



**D&D**

# MYTHIC ODYSSEYS OF THEROS

**DUNGEONS & DRAGONS**

Clash with the gods of Theros in this campaign sourcebook for the world's greatest roleplaying game

# MYTHIC ODYSSEYS OF **THEROS™**

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Many thanks to the hundreds of playtesters whose efforts made this a better book. We couldn't have created this without you!



## ON THE COVER

The invulnerable hero, Haktos the Unscarred, leaps into battle with a Nyxborn hydra, taking part in the most recent telling of a myth repeated through the ages. Jason Rainville brings this legend to life.



## ON THE ALTERNATIVE COVER

While the gods look on, the immortal struggle between Haktos and the hydra plays out in the stars of Nyx, a glimpse of eternity captured by Kevin Tong.

*Disclaimer:*

*Truly, what mortal's poor striving can weather the scheming of heaven?  
Heliad reaches for rulership; Purphoros never accepts him  
Kruphix but watches, and mortals are left to the whims of the fates, or  
Torn in the claws of the furies; only a hero denies them.*

—The Callapheia

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I AM MEDOMAI, AGELESS AND  
DEATHLESS, SEER OF ENDINGS:  
I DID FORETELL THE FALL OF ALEPHNE  
IN WATERY TERROR,  
MOCKED BY THE FOOLISH WHO SAY THAT THE  
VOICE OF THE GODS IS BUT MADNESS.  
GREAT WAS ITS RUIN, AND SLAUGHTERED WERE  
ALL WHO DID NOT HEED MY WARNING.

BRIGHTER THE FUTURE I NOW FORETELL,  
OF BEGINNINGS, NOT ENDINGS:  
HEROES ARE COMING, WHO STRIVE AGAINST  
FATE'S STERN DECREES, AND WHO CARVE THEIR  
OWN BRIGHT PATHWAY THROUGH HISTORY,  
GREATER THAN ALL MORTAL YEARNINGS.

# WELCOME TO THEROS

**T**HEY WERE ALONE ON THE GLASSY BLUE ocean. A waterfall stretched endlessly along the horizon line. The water at the edge of the world was like a placid pond, as if enjoying a last few seconds of existence before cascading over the edge in a raging torrent of white-capped water.

Directly in front of them was Kruphix's Tree. Two enormous trunks were separate at the base, but they arched toward each other and joined at the top in a single leafy crown. Stars glittered beyond the waterfall, but the background was milky violet with tinges of deep blue. The seawater that plummeted over the edge disappeared into the abyss of the stars.

*They had reached the edge of the world.*

—Jenna Helland, *Godsend*

The caprice of the gods. The destiny of heroes. Great journeys into monster-infested wilds, and mythic odysseys to the edge of the world and back. These elements of adventure fill the realms of Theros, a new setting for your DUNGEONS & DRAGONS campaign to explore.

The roots of Theros lie in the myths of ancient Greece, tales dominated by gods, heroes, and monsters. This world was created as a setting for the MAGIC: THE GATHERING trading card game, explored in card sets beginning in 2013. The lands of Theros serve as an example of how to take inspiration from real-world mythology and adapt it into a world built from the ground up for fantasy adventures.

This book is your guide to Theros, its gods, its peoples and their cities (or poleis), its threats, and its tales. It also guides you through creating characters destined to be legends and adventures born of this mythic setting.

Chapter 1 covers the heroes of Theros: the races, class options, and backgrounds you'll need to make a character. It also introduces supernatural gifts available to starting characters—features that set Theros's adventurers apart as true heroes.

Chapter 2 introduces the gods of Theros, a squabbling pantheon of arrogant and powerful beings who view mortals as pawns in their strategic games. It also provides rules and guidelines for characters who serve as champions of the gods, including divine benefits they can gain as rewards for their piety.

Chapter 3 turns to the mortal world, the lands in which the epic adventures of Theros unfold. It covers the three city-states of humanity, the wild lands of leonin and minotaurs, the great forests and wide plains where satyrs revel and centaurs roam, and the seas where tritons dwell and titanic monsters lurk. It also offers glimpses into the divine realm of Nyx and the dismal realms of the Underworld.

Chapter 4 builds on the guidelines in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, highlighting adventures set in Theros. Maintaining a focus on the gods, it presents omens that might launch heroes on the road to adventure, details hundreds of plot hooks, includes maps of potential adventure locations, and presents a short introductory adventure you can use to launch your campaign.

Chapter 5 details treasures of Theros, including the artifacts of the gods, the magical inventions of renowned artisans, and various other devices infused with the magic of the world.

Finally, chapter 6 presents numerous inhabitants of Theros. An exploration of familiar beasts from the *Monster Manual* and other sources—creatures with their roots in Greek mythology—details their place and unique characteristics in the lands of Theros. Several of Theros's most notorious creatures, foes as legendary as the world's most renowned heroes, are also presented as mythic monsters, terrors designed to test even the gods' mightiest champions.

## DREAMS OF DIVINITY

Theros possesses a unique metaphysical property: things believed and dreamed here eventually become real. The collective unconscious of mortal people has the literal power of creation, though the process unfolds over the course of countless centuries. Thus, the gods of Theros and their servants were believed, dreamed, and narrated into existence, materializing and becoming fully real as a result of mortal belief in their power. As stories were told, sacrifices made, and devotion given over ages, the gods formed and gained lives just as real as the mortals who dreamed them into being.

Does that mean that the gods of Theros are less powerful or less divine than the gods of other worlds? Not at all. Once a dream or belief in Theros becomes reality, it is just as real as any other thing, and the gods have been real for a very long time. The people of Theros believe them to be divine, ageless, and all-powerful, and therefore they are.



THE GENERAL



THE PROTECTOR

A single individual can't do anything to make the gods less real or change the nature of a god. Threatened with the wrath of Helioid, for example, a mortal can't simply "disbelieve" the god out of existence or turn his wrath to kindness. It's the collective unconscious of every sapient being on Theros that shapes reality, and changes to that reality occur on the scale of ages, not moments.

In practical terms, then, the gods of Theros are no less real, powerful, or important to Theros than the gods of other worlds are to those worlds. Notably, though, these gods have influence only over Theros and the two planes connected to it: Nyx, the starry realm of the gods, and the Underworld, eventual home of all die.

## GODS AND DEVOTION

The central conflict in Theros is among gods, striving against each other over the devotion of mortals. Mortal devotion equates to divine power: when people fervently pray to a god, when they piously observe the god's rites and sacrifices, and when they devoutly trust in the god's divine might, the god becomes more powerful.

The competition for mortal devotion isn't necessarily a zero-sum game. The people of Theros don't believe in one particular god to the exclusion of others, and the most pious people pray to all the gods with equal fervor. But a deity's goal is to increase the number of people who, when faced with peril, will call on that god for help. It's that trust, that reliance, that faith that gives the gods their power, not merely ideas and concepts.

Mortal beings—heroes and monsters alike—often become unwitting pawns in the contests of the gods. Having a powerful champion is an indication of a god's power—and can potentially increase the god's own power. A champion who acts as an agent of a god among other people helps increase those people's devotion to the god. And if a hero should happen to strike down the agents of a rival god along the way, all the better.

## FATE AND DESTINY

Two closely related concepts loom large in the way mortals think about their place in the world: fate and destiny.

The idea of fate is that the course of each mortal's life is predetermined, spun out in a tapestry woven by a trio of semidivine women, the Fates. Gods aren't bound by the strands of fate, their lives and legends constantly changing and endlessly uncertain. In the case of most mortals, it's thought they plod along their predetermined path from beginning to end, carrying out the tasks appointed for them until they complete their journey to the Underworld.

This fairly bleak view of existence is undermined by the heroic ideal exemplified in myths, legends, and the lived experience of Theros's people. Heroes, by definition, are people who defy the predetermined course of fate. They take their fate into their own hands and chart their own courses, striding boldly into the unknown, striking down supposedly invincible foes, and resisting the will of gods. Their proud defiance of fate is rewarded when they at last complete their mortal journeys; worthy heroes spend their afterlives in Ilysia, the fairest realm of the Underworld, where they finally rest from the struggle of their lives. In many cases, their works also live on, both in the stories of future generations and repeating in the night sky among the stars of Nyx.

Destiny is different. The strands of destiny are spun from the hair of the ancient god Klothys, but they don't chart a predetermined future. Destiny establishes the order of things, the hierarchy of being, the relationship between gods and mortals, the instincts and impulses that govern mortal behavior, and other aspects of the way things are. Gods and mortals alike are constrained by the threads of destiny. Mortals can do little to alter them, but more than once the arrogance and presumption of the gods have caused the strands of destiny to become tangled. The god Klothys enforces the bounds of destiny. She isn't only the spinner of destiny's strands but also an avenging fury, punishing the foolhardy gods who tangle them.



