

Gil Vargas

Slum Shepherd

A festering sore in the capital's underbelly, Gil Vargas is a petty tyrant to some, a survivor to others, and a name muttered with equal parts fear and grudging respect. In the shadows of Covrada, the proud capital of the Kingdom of Bolatine, he runs a tight operation that preys on the desperate and discarded. His so-called Gil's Gamin—street orphans and lost children—serve as pickpockets, lookouts, and laborers in a machine that never stops grinding.

From a decaying fishery down in the docks, Gil oversees a small circle of enforcers who keep the children obedient and the law looking the other way. He's cruel, clever, and far more cautious than he lets on. Plenty have tried to carve a legacy in Covrada's criminal world. Few have survived long enough to enjoy it.

Gil Vargas. Gil is not a relic of better days, but a criminal who lasted, an impressive feat for his occupation. In his prime, he navigated the court of the Rat King, rubbed elbows with smugglers and killers alike, and left plenty of dead rivals in his wake. In his older years he's focused on reinforcing his domain carved from Covrada's underbelly, running an unseen, yet efficient, operation of orphans, the Gil's Gamins. The Gamins who perform well earn moldy bread; those who fail earn lashes or worse, a visit to Gobblegut, his personal alligator. With a small yet firm seat of power established in Covrada's central harbor, Gamin enjoys his semi-retirement, surrounded by the many trophies of his past exploits.

Yog Balco. Balco, Gil's senior enforcer, serves as his fixer and apothecary, not only providing him medical services that have become all-too necessary at Gil's age, but also providing poisons and intoxicants for the gamin's to deliver and distribute. Balco has no love for Gil, yet years of service under him made it clear that under Gil a comfortable and easy life is secured. As for the gamins, he loathes the change in Gil's operation and openly displays his detest towards them any chance he gets. While he does not lash out physically against the kids, he is prone to outbursts and endless tirades against even the tiniest of blunders.

Giggles. Giggles is a cruel orc with a carved grin and sadistic eyes. Acting as enforcer, he patrols the fishery with laughter devoid of genuine joy, his many-tailed whip lined with shark teeth always at hand. Upon his approach the Gamin scatter in fear, knowing fully well that this burte needs little excuse to swing his whip for his own twisted amusement.

Mister Hookshanks. Hookshanks is a short, bitter halfling with a need to feel tall. He oversees the children's schedules, routines, and punishments, barking orders with vile glee, all while insisting the Gamin shall only address him as "Mister" Hookshanks.

Bloo. Bloo is Gil's mean mutt. This mangy beast is as foul tempered as he is old, but he still snarls like he did when he was young. Bloo has followed Vargas for decades, snapping and snarling, and never once failed to bite when ordered. The Gamin believe Bloo is clinging to live purely out of hatred. None of the kids remember a time before Bloo and are sure this foul thing will outlast them all.

Gobblegut. Gobblegut is a massive alligator Gil keeps in the waterlogged pit under his hideout. Gil claims this beast to be his vanity "pet," but everyone knows Gobblegut's maw is the final destination for those who disappoint one too many times. Bloated from decades worth of meat and refuse, this beast is always eagerly awaiting its next meal.

Gil's Gamin. The Gamin are the shaky foundation of Gil's vaning empire: a chaotic collection of terrified street urchins used as tools and thrown away the moment they wear out. Some were orphaned, some sold, others simply taken. Gil finds them, breaks them, and puts them to use under his service.

The older ones run pickpocket operations, hawk stolen wares, or intimidate newcomers. Younger ones are delegated to menial work such as sorting rotten fish, cleaning, or serving as bait or distractions for Gil's many schemes. Most are too afraid to run and too hardened to cry. Few of them still believe they can escape this life, but must are far too broken to believe in a better tomorrow. To the people of Covrada, they are either invisible or nuisances. To Gil, they are assets, given a new purpose in a world that has dismissed them.

GIL'S GAMIN

Small Humanoid, neutral

Armor Class 12 (rags)

Hit Points 7 (2d6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	13 (+1)	10 (0)	7 (-2)	7 (-2)	11 (0)

Skills Acrobatics +3, Perception +2, Sleight of Hands +3, Stealth +3

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Proficiency +2

Just Kids. The Gil's Gamin has disadvantage on saving throws against effects that frighten them. Additionally, creatures of Medium Size or larger have advantage on Intimidation checks targeting the Gamin.

ACTIONS

Shank. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4+1) piercing damage.

Unwieldy Pitchfork. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage. This attack always has disadvantage on its attack roll.

Sling. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

REACTIONS

Duck and Cover. The Gamin is missed with an attack or succeeds a Dexterity saving throw, they can move up half of their speed without provoking opportunity attacks. If the triggering Dexterity saving throw would deal damage on a successful saving throw, the Gamin takes no damage instead.

GIGGLES

Medium Humanoid (Orc), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (reinforced garment)

Hit Points 67 (9d8+27)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	11 (0)	9 (-1)

Skills Athletics +5, Intimidation +5, Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Proficiency +2

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Giggles makes 2 brutal whipping attacks. Giggles can replace one of these attacks with an intimate action.

Brutal Whipping. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4+3) slashing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d10 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

Intimidate. A creature within 10 feet of Giggles that was hit with a melee weapon attack since the beginning of his current turn must succeed a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the end of Giggles's next turn.

Cackling Lashes (Recharge 5-6). Giggles releases a barrage of wild whip lashes and makes a brutal whipping attack against up to 3 creatures in 10 feet of himself. Each creature hit must succeed a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the end of Giggles's next turn.

MISTER HOOKSHANK

Small Humanoid (Halfling), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)

Hit Points 44 (8d6+16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)	11 (0)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +7

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Halfling

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Proficiency +2

Nimble. Mister Hookshank can move through spaces of creatures that are one or more Sizes larger than himself.

Sneak Attack. Mister Hookshank deals an extra 10 (3d6) damage when he hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 ft. of an ally of Hookshank that isn't incapacitated and he doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Mister Hookshank makes 2 weapon attacks; one with his shortsword and one with his dagger.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) piercing damage.

Thrown Dagger. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Short Fuse. If Mister Hookshank is hit with a weapon attack or is taunted for his short size, he moves up to half of his speed towards the triggering creature and makes a weapon attack if possible. After using this reaction Mister Hookshank can't disengage or willingly move away from the triggering creature until the end of his next turn. To use this reaction Mister Hookshank must be able to see the triggering creature.

BALCO

Medium Humanoid (Human), lawful evil

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)

Hit Points 36 (8d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (0)	14 (+2)	11 (0)	14 (+2)	10 (0)	13 (+1)

Skills Arcana +4, Deception +3, Persuasion +3

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Elven, Infernal

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Proficiency +2

BONUS ACTION

Quick Toss (Recharge 5-6). Balco throws an alchemical flask.

ACTIONS

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.

Acid Wand. Up to 2 creatures in a 5-foot-radius centered on a point within 60 feet of Balco must succeed a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 5 (2d4) acid damage.

Alchemical Flask. Balco throws an alchemical flask, making one of the following attacks:

Acid. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) acid damage.

Molotov. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) fire damage and the target is on fire for 1 minute. A creature on fire takes 7 (2d6) at the end of its turn. A burning creature or another creature within 5 feet of it can take an action to extinguish it.

Tangleweb. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* The creature is restrained by a sticky adhesive. A restrained creature makes a DC 12 Strength saving throw at the beginning of its turn, ending the effect on a success. Additionally, a creature can repeat the saving throw as an action, also ending the effect on a success.

BLOO

Small beast, bad boy

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 18 (4d6 + 6)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP) **Proficiency** +2

Keen Senses. Bloo has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks taht rely on smell..

Grab and Shake. Bloo has advantage on bite attacks against a creature he has grappled.

ACTIONS

Frenzied Bites. Bloo makes one bite attack, if the attack hits he can grapple the target (escape DC 11), or make another bite attack against the same target.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

GOBBLE GUT

Large Beast, neutral

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)

Speed 30 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	11 (0)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4

Senses passive Perception 13

Challenge 3 (700 XP) **Proficiency** +2

Hold Breath. Gobble Gut can hold its breath for 1 hour.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage and he target is grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and Gobble Gut can't bite another target.

Death Roll. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature it has grappled in its jaws. *Hit:* 17 (2d12 + 4) and the creature is no longer grappled.

REACTIONS

Delectable Lure. When Gil Vargas hits a creature with his Chum Projectile within 60 feet of Gobble Gut, it can move up to its speed towards the hit creature.

GIL VARGAS, SLUM SHEPHERD

Medium Humanoid (Human), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throw Str + 4, Dex +6, Wis +4

Skills Deception +5, Insight +4, Intimidation +5, Perception +4, Stealth +6

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Goblin, Infernal

Challenge 3 (700 XP) **Proficiency** +3

Sneak Attack. Gil Vargas deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when he hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 ft. of an ally of Gil that isn't incapacitated and he doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

BONUS ACTION

Dirty Trick. A creature within 10 ft. of Gil that can see or hear him must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed check Gil's next attack against that creature has advantage and the creature can't use reactions until the end of Gil's turn.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Gil makes two melee attacks or he makes one attack with his light crossbow and kicks.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) piercing damage.

Kick. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4+1) bludgeoning damage and the target is pushed back 5 feet away from Gil.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Chum Projectile (4-6). Gil loads his crossbow with a chum projectile and fires it. He makes a Light Crossbow attack and on a hit the target takes an additional 4 (1d8) poison damage and is marked with bait until the creature removes it as an action. Gobble Gut has advantage on all attack rolls targeting a creature that is marked by this attack and has advantage on Perception checks to find the creature.

REACTIONS

Parry and Kick. Gil adds 3 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit him. To do so, Gil must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Eel's End

At the far end of the cities's rotting harbor, flickering lantern lights becon to follow a crooked pier across the dark waters towards a villainous den of debauchery, the Eel's End. The Eel's End consists of five ships, bound together and permanently moored, that rise and fall with the tide. Each vessel has long since surrendered its sails and now serves a singular purpose: to tempt coin from the desperate, the decadent, and the devious.

This is no ordinary dockside dive. Eel's End is a floating warren of pleasure and vice, ruled not by city law but by the whims of its master: the cunning and cruel Spider Lord Devargo. From the deck of the Throne of Spiders, a decommissioned warship which towers over the surrounding ships, the Spider Lord rules his domain. The other ships were repurposed to serve as floating establishments where each soul may follow their vice of choice. May it be drink, gambling, drugs, or pleasure: the Eels End serves it all for the right coin.

While the City Watch has no authority here, all patrons of the Eel's End know better than to provoke Devargo's wrath. His enforcers, each ruthless brutes, ensure that Devargo's law is obeyed. Many trouble-makers overcome by the overwhelming exctasy of this place has found themselves tossed mangled and broken into the brackish waters below.

Yet for all its filth and danger, Eel's End thrives. By night, it blazes with lamplight, music, and laughter. Gold flows like water, spent by petty criminals, underworld aristocrats, and lowlifes of every stripe. Whether you're seeking forbidden pleasures, illicit deals, or whispered truths, Eel's End welcomes all, so long as you bow your head to the Spider Lord.

Eel's End Enforcer. These are Devargo's hand-picked blunt instruments; rugged, ruthless, and loyal enough to keep his floating empire running smooth. They don't care if you cheat, lie, or steal, so long as the coin keeps flowing and the business stays uninterrupted. Cause a scene, short a payment, or lay hands where you shouldn't, and they'll descend like beasts. Whether it's a quiet toss into the harbor or a public beating to set an example, the enforcers ensure Devargo's law is the only one that matters aboard Eel's End.

THE FOUR SHIPS

Aside from the imposing Spider's Throne, four decommissioned ships form the Eels End. Each of it serves as another provider of comfort and vice for their unsavory patrons, each managed by one of Devargo's loyal officers.

The Golden Shark

The Golden Shark is both a bar and a gambling hall. Here coins jingle, dice clatter, and wheels spin to upbeat tunes at all times. Inhibitions are always purposefully kept loose with steady drink to keep coin purses looser, yet trouble-makers and sore losers are dealt swiftly by enforcers. This establishment is managed by **Lorré La Roc**, an uncanny looking, yet cheerful halfling who knows very well to keep the non-stop revelry going.

The Basket

The Basket, smallest of the four ships, serves as the retreat for all who indulged in their share of vice and need to sleep it off. Several bunks of different sizes and comfort are available for all who seek rest—for the right coin that is. Despite what one might think to sleep close to such a den of degeneracy, the nights spent here are safe thanks

"Bilge Biter". "Bilge Biter" is the name growled by enforcers and whispered by patrons when someone vanishes beneath the waves of Eel's End. Said to be a monstrous, man-eating pet shark loyal to Devargo himself, its legend keeps tongues tied and tempers in check. In truth, "Bilge Biter" is no single beast, just merely whichever shark happens to be circling the blood-slick waters that night. With scraps and fools aplenty, the docks are a natural feeding ground. Devargo keeps the myth alive to great effect and so far noone has dared challenging the idea of "Bilge Biter" in fear of meeting the supposed legend itself.

Chittersnap (The Ettercap). Chittersnap is the secret beneath Devargo's throne, the true reason behind the whispered tales of the Spider Lord's eerie command over arachnids. He dwells in a tangled warren of web-choked crawlspaces deep within the Throne of Spiders' belly. This reclusive ettercap is no mere servant, but perhaps Devargo's closest thing to a confidant. Through Chittersnap, Devargo's spiders watch, listen, and report, as they skitter unseen across the ships of Eel's End. In exchange for his loyalty, Chittersnap asks for little; just the occasional trespasser or would-be-hero.

Devargo the Spiderlord. Devargo Barvasi, the self-proclaimed Spider Lord of Eel's End, was not always a name spoken with reverence or fear. Once a gutter rat of a smuggler who crossed the wrong syndicate, he spent years hunted across the land, scraping by with desperation and spite. That shame forged his ambition; never again would he be so hounded and humiliated. When he arrived in Covrada, he set to work to make his ambition reality. Through backroom deals, bloody double-crosses, and calculated cruelty, Devargo carved out Eel's End, a floating fortress of vice and power that now proudly stands in the city's decrepid northern harbor. Audaciously it radiates it's lanterns and roars of revelry across the piers towards the city to signal its presence, knowing fully well that noone would dare to challenge its presence.

Devargo understands the value of myth. He cultivated his Spider Lord persona carefully—whispers of supernatural spider-speech, a throne of webs, eyes everywhere. He silenced anyone who dared recall the coward he once was, replacing fact with legend. Yet beneath the theatrics lies a capable man. Devargo is no charlatan; he's a vicious fighter armed with his signature spiked gloves and an empire to defend at all costs.

to the enforcer's watchful eyes. This improvised inn is ran by **Oi' Scruffy**, a shaggy Lycan (Wolf Folk) who most people have a hard time understanding due to his mumbling speech.