THE VANQUISHER



THE HUNTER

## CHAMPIONS AND HEROES

The champions of the gods number among some of the most influential and inspirational figures in Theros. These mortals have personal relationships with the gods, potentially serving as divine agents in the world or being compelled to action by immortal schemes. Still others were born with divine gazes set upon them, whether due to their remarkable abilities or the circumstances of their birth. Through their lives, champions experience the blessings and curses of their divine relationships. Some might brandish incredible powers granted to them by the gods. Others, however, discover how fickle and vindictive the gods can be. How a champion contends with the whims of a deific patron defines what makes them a hero, whether they seek incredible ways to court immortal favor or forge a path that throws off the bonds of destiny. Regardless of the course they choose, the deeds of champions influence belief in the gods, but even more so, they fill the hearts of Theros's people with hope and wonder.

More than just for their deeds, heroes fill an important role among the inhabitants of Theros. Legendary heroes form a vast collection of well-known archetypes whose deeds create cultural touchstones and shape modern philosophies. They also embody the potential of mortals to be more than mere drops in the raging river of fate. Tales of heroes teach that greatness is achievable and that there is more to the world than what any one individual knows. The people of Theros see the truth of this in the powers of the gods and in the immortal constellations that fill the night sky. Even as the names of individual heroes might eventually fade away, their deeds live on as heroic archetypes—such as in the case of the nameless champion in the renowned epic, *The Theriad*. These archetypes teach and inspire, whether they're represented in tales of journeys or creation, in sculptures rising above polis roofs, or in the temples of the gods. Throughout Theros, those who seek greatness typically begin by deciding what heroic archetype they most closely align with and letting that ideal influence their fate.

The heroes illustrated throughout this introduction are examples of heroic archetypes. The General, the Protector, the Vanquisher, the Hunter, the Provider, the Warrior, the Slayer, the Philosopher, and others like them are idealized figures who appear in narrative and theatrical drama—sometimes with personal names attached, but often without. Tales describe the Slayer destroying a hydra ... and a mighty cyclops, and a dragon, and a Nyxborn giant, and a lamia, and any number of other creatures. Did one Slayer do all that? No, the archetype has become the repository for legends about many different heroes, all of whom are notable primarily for slaying something.

The heroes of a Theros campaign might aspire to emulate one of the great heroic archetypes, or they might strive to forge an entirely new mythic identity, to be remembered by name in tales of glory forever.

## HISTORY AND MYTH

When storytellers relate the history of Theros, they always speak in the most general terms. An event of just ten years past happened “many years ago,” and the founding of Meletis in the distant past happened “many, many years ago.” In Theros, history transforms into myth more quickly than it does in other worlds, becoming generalized, vague, and moralistic. And because the gods are so deeply involved in mortal affairs, it's often impossible to distinguish between the myths of divine activities and the scraps of historical fact in these records.

The origin and generations of the gods—from the primordial titans to the modern pantheon now worshiped in Theros—are described in chapter 2. The world's myths also fill this book, stories that still resonate in the dreams and ambitions of Theros's people. These myths are noted in distinct sections, with the first appearing in chapter 1. Yet the largely agreed upon history of mortal folk on Theros occurred more recently and is thought to have unfolded as follows.



THE PROVIDER



THE WARRIOR

## AGE OF TRAX

Human history vaguely recalls an era just before the birth of modern human civilization, called the Age of Trax. This semi-mythical era, nestled several centuries back in the fog of historical memory, is marked by the rule of supernatural beings called archons.

The archons of Trax are said to have come from unknown lands to the north and established a heavy-handed rule over the humanoid Theros. Many people remember this as a time of oppressive servitude, when they were forced into the armies of the tyrant Agnomakhos. The archons dubiously suggested that their rule actually protected the weaker species—centaurs, humans, leonin, minotaurs, and satyrs—from the dangers of far more powerful beings. Giants, demons, and medusas are said to have ruled kingdoms of their own in those days, and tales tell of Agnomakhos leading his leonin soldiers to repel an invading army of giants. Dragons, krakens, and hydras are also said to have grown to even greater size in those days than they do now, annihilating whole nations and carving untold catastrophes across the land.

## BIRTH OF THE POLEIS

The end of the Age of Trax corresponds roughly with the rise of the fourth and latest generation of gods, whose interests lie in the application of more abstract principles to the realities of mortal life. Three of these gods—Ephara, Iroas, and Karametra—played significant roles in the establishment of human civilization, in opposition to the archons.

The goddess Ephara inspired and equipped two human heroes, Kynaïos and Tiro, to overthrow the archon Agnomakhos. Divergent tales describe their history following the defeat of the tyrant. Some claim that they warred with each other for control over the region and that only their eventual death paved the way for the peace that allowed the new polis of Meletis to flourish. The truth is that they ruled Meletis peacefully together, established its legal code, and defended it for decades.

After the fall of Agnomakhos and the other archons of Trax, humans and minotaurs waged a bloody war in the highlands. The poleis of Akros and Skophos were born from that bloodshed, inspired by the martial doctrines of Iroas and Mogis rather than the legal code of Ephara. Eventually the years of war settled into an uneasy peace with the badlands of Phoberos as a barrier separating the poleis from each other.

Meletis, Akros, and Skophos perpetuated the stark division between civilization and nature that was inherent in the archons' rule. While most humans (and minotaurs) embraced that division, the god Karametra tried to teach people a new way of living in harmony with nature, leading to the founding of Setessa.

## AGE OF HEROES

The uncounted centuries since the fall of the archons have been marked by the exploits of great heroes, many of which are recorded in works of epic prose and poetry. Three major narratives remain widely retold and studied: *The Akroan War*, *The Callapheia*, and *The Theriad*.

The epic tale of the Akroan War is only nominally a history of the long siege of Akros, precipitated by the queen of Olantin abandoning her husband and going to live with the Akroan king. With the war as a backdrop, a nameless poet spins tales of gods and heroes, victories and tragedies. The death of the triton queen Korinna, and the resulting birth of the Dakra Isles from Thassa's falling tears, is a tale told incidentally, by way of comparison to the grief of the Olantian king. The tale of Phenax escaping from the Underworld is told to explain the origin of a phalanx of the Returned that comes to fight alongside the Olantian forces. And when the sphinx oracle Medomai appears and foretells the fall of Olantin, the poet tells of Medomai's earlier prophecy of the destruction of Alephne—a tragedy that could have been averted had anyone believed the sphinx's dire warning.

The saga of Callaphe the Mariner, told in *The Callapheia*, is a more coherent narrative focused on a single hero and her exploits. Known as the greatest mariner who ever lived, Callaphe was a human trickster from



THE SLAYER



THE PHILOSOPHER

Meletis who sailed a ship called *The Monsoon*. She was the first mortal to decipher the secret patterns of the winds (provoking Thassa's ire), and she sailed over the edge of the world and into Nyx to claim her place among the stars. The tales of her adventures are a mythic tour of the Dakra Isles and the coastlands of Theros, describing a panoply of creatures, nations, and marvelous phenomena—some of which still exist as described in its verses, though others are lost to history or myth.

*The Theriad* is a different sort of epic, closely associated with the worship of Heliad. At a glance, it appears to be about a champion of Heliad who is never named but simply called "the Champion." A closer read, though, reveals that the tales take place over the span of centuries and the identity of the Champion changes from tale to tale. In fact, *The Theriad* is a compilation of tales describing the exploits of many different champions of the sun god. It is widely believed that some tales are actually prophecies of champions yet to come.

## RECENT MEMORY

The Age of Heroes has not yet come to an end, and more epics will surely be sung and written as more heroes take their destinies into their own hands and chart their paths to the stars. The heroes of recent memory—Haktos the Unscarred, Siona and her crew on the *Pyleas*, Kyttheon Iora, Elspeth and Daxos, Anax and Cymede, Ajani Goldmane, and countless others—are no less heroic than the protagonists of age-old epics, even if their deeds aren't yet as widely known. Beyond individuals—a kraken attack on Meletis; the fall of the monstrous hydra Polukranos; the Nyxborn assault on Akros; Erebus's titan felled by Heliad's champion; the apotheosis and destruction of the mortal-turned-god Xenagos—the epic events of the recent past are already remembered and retold as mythic deeds. Many of these tales are told throughout this book, but they're only a fraction of the myths the people of Theros share.

Like white-hot bronze on the smith's anvil, Theros is ready to be forged by the deeds of today's heroes and ushered into the next great era of its history.

## LANGUAGES

Theros is not the most cosmopolitan of worlds, and a relatively small number of languages are used in its lands and sea. The citizens of the three human poleis (Meletis, Akros, and Setessa) speak their own dialects of the Common language, mutually intelligible but just different enough to identify the speaker's native land. Leonin and minotaurs have their own languages, and tritons speak the Aquan dialect of Primordial. Centaurs and satyrs speak distinct dialects of Sylvan, and different bands of centaurs even pronounce the same words differently. Giants and cyclopes share one language. Dragons and sphinxes have distinct languages rarely spoken among mortals of Theros, and the gods themselves speak in a unique language that few beyond mortal oracles can understand.