The Dream Boat

This aptly named establishment is a brothel ran by the beautiful drow **Aksi Ren** who hosts plenty of men and women who offer their services. The Dream Boat also offers empty rooms for couples to spend undisturbed quality time with one another. Despite plenty of offers from adoring patrons, Aksi Ren does not offer her company for coin, giving rise to rumors that she might be Devargo's lover.

The Upper Sphere

Smoke wreathed lounges, plenty of satin pillows, and many strange instruments for the consumption of any thinkable narcotic can be found here. This drug hall is overseen by **Angel**, a haggard and androgynous human with strangely discolored ashen skin. They rarely speak but seems to instinctively know which poison a patron is yearning for to ease their sorrows.

Knivesies (Social Game)

Knivesies is the local game of choice among the unsavory company found in the kingdom's ports. Due to Devargo's personal fondness of the game, knivesies is particularly popular in the Eel's End.

Agreeing to a game of knivesies can offer a character many benefits in the Eel's End. It might be an easy way to gather social reputé with another character, or it might be an opportunity to make some easy coin or to further their investigation by demanding the opponent to relinquish information in place of a monetary bet.

Set Up. The two contestants are set on top of a long wooden table, large enough for both of them to stand on. The backs of their hands are bound together with leather straps, limiting them to the use of one hand. Both contestants must remain bound to one another until the end of the game. A dagger is jammed with its blade onto the table between both contestants. Then the game begins after a count of 10, in which bystanders can place set amount of bets by placing coin on the table.

Goal. One contestant either must collect more coin than the other or force the other contestant off the table. The game ends once all coins are collected, or only one contestant remains on the table.

Rules. When the game starts both contestants roll for initiative. Aside from attacking, contestant can choose one of the following actions:

- **Get the Knife.** A contestant goes for the dagger. If the dagger is still stuck in the table they get it without the need of any check. If the dagger is already held by the other contestant they must succeed an opposing Strength check against the other contestant to disarm them. If they successfully disarm their opponent, the contestant can get the knife as part of the same action.

ENFORCER

Medium Humanoid (Human), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (chainmail)

Hit Points 37 (5d8 +15)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	11 (0)	16 (+3)	10 (0)	9 (-1)	9 (-1)

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Proficiency +2

Grab and Bash. The enforcer has advantage on attack rolls against any creature they have grappled.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The enforcer makes two attacks: one with their mace and one with their slam.

Flail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 7 (1d8+3) bludgeoning damage.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 5 (1d4+3) bludgeoning damage. Instead of dealing damage the enforcer can push the target by 5 feet (unless the target is a larger Size than the enforcer) or grapple the target (escape DC 13). As long as the enforcer has a target grappled, they can't make slam attacks.

Eel's End Thugs

- **Get the Coins.** A contestant goes for the coins. As part of the action, they can make a Dexterity (Sleight of Hands) check. The contestant will collect 1d10 coins plus 1 additional coin for each increment of 5 the Sleight of Hand check beats. Doing so will provoke an opportunity attack from the opponent.
- **Get them Off.** A contestant can attempt to push the opponent off of the table. To do so they must succeed an opposing Athletics (Strength) check. If they are successful, the defending contestant will be off-balance until the end of the attacking contestant's next turn. If a contestant succeeds an opposing Athletics check against a contestant that is off-balance, the defending contestant is then knocked off the table.
- **Get Dirty.** Knivesies is no gentleman's sport! As such playing dirty tricks on your opponent is valid (and encouraged by the crowd). This is an opportunity for a contestant to get creative and suggest an action which can be approved or veto'd by the Dungeon Master. If approved the Dungeon Master must decide a fitting contesting skill check and a reasonable result on a success. (Avoid effects that would result into an instant win!)

End. At the end of the game, all money the contestants collected are returned onto the table. Half of the total money on the table is paid to the winner and the remainder is split evenly among all who bet on the winner.

Sharp Knivesies. There exist no rules that prohibit the use of lethal force in knivesies, but usually there is an agreement that friendly competitions of knivesies are not played lethally (except for a few cuts). But if there is an explicit intent to play a lethal game of knivesies, people refer to that as a round of "Sharp Knivesies".

"BILGE BITER"

Large Beast

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 45 (6d10 +12)

Speed 5 ft., Swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	1 (-5)	12 (+1)	4 (-3)

Skills Perception +3

Senses Blindsight 60 ft. (only when in water), Passive

Perception 13

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Proficiency +2

Aquatic. "Bilge Biter" can breathe underwater. For each hour "Bilge Biter" is out of water it gains one level of exhaustion. All exhaustion gained this way is recovered if "Bilge Bite" spends a Long Rest in water.

Blood Frenzy. "Bilge Biter" has advantage on all attack rolls that target creatures that are missing hit points.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 14 (3d6 + 4) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Bloody Appetite. When "Bilge Biter" rolls for initiative, it can make a Wisdom (Perception) check. If it detects any creatures within 60 feet of itself that are missing hit points it moves up to its speed towards the detected creature.

CHITTERSNAP THE ETTERCAP

Medium Monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 66 (12d8 +12)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +7

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Understands Common but doesn't speak

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Proficiency +2

Spider Climb. Chittersnap can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Web Sense. While in contact with a web, Chittersnap knows the exact location of any creature in contact with the same web.

Web Waker. Chittersnap ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

BONUS ACTIONS

Webbing Stealth. When he is in a web, Chittersnap performs the hide action.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Chittersnap makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8+3) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) poison damage or plus 18 (4d8) poison damage if the attack was made with advantage. The target must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4+3) slashing damage.

Web Shot (Recharge 5-6). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* The creature is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained creature can make a DC 11 Strength check, escaping from the webbing on a success. The effect ends if the webbing is destroyed. The webbing has AC 10, 5 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage and immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage.

Spider Lord's Fangs

Weapon (Pair of Spiked Gauntlets), Uncommon

These gauntlets are designed with a specific compartment at the wrist directly connected to the blade, allowing for an easy application of any vial of poison placed within the compartment.

Any contact or injury type poison can be placed within the Fangs and the next time you successfully hit a creature, you can choose to dispense the poison and apply its effect on the attack as if it was applied beforehand. The poison is then consumed. You can have a total of 2 different poisons placed within the Fangs, one for each part of the pair.

Chittersnap Trap (Trap)

In his years of webcrafting Chittersnap has learned to create cunning webs which explosively wrap themselves around whichever disturbs their fragile equilibrium.

Area. Chittersnap's Traps always fill a 5-foot square area.

Perception. A creature must succeed a DC 13 Perception check to find a peculiar woven web on the ground, which, if disturbed, would fold into itself upwards, trapping whichever creature stepped on it.

Trigger. A creature steps on the trap.

Effect. The creature must succeed a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be restrained by the Chittersnap Trap. A restrained creature can attempt to use an action to make a DC 13 Strength check to break and escape the web, ending the condition. The restraint also ends if the web is destroyed (AC 10, 20 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage and immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage). If the triggering creature is Large size or bigger, it must succeed a DC 13 Strength saving throw or has its movement speed reduced by half until the end of its next turn.

DEVARGO THE SPIDER LORD

Medium Humanoid (Human), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt & dual defense)

Hit Points 82 (11d8 +33)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (0)	13 (+1)

Skills Acrobatics +5, Deception +4, Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Proficiency +3

Dual Defense. As long as Devargo wields his two spiked gauntlets and is not incapacitated, he has a +1 bonus to his AC (included).

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). Devargo deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when he hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 ft. of an ally of Devargo that isn't incapacitated and Devargo doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Spider Slippers. Devargo wields spider slippers, granting him a climbing speed equal to his movement speed and also allowing him to climb upside-down surfaces.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Devargo makes three melee weapon attacks.

Spider Lord's Fangs (Spiked Gauntlets). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) poison damage.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Cross Counter. When a creature hits Devargo with a melee weapon attack he can reduce the damage by 9 (1d6+6). If this reduces the damage to 0 he can attack the triggering creature with his spiked gauntlet as part of the same reaction.

Dead Warrens

The Gray Gardens, Covrada's vast, yet secluded graveyard, holds a quiet found in no other place within the city walls. While unrest stirs across the city, here the silence lingers palpably while the graveyard itself awaits a tide of fresh corpses. Perhaps the graveyard's bleakest corner is the Fields Forlorn, which only holds forgotten graves. Its crumbling mausoleums suggest the resting place of bloodlines long past. Few mourners pass through here—as those buried here had none to carry their memory.

Within this desolate quarter, startling signs of disturbance emerge: fresh wheel tracks and small footprints leading to a lonely mausoleum. There, under its cracked stone leads a hidden descent into the Dead Warrens, a labyrinthian catacomb claimed by Ramon the necromancer. Though its master is absent, seeking power elsewhere, and his lair is inhabited by cabal of halfling necromancers, lead by an exile named Vernan Mordanse. The cabal serves Ramon, seeking payment in forbidden knowledge.

The Warrens teem with experiments born of Ramon's research and his dark allies. Though Ramon's is absent, his presence lingers, promising retaliation against those who dare disturb his laboratory.

Necrophidius. The Necrophidius were some of Ramon's earliest creations to serve as his slithering sentinels that lurk in the Warren's shadows. They are composed of skeletal serpentine bodies crowned by human skulls whose empty eyesockets swirl with a haunting light. While their bone-like structure would indicate an undead nature, these are constructs of vile purpose; to hunt the living, for which they are uniquely equipped for. Silent in their movement they strike from the dark to inflict paralysis with their bite. Against the vigilant they use hypnotic movements that prey on the senses of living being, putting them into temporary stupors which leave them wide open for attack.

Cabbage Head. Cabbage Head is Ramon's repulsive prison guard, his body deformed by the vile Troll Taint. At least now his ugly form matches his vile character. Twisted features and a lumbering frame make him a liability in the world above, so Ramon found a perfect purpose for Cabbage Head in the Dead Warren. To him, Ramon is both master and savior, to whom he seeks to repay his debt with absolute zeal. His captives are well taken care of, as Cabbage Head seeks to please his master, but his childlike temper and brute strength have led the occasional prisoner reduced to bloody pulps for Ramon to reassemble.

Vernan Mordanse. Vernan Mordanse is the embittered head of the group of halfling necromancers who have sought sanctuary in Ramon's shadow. Exiled from their families and homes, these outcasts united through desperation and obsession, tied together by their goal of escaping death and thus escape an exile's fate. Vernan stands both as leader and inspiring example, his ruthless nature garnered the fervent devotion of the fanatical and the broken.

For Vernan Mordanse, Ramon Vargas is less a mentor but a contractor—knowledge exchanged for service, power traded for obedience. Vernan neither schemes for the City of Covrada nor cares for its fate; his eyes are fixed only on the home that cast him aside. He dreams of the day he will return at the head of a tide of ravenous dead, when the hearths and fields of his childhood burn and relish in the lamentations of the fools who once spurned him.

VERNAN MORDANSE

Small Humanoid (Halfling), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (mage armor)

Hit Points 91 (14d6 +42)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Con+6, Int+6, Wis +5, Cha +4

Skills Arcana +6, History +6, Perception +5, Persuasion +4

Damage Resistances Necrotic, Poison

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Halfling

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Proficiency +3

Dark Devotion. Mordanse has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Lost in among the Dead. Mordanse can move through spaces of other creatures one size larger than himself. If those creatures are undead under his control, moving through their spaces costs no extra movement.

BONUS ACTIONS

Command Minions. Up to two zombies within 30 ft. of Mordanse can use a reaction and move up to their speed and make a melee weapon attack or can attempt to grapple a creature.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Mordanse makes one spell attack and a zombie under his control within 20 ft. of himself makes a melee weapon attack.

Necrotic Surge. *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 22 (4d10) necrotic damage, if the target is an undead creature Mordanse can chose to heal it by that amount instead.

Bone Chill. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d8) necrotic damage.

Heart Stopper (Recharge 5-6). *4th-level Necromancy Spell, Components:* V, S, *Requires Concentration.* *Effect:* A living creature within 60 ft. of Mordanse must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save the target becomes stunned for one minute or until Mordanse concentration is broken. On a successful save the creature takes 11 (2d10) necrotic damage and is not stunned. At the end of the stunned creature's turn it takes 22 (4d10) necrotic damage and makes a saving throw, ending the stunned condition on a success.

Spellcasting. Mordanse casts one of the following spells, using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 14):

At will: *Cause Fear*, *Ray of Enfeeblement*

1/day (Each): *Animate Dead*, *Dispel Magic*, *Fear*, *Invisibility*

Dead Warrens Lair Actions

When fighting Mordanse inside the Dead Warrens, he can take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing ties), Mordanse can take one lair action to cause the following effect:

Endless Hordes. Two zombies previously created by and under the control of Mordanse crawl from the shadows and join combat.

More than Expected (1/Day). Six zombies previously created by and under the control of Mordanse arrive and join combat.

MORDANSE INITIATE

Small Humanoid (Halfling), neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (mage armor)

Hit Points 22 (5d6 +5)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	11 (0)	9 (-1)

Skills Arcana +5, Perception +2

Damage Resistances Poison

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Halfling

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Proficiency +2

Dark Devotion. The initiate has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Lost in the Crowd. The initiate can move through spaces of other creatures one size larger than itself.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

Necrotic Bolt. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8+3) necrotic damage.

Spellcasting. The Initiate casts one of the following spells, using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 13):

1/day (Each): *Cause Fear*, *Unseen Servant*

CABBAGE HEAD

Medium Humanoid (Human), unaligned

Armor Class 14 (brawn)

Hit Points 105 (14d8 +42)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	7 (-2)	8 (-1)	6 (-2)

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +1

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Proficiency +2

Brawn. When Cabbage Head wears no armor, he adds his Constitution modifier to his AC.

Gauntlets of Giant Strength. Cabbage Head wears Gauntlets of Ogre Strength. Without them his Strength score is 16.

Troll Taint. Cabbage Head is inflicted with the Troll Taint disease (see Troll Taint from Fear the Forgotten Foes). Any creature that is hit by one of Cabbage Head's unarmed strikes or touches him must succeed a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or become afflicted with Troll Taint.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Cabbage Head makes three unarmed strikes.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) bludgeoning damage.

REACTIONS

Retaliate. When Cabbage Head is hit with an attack and it scored a critical hit or the attack roll had advantage, he makes an unarmed strike against the attacking creature.

NECROPHIDIUS

Medium Construct, unaligned

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 71 (11d8 +22)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)	2 (-4)	10 (0)	1 (-5)

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +4

Damage Immunities Poison, Psychic

Condition Immunities Charmed, Poisoned, Exhausted, Frightened, Poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., blindsight 10 ft., passive Perception 12

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Proficiency +2

Detect Living. The Necrophidius has advantage on perception checks to find humanoids, beasts, and monstrosities.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6+3) piercing damage and the target must succeed a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save a creature is poisoned for 1 minute. A poisoned creature is paralyzed and repeats the saving throw at the end of its turns, ending the poisoned condition on a success.