### STANDARD LANGUAGES

Language	Typical Speakers	Script
Common	Humans	Common
Giant	Cyclopes, giants	Minotaur
Leonin	Leonin	Common
Primordial	Tritons	Common
Minotaur	Minotaurs	Minotaur
Sylvan	Centaurs, satyrs	Elvish

### EXOTIC LANGUAGES

Language	Typical Speakers	Script
Celestial	Gods	Celestial
Draconic	Dragons	Draconic
Sphinx	Sphinxes	—



DRAWN TOGETHER BY FATE, THREE HEROES—CENTAUR, LEONIN, AND HUMAN—PIT THEMSELVES AGAINST SIRENS IN THE DAKRA ISLES.



# CHARACTER CREATION

**I**N FAIRNESS, THE GIANT HAD JUST BEEN awakened. Still, not everyone would be able to bring down a brute twice the size of a city temple, even if it was in a stupor, so I guess I am a hero. That's not to say I'm the greatest hero or would even be remembered once I fell, but I would not turn away being called "Aesrias, the hero." I am stronger than others of my age and have always been able to easily master all manner of weapons, although for challenge I prefer to use my own fists in combat.

But I boast too much. In truth, I am one of many who are blessed with the might of Iroas, children of devout parents to whom the God of Victory has given the strength to serve and protect the people. Everyone always said I was born a hero.

—Matt Knicl, "The Hero of Iroas"

What makes a hero? Is it a quality of birth that sets some mortals above others? Is it a blessing from the gods? Is it a matter of fate, spun out in the strands of a divine tapestry, charting the course of a hero's life from miraculous birth to glorious end?

If you're reading this, the answer is that *you* make a hero, of course. In Theros, player characters and heroes are synonymous, being rare individuals whose deeds aren't bound by fate, who willfully stray from the paths laid before them and chart their own courses.

This chapter describes playable races of Theros, new subclass options, a new background, and their places in the world. It also includes a description of the supernatural gifts that set the heroes of Theros above the ordinary mortals of their world. But it begins with the question of what makes *your* character a hero.

## HEROIC DRIVE

The defining characteristic of a hero in Theros is their heroic drive—the force that impels them to live a life worthy of great epics. Ordinary mortals across the multiverse are driven to extraordinary deeds when they are called on to pursue their ideals, to protect their bonds, and to overcome their flaws. In Theros, heroic drive stems from the same sources, but the power of fate and myth destines every character for legend; all one must do is act and discover their own immortal tale.

## AMPLIFYING YOUR IDEAL

Many characters' ideals come directly from their service to a god. Each god's description in chapter 2 includes a table you can use to determine your hero's ideal if your character serves that god, instead of (or in addition to) an ideal derived from your background. But whether your character holds to one of those ideals, one from the *Player's Handbook* or another source, or one of your own invention, try to state your ideal in the grandest possible terms to express your character's heroic drive.

## LEGENDARY BONDS

The connections and goals that serve as characters' bonds are powerful motivators, all the more so when they have supernatural origin or possess mythological weight. As with your character's ideal, think on a legendary scale as you define your character's bonds.

What if a person mentioned in your bond is actually a god? Consider this twist on a bond from the urchin background in the *Player's Handbook*: "I owe my survival to Phenax, god of thieves, who taught me to live on the streets while disguised as another mortal urchin." In this case, the secret divine identity of the person in the bond makes the bond more significant.

## TRAGIC FLAWS

The heroes of Theros don't often conform to tidy definitions of heroic morality and virtue, and they are often laid low by their own flaws. The *Player's Handbook* encourages you to think of "anything that someone else could exploit to bring you to ruin or cause you to act against your best interests." For a hero in Theros, a tragic flaw is something that the gods themselves might exploit or punish, with hubris being the classic example.

The gods of Theros aren't so concerned about "ordinary" flaws like addiction or laziness. Rather, consider a tragic flaw involving something you don't want a god to learn or certain to provoke a god's anger.

For example, some of the flaws listed for the outlander background in the *Player's Handbook* could put a character into conflict with a god. "I remember every insult I've received and nurse a silent resentment toward anyone who's ever wronged me" could cause significant problems when the character nurses a grudge against a god.

A tragic flaw can also be supernatural in nature. A hermit who harbors "dark, bloodthirsty thoughts that my isolation and meditation failed to quell" might have a sinister connection to the vicious god Mogis.

## SUPERNATURAL GIFTS

Most heroes of Theros have some kind of supernatural aid to help them achieve their goals. Often this aid comes from the gods, but some heroes might find their support from other beings, such as the sphinx Medomai, an oracle like Atris or Kydele, or a repository of mystical knowledge. Some heroes are born with supernatural power or born as a result of supernatural events.

A character in Theros begins with one supernatural gift chosen from those in this section. Work with the DM to decide where your character's gift came from. Is it tied to the god you serve? Was it the result of a fateful encounter with a sphinx or an oracle? Does it indicate the nature of your birth? Each gift's description also includes a table to spark your imagination as you think about your character's gift.

These supernatural gifts are intended for starting characters, but some might be bestowed by gods as rewards for remarkable deeds.

### ANVILWROUGHT

You were forged in the fires of Purphoros's forge. Your appearance bears a metallic sheen and visible joints. The Anvilwrought Characteristics table suggests details of your life or origins. Additionally, you gain the following traits.

**Constructed Resilience.** You were created to have remarkable fortitude, represented by the following benefits:

- You have advantage on saving throws against being poisoned, and you have resistance to poison damage.
- You don't need to eat, drink, or breathe.
- You are immune to disease.
- You don't need to sleep, and magic can't put you to sleep.

**Sentry's Rest.** When you take a long rest, you must spend at least six hours in an inactive, motionless state, rather than sleeping. In this state, you appear inert, but it doesn't render you unconscious, and you can see and hear as normal.

### ANVILWROUGHT CHARACTERISTICS

d6	Characteristic
1	An oreid who works in Purphoros's forge is the closest thing I have to a parent.
2	Purphoros made me to serve him.
3	I was created decades ago and, fearing that I'm growing obsolete, recently fled Mount Velus.
4	Purphoros regrets my creation and wants to reforge me into something better.
5	Purphoros intended me to carry on his work by making even greater creations of my own.
6	Someone in Mount Velus implanted a terrible secret within me in order to smuggle it out into the world.

### NATAL OMENS

The birth of a hero is often accompanied by signs in Nyx and Theros alike. You can use the Omens table in chapter 4 to randomly determine an omen that appeared when you were born. It's up to you and your DM to determine the omen's meaning.

## HEROIC DESTINY

Great deeds lie in your future, and it will take extraordinary effort to kill you before you accomplish those deeds. Choose or roll a random destiny using the Heroic Destiny table. Additionally, you gain the following traits.

**Defy Death.** You have advantage on death saving throws.

**Hard to Kill.** When you are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, you can drop to 1 hit point instead. Once you use this trait, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

### HEROIC DESTINY

d6	Destiny
1	I'm destined to be the most skilled practitioner of a craft or trade.
2	I'm destined to earn a place among the stars of Nyx.
3	I'm destined to become a god.
4	I'm destined to liberate my beloved from the clutches of the Underworld.
5	I was born while a kraken ravaged Meletis, and I'm destined to destroy that kraken.
6	I'm destined to uncover the secret of the gods' power.

## ICONOCLAST

No one can deny the reality of the gods of Theros, whose presence and deeds are visible in the night sky and sometimes directly in the mortal realm. But some people refute the idea that the gods are worthy of reverence. Such iconoclasts are common among the leonin, but members of any culture can adopt this supernatural gift. The Iconoclast Characteristics table presents suggestions for why you've become an iconoclast.

Your denial of the gods gives you supernatural power to resist their influence in the world. You gain the following traits.

**Enlightened Protection.** You can cast *protection from evil and good* with this trait, targeting only yourself and requiring no material components. Once you do so, you can't cast it in this way again until you finish a long rest. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this trait.

**Reject the Gods.** You can't gain or lose piety to any god. You instead gain the following traits at the character level listed in each one. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for any spell that you cast through these traits.

### ICONOCLAST HERO

#### 5th-level Iconoclast trait

You can cast *dispel magic* with this trait. Once you do so, you can't cast it in this way again until you finish a long rest.

## ICONOCLAST PARAGON

### 11th-level Iconoclast trait

You can cast *dispel evil and good* with this trait, requiring no material components. Once you do so, you can't cast it in this way again until you finish a long rest.

In addition, when you cast *dispel magic* using your Iconoclast Hero trait, you cast it as a 4th-level spell.

## ICONOCLAST ARCHETYPE

### 17th-level Iconoclast trait

You can cast *antimagic field* with this trait, requiring no material components. Once you do so, you can't cast it in this way again until you finish a long rest.