Dance of Death (Recharge 5-6). The necrophidius begins to sway. Each beast, humanoid, and monstrosity creature within 30 ft. of the necrophidius that can see it must succeed a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed for 1 minute or until it takes damage. A charmed creature is incapacitated and repeats the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the charmed condition on a success.

The Rat King

As populus of Covrada buckles beneath the weight of the Blood Veil, the city's elite retreat behind gilded walls, desperate to keep the plague from their polished streets. Yet even there, safety is an illusion. In the underbelly of Covrada, Girrig the Rat King stirs — a cunning manipulator who sees plenty opportunity in the city's misery. Through whispers, blackmail, and fear, he threatens to unleash the Blood Veil among the upper crust unless they bend to his will. None can say for certain whether Girrig is one man, a cabal, or merely the name given to the city's unexplained evils, but his influence runs deep enough that nobles whisper his name like a curse.

When the unassuming mys Brigida sought out the our heroes after hearing of their efforts of fighting the Blood Veil, her simple plea carried both desperation and dread: "Please, kill the Rat King."

MYS RIFF RAFF

Small Humanoid (Mys), neutral

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 9 (2d6 +2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (0)	10 (0)	10 (0)

Skills Stealth +4, Sleight of Hand +4, Perception +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Proficiency +2

Group Scatter. When the Mys begins a turn within 5 ft. of 2 or more allies, its movement provokes no opportunity attacks until the end of the turn.

Lost in the Crowd. The Mys can move through spaces of creatures of a larger Size than itself. Spaces of other creatures that are 2 or more Sizes larger than the Mys do not cost them extra movement to move through.

RAT KING'S ENFORCER

Small Humanoid (Mys), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 22 (4d6 +8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (0)

Skills Acrobatics +5, Perception +3, Stealth +7

Damage Resistances Necrotic, Poison

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Proficiency +2

Lost in the Crowd. The enforcer can move through spaces of creatures of a larger Size than itself. Spaces of other creatures that are 2 or more Sizes larger than the Mys do not cost them extra movement to move through.

The Rat King

Brigida. Among Covrada's downtrodden, few suffer more than the Mys — the small, mouse-like folk forced into the city's slums and even the ancient sewers below. Poverty and desperation drive many of them into crime, a cycle the Rat King has exploited well. Brigida was recruited early in her life by the Rat King, her timid smile and unthreatening stature obscured her true capabilities. To most, she appears harmless — a meek courier or errand-runner — yet beneath that facade lies a survivor who has learned to kill, deceive, and vanish befitting her rank as one of the Rat King's finest enforcers.

Everything she did, she told herself, was for survival and the faint hope of a better tomorrow for her people. But with the coming of the Blood Veil, the Mys have become scapegoats for the city's fear, branded as "filthy carriers" of the plague. When Brigida learned that Girrig's latest plot would weaponize her kin to deliver the disease into the homes of nobles, she knew this would forever brand her people as pariah. Determined to save her people from eternal persecution, she sought the city's heroes for aid — still cloaked in her familiar, innocent guise.

Mob Tactics. The Mys deals an additional 2 (1d4) damage to a creature that is within 5 ft. of at least one of the Mys' allies and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

Distraction Rock (The Mys must be hidden to use this attack). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* The target becomes aware of the Mys' presence as if it had succeeded on a Wisdom (Perception) check to detect it. The target has disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks until the end of its next turn.

If the Mys is invisible or heavily obscured, the target learns the direction of the Mys but not their exact location.

REACTIONS

Scram. When the Mys is detected with a successful Perception check while they are hiding, or rolls for initiative they can move up to their speed.

Sneak Attack (1/turn). The enforcer deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when they hit a target with a weapon attack and have advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 ft. of an ally of the enforcer that isn't incapacitated and the enforcer doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

BONUS ACTION

Cunning Action. The enforcer takes the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The enforcer makes 2 dagger attacks.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) piercing damage.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Flashing Daggers. The enforcer makes up to 3 dagger attack against different targets in a 10 ft. radius centered at a point within 20 ft. of the enforcer.

BRIGIDA

Small Humanoid (Mys), neutral



Armor Class 16 (studded leather)

Hit Points 66 (12d6 +24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (0)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)

Skills Acrobatics +7, Deception +6, Perception +4, Persuasion +6, Stealth +10

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Proficiency +3

Lost in the Crowd. Brigida can move through spaces of creatures of a larger Size than herself. Spaces of other creatures that are 2 or more Sizes larger than her do not cost her extra movement to move through.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). Bridgida deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when she hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 ft.

Vendra, Charlatan Perfumer. Vendra was meant to appear during the height of Covrada's Blood Veil outbreak. She is a charismatic fraud posing as a miracle perfumer. With a sweet smile peddles her bottled salvation: a fragrant cure to ward off the sickness that ravages the capital. In truth, her wares were nothing more than scented water and clever marketing. Left unchecked, her deception would lead desperate citizens to forgo real aid, worsening the city's crisis.

VENDRA, CHARLATAN PERFUMER

Medium Humanoid (human), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 15 (armor)

Hit Points 78 (12d6 +36)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex+5, Cha+4

Skills Deception +4, Perception +2, Persuasion +4

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Proficiency +2

Alchemist's Supplies. Vendra carries a set of Alchemist's Supplies.

Evasion. If Vendra is subjected to an effect that allows her to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, she instead takes no damage if she succeeds on the saving throw and only half damage if she fails.

Perfume. Vendra carries 3 bottles of prepared perfume on her which must be used to perform certain actions. If she does not have the required amount of prepared perfume bottles, she can't perform that action.

BONUS ACTION

Cunning Action. Vendra takes the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Vendra uses a Perfume and makes a melee weapon attack.

of an ally of Bridgida that isn't incapacitated and the Bridgida doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

BONUS ACTIONS

Cunning Action. Brigida takes the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Brigida makes 2 weapon attacks or she makes 1 weapon attack with advantage against a target that has no other allies within 5 ft. of itself.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4+4) piercing damage.

Deadly Flourish (Recharge 5-6). Brigida moves up to her speed without provoking opportunity attacks. She can make up to 2 melee weapon attacks at any point during that movement. Both of these attacks benefit from Brigida's **Sneak Attack** trait.

REACTIONS

Uncanny Dodge. When Bridgida takes damage from an attack she can reduce the damage taken by half. Brigida can only use this reaction if she can see the attacker.

ening the city's crisis.

Due to her effective marketing, news of her miracle cure will spread quickly, making it easy for heroes to learn about her scheme. When cornered, Vendra is quick to drop her pleasant facade, trying to escape justice by any means necessary with the help of her goons.

Poison Knife. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) poison damage.

Perfume (Costs 1 Bottle). Vendra uses one of the following perfumes:

Caustic Cologne. Vendra sprays acidic spray in a 15 ft. cone. Each creature in the area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) acid damage on a failed save and half as much on a successful o.

Choking Vapours. Vendra sprays an irritating vapour in a 15 ft. cone. Each creature in the area must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. A poisoned creature must succeed a DC 13 Constitution saving throw at the beginning of its turn or must spend its turn gasping for air and coughing. A poisoned creature that succeeds that saving throw by 5 or more is no longer poisoned.

Shrouding Haze. Vendra spreads a thick haze in a 10-foot radius centered on herself which lasts until the end of her next turn. The area is heavily obscured and each creature in the area has advantage on the next stealth check they make to hide. Additionally any creature in the area other than Vendra can use a reaction to use the hide action and move up to half of their speed.

Hasty Preparation. Vendra creates 1d4-1 prepared perfume bottles. If the result is 0 she fails to prepare any bottles. To perform this action Vendra must have access to material to create perfume (typically she carries a set of alchemist's supplies with her).

REACTION

Irresistible Aromatic (Costs 1 Bottle). When a creature within 5 ft. of Vendra makes a melee attack against her, she forces the creature to succeed a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or the creature is charmed by Vendra until the beginning of its next turn and must choose another target for the attack.

Girrig the Rat King. Girrig the Rat King is one of Covrada's most persistent legends — a name whispered in seedy taverns and back alleys, half-dismissed as myth. Some claim "Girrig" is merely a title passed down through generations of crime lords, a convenient mask worn by those who seek power through fear. Yet those who truly rule Covrada's underworld know better. The Rat King is no man, but a monstrous intellect that has endured for centuries, a living hive of vermin bound by one will. His countless rats serve as his eyes, ears, and hands, spreading through every district like veins of rot beneath the city's skin.

Even his lieutenants, such as Brigida, serve only fragments of his sprawling consciousness. To her, he is a single unseen master pursuing influence among the nobility — but the truth runs deeper. The Rat King's mind stretches through Covrada itself, feeding on its corruption. Whether his schemes succeed or fail means nothing; Girrig is eternal, as inseparable from Covrada as its own shadow.

GIRRIG THE RAT KING

Medium monstrosity (shapechanger), neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 105 (14d8+42)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (0)	19 (+4)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Int +6, Wis +4

Skills Deception +5, Insight +4, Perception +4, Stealth +7

Damage Resistances poison, bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Thieves' Cant, Dwarven, Halfling

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Proficiency +4

Equipment. Girrig wears a Ring of Mind Shielding and a +1 Rapier called "The Rat's Needle".

Shape Change. Girrig can use his action to transform into a tiny rat, medium humanoid, or back into his true form. His statistics, other than his size, are the same in each form, except for his resistances and immunities other than being charmed and frightened, which he only retains in his true form. Any equipment he is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. He reverts into his true form if he dies.

Death Throes. When Girrig dies, he explodes into a swarm of rats that immediately scatter. The fleeing swarm of rats makes one bite attack (using Girrig's bite attack) against each creature in a 10 ft. radius centered on the rat king.

Keen Smell. The rat king has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Legendary Resistance (2/Day). If Girrig fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

Sneak Attack (1/turn). Girrig deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when he hits a target with his rapier and has advantage on the Attack roll, or when the target is within 5 ft. of an ally of Girrig that isn't Incapacitated and he doesn't have disadvantage on the Attack roll.

Future Adventure Development

Girrig the Rat King's presence in the adventure is brief, one of many threads the heroes may pursue amid the chaos left by the Blood Veil. How much of his true nature — a semi-endless, parasitic entity — is revealed depends entirely on you. For most, Girrig's defeat will seem final, and the heroes may rest easy believing the Rat King slain.

However, should a character claim the Ring of Mind Shielding from his corpse, they may soon discover a lingering presence within. Through the ring, Girrig's mind may whisper — persuasive, patient, and ever plotting. As a master manipulator, he will offer the aid of his rats and his vast web of spies in exchange for seemingly harmless favors. Yet every agreement furthers his hidden design: to spread the infection that is himself beyond Covrada's borders, using his new "ally" as a vessel for his spread.

Swarm Squeeze (True form only). When in his true form, Girrig can move through any opening large enough for a tiny beast.

Vermin Mastery. Girrig can communicate telepathically with any rodents within 60 ft. of itself.

BONUS ACTION

Cunning Action. Girrig takes the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

ACTIONS

Multiattack (Humanoid or True form only). Girrig makes three bite attacks, or two weapon attacks.

Bite (Tiny Rat form, or True form only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d4 +4) piercing damage.

Rapier +1 (Humanoid form only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 +5) piercing damage.

Children of the Night (1/day). Girrig conjures up to 8 swarms of rats within 60 ft. of himself under his control. The swarms can be conjured in spaces occupied by other creatures. The swarms remain for 1 hour or until Girrig dies.

Split (True form only). Girrig splits off part of his body, either creating a Rat, a Giant Rat, or a Swarm of Rats within 5 ft. of himself. He loses hit points equal to the hit points of the created creature. The created rat creature dies after 1 hour. Girrig cannot split when he is below half of his maximum hit points. As an action, Girrig can absorb a rat creature he created or the body of a rat creature he created, and regain hit points equal to the creatures' maximum hit points. Girrig gains all knowledge the rat creature accumulated while split from Girrig.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Girrig can take 2 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Girrig regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

Move. Girrig moves up to half of his speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Command Rats (1/round). A Rat, Rat swarm, or other ratlike creature created by Girrig within 60 ft. of him moves up to its movement speed to a creature Girrig can see and makes a melee weapon attack.

Nibble. Girrig makes a bite attack.

Epidemic

The blood veil plague is sweeping through the city of Covrada, leaving people afraid and streets vacant. In response, Queen Illosa of Bolatine publically appointed her own Queen's Physicians to combat the outbreak, led by the trusted Doctor Duarte. Despite their efforts, though, the disease keeps its ravaging grip on the city as bodies pile higher and higher.

As the crisis escalates, the party—already suspicious of the new monarch—began to question the effectiveness (and the motives) of the Queen's Physicians. After investigating the disappearance of an aspiring musician during the cities' turmoil, they found clues pointing directly towards the Queen's Physicians' headquarters, and thus the party set out to investigate the Hospice of Mercy.

The hospice, known as a supposed sanctuary for the city's sickest, was discovered to harbor a sinister truth: It is not a place of healing, but a laboratory where new and yet deadlier strains of blood veil are developed. The plague terrorizing Covrada was not a natural disaster, but a man-made weapon, engineered and unleashed at the queen's command. Her own city served as its first testing grounds, to rid it of its poor and undesirables. Now, with the city's resources stretched thin and few allies to trust, it falls to the heroes to expose the conspiracy and put an end to the sinister operations hidden within the hos-

pice's walls... and to the dark secrets lurking even deeper below.

Jostina Surepso. Jostina, a loyal, yet derranged, servant of Ramon Vargas, orchestrated a massacre in an oppulent manor to spread blood veil by raising slain guests as zombies. Disguised as an entertainer, she trapped, killed, and reanimated partygoers, to prepare a virulent wave of undead to sweep across the city. After the players defeated Jostina, a survivor from the manor provided a crucial piece of information. He described suspicious activity involving a cart leaving the scene. This unassuming, yet vital clue ultimately led the party to the Hospice of the Daughter of Mercy, steering their investigation toward the heart of the plot behind the blood veil outbreak.

Doctor Duarte. Doctor Duarte is an ambitious master physician serving Queen Illosa of Bolatine. Appointed to oversee the city's response to blood veil, Duarte is a skilled virologist who monitors the plague's spread with a growing scientific fascination. His ultimate objective from the Queen is to develop a vaccine, so that the blood veil can be turned into weapon able to devastate the queen's enemies while her own forces remain untouched. Though he takes great pride in his work with the blood veil virus, Duarte cannot escape the frustrating truth that sole credit for the plague's creation is not his own, as it was the result of a secret collaboration with two other brilliant minds that surpass his own.

JOSTINA SUREPSO

Medium humanoid (Elf), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (18 if she is in dim light or darkness)

Hit Points 71 (11d8+22)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Int +4, Cha +5

Skills Acrobatics +10, Deception +5, Perception +2, Sleight of Hand +7, Stealth +10

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Elven, Infernal

Challenge 7 (2,700 XP)

Proficiency +3

Equipment. Jostina wields a Sadistic Hand Crossbow and carries 2 potions of invisibility.

Sneak Attack (1/turn). Jostina deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when she hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 ft. of an ally of Jostina that isn't incapacitated and the Jostina doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Shadow Cowl. As long as Jostina is in dim light or darkness, she has a +2 bonus to her AC.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Jostina makes two attacks, one with her crossbow and one with her dagger. She can disengage in place of one dagger attack.

Sadistic Hand Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. **Hit:** 7 (1d6 +4) piercing damage. A creature hit with this weapon is wounded for one minute or until it regains any amount of hit points. A wounded creature suffers 3 (1d6) necrotic damage at the beginning on each of its turn. On the end of each turn the wounded creature makes a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, ending the effect on a success.

Dagger. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. **Hit:** 6 (1d4+4) piercing damage.

Potion of Invisibility (2). Jostina drinks a Potion of Invisibility.

BONUS ACTION

Blend In. Jostina hides if she is in dim light or darkness.

Shadow Dance (Recharge 4-6). Jostina teleports up to 30 ft. into an unoccupied space that is in dim light or darkness. Alternatively, when Jostina is in dim light or darkness when she uses this bonus action, she can teleport to an unoccupied spot within 5 ft. of a creature she can see and her next attack against it has advantage before the end of her next turn.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Legendary Action Uses: 2. Immediately after another creature's turn, Jostina can expend a use to take one of the following actions. Jostina regains all expended uses at the start of each of its turns.

Bolt from the Shadows. Jostina must be in dim light or darkness to use this action. She attacks with her crossbow. If she is hidden this attack does not reveal her position.

Dancing Daggers. Jostina moves up to her speed without provoking opportunity attacks and attacks with her dagger at any part of that move. That attack can't apply sneak attack.

Sneak. Jostina moves up to her speed and hides (in any order).

Royal Physician

The royal physicians, loyal servants of Queen Illosa and hailing from her former kingdom of Arabasti, are expert medics as skilled at harm as healing. Clad in eerie birdlike masks and robes, their presence strikes fear across Covrada—few who are taken by them for “treatment” ever return. Their reputation has become as chilling as the blood veil itself.

ROYAL PHYSICIAN

Medium humanoid, lawful evil

Armor Class 14 (garb)

Hit Points 27 (5d8 +5)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	10 (0)

Saving Throws Con +3

Skills Medicine +5, Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Proficiency +2

Euthanasia. When the royal physician hits a dying creature with a melee weapon attack, the creature must succeed a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or die.

Protective Mask. The royal physician has advantage on any kind of saving throws against gaseous effects, such as the Stinking Cloud spell or Choking Dust.

Sneak Attack (1/turn). The royal physician deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when they hit a target with a weapon attack and have advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 ft. of an ally of the royal physician that isn't incapacitated and the royal physician doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Surgical Tool. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

Injection. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) poison damage and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. At the end of each of the poisoned target's turns, it must repeat the save, taking 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failed save or ending the condition on itself on a success. If the poison damage reduces a creature to 0 hit points, the creature is stable but poisoned for 1 hour (it no longer makes saving throws at the end of its turn), even after regaining hit points, and is unconscious while poisoned in this way.

Restorative Measure (Recharge 5-6). A creature within 5 ft. of the Royal Physician regains 13 (3d6+3) hit points and is no longer poisoned.

Gray Maidens

The Gray Maidens are the renowned knightly order of Arabasti. After their homeland was conquered and absorbed into the Kingdom of Bolatine, they were forced to swear loyalty to the a new throne. Now, with their former queen ascended as Queen of Bolatine, they serve her once more with unwavering loyalty. Fiercely devoted and highly trained, the Gray Maidens are her most formidable soldiers, executing her will without hesitation or doubt.

GRAY MAIDEN

Medium Humanoid (Human), lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (shield + plate)

Hit Points 52 (8d8 +16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	11 (0)	11 (0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +5, Wis +2

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Proficiency +2

Ballistic Shield. The gray maiden's shield is designed to allow her to use it while wielding her greatbow.

Empowered Strike. The first time on her turn when the maiden hits with a weapon attack, the attack deals an additional 9 (2d8) damage.

Steadfast. The maiden has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened..

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The maiden makes two melee weapon attacks.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8+4) slashing damage.

Greatbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 120/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Parry & Strike. The maiden adds 2 to her AC against one melee attack that would hit her. To do so, the maiden must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon. If this causes the attack to miss the maiden can make a melee weapon attack against the triggering creature as part of the same reaction.

DOCTOR DUARTE

Medium humanoid, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 77 (14d8+14)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Wis +6, Cha +4

Skills Medicine +8, Perception +5, Sleight of hand +6, Stealth +6

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Halfling, Infernal

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Proficiency +3

Sneak Attack (1/turn). Duarte deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when he hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 ft. of an ally of Duarte that isn't incapacitated and Duarte doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Surgical Rapier. Duarte wields the Surgical Rapier. Whenever he strikes a creature with an attack that has advantage he can choose one of the following:

- **Hamstring:** The creature's speed is halved.
- **Tendon:** The creature drops what it is holding in one of its hands and is unable to hold anything in that hand.
- **Vocal Cord:** The creature is unable to speak and can't use vocal components
- **Artery:** The creature takes 7 (2d6) necrotic damage at the beginning of each of its turns.

Magic Items:

Sadistic Crossbow

Weapon (Light-, Heavy-, or Hand Crossbow), Uncommon

A creature hit with this weapon is wounded for one minute or until it regains any amount of hit points. A wounded creature suffers 3 (1d6) necrotic damage at the beginning on each of its turn. On the end of each turn the wounded creature makes a DC Constitution saving throw, ending the effect on a success. The DC is equal to 8 + your Strength or Dexterity modifier (whichever was used for the attack) + your proficiency bonus.

- **Optical Nerve:** The creature has disadvantage on attack rolls unless it relies on another sense than sight.

The creature makes a DC 14 Constitution saving throw against this effect at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success, or until it regains any amount of hit points.

ACTIONS

Surgical Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 +3) piercing damage.

Crippling Strike. Duarte makes a single melee weapon attack against a creature. If the hit would trigger his **Sneak Attack** trait, he deals no additional damage. Instead the creature must succeed a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of Duarte's next turn (**Surgical Rapier** can still apply).

Plague Bomb (Recharge 5-6). Duarte throws a bomb that detonates in a 10-foot radius centered on a spot within 60 ft. of him. The bomb creates a virulent cloud that remains until the end of Duarte's next turn. A creature that begins its turn in the area or enters it for the first time during its turn must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save a creature takes 22 (5d8) poison damage and is poisoned until the beginning of its next turn.

BONUS ACTION

Cunning Action. Duarte dashes, disengages, or hides.

REACTIONS

Uncanny Dodge. When Duarte is hit with an attack from a creature he can see, he reduces the damage of the attack by half.

Surgical Weapon

Weapon (any finesse weapon), Rare (requires attunement by a Rogue with proficiency in Medicine)

When you wield this weapon you gain access to additional options for your cunning strike, forcing a Constitution saving throw each to avoid its effect:

Artery (Cost: 2d6). The creature takes 7 (2d6) necrotic damage at the beginning of each of its turns.

Hamstring (Cost: 2d6). The creature's speed is halved and it can't dash.

Optical Nerve (Cost: 2d6). The creature has disadvantage on attack rolls unless it relies on another sense than sight and has disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks.

Tendon (Cost: 3d6). The creature drops what it is holding in one of its hands and is unable to hold anything in that hand. Additionally it has disadvantage on Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) checks.

Vocal Cord (Cost: 2d6). The creature is unable to speak and can't use vocal components for spells.

The affected creature repeats the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. The effect also ends if the creature regains any amount of hit points.

The Dark Temple

After unveiling the hospice of mercies' sinister secret as a front to further the blooveil's spread, the group found that the clinical halls hold darker secrets still. Hidden underneath an unassuming elevator shaft, modern masonry merged with ancient architecture. A path to one of the cities many draconic ruins was revealed. These forgotten halls once served as a smugglers' refuge have become the heart of the Cult of Ragnaxxa. Decades ago, Ragnaxxa's faithful were drawn by the palpable presence of a malevolent force hidden away in the ruin's shadows. Over time, these ruins were reshaped into a temple and cradle for the slumbering horror which the worshippers believed to be one of Ragnaxxa's very own progeny.

The cult's machinations flourished in secrecy, and when approached by Queen Illosa for her own schemes, they readily agreed under the promise of human suffering. Thus they offered the warehouse above the temple as the physician's 'house of healing' and many seeking treatment were funneled into the depths, where their agony served both as fuel for the cult's rituals and the perfect test subjects for the bloodveil. It was in that temple beneath the hospice, where Thecia, Duarte, and the ancient alchemist Artorius combined their twisted expertise, weaving together forbidden sciences and dark magic to birth the bloodveil plague and now seek to perfect it.

Ramon Vargas. Once the feared master of the Dead Warrens, Ramon Vargas is a necromancer whose obsession with death knows no limits. Lured by promises of deeper necromantic knowledge, Ramon abandoned his old domain in favor of the Temple of Ragnaxxa. However, his alliance is one of convenience rather than faith. For Ramon's twisted mind, the spread of bloodveil is both an experiment and a means to indulge his cruel fascinations. As the heroes invade the temple, he recognizes them as the meddling would-be-heroes who not only took down his father, but also disrupted the sanctity of his laboratory deep within the Dead Warrens. Though he is not particularly bitter over these losses, Ramon relishes the opportunity to inflict suffering under the guise of petty revenge. His alliance with the cult is fleeting—his only loyalty lies only with his own sick desires and the endless secrets of the grave.

Thecia, Vestal of the Eternal Night. Thecia stands as the newly established figurehead of the local cult, renowned across kingdoms for her mastery of engineered plagues. Personally invited to Covrada by Queen Illosa, Thecia's purpose was not only to seize control of the cult, but also to collaborate in the queen's dark ambitions. Yet Thecia is driven by a higher calling; political intrigue means little to her compared to the rumored presence of one of Ragnaxxa's slumbering spawn beneath the city. For Thecia, this is a sign of divine purpose. With her greatest plague yet unleashed upon Covrada, she is certain that the suffering above will be enough to rouse the ancient child from its sleep.

RAGNAXXA CULTIST

Medium humanoid, neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (cult garbs)

Hit Points 44 (8d8 +8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (0)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Wis +4

Skills History +2, Religion +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Proficiency +2

Humanities' Bane (1/day). When the Ragnaxxa Cultists casts a spell and forces a humanoid to make a saving throw, they can reduce the saving throw by 3 (1d6).

Slaughter Humanoid. Once per turn when the Ragnaxxa cultist hits a creature with a melee weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, they deal an additional 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

ACTIONS

Sacrificial Blade. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6+2) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) necrotic damage.

Kill Light. *Cantrip Conjunction Spell, Components:* V, S. *Effect:* The Ragnaxxa Cultist targets one non-magical light source within 60 ft. of themself and snuffs it out. Alternatively the Cultist can target an active *Light* spell and must succeed a Wisdom check to end the spell. The DC is equal to the spellcaster's spellcasting DC.

Spellcasting. The cultist casts one of the following spells, using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks):

At Will: *Kill Light, Thaumaturgy*

2/day: *Command*

1/day (Each): *Proliferate Pain, Hold Person*

BONUS ACTION

Proliferate Pain. *2nd Level Necromancy Spell, Components:* V, S. *Effect:* A humanoid within 60 feet of the Cultist that is missing hit points must make a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save the creature takes 9 (2d6+2) necrotic damage and half as much on a successful one.

Poison:

Nightbane

Magical Injury Poison, Price 800 gp per Dose

Effect: A humanoid subjected to this poison must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save the humanoid takes 27 (6d8) necrotic damage and becomes debilitated for 24 hours. A debilitated creature reduces any ability check, attack roll, or saving throw, it makes by 1d6. On a successful save a creature takes 13 (3d8) necrotic damage and suffers no additional effects.

RAMON VARGAS

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (mage armor)

Hit Points 72 (11d8+22) + 15 temporary hit points

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	11 (0)

Saving Throws Con +5, Int +7, Wis +4

Skills Arcana+7, History+7, Medicine+7, Nature+7, Perception+4

Damage Resistances necrotic

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Proficiency +3

Legendary Resistance (1/day). When Ramon would fail a saving throw and is above half of his maximum health, he can expend a Legendary Action to succeed instead.

Self-Experimentation. Ramon has 15 temporary hit points, resistance to necrotic damage, and darkvision (all included).

ACTIONS

Necropsy. *Melee Spell* Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 18 (4d8) necrotic damage and if the target is undead it has disadvantage on attack rolls until the end of Ramon's next turn. The necrotic damage of this spell ignores necrotic resistance.

Chill Touch. *Ranged Spell* Attack: +7 to hit, range 120 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (3d8) necrotic damage and the target can't regain hit points until the start of Ramon's next turn.

Vampiric Touch (If Cast). *Melee Spell* Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) necrotic damage and Ramon regains hit points equal to half the necrotic damage dealt.

Spellcasting. Ramon casts one of the following spells, using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks):

At Will: *Chill Touch*, *Dancing Lights*, *Necropsy*

4/day: *Animate Dead*, *Vampiric Touch*, *Web*

1/day (Each): *Dimension Door*, *Phantasmal Killer*, *Stinking Cloud*

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Legendary Action Uses: 2. Immediately after another creature's turn, Ramon Vargas can expend a use to take one of the following actions. Ramon regains all expended uses at the start of each of his turns.

Skulk. Ramon moves up to half of his speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Chill Touch (2 Actions). Ramon casts *Chill Touch*.

Battle Magic (2 Actions). Ramon attacks with *Necropsy* or, if concentrating on the spell, *Vampiric Touch*.

Villainous Escape (2 Actions, 1/day). If Ramon is below half of his maximum hit points, he casts *Dimension Door* if possible.

BLOO II

Small Construct, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 78 (12d6+48)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)

Skills Perception +4

Damage Immunities lightning, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with adamantite weapons

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Proficiency +3

Aversion to Fire. If Bloo takes fire damage, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

Berserk. Whenever Bloo starts its turn with 30 hit points or fewer, roll a d6. On a 6, Bloo goes berserk. On each of its turns while berserk, Bloo attacks the nearest creature it can see. If no creature is near enough to move to and attack, Bloo attacks an object, with preference for an object smaller than itself. Once

the Bloo berserk, it continues to do so until it is destroyed or regains all its hit points. Ramon Vargas, if within 60 feet of Bloo golem, can use an action to calm Bloo. Bloo must be able to hear Ramon to be calmed. If Bloo takes damage while still at 30 hit points or fewer, it might go berserk again.