In addition, when you cast *dispel magic* using your Iconoclast Hero trait, you cast it as a 5th-level spell.

## ICONOCLAST CHARACTERISTICS

### d6 Characteristic

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | I blame the gods for the death of those I cared about.                                  |
| 2 | Multiple gods seek to use me to their ends, so I try to avoid all divine entanglements. |
| 3 | It's obvious the gods are fickle and unworthy of worship.                               |
| 4 | I know the world's future lies with mortals, not gods.                                  |
| 5 | I'm convinced the gods want me dead.  |
| 6 | I refuse to be a pawn in divine schemes.  |

## HEROIC FEATS

If your campaign uses the optional feat rules from chapter 6 of the *Player's Handbook*, your Dungeon Master might allow you to take a feat as a variant supernatural gift. You gain one feat of your choice. This list suggests twelve feats from the *Player's Handbook*, but you can choose any feat your DM allows:

- A snake emerged from my mouth before I took my first breath—an omen of my gift for deception. (Actor)
- I hear voices on the wind, warning me of danger. (Alert)
- Iroas gifted me with physical prowess, intending to see me compete in the Iroan Games. (Athlete)
- I feel the vitality of the earth beneath my feet, and it refreshes my strength when I rest on it. (Durable)
- The stars of Nyx are never hidden from my sight, revealing their secrets to my eyes. (Keen Mind)
- I hear the echoes of the gods' speech in every mortal language and trace the patterns of Nyx in the written word. (Linguist)
- The gods smile on me, but I dread the day when they withdraw their favor and my luck runs out. (Lucky)
- As a child, I used to run through the woods and play with a giant lynx—which, I learned later, was an emissary of Nylea. (Mobile)
- The sun's light brings what is hidden to clear view in my eyes. (Observant)
- I ate a magical fruit that blessed me with extraordinary resilience. (Resilient)
- I studied with a supernatural tutor. (Skilled)
- I was bathed in the waters of a mystic river that left my skin resistant to harm—and glittering with starlight. (Tough)

## INSCRUTABLE

Like a sphinx, you have a mind like a maze, impenetrable to mortal scrutiny. This might be a gift or training from an actual sphinx, the blessing (or curse) of a god, or an inexplicable talent. The Inscrutable Characteristics table suggests options for what makes you inscrutable. Additionally, you gain the following trait.

**Psychic Shield.** You have resistance to psychic damage.

**Sphinx's Shroud.** You are immune to any effect that allows other creatures to sense your emotions or read your thoughts. Wisdom (Insight) checks made to ascertain your intentions or sincerity have disadvantage.

### INSCRUTABLE CHARACTERISTICS

#### d6 Characteristic

- 1 I was educated by a sphinx in the Dakra Isles.
- 2 I am a devout adherent to one of Meletis's schools of philosophy (detailed in chapter 3).
- 3 I only speak in the past tense, as if all things I say have already transpired.
- 4 I have sworn a vow to allow no living person to see behind the mask that covers my face at all times.
- 5 Why wouldn't I phrase every statement as a question?
- 6 I was born a sphinx, but a god cursed me into humanoid form and saddled me with the limits of mortal knowledge. I won't rest until I break the curse.

## LIFELONG COMPANION

Behind many heroes is another hero whose greatness comes from the support and love they offer. Haktos had his beloved Perynes, Renata was accompanied by her servant Karados, and Siona sailed with her devoted crew. Like these partners, you are great and make others great. Consider the Companion Relationships table when determining your legendary connection. Any relationship with another player's character requires that player's consent. Additionally, you gain the following traits.

**Boon Aura.** Your allies within 5 feet of you have advantage on saving throws against being frightened or charmed, provided you aren't incapacitated.

**Companion's Protection.** When a creature you can see within 5 feet of you is hit by an attack roll, you can use your reaction to cause the attack to hit you instead. Once you use this trait, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

### COMPANION RELATIONSHIPS

#### d6 Relationship

- 1 Another character is my lover or dearest friend.
- 2 Another character is my sibling.
- 3 Another character is my parent or child.
- 4 Another character is a champion of my god.
- 5 After admiring another character from afar, I've finally won a position by their side.
- 6 I want nothing more than for another character to recognize my devotion and love me in return.

## MYTHS OF THEROS

The world of Theros is alive with myths. From stories about the deeds of gods that explain the workings of the world to inspirational (or cautionary) tales of heroes, remarkable tales spread in countless ways, be they diversions, lessons, or songs. Just as in Theros, throughout this book you'll find numerous tales of great deeds, magical origins, grim tragedies, and more. In each case, such myths appear in sidebars like "Myth of the First Kings of Meletis." These cues note the legendary places these stories occupy in the minds of Theros's people and their place as tales that endlessly play out among the constellations of Nyx.

## NYXBORN

Born from the minds of the gods, the creatures that populate the gods' realm are called Nyxborn. Nyxborn creatures resemble mortal beings, but philosophers debate their true character. Are they idealized forms of mortal beings, free from the imperfections and transience that causes mortals to suffer and die? Or are they hollow and soulless shades, lacking the authenticity and pathos that make mortal existence worthwhile?

A Nyxborn is like a fragment of divinity, an idea or a dream that is incarnate. You embody an idea—like the way leaves turn toward the sun or the feeling of ocean sand between the toes, the way the heart stirs when the tide of battle changes or the sadness that lingers when remembering a happy moment of childhood.

These ideas, dreams, memories, and feelings are the stuff Nyx is made of, and a Nyxborn is shaped from that raw material. You might have been specifically crafted by one of the gods to serve a certain purpose. Or your existence could be an accident caused by a confluence of supernatural forces. The Nyxborn Origin table offers a handful of suggestions that might explain how you came to be, and the Nyxborn Quirks table describes some special effects that might linger around your person.

Additionally, you gain the following traits.

**Cloak of Stars.** As an action, you wrap yourself in a starry cloak, appearing like a silhouette formed of the night sky. When you do, attack rolls have disadvantage against you. This cloak lasts for 1 minute, until you doff it (no action required), or until you die. Once you use this trait, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

**Nyxborn Resistance.** You have resistance to necrotic and radiant damage.

### NYXBORN ORIGIN

#### d6 Origin

- 1 One of my parents is a nyxborn, a nymph, or some other supernatural creature.
- 2 I was formed from Nyx by one of the gods to serve as a divine emissary.
- 3 I'm a side effect of some other divine action.
- 4 A god witnessed my birth, making me what I am.
- 5 I was rescued from the Underworld and took on supernatural characteristics when I returned to life.
- 6 I'm a song or other work of art brought to life.



HEROES AND LIFELONG COMPANIONS,  
KYNAIOS AND TIRO FOUNDED MELETIS AND RULED AS ITS FIRST KINGS.

## NYXBORN QUIRKS

### d6 Quirk

- 1 Whenever my weapon strikes something, the weapon gives off a shower of starry sparks.
- 2 My hair moves as if in a perpetual breeze.
- 3 My anger smells like burning autumn leaves.
- 4 When the sun shines on me just so, I glimmer with many colors.
- 5 My laughter causes nearby birds to erupt in song.
- 6 People who sleep near me always dream of the sea.

## ORACLE

You possess a precious gift coveted not just by mortals but by the gods themselves: the gift of clear communication between the mortal and divine realms. As an oracle, you can perceive the whims of the gods and petition them for glimpses of their vast insight. This gift also comes with a curse, though, which typically takes the form of dire insights. Consult the Oracle Curse table to determine what unwanted revelations you receive.

The gods seek mortal oracles to act as their agents. As a result, most oracles devote themselves to the service of a single god and learn to ignore the voices of all others. Occasionally, two gods agree to share the services of an oracle. Oracles who try to remain independent often find themselves pursued by the agents of evil gods who would bind them to the god's service, if necessary.