Immutable Form. The golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Lightning Absorption. Whenever Bloo is subjected to lightning damage, it takes no damage and instead regains a number of hit points equal to the lightning damage dealt.

Magic Infused Body. Bloo's attacks are magical and it has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Grab and Shake. Bloo has advantage on bite attacks against a creature he has grappled. If Bloo hits a creature it has grappled with a bite attack, it must succeed a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

ACTIONS

Frenzied Bites. Bloo makes one bite attack, if the attack hits it can grapple the target (escape DC 14), or make another bite attack against the same target.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (3d6+4) piercing damage.

Ramos Artorius, Alchemist. Once a brilliant and ambitious alchemist, Artorius spent decades wandering the continent, apprenticing under masters in pursuit of alchemy's elusive pinnacle. Desperate to extend his own life, he transformed himself into a faux-vampire. The ritual was flawed, cursing him with a wretched, half-living state, yet granting him centuries to continue his research. In search of the true source of vampirism, he journeyed south, only

to be captured by the Red Scorpions, a ruthless assassin cult. As their unwilling slave, Artorius created poisons of unmatched potency. Ultimately, the Red Scorpions offered his talents to Queen Illosa as part of their alliance. Drawing on his twisted expertise, Artorius helped engineer the bloodveil—a vampiric plague designed to kill rather than transform. In return for this final act, he was promised his freedom, a bargain he accepts with deep resentment.

THECIA VESTAL OF THE ETERNAL NIGHT

Medium humanoid (Dragonborn), neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (ornate armor)

Hit Points 127 (15d8+60)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +7, Wis +6, Cha +5

Skills Insight +6, Perception +6, Religion +4

Damage Resistances necrotic, poison

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Draconic, Infernal

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Proficiency +3

Devil's Sight. Thecia's darkvision is not impeded by magical darkness.

Equipment. Thecia wields a Ragnaxxian Trident.

Hateful Presence. Each other humanoid within 10 feet of Thecia subtracts 1d4 from any saving throw it makes.

Legendary Resistance (1/day). When Thecia would fail a saving throw and is above half of her maximum health, she can expend a Legendary Action to succeed instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Thecia makes two attacks, using Ragnaxxian Trident or Deathly Ray in any combination. She can replace one of her attacks with her Draconic Breath if available.

Ragnaxxian Trident. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 +4) piercing damage plus 11 (2d10) necrotic damage. The target can't regain hit points until the end of its next turn.

Deathly Ray. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (4d10) necrotic damage.

Magic Items:

Ragnaxxian Trident

Weapon (Trident), Rare (requires attunement)

This trident deals an additional dice of its damage as necrotic damage and can use Wisdom or Charisma in place of Strength for any attacks you make with this weapon. Additionally it can be used as a holy symbol of Ragnaxxa to cast divine spells, but if done so, any radiant damage inflicted by spells becomes necrotic instead. Any humanoid that takes damage from this weapon can't regain hit points until the end of its next turn.

Instead of throwing this weapon, you can fire a bolt of darkness at a creature within 60 ft. of yourself, dealing 2d8 plus your Strength, Wisdom, or Charisma modifier necrotic damage.

Draconic Breath (Recharge 5-6). Thecia breathes unholy miasma either in a 15-foot Cone or in a 30-foot Line. Each creature in the area must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 15 (3d10) necrotic damage on a failed save and half as much on a successful one.

Spellcasting. Thecia casts one of the following spells, using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks):

At Will: *Speak with Dead*, *Thaumaturgy*

1/day (each): *Command 4th Level*, *Contagion*, *Darkness*

Contagion. Thecia touches a creature within 5 feet of herself. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 45 (10d8) Necrotic damage and gains the Poisoned condition. When the creature is poisoned, Thecia can choose one of the target's abilities. While Poisoned, the target has Disadvantage on saving throws made with the chosen ability.

The target must repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns until it gets three successes or failures. If the target succeeds on three of these saves, the spell ends on the target. If the target fails three of the saves, the spell lasts for 7 days on it.

Whenever the Poisoned target receives an effect that would end the Poisoned condition, the target must succeed on a Constitution saving throw, or the Poisoned condition doesn't end on it.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Legendary Action Uses: 2. Immediately after another creature's turn, Thecia can expend a use to take one of the following actions. Jostina regains all expended uses at the start of each of its turns.

Attack. Thecia makes a Ragnaxxian Trident or Deathly Ray attack.

Invoke Malaise. A creature within 5 ft. of Thecia who inflicted damage to her since the end of her turn must succeed a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 9 (2d8) poison damage and be poisoned until the end of Thecia's next turn. A creature poisoned this way has disadvantage on Constitution saving throws.

Nocturne Wings. Each creature within 5 ft. of Thecia must succeed a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or take 7 (2d6) psychic damage. She then teleports up to 30 feet to a location within dim light or darkness.

Other Evil Cults?

In the original adventure path "Curse of the Crimson Throne," the temple beneath the hospice was dedicated to a deity of undeath and vampirism. Since my campaign is set in a world shaped by the Forgotten Foes, the Ancient Dragon Gods, and the Unbound Monsters, I've adapted the temple, its objectives, and its denizens to better fit my setting. You are, of course, encouraged to customize these elements to suit your own world. Of the characters featured here, only Thecia would require replacement in such a case, though her statblock can easily be repurposed for any vile cult leader or worshipper of evil you wish to place in command of the temple.

If you're interested in learning more about the Ancient Dragon Deity Ragnaxxa, her cult, and her brood, you can find additional details in the supplement "[Old Dragon Gods - Ragnaxxa the Eternal Night.](#)" also available on my Patreon.

The Would-Be Emperor

With plenty of opportunity presenting itself during the crisis, many forces made their move. The evil Queen wasted no time to cut off the much loathed Old City from the rest of the capital, using the veil of concern over supposed last pockets of sickness to place it under strict quarantine. The already struggling Old City quickly fell into chaos and lawlessness when left to its own devices. In the middle of all this chaos, an unlikely figure rose to power: Pall Snoek, self proclaimed “Emperor” and new lord of Old City.

The Emperor’s Thugs. Fear and desperation drove these men to pledge themselves to the emerging emperor, whom they follow zealously. There is little to distinguish them from ordinary criminals; they often harass and intimidate the people of Old City, demanding tribute for the Emperor’s so-called protection and goodwill. Any voices raised against His Eminence are swiftly and violently silenced.

Pall Snoek. Pall Snoek—blessed be his name—rose from humble beginnings as a struggling actor, barely scraping by with his assistant Chope in low-budget productions. When the kingdom’s crisis struck and even his few remaining audiences vanished, Pall teetered on the brink of despair—until a sudden magical awakening revealed a wellspring of raw power he took as divine providence. Emboldened, Pall used dramatic displays of magic to rally ruffians during the Old City’s collapse, and with each new follower, his delusions of grandeur only grew. He may know little of law or governance, but

EMPEROR’S THUG

Medium humanoid, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (Armor & Shield)

Hit Points 26 (4d8 + 8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (0)	14 (+2)	10 (0)	9 (-1)	9 (-1)

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Proficiency +2

Mob Attack. The Thug deals an additional 7 (2d6) damage against targets within 5 feet of another ally of the Thug that is not incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Battle Axe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8+2) slashing damage.

Bash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4+2) bludgeoning damage and the target must succeed a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of the Thug’s next turn. For each additional time a creature must make a saving throw against a Thug’s bash before the beginning of its turn, the DC is increased by 1.

The Would-Be Emperor

if there’s one thing Pall truly understands, it’s how to command a stage—and now, the entire Old City is his audience.

Le Chope. Le Chope is Pall Snoek’s silent shadow, a mute halfling woman fiercely loyal to her mentor. Once a stagehand, she now entered centerstage as the emperor’s fearsome executioner, using a stolen magical belt to play her role expertly. Though she speaks no words, her devotion and prowess are loud enough, ensuring Pall’s will is carried out without question. Those who oppose him fall to her blade.

PALL SNOEK, THE ‘EMPEROR’

Medium humanoid (Human), neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (mage armor)

Hit Points 99 (18d8+18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (0)	12 (+1)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +4, Cha +7

Skills Acrobatics +6, Deception +7, Insight +4, Perception +4, Performance +7, Sleight of Hand +6

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Dwarven, Elvish, Halfling

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Proficiency +3

Arcane Aura Overflowing. Whenever Pall casts a spell with **Uncontrolled Casting** he gains 20 temporary hit points. As long as he has those temporary hit points he is resistant to force damage.

Power Overwhelming. Pall Snoek has no limitations of casting non-cantrip spells in a single turn.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Pall makes three Arcane Burst attacks.

Arcane Burst. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft./range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d8 +4) force damage.

Spellcasting. Pall casts one of the following spells, using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks):

At Will: *Detect Magic*, *Light*, *Mage Armor*, *Minor Illusion*, *Prestidigitation*

1/day (each): *Confusion* (but in a 20 ft. Sphere within 100 ft.), *Fireball* (level 4), *Vitriolic Sphere*, *Cone of Cold* (but in a 20 ft. Sphere within 100 ft.).

Uncontrolled Casting (Recharge 5-6). Pall casts one of his 1/day spells but has to roll randomly (use a 1d4) which spell he casts. If he rolls *Confusion* he casts the spell as normal but it lasts until the end of his next turn and does not need concentration.

BONUS ACTIONS

Misty Step (3/Day). Pall casts *Misty Step*, using the same spellcasting ability as Spellcasting.

REACTIONS

Aura Burn.

Trigger: A creature makes an attack roll against Pall.

Effect: Pall increases his AC by 4 against the triggering attack. If the triggering attack was a melee weapon attack and misses, Pall can make a melee Arcane Burst attack against the triggering creature as part of the same reaction.

LE CHOPE

Medium humanoid (Halfling), lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (Armor & Shield)

Hit Points 26 (4d8 +8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	13 (+1)	9 (-1)

Skills Intimidation +5

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Halfling, but can't talk

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Proficiency +3

Head Hunter. The first time in a turn Le Chope deals damage to a creature with an melee weapon attack made with advantage, the attack deals an additional 1d6 damage of the same type.

Additionally, Le Chope scores critical hits when she scores a roll of 18 or higher when the attack roll has advantage.

Blood Pig (Social Game)

Blood Pig is a chaotic and violent team sport, designed by the derranged 'Emperor' Pall Snoek. While the game has written rules, they are intentionally confusing and may change at the whim of its creator

Set Up. Blood Pig is played in a rectangular area surrounded by walls and split into 2 team zones. Pall's Palace will feature a designated arena to host its frequent games of Blood Pig. Each team zone has a "pit" that holds a starving wolverine (or similar carnivore) and a cage. Each "pit" is located in a corner at the far end of each team's zone, serving as the goal, while each cage is positioned at the center of the same end of the zone. Each team consists of up to 8 players, if a team can't fill it's roster, too bad! Each team starts in their own zones but must be at least 5 feet away from the other team's zone. A coin flip (or Pall's whim) will decide which team starts with a piglet which then will be placed in their cage. Before the match begins, referees ensure all players have relinquished weapons and spellcasting tools. When all is ready, the host loudly declares the rules and signals the start of the game.

Goal. The two teams compete to be the first to score 5 points. Points are scored by capturing a live piglet and deliver it into the opposing team's pit (where it will die a swift, but gruesome and noisy death).

Rules. When the game starts, each participant rolls for initiative as usual and the game follows the general combat rules, as unarmed strikes, grappling, or shoving are all allowed (and encouraged!). When a player is incapacitated or dies, the game is not paused and no replacements are allowed.

Catching and handling a piglet will prove difficult—they will squirm, run, and might be covered in lard. A player can interact with a piglet in the following ways:

- **Grab the Piggy.** Picking up a piglet from the cage or a piglet that is unconscious only requires an action. Picking up a live and not incapacitated piglet from the field requires a successful unarmed strike against an AC of 12.
- **Wrangle the Piggy.** When carrying a live and conscious pig, a player must roll on the Squirring Pig table to see how the pig reacts to being carried. A player that takes damage while carrying a conscious pig must make a Dexterity saving throw (DC is equal

Belt of Giant Strength. Le Chope wears a Belt of Giant Strength (21 Strength). Her base Strength without it is 13.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Le Chope makes 2 weapon attacks. When she hits a creature with her Greataxe she can make a Cleave attack against another creature within 5 ft. of the original target as part of the same attack.

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d12+5) slashing damage.

Cleave. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d12) slashing damage.

Vise la tête. Le Chope makes a single weapon attack targeting a humanoid. The attack roll has advantage. When she hits with the attack she can make a Cleave attack, also with advantage, against another creature within 5 ft. of the original target.

to 8 + 1 per point of damage taken). A piglet not carried by anyone will move at initiative count 0 each round, running 30 feet into a random direction, but will not cause it to run into a pit.

- **Pass the Piggy.** If within 5 feet of another player, the pig can be passed as an action. Throwing a pig requires an action to make a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check targeting a point or another Player. The DC is increased by increments of 2 for each 10 feet the pig is thrown past initial 10 feet. Catching a thrown pig requires a successful DC 12 Strength or Dexterity check. On a failure the pig either misses its mark and lands somewhere along the trajectory or is dropped by the catcher respectively.
- **Snatch the Piggy.** As an action a player can attempt to grab a pig out of another player's hands as an action. Both players make a competing check, using either Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Strength (Athletics). If the attacker beats the defender, they carry the piglet now but must roll on the Squirring Pig table immediately.
A player may also attempt to snatch a thrown piglet out of the air. If a thrown piglet passes through or over an area the player occupies they can use a reaction to make an unarmed strike with disadvantage, trying to beat the rolled Strength (Athletics) check made by the throwing player. On a success the player snatched the thrown piggy out of the air.
- **Plunge the Piggy.** A piglet can be dropped into the pit as an action. Any player that starts their turn within 5 feet of a pit takes 1d6 slashing damage.
- **The Big No, Nos.** When a team's player is caught using a weapon or spell, the enemy team is awarded one point. Tossing a pig out of bounds will cause the offending player to be sent to retrieve the loose pig and the opposing team is awarded a point. Arguing with the host's rules will cause a player to be sent of the field for the remainder of the game (and later tossed in the pit). A team attacking or harming a wolverine (or whatever is in the pit) will result in immediate forfeit.

End. The game ends as soon as one team scores 5 points, or in the unlikely event the host runs out of piglets upon which the leading team is declared winner (in case of a tie Pall will declare the winner on a whim).