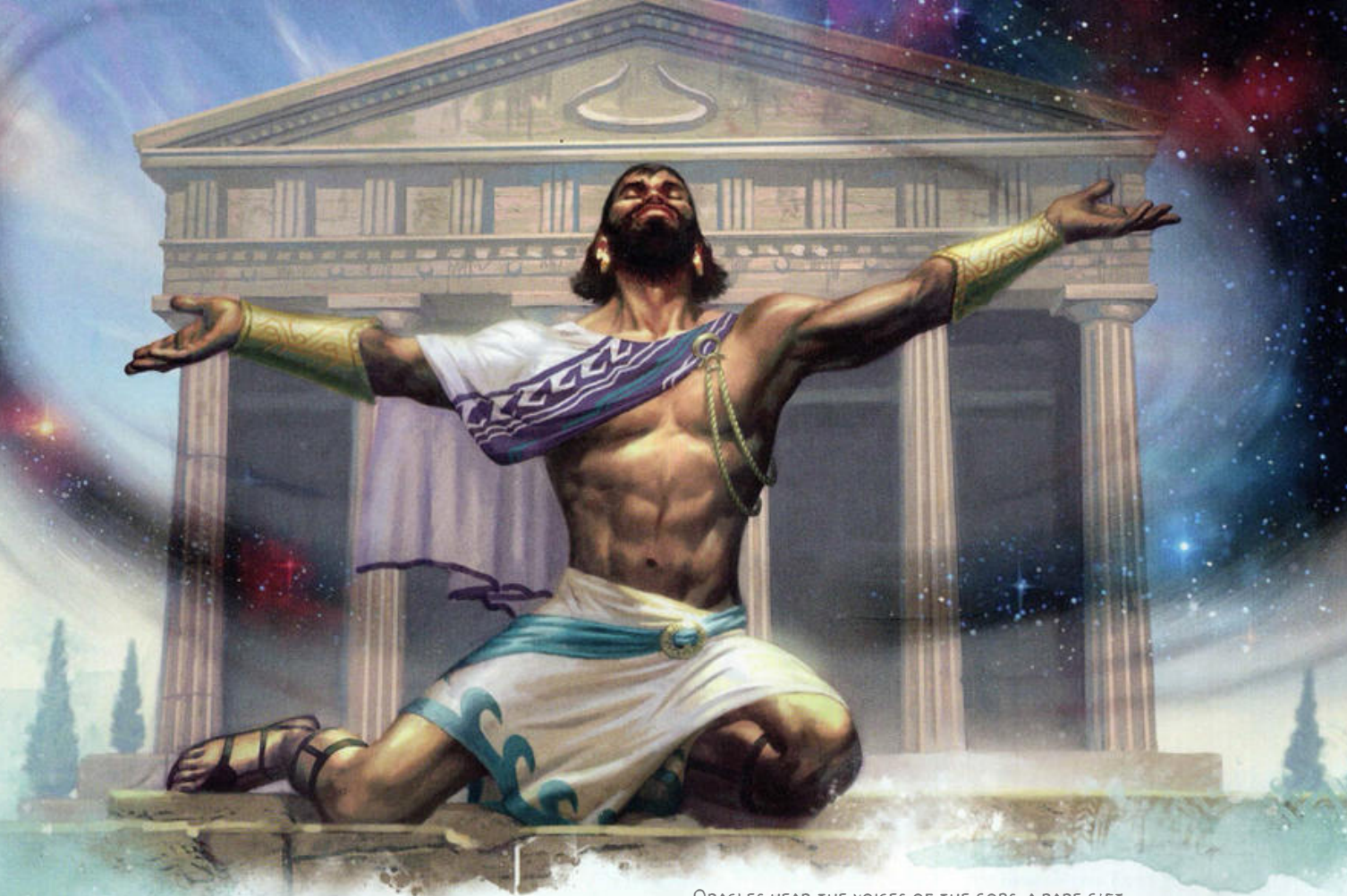
## MYTH OF THE FIRST KINGS OF MELETIS

In ages past, the peoples of what would one day become Meletis were ruled by the archon tyrant Agnomakhos. Unchecked for generations, the vicious overlord carved out a mighty empire. Willing to endure the immortal's cruelty no longer, the heroes Kynaïos and Tiro—united by their love of freedom and one another—rose to challenge him. The people rallied to their cause, and through strength of arms, magic, and devotion, they defeated Agnomakhos. The polis of Meletis rose from the ruins of the archon's empire, established as a beacon of freedom and enlightenment, and its people chose Kynaïos and Tiro to be its first kings.

You gain the following traits.

**Ears of the Oracle.** You can speak, read, and write Celestial, the language of the gods. In addition, a god might deliver a message through you, and you can decide whether to use your own voice or to allow the god's voice to come through your mouth to deliver the message, translated into any language you speak.

**Oracle's Insight.** The gods give you flashes of insight that help you bring your efforts to fruition. When you make an ability check, you can roll a d10 and add the number rolled to the check. You can wait until after you roll the d20 before deciding to add the d10, but you must decide before the DM says whether the roll succeeds or fails. Once you use this trait, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.



ORACLES HEAR THE VOICES OF THE GODS, A RARE GIFT AND SOMETIMES A CURSE.

**Oracle's Piety.** Your oracular abilities improve as your piety score increases. Instead of gaining the piety benefits associated with any god (as described in chapter 2), you gain the following traits when you reach the specified piety score.

Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for any spell that you cast through these traits.

### AUGUR

#### *Piety 3+ Oracle trait*

You can cast *augury* as a ritual with this trait. Once you do so, you can't cast it in this way again until you finish a long rest.

### SEER

#### *Piety 10+ Oracle trait*

You can cast *divination* as a ritual with this trait. Once you do so, you can't cast it in this way again until you finish a long rest.

### SIBYL

#### *Piety 25+ Oracle trait*

You can cast *commune* as a ritual with this trait. Once you do so, you can't cast it in this way again until you finish a long rest.

You also can't be surprised, provided you aren't incapacitated.

### DIVINE ORACLE

#### *Piety 50+ Oracle trait*

You can increase your Intelligence or Wisdom score by 2, as well as increasing your maximum for the chosen score by 2.

### ORACLE CURSE

#### d8 Flaw

- 1 I know exactly how I'm going to die, and I can't do or say anything to prevent it.
- 2 People who consult me for information rarely believe the answers I give them.
- 3 I'm haunted by nightmares foretelling the deaths of people I've never met.
- 4 I'm often distracted by the sights and sounds of things that other people can't perceive.
- 5 A horrible monster in Nyx watches me constantly, and I see it every time I venture outdoors.
- 6 Any time I grow close to someone, I see them aged, dying, or dead.
- 7 Whenever I receive a divine vision, I get an intense pain in my head or chest.
- 8 One of the gods intends to use me as an oracle whether I want to listen or not.

## PIOUS

Born with a particular connection to a deity, you have been winning favor with your god since birth. Consult the Pious Quirks table to determine how your faith might influence your personality. Additionally, you gain the following traits.

**Pious Protection.** If you fail a saving throw, you can reroll it, and you must use the new roll. Once you use this trait, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

**Religious Study.** You have advantage on any Intelligence (Religion) check pertaining to your chosen god.

**Starting Piety.** You begin with a piety score of 3 with your chosen god.

### PIOUS QUIRKS

#### d6 Quirk

- 1 I often call people by the name of my god (or another god) by accident.
- 2 I stay up late at night watching the stars in hopes that my god will share a message with me.
- 3 I'm deeply jealous of my god's oracles, who seem to have a more intimate relationship with my god than I can ever hope to attain.
- 4 I dream of one day entering Nyx and being granted a permanent place at my god's side.
- 5 I have no home besides the temples of my god.
- 6 I can't prove it, but I suspect that my god might actually be my parent.

## UNSCARRED

Like the great hero Haktos, you are resistant to physical harm. Use the Unscarred Origin table to determine how you gained your legendary invulnerability. Additionally, you gain the following trait.

**Unscarred Resilience.** When you take damage, you can use your reaction to roll a d12. Add your Constitution modifier to the number rolled, and reduce the damage by that total. After you use this trait, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

### UNSCARRED ORIGIN

#### d6 Origin

- 1 I was bathed in hydra's blood as an infant, and my wounds close too quickly to become mortal injuries.
- 2 I swallowed a magic stone that fell from Nyx, which made my skin hard as rock.
- 3 When I was wounded as a child, a god healed me. Now wounds are reluctant to undo the god's work.
- 4 I was rescued from the Underworld, and I'm not sure I fully returned to life—it's always so cold.
- 5 I was born on one of the Dakra Isles. All my people are naturally resilient, a fact I didn't realize until I lost my home and ventured into the world.
- 6 I don't know who one or more of my parents is, but my resilience (and other hints) provide clues to their immortal identity.

## RACES

A diverse assortment of peoples dwell among the lands of Theros. Aside from humans, the races in the *Player's Handbook* are unknown on Theros, unless they're visiting from other worlds.

This chapter provides information about the following common playable races of Theros, as well as racial traits for all of them except humans:

**Humans** on Theros are similar to those found on other D&D worlds: adaptable, ambitious, and wildly diverse.

**Centaur**s employ cunning and equine strength to further the goals of the roaming Lagonna and Pheres bands.

**Leonin** are proud lion-like hunters, many of whom live in defiance of the gods.

**Minotaurs** are infamous for bloodthirstiness, a reputation even the most peaceful struggle to escape.

**Satyr**s follow their passions in the pursuit of wild revels and new adventures.

**Triton**s are an enigmatic, sea-dwelling people with an endless desire to explore.

## HUMAN

The most numerous of Theros's mortal races, humans embody the mortal will to carve out a place for civilization from the wilds. Although other, smaller settlements exist, the majority of humans are associated with one of Theros's three major poleis: Meletis, Akros, and Setessa.