Arkora Conspiracy

The Arkora family uses the city's turmoil to make its move. After establishing itself as one of the last forces of order in the Old City, House Arkora secures a key political figure — the missing Seneshall, who holds the truth behind the evil queen's sudden rise.

After dealing with Pall Snoek, the group learns that the Arkora family is holding the missing Seneshall. They set out to investigate its opulent manse. The party explores Arkora Palace, searching for clues about the Seneshall's whereabouts without alerting its masters.

Jade Elephant. Standing proudly at display in the House Arkora's fantastical garden is a jade elephant of artistic excellence. This beautiful statue serves as more as a display piece, it is the first guardian to the dungeons below the Arkora Palace. It comes to life the moment any foul intruder attempts to breach the lower levels, ensuring that only smears of the unwanted guests remain for the staff to clean up.

Strangling Carpet. An opulent carpet stretches across one of the Arkora's spacious rooms. Certainly no harm will come from stepping on it...

STRANGLING CARPET

Huge Construct, Unaligned

Armor Class 15
Hit Points 105 (14d12 +14)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	1 (-5)	5 (-3)	1 (-5)

Skills Perception +1
Immunities Poison, Psychic; Charmed, Deafened, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned
Senses Blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP) **Proficiency** +3

A Bag of Fools. The strangling carpet can grapple up to 4 Medium or smaller creatures at a time.

Damage Transfer. While it is grappling at least one creature, the carpet takes only half the damage dealt to it, and a random creature grappled by the carpet takes the other half.

False Appearance. As long as the strangling carpet remains motionless it is indistinguishable from a common huge carpet and other creatures can move through its space without penalty to their speed.

ACTIONS

From Under Your Feet. The strangling carpet makes a Smother attack against every creature in its space.

Smother. *Melee Attack Roll:* +7, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 18 (4d6 + 4) Bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, the carpet can give it the Grappled condition (escape DC 14) instead of dealing damage. Until the grapple ends, the target has the Blinded and Restrained conditions, is suffocating, and takes 18 (4d6 + 4) Bludgeoning damage at the start of each of its turns. The carpet can't use this action if it has at least one creature grappled.

ARKORA HOUSE GUARD

Medium Humanoid (Human), Lawful Neutral

Armor Class 18 (Armor & Shield)
Hit Points 39 (6d8 +12)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	10 (0)	12 (+1)	11 (0)

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +3
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages Common
Challenge 2 (450 XP) **Proficiency** +2

Seize the Intruder! The guard has advantage on Opportunity Attacks during their first round of combat. Additionally, whenever the guard scores a hit against a creature with an Opportunity Attack, they can choose give the target the grappled condition instead of dealing damage (escape DC 13).

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The guard makes two attacks.

Curved Blade. *Melee Attack Roll:* +5, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 8 (2d4+3) Slashing damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5, reach 5 ft./range 30/120 ft. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) Piercing damage.

JADE ELEPHANT

Huge Construct, Unaligned

Armor Class 16
Hit Points 94 (9d12 +36)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	9 (-1)	18 (+4)	3 (-4)	11 (0)	6 (-2)

Immunities Poison, Psychic; Charmed, Deafened, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Understands Common
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP) **Proficiency** +3

Immutable Form. The jade elephant can't shape-shift.

Lethargic Vapors. *Wisdom Saving Throw:* DC 13, any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of the jade elephant. *Failure:* The target has the Poisoned condition until the start of its next turn. A poisoned creature has its Speed halved and can't use Bonus Actions or Reactions.

Magic Resistance. The jade elephant has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The elephant makes two Gore attacks.

Gore. *Melee Attack Roll:* +9, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 17 (2d10+6) Piercing damage. If the target is a Huge or smaller creature and the elephant moved 20+ feet straight toward it immediately before the hit, the target has the Prone condition.

BONUS ACTIONS

Trample. *Dexterity Saving Throw:* DC 17, one creature within 5 ft. that has the Prone condition. *Failure:* 19 (2d12+6) Bludgeoning damage. *Success:* Half damage.

DM Tuz Table Scraps: Crimson Throne

Majordomo Carnochan. Majordomo Carnochan is most often seen as a mild, elderly gentleman, wreathed in fragrant pipe smoke and armed with impeccable manners. Few suspect that beneath the fine clothes and courtesy lurks a toporpillar—a patient, calculating fey bound to House Arkora. Among the family's greatest treasures is its archive of fey true names, a collection that compels otherwise capricious fey into service. Carnochan's was one of them, yet he bears his yolk with curious pride.

MAJORDOMO CARNOCHAN

Large Fey, True Neutral

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 123 (13d10+52)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	7 (-2)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +4, Wis +6

Skills Insight +6, Perception +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Sylvan

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Proficiency +3

Glamor. Carnochan appears as a Medium size old human male until he takes damage or makes an attack.

Magic Resistance. Carnochan has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Legendary Resistance (1/day). When Carnochan would fail a saving throw, he can succeed instead but his Vapors of Legacy trait can't be used until the end of his next turn.

Vapors of Lethargy. *Wisdom Saving Throw:* DC 15, any creature of Carnochan that starts its turn within 20 feet of Carnochan. *Failure:* The creature becomes sluggish until the end of its next turn. A sluggish creature has disadvantage on attack rolls, can't use Reactions, and its Speed is halved.

When the creature is sluggish when failing the saving throw, it gains the Charmed condition for as long as it is sluggish. A charmed creature becomes unwilling to fight or perform hostile and wants to remain in the vapor to continue inhaling it, willingly failing its Wisdom Saving throws against it. The charmed

Topor Pipe

Wondrous Item, Rare (Requires Attunement)

As an Action, you can light the pipe and begin to smoke it (and put it out with another). The pipe can remain burning until you put it out. As long as the pipe is burning you have advantage on Persuasion checks to persuade Humanoids and Fey to not attack you.

The Pipe has a total of 6 charges. As an Action, or as part of the same Action when you light the pipe, you can expend 2 charges to cast the *Calm Emotions* spell centered in a 20 ft. radius on yourself (you may choose whether or not you are affected). As an Action, when you smoke the pipe, you can expend 3 charges and exhale a 30 ft. cone of debilitating smoke. Each creature in the area is afflicted by the *Slow* spell, but you don't need to concentrate on the spell. The pipe regains 2+1d4

Years of service have transformed obligation into loyalty. Carnochan stands at the heart of Arkora Palace's defenses, orchestrating guards with authority and laying subtle magical wards to secure what the guards may miss. Nothing within the manse escapes his notice for long; a misplaced footstep or whispered intrigue is enough to rouse his attention. Polite, unhurried, and ever watchful, the Majordomo's presence felt in the entirety of Arkora Palace.

condition on the creature ends early if it takes any amount of damage or ends its turn outside of the vapor's area of effect.

A creature immune to the Charmed condition is unaffected.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Carnochan makes one attack and uses his Puff action.

Dream's End (Cane Blade). *Melee Attack Roll:* +8, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 15 (2d8+6) Slashing damage. If the target has the Charmed condition, the condition ends and the creature takes an additional 18 (4d8) psychic damage.

Slam. *Melee Attack Roll:* +8, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 13 (2d6+6) Bludgeoning damage.

Puff. *Constitution Saving Throw:* DC 15, a creature within 10 ft. of Carnochan. *Failure:* The creature takes 14 (4d6) poison damage and has disadvantage on Wisdom saving throws until the end of Carnochan's next turn.

Exhale (Recharge 5-6). *Wisdom Saving Throw:* DC 15, each creature in a 60 ft. cone. *Failure:* The creature becomes sluggish (see Vapors of Lethargy). If the creature is already sluggish it gains the Charmed condition as if effected by the **Vapors of Lethargy**.

Spellcasting. Carnochan casts one of the following spells, using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks):

At Will: *Detect Magic, Sending, Message, Mage Hand, Unseen Servant*

2/day (Each): *Alarm, Arcane Lock, Sending*

1/day (Each): *Dispel Magic, Hypnotic Pattern, Hold Person, Glyph of Warding (always as a Hold Person Spell Glyph), Locate Creature*

charges at the beginning of each day. If you are addicted to it and smoked it within the past 12 hours, it regains all charges at the dawn of the day instead.

The DC of this magic item's effects is 13.

Addiction. The fey smoke of the Topor Pipe is highly addictive. Whenever you smoke the pipe, you must succeed a Wisdom saving throw or become addicted. Once addicted, you are overcome with a compulsive need to smoke the pipe. Failing to smoke the pipe for 12 hours causes you to gain a level of Exhaustion (to a maximum of 4) which can only be recovered if you smoked the pipe within the past 12 hours. Additionally, as long as you are addicted to the Topor Pipe, you are immune to being charmed or frightened, but suffer a -10 feet penalty to your Speed and any Reaction you take has a 50% chance of failing due to your slowed reflexes.

Arkora Labyrinth

Underneath the Arkora Palace lies the Arkora Labyrinth, a complex, shifting dungeon constructed by the family during its golden era. Designed as an elaborate obstacle course, the labyrinth consists of numerous interconnected chambers and corridors filled with dangerous obstacles and one powerful guardian, the most ancient of Arkora's fey servants.

Bitterstrike. Bitterstrike and his gang of darklings guard the twisting descent that leads to the Labyrinth. Bound to the Arkora family through the power of their archive of true names, Bitterstrike is the most resentful among the fey forced into service. The indignity of his compelled servitude has left him seething with frustration, which he eagerly unleashes on any intruders who dare to approach the labyrinth.

Enlightened Krasny. Enlightened Krasny, a heretic who venerates pain, is the Arkora's jailor and torturemaster. Inflicting pain is spiritual generosity to Krasny; only through suffering can one appreciate life's pleasures after all. How a unique and zealous figure such as this joined the family is unknown, but her loyalty and dedication are clear.

Sorell the Mazebound. Sorell the Mazebound is an ancient fey and the most powerful such being in the Arkona's service. Once the guardian of a labyrinth deep within the Hedge, Sorell was forcibly bound to the family by Glorio Arkona I after a period of fierce resistance. Now, Sorell serves as master of the Labyrinth, having mastered its shifting halls and secrets. Few can hope to challenge Sorell within their domain, where every twist and trap works to their advantage.

BITTERSTRIKE DARKLING KILLER

Medium Fey, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 18 (16 if in bright light)

Hit Points 91 (14d8+28)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Wis +5, Cha +6

Skills Acrobatics +8, Deception +6, Perception +5, Stealth +11

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Elvish, Sylvan

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Proficiency +3

Cowl of Shadows. Bitterstrike has a +2 bonus to his AC when in dim light or darkness.

Death Burn. When Bitterstrike dies, magical light flashes out from it in a 10-foot radius as its body and possessions, other than metal or magic objects, burn to ash. Any creature in that area must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 7 (2d6) radiant damage and is blinded until the end of its next turn. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't blinded.

Devil Sight. Bitterstrike can see through magical darkness.

HOBBLING HOOK-CLAWED APPARATUS

Large Construct

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 78 (12d10 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)	13 (+2)	1 (-5)

Proficiency +3

Damage Resistances cold, acid, fire; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison, psychic

Damage Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 12

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Deep Embrace. The apparatus has advantage on melee weapon attacks against creatures it has grappled.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The apparatus makes a Hook Claws attack, if the attack misses it makes another attack against the same target.

Hook Claws. *Melee Attack Roll:* +9, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8+6) Slashing damage and the target must succeed a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or gains the Grappled condition (escape DC 16).

Hook-Claw Massacre. The apparatus makes three hook claws attacks against a creature it has grappled.

Legendary Resistance (1/day). When Bitterstrike would fail a saving throw, he can succeed but his Concentration on *Darkness* ends.

Master of Ambush. When Bitterstrike takes the Hide action, each other Darkling within 60 ft. of himself that takes the Hide action before the beginning of his next turn can take his Stealth check's result to determine if they successfully hide.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Bitterstrike makes two Shadow Blade attacks.

Shadow Blade. *Melee Attack Roll:* +8, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 *Hit:* 23 (4d8+5) Psychic damage. This attack always has advantage if the target is in dim light or darkness.

Darkness (Recharge 4-6). Bitterstrike casts the *Darkness*, spell requiring no spell components and using Charisma as the spellcasting ability.

BONUS ACTIONS

Dark Step. Bitterstrike teleports to an area within 30 ft. of himself that is in darkness. If this area is within the area of effect of his own *Darkness* spell the range of this action is unlimited as long as Bitterstrike is on the same plane of existence as his *Darkness*.

ENLIGHTENED KRASNY

Medium Humanoid (Dark Elf), Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 15 (Chain Shirt)

Hit Points 127 (17d8+51)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	9 (-1)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +2, Cha +7

Skills Arcana +4, Intimidation +7, Perception +4

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Elvish, Infernal

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Proficiency +3

Pained Bond. Whenever Krasny takes damage, the creature under Krasny's *Hex* takes 3 (1d6) necrotic damage.

Hex Link. Krasny's Hook Clawed Apparatus benefits from her *Hex* as well.

Legendary Resistance (1/day). When Enlightened Krasny would fail a saving throw, she can succeed but her Concentration on *Hex* ends.

SORELL THE MAZEBOUND

Large Fey, True Neutral

Armor Class 17

Hit Points 178 (21d10+63)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	18 (+4)	22 (+6)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Int +9, Wis +9, Cha +11

Skills Insight +14, Investigation +14, Perception +9

Damage Resistances Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened

Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages Common, Sylvan

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Proficiency +5

Break Mental Defenses. A creature charmed by Sorell has disadvantage on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws against his spells.

Magic Resistance. Sorell has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Legendary Resistance (1/day). When Sorell would fail a saving throw, they can spend a legendary action to succeed it instead.

Legendary Endurance. If Sorell fails a saving throw, they can choose to take 50 force damage which can't be reduced or negated to gain an additional use of their Legendary Resistance.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Krasny makes 2 attacks with her hooks. If both targets hit the same creature, she can cast *Hex* targeting the creature as part of the same action.

Vile Hook. *Melee Attack Roll:* +6, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 10 (2d6+3) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) necrotic damage.

Spellcasting. Krasny casts one of the following spells, using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks):

At Will: *Detect Magic*, *Hex*

3/day (total): *Hellish Rebuke* (at 3rd level), *Suggestion*

BONUS ACTIONS

Pained Command. A creature under the effect of Krasny's *Hex* spell must succeed a DC 15 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save it must move up to its speed in a direction of Krasny's choice.

REACTION

Hellish Rebuke (Level 3). Trigger: A creature deals damage to Krasny.

Effect: The creature makes a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. Failure. The creature takes 22 (4d10) Fire damage. Success. The creature takes half as much damage.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Sorell makes 3 attacks.

Staff. *Melee Attack Roll:* +11, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 15 (2d8+6) Bludgeoning damage plus 4 (1d8) Force damage.