### HUMAN NAMES

Human names tend to honor heroes or philosophers of old—an aspirational nudge from parent to child in the hope that their offspring might one day live up to such a storied name.

Family surnames are uncommon in the human poleis, and people with the same name must find ways to distinguish themselves from one another. Some attach their place of birth or residence to their own names. A merchant from Meletis named Brigone, for example, would be Brigone of Meletis. Others link their name to their trade, like Ristos the Learned, or Alesta the Hunter.

The most prestigious names however, are those earned through deeds or temperament. These names typically mark heroes, such as Hypatia of the Winged Horse, Kalogeros Doomhammer, or Ianthe the Bold.

**Female Names:** Agathe, Alesta, Arissa, Brigone, Cal-laphe, Corisande, Hira, Hypatia, Iadorna, Ianthe, Lidia, Luphea, Nymosyne, Olexa, Polyxene, Psemilla, Rakleia, Sophronia, Telphe, Tikaia, Vala

**Male Names:** Alkmenos, Basarios, Braulios, Drusus, Eocles, Hixus, Kaliaros, Kalogeros, Kanlos, Kleon, Kyttheon, Lanathos, Lindos, Nyklos, Phrogas, Prokopios, Rhexenor, Ristos, Teraklos, Uremides, Verenes, Zenon

## CENTAUR

Powerful and curious, quick to act and knowledgeable of the wider world, centaurs seek to experience life's boundless bounty. The centaurs of Theros are divided into two groups: members of the far-traveling Lagonna band and the proud raiders of the Pheres band. These bands occupy territories situated between the three major human poleis, making them common sights to those who travel human lands. Not ones to settle in permanent homes, though, centaurs might be found wherever there are wonders to be witnessed and adventures to be had.

### MARKINGS OF THE HERD

Though centaurs share the same basic physiology, the centaur bands are commonly associated with their own distinct traits.

Lagonna band centaurs tend to be sleek and muscular, with powerful legs built for endurance rather than speed. They usually have coats of a single color, often with a shine that can look metallic in bright light.

Pheres band centaurs typically have long, nimble legs and lean bodies, and are often marked with natural color patterns on their hide. Pheres centaurs sometimes paint or tattoo their upper bodies to match the patterns on their lower half. Occasionally, a Pheres centaur is born with vertical stripes on their hooves, foretelling an exciting and adventurous life.

### LAGONNA MERCHANT FAMILIES

Lagonna centaurs travel in small merchant family bands called *guri*. These groups frequently trade with Meletis, which provides the biggest market for their wares, but they also do business with Setessa and smaller communities within Akros's lands.

The eldest member of each *guros* typically leads their family. In times of discord, the heads of the *guri* gather to make decisions together. Other members of the *guros* work as traders, gatherers, packers, and scouts. A *guros* has several specialized roles required for success in travel and trade: a barterer, an omener, a courser, and preferably a *koletra*.

A barterer negotiates deals between the *guros* and other traders. Barterers must know the customs of other cultures and speak several different languages.

An omener is an oracle who reads messages from the gods in the natural world and reveals how the immortals would have the *guros* travel.

A courser explores new trade territory for their *guros*. They are expert trackers and navigators, able to venture deep into unexplored territory and unerringly return to their families.

Finally, every *guros* tries to travel with at least one *koletra*, one of the mighty, well-trained warriors of the Lagonna who are said to have the blood of the first, legendary centaur heroes. *Koletras* are said to bring good luck to a band, but are also usually fated to die in defense of their family. Not every *guros* has a *koletra* of its own, and *guri* share their best warriors among each other as a sign of goodwill and a way to forge bonds.

## JOURNEYS OF DISCOVERY

When young Lagonna centaurs become adults, they often leave their band to travel the world on their own. This time of self-discovery, called a *protoporos*, can last anywhere from a few weeks to several years. The Lagonna believe that a *protoporos* helps young centaurs find their place in the world. An omener reads the signs of fortune before sending young centaurs on their way, guiding the first steps of their journey. While most centaurs return to the band eventually, some find their calling elsewhere. When the Lagonna tell tales of their greatest heroes, they often speak of centaurs who found their heroic destiny on a *protoporos*.

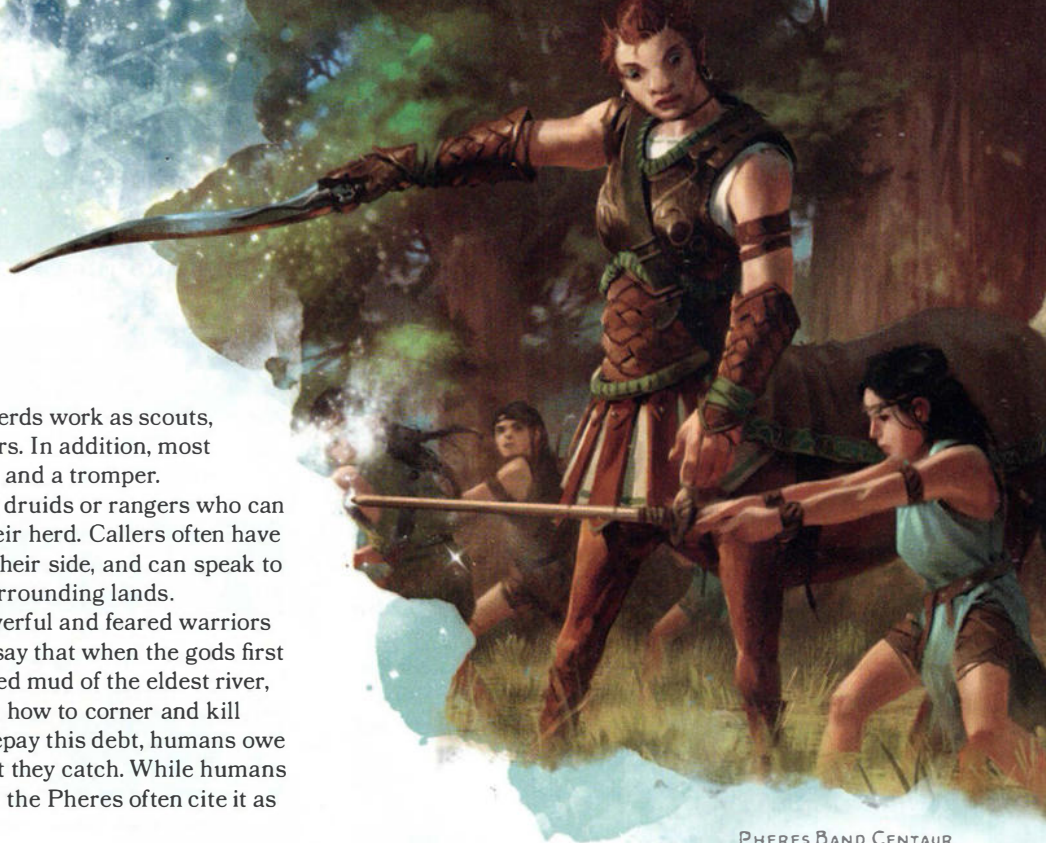
### PHERES RAIDERS

The Pheres roam the wild lands between Setessa and Akros in small raiding herds. These herds are voluntary associations, in contrast to the family groups of the Lagonna. When necessary, several small bands join together in a larger herd to target particularly dangerous but resource-rich targets—be they humanoid traders or roving, greedy monsters. Bands also join together to defeat common threats or to hunt for game.

The Pheres value physical strength, speed, and prowess in both hunting and combat. Often a band is led by the strongest and most dominant warrior, called the charger. However, some bands elevate a tactician or strategist to this venerated position. The Pheres can be brutal and greedy, but they are clever as well, and understand the value of strategic leadership.

LAGONNA BAND CENTAUR





PHERES BAND CENTAUR

Other centaurs in Pheres herds work as scouts, archers, warriors, and foragers. In addition, most Pheres herds contain a caller and a tromper.

Pheres callers are typically druids or rangers who can draw animal assistance to their herd. Callers often have one or more animal allies at their side, and can speak to animals to learn about the surrounding lands.

Trompers are the most powerful and feared warriors of the herd. Centaur legends say that when the gods first fashioned humans from the red mud of the eldest river, Pheres trompers taught them how to corner and kill prey. The story tells that, to repay this debt, humans owe the centaurs a portion of what they catch. While humans don't recall this arrangement, the Pheres often cite it as justification for their raids.

### PHERES RENEGADES

Pheres band members survive by working and fighting together, but still some centaurs choose to strike out on their own. These renegades often feel like outsiders in their own band. They might be pacifists, wishing to learn about other people rather than fighting them. Or they might feel a restlessness in their soul that nothing else can soothe. Though renegades build their own life away from the band, most retain some connection with their past. Some stories tell of renegades returning to help their band in times of need before disappearing once more.

### CENTAUR NAMES

Lagonna centaurs tend to favor names of three or four syllables, often borrowed from cultures they have met during their travels. Pheres centaurs tend to have shorter, sharper sounding names, often appended with an honorific gained in battle.

**Female Lagonna Names:** Honotia, Kelitia, Lileo, Meloe

**Male Lagonna Names:** Aughus, Dririos, Ormasos, Volien

**Female Pheres Names:** Bido, Daxa, Saya, Tesia

**Male Pheres Names:** Eno, Roth, Skelor, Stihl

**Pheres Honorifics:** Threekills, Razorhoof, Unsleeping, Daggereye, Silentstep

### CENTAUR TRAITS

Your centaur character has the following racial traits.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Strength score increases by 2, and your Wisdom score increases by 1.

**Age.** Centaurs mature and age at about the same rate as humans.

**Alignment.** Centaurs are inclined toward neutrality. Lagonna centaurs tend to be more lawful, while Pheres centaurs are more often chaotic.

**Size.** Centaurs stand between 6 and 7 feet tall, with their equine bodies reaching about 4 feet at the withers. Pheres centaurs tend to be slightly larger than Lagonna centaurs. Your size is Medium.

Here's how to determine your height and weight randomly, starting with rolling a size modifier:

Size modifier = 1d10

Height = 6 feet + your size modifier in inches

Weight in pounds = 600 + (2d12 × your size modifier)

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 feet.

**Fey.** Your creature type is fey, rather than humanoid.

**Charge.** If you move at least 30 feet straight toward a target and then hit it with a melee weapon attack on the same turn, you can immediately follow that attack with a bonus action, making one attack against the target with your hooves.

**Hooves.** Your hooves are natural melee weapons, which you can use to make unarmed strikes. If you hit with them, you deal bludgeoning damage equal to 1d4 + your Strength modifier, instead of the bludgeoning damage normal for an unarmed strike.

**Equine Build.** You count as one size larger when determining your carrying capacity and the weight you can push or drag.

In addition, any climb that requires hands and feet is especially difficult for you because of your equine legs. When you make such a climb, each foot of movement costs you 4 extra feet instead of the normal 1 extra foot.

**Survivor.** You have proficiency in one of the following skills of your choice: Animal Handling, Medicine, Nature, or Survival.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write Common and Sylvan.

## LEONIN

The leonin guard the shining lands of Oreskos, a golden plain where even the gods rarely trespass. Prides of these nomadic, lion-like humanoids rarely interact with other peoples, having all they need in their shimmering homeland and knowing the treachery of strangers. Still, some leonin wonder what lies beyond Oreskos's border mountains and seek to test themselves in a wider world.

### NOBLE AND FIERCE

Leonin tend to be tall compared to humans and move with a boldness that suggests their physical might. Tawny fur covers leonin bodies, and some grow thick manes ranging in shades from gold to black. While their hands prove as nimble as those of other humanoids, leonin have retractable feline claws, which they can extend instantly. This, along with their ability to produce bone-shaking roars, gives most leonin an air that readily shifts between regal and fearsome.

Leonin often act with confidence, which can come off as imperiousness. While this can reassure their allies, it can also suggest defiance in the face of what they perceive as imposed authority or unworthy experts.

### QUICK TO QUARREL

Other peoples often perceive leonin as quick to take offense, intolerant of criticism, or belligerent. The truth is that many leonin simply enjoy fighting, whether verbal or physical. They take pleasure in argument, wrestling, sparring, and even battle, enjoying the opportunity to exercise their minds and bodies.

It follows, too, that leonin aren't inclined to carry grudges. A warrior might react with sudden violence to an insult, but when the fight is over (and the leonin's superiority proven), the insult is forgotten—along with the vanquished foe.

### PRIDE AND SELF-RELIANCE

Few leonin devote themselves to the service of the gods. Centuries ago, the leonin worshiped the same gods that humans do, but after many of their prides suffered depravities at the hands of the tyrant Agnomakhos, most leonin rejected the gods. It's not that they deny the existence of deities; they merely see the gods as mercurial and ultimately unworthy of adoration. The Leonin and the Gods table suggests the range of attitudes that leonin might adopt toward the gods.

Leonin rely on themselves and their prides. A pride is bound together by the experience of a shared challenge and, in particular, the sacred act of the hunt. See chapter 3 for more details on Oreskos and the leonin who call that land home.

### LEONIN AND THE GODS

#### d6 Attitude

- 1 I'm amused by the antics of the gods and their earnest, but ultimately deluded, mortal champions, and I feel smugly superior in my detachment.
- 2 The meddling of the gods in mortal affairs makes me angry and bitter. I wish they would just leave us all alone!
- 3 I view the gods as worthy adversaries—incredibly clever and well-prepared to play a long game but ultimately doomed to lose their games.
- 4 I'm certain every bad thing that happens can ultimately be blamed on the gods, but I roll my eyes at each new twist of fate and try to get on with my life.
- 5 I wish that I could be as naive as humans and other mortals who actually think the gods are looking out for them. I miss that kind of innocence.
- 6 I don't talk about it among other leonin, but I actually revere the gods and try to please them by my actions.





LEONIN MATRONS LEAD THE PRIDES OF ORESKOS, PROTECTING THE PLAINS FROM INTERLOPERS.

## LEONIN NAMES

Along with their personal names, leonin identify themselves by their pride. A member of the Flintclaw pride with the personal name of Ziore, for example, would likely style herself as Ziore of the Flintclaw.

**Female Names:** Aletha, Atagone, Demne, Doxia, Ecate, Eriz, Gragonde, Iadma, Koila, Oramne, Seza, Ziore

**Male Names:** Apto, Athoz, Baragon, Bryguz, Eremoz, Gorioz, Grexes, Oriz, Pyxathor, Teoz, Xemnon, Xior

**Pride Names:** Embereye, Flintclaw, Goldenfield, Ironmane, Starfeller, Sunguides

## LEONIN TRAITS

Your leonin character has the following racial traits.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Constitution score increases by 2, and your Strength score increases by 1.

**Age.** Leonin mature and age at about the same rate as humans.

**Alignment.** Leonin tend toward good alignments. Leonin who are focused on the pride lean toward lawful good.

**Size.** Leonin are typically over 6 feet tall, with some standing over 7 feet. Your size is Medium.

Here's how to determine your height and weight randomly, starting with rolling a size modifier:

Size modifier = 2d10

Height = 5 feet + 6 inches + your size modifier in inches

Weight in pounds = 180 + (2d6 × your size modifier)

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 feet.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Claws.** Your claws are natural weapons, which you can use to make unarmed strikes. If you hit with them, you can deal slashing damage equal to 1d4 + your Strength modifier, instead of the bludgeoning damage normal for an unarmed strike.

**Hunter's Instincts.** You have proficiency in one of the following skills of your choice: Athletics, Intimidation, Perception, or Survival.

**Daunting Roar.** As a bonus action, you can let out an especially menacing roar. Creatures of your choice within 10 feet of you that can hear you must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of you until the end of your next turn. The DC of the save equals 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier. Once you use this trait, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write Common and Leonin.

## MINOTAUR

The minotaurs who dwell in the badlands of Phoberos and the remote polis of Skophos are caught between two worlds. Some follow the dark god Mogis, who has tyrannized them for ages untold and shown them a trail of slaughter that is all many minotaurs have ever known. Others, though, have emerged from this bloody path and found a world that welcomes those who pursue their own destinies and heroic callings.

### BUILT TO SURVIVE

Minotaurs are barrel-chested humanoids with heads resembling those of bulls. Their horns range in size from about 1 foot long to great, curling weapons easily three times that length. Theros minotaurs often carve their horns to sharpen their edges, etch symbols of power into them, or sheathe them in bronze to prevent them from shattering during battle.

Thick hair extends down minotaurs' necks and powerful backs, and some have long patches of hair on their chins and cheeks. Their legs end in heavy, cloven hooves, and they have long, tufted tails. Minotaur priests often adorn themselves with sacred items, be they trophies from fallen foes, keepsakes from their homeland, or naturally occurring marks of their god's favor.

### AGES OF DARKNESS

Although minotaurs aren't evil by nature and are free to worship any god, many are raised among those devoted to Mogis's vile whims. Myths tell that Mogis created the first minotaurs from his own followers, typically

criminals and monsters of unspeakable depravity. While many groups of minotaurs still honor their villainous progenitors, others have abandoned their ancestors and moved beyond their crimes, seeking their fates in the future, not the past.

While the inhabitants of Akros and other reaches near Phoberos, the homeland of most minotaur herds, have engaged in endless conflicts with bloodthirsty minotaurs, they know there are those who forsake Mogis's depravities. The people of Meletis, Setessa, and lands beyond are also generally open-minded and curious about minotaurs who wander into their lands. Epics like *The Callapheia* also describe multiple heroic minotaurs. As a result, a minotaur traveling in the company of other non-minotaurs is likely to be accepted in any polis.