Out of Sight... Sorell the Mazebound gains the Invisible condition until they uses an action other than commanding their *Mage Hand*. They can use this Action only if no creature is currently observing them.

Spellcasting. Sorell casts one of the following spells, using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks):

At Will: *Dissonant Whispers* (at 2nd level), *Mage Hand*, *Message*, *Minor Illusion*

3/day (total): *Dispel Magic*, *Dimension Door*, *Locate Object*, *See Invisibility*, *Suggestion*

BONUS ACTIONS

Flummocking Strike. A creature struck by Sorell during this turn must succeed a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed until the end of Sorell's next turn. A charmed creature is incapacitated.

Striding Steps. Sorell moves up to their speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Legendary Action Uses: 2. Immediately after another creature's turn, Sorell can expend a use to take one of the following actions. Sorell regains all expended uses at the start of each of their turns.

Strike. Sorell moves up to half of their speed without provoking opportunity attacks and attacks with their staff.

Enchant. Sorell casts an enchantment spell of 2nd level or lower. Once they uses this action, they can't do so again until the beginning of their next turn.

Finger Patriarch

Little did the group expect to find a garden of immaculate beauty hidden behind Sorell's throne. Though their mission was to locate the missing seneschal, they felt compelled to follow this mystery deeper. At the heart of this underground garden stood the Patriarch of House Arkora—Garvo Arkora I—a renowned figure of whom they had heard so much, long believed to have vanished after leaving his momentous mark upon the city. Yet whatever creature bore this man's famous name, nothing about him was human anymore.

Garvo Arkora V. Privileged to carry the inherited name of Garvo, he was the fourth spawn created by the Patriarch to serve as the new face of the House, as his predecessors had before him. It was he who had left subtle hints for the group, guiding them to explore the depths of Arkora Palace with one simple hope: that they would find his creator and put an end

to his long-lasting grip on the family. For without intervention, both he and his sister would ultimately face the same fate—to be consumed and reunited with the Patriarch once they had each served their purpose.

Merilya Arkora. One of two spawn who governed House Arkora, Merilya had been given few responsibilities, leaving her free to indulge in excessive frivolities—and, unknowingly, to spread the influence of Garvo I through every fleeting contact she made. Her loosened inhibition left her vulnerable to the defining compulsion of the Godhands: an insatiable drive to eliminate all rivals. Thus, she had always harbored a deep disdain for her brother Garvo V, and so she moved to sabotage his efforts to aid the group, unable to resist the pull of her creator's will for absolute obedience.



Garvo Arkora I
Artwork by William Liberto

FINGER SPAWN

Medium Abomination

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 148 (27d8+27)

Speed 30 ft., Fly 30 ft. (Hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Con +5, Wis +6, Cha +8

Skills Deception +8, Insight +6, Perception +6, Persuasion +8

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Common, and any 2 additional languages

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Proficiency +4

Godhand's Will. The spawn has advantage on Wisdom saving throws.

Legendary Resistance (2/day). When the spawn would fail a saving throw, it can spend a legendary action to succeed it instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The spawn makes two melee weapon attacks. The first target it hits must succeed a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or gains the Charmed condition until the start of the spawn's next turn.

Strike. *Melee Attack Roll:* +8, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 18 (4d6+4) Psychic damage.

Finger Beam. *Ranged Attack Roll:* +8, Range 120 ft. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) Force damage.

Divine Push. *Strength Saving Throw:* DC 16, one creature within 60 feet. *Failure:* The creature takes 27 (6d8) Force damage and if the creature is size Huge or smaller is pushed up to 20 feet in a direction of the spawn's choice. If this causes the creature to impact another creature, the forced movement ends and the other creature takes 13 (3d8) bludgeoning damage and the moved creature gains the prone condition.

Spellcasting. The Spawn casts one of the following spells, using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks):

At Will: *Charm Person, Disguise Self, Mage Hand, Message*

3/day (total): *Dimension Door, Suggestion*

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Legendary Action Uses: 2. Immediately after another creature's turn, the spawn can expend a use to take one of the following actions. The spawn regains all expended uses at the start of each of its turns.

Finger Beam. The spawn makes a Finger Beam attack.

Flourish. The spawn moves up to half of its speed without provoking opportunity attacks. At any point during that movement it makes a melee weapon attack.

Noble Presence. *Strength Saving Throw:* DC 16, each creature in a 5-foot emanation. *Failure:* A creature takes 10 (3d6) Force damage and is pushed 10 feet away from the spawn.

GARVO ARKORA V. (FINGERSPAWN VARIANT)

Medium Abomination, Neutral

Equipment. Garvo V wields a +1 Rapier.

ACTIONS

Rapier. *Melee Attack Roll:* +9, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 9 (1d8+5) Piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) Psychic damage.

Additional Spellcasting. In addition to the listed spells, Garvo V knows these spells:

At Will: *Prestidigitation*

1/day (each): *Scrying, Sending*

REACTIONS

Parry. Trigger: A creature makes an attack roll against Garvo V (Garvo must wield his rapier).

Effect: Garvo V adds +4 to his AC against the triggering attack.

MERILYA ARKORA (FINGERSPAWN VARIANT)

Medium Abomination, Chaotic Neutral

Equipment. Merilya carries a Ketch of Lightning Javelins (she can use Lightning Javelin's at will).

Freedom of Movement. Merilya is immune to the Grappled, Restrained, and Paralyzed conditions.

ACTIONS

Lightning Javelin (Melee). *Melee Attack Roll:* +8, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 8 (1d6+4) Piercing damage, plus 3 (1d6) Lightning damage, plus 10 (3d6) Psychic damage.

Lightning Javelin (Thrown). *Dexterity Saving Throw:* DC 16, each creature in a 60-foot line originating from Merilya. *Failure:* The creature takes 14 (4d6) Lightning damage.

Success: Half Damage.

Additional Spellcasting. In addition to the listed spells, Garvo V knows these spells:

At Will: *Prestidigitation*

1/day (each): *Dominate Person, Fly, Freedom of Movement (Already Cast)*

Garvo Arkora I

Born three centuries past into a house reduced to little more than a fading name, Garvo Arkora entered the world with the quiet fury of a man who refuses his inheritance. House Arkora had once commanded respect and wielded influence within the highest halls of power, but by the time Garvo drew his first breath, little remained of that legacy beyond crumbling portraits and whispered stories of better days.

Where others in his position might have accepted slow decline, Garvo chose a different path. Driven by an ambition that bordered on the sacred, he set sail for the southern isles—the ancestral cradle of his bloodline—in search of forgotten connections, buried debts, or some dormant legacy he might resurrect and wield.

What he found was something far older and stranger than he had anticipated.

Deep within the ruins of his ancestral home, he encountered a wretched, diminished creature—a shriveled hand, the last pitiful remnant of a Godhand, a

being of immense and terrible power ground now diminished. The creature moved to seize him, to puppet his body and borrow what little life it could. But it was too weak, and Garvo was too strong. More surprising still, Garvo did not flee. He made it an offer.

He had recognised the potential coiled within that broken thing—the shadow of a might that could yet shake the world. And so he proposed a covenant: he would serve as its willing host, offering his body freely, and in return the Godhand would lend him its power to rebuild what his family had lost.

The creature, left with little else, accepted. Garvo returned home transformed—no longer merely a man, but a unique Remnant. He moved through his House's crumbling hierarchy like a blade, his newfound authority impossible to deny or resist. Within years, House Arkora breathed again. Garvo himself would disappear into the shadows from where he'd continue to direct his new spawns to lead House Arkora to new heights.

GARVO ARKORA I FINGER PATRIARCH

Medium Abomination, Lawful Evil

Armor Class 17

Hit Points 229 (27d8+108)

Speed 30 ft., Climb 30 ft., Fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	13 (+1)	19 (+4)	22 (+6)	22 (+6)	16 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Int +11, Wis +11, Cha +9

Skills Insight +11, Perception +11, Stealth +6

Condition Immunities charmed

Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 21

Languages Common, Telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 15 (13,000 XP)

Proficiency +5

Godhand's Embrace. As a magic action Garvo I can touch a creature and communicate with it. When doing so Garvo I can instantly imbue a creature with anything he knows or convey complex ideas and information with his telepathy. When touching a creature like this Garvo I can also attempt to invade and read the creature's mind and memories. A creature can attempt to resist the Garvo's communication with a successful DC 18 Wisdom Saving Throw.

Consume Spawn. When Garvo I hits one of his Fingerspawn (Garvo V or Merilya) with a slam attack, the spawn takes 27 (6d8) necrotic damage and he regains a number of Hit Points equal to the damage dealt. This necrotic damage can't be resisted or negated.

Legendary Resistance (3/day). When Garvo I would fail a saving throw, he can succeed it instead. If he does he must end the Charmed condition on one creature under his control.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Garvo I makes 2 Slam attacks or three Finger Beam attacks. The first target he hits with his slam must

succeed a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or gains the Charmed condition until the start of Garvo's next turn.

Slam. *Melee Attack Roll:* +10, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 8 (1d6+5) Bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) Psychic damage.

Finger Beam. *Ranged Attack Roll:* +10, Range 120 ft. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) Force damage.

Imprint. *Wisdom Saving Throw:* DC 18, one creature within 5 feet. *Failure:* The creature takes 27 (6d8) Psychic damage and its Wisdom Score is reduced by 1d6 (3). If this reduces the creature's Wisdom to 0, the creature drops to 0 hit points. If this attack reduces a creature's hit points to 0 it is stable and automatically fails all Wisdom saving throws for as long as it is unconscious. Additionally, when a creature is reduced to 0 hit points by this action, it gains the Fingerprint Mark for 1 hour or until the creature is no longer unconscious.

Success: Half Damage. This damage can't reduce a creature to below 1 hit point.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Legendary Action Uses: 3. Immediately after another creature's turn, Garvo I can expend a use to take one of the following actions. Garvo I regains all expended uses at the start of each of his turns.

Command. *Wisdom Saving Throw:* DC 18 (A creature immune to the Charmed condition succeeds automatically), one creature within 120 ft. that has a Fingerprint Mark. *Failure:* The creature Charmed by Garvo I until he dies. A Charmed creature obeys any command by Garvo I. If the creature is at 0 hit points and unconscious, regains half of its maximum Hit Point.

Success: The creature loses the Fingerprint Mark.

Finger Beam. Garvo I makes a Finger Beam attack.

Noble Presence. *Strength Saving Throw:* DC 18, each creature in a 5-foot emanation. *Failure:* A creature takes 10 (3d6) Force damage and is pushed 10 feet away from Garvo I.

Imprint (Costs 2 Actions). Garvo I uses his Imprint action.

Into the Cinderlands

With the seneschal rescued from the clutches of the Arkora family, a grim truth has come to light: the Queen's corruption is no mere madness. At its source lies a vile artifact, now fashioned into her very crown, twisting her will from within. To uncover the artifact's origins—and learn how its dark influence might be undone—the party must venture west into the Cinderlands.

A great plateau scarred by legend, the Cinderlands is a place where the land itself bears the wounds of an age long past. It is said that two dragon gods once clashed upon this earth, and the fury of their conflict warped the landscape forever, leaving behind a blasted, breathtaking wilderness unlike anything found elsewhere in the kingdom.

Ruby. This young woman presented herself as a member of a local organisation with growing concerns over the Queen's recent political overreach—a cover the party saw through with little difficulty, recognising the hallmarks of the city's thieves' guild. She offered an alternative route up to the plateau, one that bypassed Crown scrutiny entirely. The party, confident in their own means, declined. What Ruby did not reveal is that she is in truth a loyal operative of the Red Scorpion Assassins, the deadly cult in the Queen's employ. Stationed in the border city as one of many sleeper agents seeded across the kingdom, her role is to ensure the Red Scorpions maintain eyes and ears wherever they are

needed. Though the party slipped past her offer, they did not escape Ruby's attention—she now knows their faces, their movements, and their next destination. After the incident of the Red Veil plague, the Red Scorpions have unfinished business with the group, and they have not seen the last of her.

Royal Gargoyles. Royal Gargoyles have long served as elite guardians and sentinels of the kingdom, their likeness immortalised on the royal coat of arms itself. Crafted through a rare union of magic and masterful artisanship, these formidable constructs are stationed at key locations across the realm, where their imposing presence alone is often enough to discourage those who might test their limits.

Several Royal Gargoyles patrol the sheer cliffs surrounding the Cinderlands, tasked with a twofold purpose: ensuring no threat escapes the blasted plateau, and preventing unsanctioned entry into a region the Crown keeps under strict regulation. The party, however, managed to avoid a confrontation with these powerful creatures entirely—slipping undetected onto the lift and ascending into the Cinderlands before the Gargoyles were any the wiser.

RUBY THIEVES GUILD OPERATIVE

Medium Humanoid, Chaotic Neutral

Armor Class 16 (Studded Leather +1)

Hit Points 60 (12d8+24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Wis +5, Cha +8

Skills Acrobatics +8, Deception +8, Perception +5, Persuasion +8

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Draconic, Infernal

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Proficiency +4

Expert. Ruby has a Proficiency Bonus of +4.

Magical Gear. Ruby carries a Wand of Magic Missiles and a pair of Slippers of Spider Climbing.

Magic Lenses. Ruby wears a pair of magic lenses that allow her to detect magical objects and magical effects with a thin outline.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Ruby makes two attacks, one with her Rapier, and one with her Dagger.

Rapier. *Melee Attack Roll:* +7, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 8 (1d8+3) Piercing damage and the target has Disadvantage on the next attack roll it makes before the end of its next turn.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Attack Roll:* +7, reach 5 ft. or range 20/40 *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) Piercing damage.

Dissonant Shock (1/day, 5th Level Evocation) *Constitution Saving Throw:* DC 16, each creature in a 20-foot-radius Sphere centered on a point within 60 feet. *Failure:* 28 (8d6) Thunder damage, and the target is disoriented for 1 minute. A disoriented creature subtracts 1d6 from all its d20 rolls. The target repeats this saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. *Success:* Half damage.

Spellcasting. Ruby casts one of the following spells, using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks):

At Will: *Mage Hand, Minor Illusion, Message, Vicious Mockery* (3d6 Psychic damage)

1/day (each): *Feather Fall, Greater Invisibility, Hypnotic Pattern, Locate Object, Sending, Silence, Spider Climb*

BONUS ACTIONS

Cunning Step. Ruby uses the Disengage action.

REACTIONS

Cutting Words (Recharge 4-6). *Trigger:* A creature that can hear Ruby makes an ability check or attack roll within 60 feet of her.

Effect: Ruby reduces the ability check or attack roll by 1d8.

ROYAL GARGOYLE (HALBERD)

Large Elemental, Neutral

Armor Class 19

Hit Points 133 (14d10+56)

Speed 30 ft., Fly 60

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	14 (+2)	7 (-2)

Skills Stealth +4, Perception +8

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhaustion, Petrified, Poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Doesn't speak, understands the language of its creator

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Proficiency +3

Masonry Masterwork. Any Critical Hit scored against the Royal Gargoyle becomes a normal hit.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Royal Gargoyle makes two Halberd attacks and a Blade Tail attack.

Halberd. Melee Attack Roll: +8, reach 10 ft. Hit: 21 (3d10+5) Slashing damage.

Bladed Tail. Melee Attack Roll: +8, reach 5 ft. Hit: 12 (2d6+5) Piercing damage. If the creature has the Prone condition, its Speed becomes 0 until the end of the Royal Gargoyle's next turn.

BONUS ACTIONS

Landing Attack. The Royal Gargoyle spends 30 feet of Flying Speed to move towards a surface and must land on it (if it fails to do so, this action has no effect). **Strength Saving Throw:** DC 16, each creature in a 10-foot Emanation originating from the Royal Gargoyle. **Failure:** The creature is pushed 10 feet and gains the Prone condition.

REACTION

Vigilant Strike. Trigger: A creature moves out of the Royal Gargoyle's reach.

Effect: The Royal Gargoyle makes a melee weapon attack against the triggering creature. On a hit the creature's remaining Speed is 0.

Thousand-Embers. Thousand-Embers is an old ally, a shaman of the Tanedi—one of 3 indigenous tribes native to the Cinderlands—who served as both spiritual guide and community leader for his people during their time in the capital. The party aided him in a time of grief, retrieving the remains of his grandson from the depths of the Death Warrens so that the old man might finally lay the boy to rest. As tensions across the kingdom grew, Thousand-Embers led a contingent of his people home, returning to the ancestral lands of the Tanedi in the Cinderlands. The party now hopes to find him there, trusting that his wisdom, his knowledge of the plateau, and his ties to its people may prove an invaluable thread to pull as they pursue the truth behind the Queen's corruption.

Bone Slayers. Bone Slayers are the elite warriors of the Tanedi, honed for fighting the undead. This specialisation is no accident of history—it flows directly from the Tanedi's role among the tribes of the

ROYAL GARGOYLE (SWORD & SHIELD)

Large Elemental, Neutral

Armor Class 21

Hit Points 133 (14d10+56)

Speed 30 ft., Fly 60

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	14 (+2)	7 (-2)

Skills Stealth +4, Perception +8

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhaustion, Petrified, Poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Doesn't speak, understands the language of its creator

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Proficiency +3

Masonry Masterwork. Any Critical Hit scored against the Royal Gargoyle becomes a normal hit.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Royal Gargoyle makes two Battle Axe attacks and a Blade Tail attack.

Battle Axe. Melee Attack Roll: +8, reach 10 ft. Hit: 18 (3d8+5) Slashing damage.

Bladed Tail. Melee Attack Roll: +8, reach 5 ft. Hit: 12 (2d6+5) Piercing damage. If the creature has the Prone condition, its Speed becomes 0 until the end of the Royal Gargoyle's next turn.

BONUS ACTIONS

Shield Bash. **Strength Saving Throw:** DC 16, one creature within 5 ft. of the Royal Gargoyle. **Failure:** The creature is either pushed 5 feet or gains the Prone condition.

REACTION

Rebuffing Block. Trigger: A creature within 5 ft. of the Royal Gargoyle misses it with a melee weapon attack.

Effect: The Royal Gargoyle uses its Shield Bash against the triggering creature.

Cinderlands as guardians of the dead. The stewardship of burial grounds, the tending of graves, and the practice of exorcism have long been woven into the fabric of Tanedi tradition.

Illwyd Embersoul, Who-Died-Once. Illwyd Embersoul is the leader of the Tanedi—a powerful druid whose bond with the element of fire runs as deep as the scorched earth of the Cinderlands itself. Her authority among her people is absolute and unquestioned. Earning her trust will be the party's first challenge upon the plateau. For it did not take long to learn that the tribes of the Cinderlands hold something the party desperately needs—the history of the Queen's crown, its origins, its dark purpose, and perhaps most crucially of all, the means of destroying it.

THOUSAND-EMBERS

*Medium Humanoid, Neutral Good***Armor Class** 15**Hit Points** 49 (9d8+9)**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)

Skills Insight +6, Nature +4, Perception +6**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16**Languages** Common, Druidic, Sylvan**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)**Proficiency** +3

Ember Spirits. When Thousand-Embers casts the *Summon Beast* or *Spirit Guardians* spells, he can choose to change any damage they deal to be Fire damage.

Experienced. Thousand-Embers has a Proficiency Bonus of +3.

Into the Cinderlands

Spirit Speaker. Thousand-Embers can perform a 10 minute long ritual. At the end of the ritual he casts the *Speak With Dead* without having to expend a spell slot.

ACTIONS

Ember Staff. *Melee Attack Roll:* +6, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 8 (2d4+3) Bludgeoning damage plus 5 (2d4) fire damage.

Produce Flame. *Ranged Spell Attack Roll:* +6, range 60 ft. *Hit:* 9 (2d8) Fire damage.

Spellcasting. Thousand-Embers casts one of the following spells, using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks):

At Will: *Druidcraft*, *Elementalism*, *Produce Flame*

2/day (each): *Animal Messenger*, *Fog Cloud*, *Summon Beast*

1/day (each): *Spirit Guardians*

BONE SLAYER

*Medium Humanoid***Armor Class** 16 (Bone-Hide Armor)**Hit Points** 65 (10d8+20)**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (0)

Skills Perception +4, Religion +3, Survival +4**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14**Languages** Common, Druidic, Sylvan**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)**Proficiency** +2

Blessed Arms. The Boneslayer's weapons ignore resistances to Bludgeoning, Piercing, or Slashing damage of Undead creatures.

Undead Hunter. The Boneslayer has advantage on Wisdom (Survival) checks to track and find Undead creatures.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Boneslayer makes two weapon attacks.

Maul. *Melee Attack Roll:* +6, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 13 (3d6+3) Bludgeoning damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Attack Roll:* +6, range 5 ft. or range 150/600 *Hit:* 12 (2d8+3) Piercing damage.

Spellcasting. The Boneslayer casts one of the following spells, using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks):

1/day (each): *Hunter's Mark*, *Protection from Evil and Good*

ILLWYD EMBERSOUL, WHO-DIED-ONCE

*Medium Humanoid, True Neutral***Armor Class** 16**Hit Points** 176 (16d8+64)**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	20 (+5)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +8, Wis +9**Skills** Insight +9, Nature +6, Persuasion +7, Perception +9**Damage Resistances** Fire**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19**Languages** Common, Druidic, Sylvan, Primordial (Ignan)**Challenge** 10 (5,900 XP)**Proficiency** +4

Legendary Resistance (1/day). When Illwyd would fail a saving throw, he can succeed instead.

Blazing Blood. As long as Illwyd has the Bloodied condition, creatures that deal damage to her while within 5 ft. of her take 7 (2d6) Fire damage.

Regenerating Embers. Illwyd regains 10 Hit Points at the start of her turn if she has 1 or more Hit Points.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Illwyd makes 2 Flame Blade or Hurl Flame attacks in any combination.

Flame Blade. *Melee Attack Roll:* +9, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 19 (4d6+5) Fire damage.

Hurl Flame. *Ranged Attack Roll:* +9, range 60 *Hit:* 15 (3d6+5) Fire damage.

Spellcasting. Illwyd casts one of the following spells, using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks):

At Will: *Burning Hands (3rd Level)*, *Druidcraft*, *Elementalism*, *Flaming Sphere (3rd Level)*, *Produce Flame*

1/day (each): *Fire Storm*, *Regeneration*, *Reincarnate*

REACTIONS

From Ashes (1/Day). *Trigger:* Illwyd is reduced to 0 Hit Points.

Effect: Illwyd regains 80 Hit Points and no longer has the Prone condition. *Dexterity Saving Throw:* DC 16, each creature in a 20-foot-Emanation originating from Illwyd. *Failure:* 28 (8d6) Fire damage. *Success:* Half damage.

Archon's Acropolis

Consulting with Illwyd and the Tanedi, the party learned that the answers they seek likely lie with the Haelwir—the largest of the Cinderlands' tribes, whose ancient Sun Shamans are said to guard the oldest secrets of the land. The Haelwir are a proud and guarded people, and their relationship with the kingdom beyond the plateau is one of open animosity—a difficult history that has left them sworn enemies of the crown and its citizens alike, making the party's task a delicate one.

To that end, Illwyd pointed them toward the Archon's Acropolis. Among the Haelwir, young warriors prove their courage and mark their passage into maturity by seeking out the Archon's Mark—a magical seal that carries with it a measure of standing in the tribe's eyes. It is through this mark that the Sun Shamans take notice. If the party hopes to open any door with the Haelwir, they must first earn what every Haelwir warrior earns: the Mark itself.

Flamewarped Ox. The Cinderlands is home to many strange and dangerous creatures, such as the Flamewarped Ox—beasts visibly transformed by the volatile Cinderlands. They hide and horns bearing the unmistakable marks of the plateau's fiery nature. The same warping that reshaped its body did little favours to its temperament; Flamewarped Oxen are aggressively territorial, treating virtually anything that moves as a threat—a disposition well suited to an environment where that instinct is rarely wrong.

Tentacles-From-Below. At the heart of the Archon's Acropolis lies a grand central hall, dominated by two large pools of dark, still liquid—unassuming at first glance, and easy to dismiss. It was only when the silence of the acropolis was broken that the truth revealed itself: massive tentacles erupted from the depths of both pools, thrashing wildly and reaching for anything within grasp. What had seemed a surprisingly straightforward trial suddenly made a great deal more sense—this was the reason the Archon's Mark carries the weight it does among the Haelwir, and why not every young warrior who seeks it returns to tell the tale.

FLAMEWARPED OX

Large Beast

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 76 (8d10+32)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities Fire

Senses passive Perception 11

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Proficiency +4

Altered Beast. The Flamewarped Ox has advantage on saving throws against effects and spells that specifically target Beast-type creatures.

Overrun. If the Ox moves at least 20 feet towards a creature that is a smaller size than the Ox and hits it with a Horn attack, the creature fails the saving throw automatically and gains the Prone condition.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Ox attacks with its Horns. If a creature falls prone due to the attack, the Ox can attack the creature with a trample attack.

Horn. *Melee Attack Roll:* +7, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) Fire damage.

Trample. *Melee Attack Roll:* +7, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) Bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) Fire damage. *Miss:* Half damage if the target has the Prone condition.

HAELWIR SUNSEEKER

Medium Humanoid, True Neutral

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	10 (0)	12 (+1)	10 (0)

Skills Perception +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Sylvan

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Proficiency +2

Distract. The Sunseeker doesn't provoke Opportunity Attacks from creatures within 5 ft. of another Sunseeker.

Hunting Cadre. The Sunseeker has Advantage on attack rolls against targets that an ally of the Sunseeker hit with an attack since the beginning of its last turn.

Sure-kill Strike. Once per turn when the Sunseeker makes hits a creature with the Bloodied condition, or with an attack that has Advantage, the attack deals an extra 10 (3d6) damage to the target.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The sunseeker makes three melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft./range 30/120 ft. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) Piercing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) Piercing damage.

TENTACLES-FROM-BELOW

Large Dragon, Unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 168 (16d10+80)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)

Skills Athletics +9, Perception +4

Damage Immunities Psychic

Condition Immunities Charmed, Frightened, Unconscious

Senses blindsight 15 ft. (blind beyond), passive Perception 14

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP) **Proficiency** +3

Confined. The tentacles are part of a larger entity and therefore are limited to the large pools of water they emerge out of. They cannot be forcefully moved out of it, nor can they be teleported.

Guarded Reach. Creatures provoke opportunity attacks from the Tentacles when they leave a space anywhere within its reach.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The tentacles make two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Attack Roll:* +9, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 22 (3d10+6) Bludgeoning damage and the target has the Grappled condition (escape DC 16).

KEYGON, WHO-EATS-WHAT-HE-KILLS

Medium Humanoid, Neutral

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 136 (16d8+64)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	14 (+2)	19 (+4)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +7, Con +7, Wis +5

Skills Athletics+7, Perception +5, Survival +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages Common, Sylvan

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP) **Proficiency** +3

Brutal Swings. Keygon scores a critical hit when he rolls a 19 (with a d20) on an attack roll.

Heroic Resistance (Recharge 5-6). When Keygon fails a saving throw he can add 10 to the result, potentially turning the failure into a success.

Hope Of His People. As long as Keygon has the Bloodied condition, he has Advantage on attack rolls and saving throws.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Keygon makes two attacks, using Greataxe or Chain Hook in any combination.

Keygon Who-Eats-What-He-Kills. Keygon is no ordinary young warrior of the Haelwir—his raw strength and staggering potential marked him as something exceptional from an early age, earning him the admiration of his people and the careful attention of the Sun Shamans, who see in him the makings of a true symbol of hope for the tribe. That adoration, however, has not come without cost. Years of praise have left Keygon proud to a fault, his confidence tipping more than occasionally into arrogance.

When Keygon arrived at the Kelyd Mounds—the sacred home of the Tanedi—he came bearing the body of a fallen Haelwir warrior, seeking the Tanedi's blessing to lay his kinsman to rest in their care. It was a solemn errand, and the sight that greeted him was not one he took kindly to: outsiders, welcomed as guests within the Mounds. His displeasure was neither subtle nor restrained, and the altercation that followed was swift in coming. Illwyd's reprimand was swifter still—the sanctity of the Kelyd Mounds was not a thing she would see compromised by wounded pride—and as recompense, Keygon and his hunting cadre were charged with leading the party to the Archon's Acropolis, a task the young warrior accepted with all the grace one might expect, which is to say very little.

Greataxe. *Melee Attack Roll:* +7, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 18 (4d6+4) Slashing damage and 7 (2d6) Slashing damage to another creature within 5 feet of the original target.

Slam. *Melee Attack Roll:* +7, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 13 (2d8+4) Bludgeoning damage.

Chain Hook. *Ranged Attack Roll:* +7, range 20 ft. *Hit:* 14 (4d4+4) Piercing damage and the Target is pulled up to 20 ft towards Keygon.

Keygon Lariat. Keygon uses his Chain Hook attack against a creature 10 or more feet away from him, if the attack hits and pulls the target within 5 ft. of Keygon, he makes a Slam attack against the target. On a hit the target must succeed a Constitution saving throw or gains the Stunned condition until the end of Keygon's next turn. The DC is equal to 15 or the Slam's damage, whichever is higher.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Legendary Action Uses: 1. Immediately after another creature's turn, Keygon can expend a use to take one of the following actions. Keygon regains all expended uses at the start of each of his turns.

Move and Strike. Keygon moves up to half of his speed and makes an attack.