See chapter 3 for more details on Phoberos, the minotaur polis of Skophos, and various minotaur bands.

### PASSION AND ZEAL

Minotaurs are known for venting their outrage through violence, but they aren't generally quick to anger. They are passionate, loving their friends and partners fiercely, and they laugh loud and long at good jokes. This zeal also extends to their faith. Those who have avoided the corrupting influence of Mogis gravitate toward the service of gods who share their bold nature, especially Erebus, Keranos, and Purphoros. Those who have rejected Mogis sometimes embrace his hated twin brother, Iroas.

### MINOTAUR NAMES

In the labyrinthine polis of Skophos, the deeds of minotaur champions are carved among the winding halls. Minotaurs often name their children after these great heroes, believing that a child will inherit the strength, audacity, guile, or fearsomeness of a heroic namesake. Other minotaur parents invent their own names, though, believing in their child's potential to light a new constellation in Nyx with the brightness of their own soul.

The Minotaur Namesake table suggests possible qualities or deeds that a minotaur's namesake might have been known for. Your character might strive to emulate that quality or seek to forge a new legacy to be associated with your name by future generations.

**Female Names:** Bozzri, Dhazdoro, Erinimachis, Ghalantzo, Halafoti, Kerania, Mitévra, Philoprodís, Tavromiki, Ypoudoris

**Male Names:** Bamvros, Fotiyinos, Halafotios, Keranios, Menetavro, Nikavros, Prodos, Rhordon, Tavrostenes, Thyrogog

### MINOTAUR NAMESAKE

#### d8 Ancestor's Qualities

- 1 My namesake defeated a massive enemy.
- 2 My namesake was known for fierce devotion to a god.
- 3 My namesake was a respected leader of other warriors.
- 4 My namesake ran the entire breadth of Phoberos in order to warn the minotaurs of an Akroan attack.
- 5 My namesake was famous for great magical ability.
- 6 My namesake was a hero's devoted companion.
- 7 My namesake is remembered for incredible generosity.
- 8 My namesake was a great oracle.





### MINOTAUR TRAITS

Your minotaur character has the following racial traits. These traits are also suitable for minotaurs in other D&D worlds where these people have avoided the demonic influence of Baphomet.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Strength score increases by 2, and your Constitution score increases by 1.

**Age.** Minotaurs mature and age at about the same rate as humans.

**Alignment.** Minotaurs who leave the walls of Skophos have the opportunity to be free of its culture and pursue chaotic alignments, while those who remain within the polis and its tyrannical regime tend toward lawful alignments.

**Size.** Minotaurs average over 6 feet in height, and they have stocky builds. Your size is Medium.

Here's how to determine your height and weight randomly, starting with rolling a size modifier:

Size modifier = 2d8

Height = 5 feet + 4 inches + your size modifier in inches

Weight in pounds = 175 + (2d6 × your size modifier)

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Horns.** Your horns are natural melee weapons, which you can use to make unarmed strikes. If you hit with them, you deal piercing damage equal to 1d6 + your Strength modifier, instead of the bludgeoning damage normal for an unarmed strike.

**Goring Rush.** Immediately after you use the Dash action on your turn and move at least 20 feet, you can make one melee attack with your horns as a bonus action.

### MYTH OF MOGIS AND THE MINOTAURS

Some legends claim that Mogis created the minotaurs, transforming his most bloodthirsty followers so that their hulking bodies resembled his own. However, while the tales told in the labyrinth-polis of Skophos affirm that Mogis rewarded his most devoted followers, they assert that these followers were already minotaurs, and all Mogis did was exalt them to an honored status. Among minotaurs who worship Mogis, these heroes are revered as spiritual if not literal ancestors. The moral of this story is simply that Mogis is a god who rewards his faithful servants.

Minotaurs who don't follow Mogis are quick to point out that this myth says nothing about the nature of minotaurs. The worship of Mogis, they argue, is no more inherent to them than it is to humans, and minotaurs aren't destined to a life of slaughter because of the circumstances of their creation. Perhaps most importantly, minotaurs aren't an offshoot of humanity but a people in their own right, and neither their nature nor their destiny is tied to a single god.

**Hammering Horns.** Immediately after you hit a creature with a melee attack as part of the Attack action on your turn, you can use a bonus action to attempt to shove that target with your horns. The target must be within 5 feet of you and no more than one size larger than you. Unless it succeeds on a Strength saving throw against a DC equal to 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Strength modifier, you push it up to 10 feet away from you.

**Imposing Presence.** You have proficiency in one of the following skills of your choice: Intimidation or Persuasion.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write Common and Minotaur.

## SATYR

Satyrs have a well-earned reputation for their good spirits, gregarious personalities, and love of revels. Most satyrs are driven by simple desires, to see the world and to sample its every pleasure. While their spontaneity and whimsy sometimes put them at odds with more stoic peoples, satyrs rarely let the moodiness of others hinder their own happiness. Life is a blessing from the gods, after all, and the proper response to such a gift, as far as most satyrs are concerned, is to accept it with relish.

### BORN OF THE WILD

In their physical forms, satyrs embody a fusion of humanoid civilization with the freedom of wild beasts. Generally, they look similar to humans, with a range of builds and features. But their goatlike horns, pointed ears, and furred lower bodies sharply distinguish them. Satyrs' solid horns connect to their heads at the base of their skulls, while their legs end in sturdy hooves. Thick fur covers their bodies from the waist down, shorter at the waist and longer below the knees. Short, soft hair grows down their neck and spine, along their shoulders, and on their forearms.

### EMBRACING LIFE

Most satyrs believe that the other peoples of Theros are woefully burdened with the plague of seriousness. Satyrs scoff at the efforts of polis-builders with their laws and right angles, and they poke fun at philosophers with their endless theories and interminable discourse.

Satyrs feel that life is to be lived and experienced with all the senses. Satyrs see the world and everything in it as a book of delights, and they want to explore every page. See chapter 3 for more details on the satyr homeland, the Skola Vale.

### THE ART OF THE REVEL

The humans of the poleis generally think of satyrs' revels as raucous bacchanals, where anything and everything might happen. This picture isn't wrong, but it's incomplete: there's more to a revel than debauchery. For satyrs, revelry is a way of life. It's the delight in small things: the song of a bird, a warm breeze, the smell of a tasty pie, relaxing by a river in the sunshine. Life freely offers these gifts, and for a satyr, they are more valuable than gold or glory. To revel means to forget the constraints of time, to let go of the future and past, and to be wholly in the present moment. For satyrs, encountering life with all the senses honors the gods, and—most importantly—it feels really good. Driven by instinct and intuition, most satyrs prove unpredictable, following their sense of wonder wherever it leads.

### VERY ODD INDEED

Satyrs are known for their eccentricities. Some people spend too much time worrying over why satyrs behave as they do. But satyrs themselves simply are as they are, feeling no need to understand what drives them, much less explain it to others. The Satyr Eccentricities table suggests a few tastes or proclivities your satyr character might possess.

### SATYR ECCENTRICITIES

#### d8 Characteristic

- 1 Flowers are the most amazing things ever. I want to pick them, wear them, and discover their silent secrets.
- 2 There isn't a tree or statue that isn't fun to climb.
- 3 Nothing wards off bad luck like a jolly dance.
- 4 Sometimes talking to a plant really helps.
- 5 If stumped, I smoke a pipe. And if I'm going to smoke a pipe, it's going to be a splendid pipe.
- 6 I imagine that my clothes are my glorious soul on display for all the world to behold, and I dress accordingly.
- 7 Having horns is the best. They are fun to decorate, and they can pop open an amphora, no problem.
- 8 If I have something really important to say, I always make sure to sing it.

### SATYR NAMES

A satyr's name is as playful and mischievous as they are, and each one is given when a satyr's personality shines through. Most satyrs also give each other nicknames.

**Female Names:** Alik, Avra, Chara, Dafni, Eirini, Elpida, Irini, Kaiti, Lia, Niki, Tasia, Xen, Yanna, Zoi

**Male Names:** Alekos, Dimi, Filipp, Ilias, Kyriakos, Neofytos, Omiros, Pantelis, Spyro, Takis, Zenon

**Nicknames:** Bounder, Bristlechin, Clip-Clop, Dappleback, Hopper, Nobblehorn, Orangebeard, Quickfoot, Scrufflebutt, Sunbeam, Skiphoof, Twinkle-Eyes



## SATYR TRAITS

Your satyr character has the following racial traits.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Charisma score increases by 2, and your Dexterity score increases by 1.

**Age.** Satyrs mature and age at about the same rate as humans.

**Alignment.** Satyrs delight in living a life free of the mantle of law. They gravitate toward being good, but some have devious streaks and enjoy causing dismay.

**Size.** Satyrs range from just under 5 feet to about 6 feet in height, with generally slender builds. Your size is Medium.

Here's how to determine your height and weight randomly, starting with rolling a size modifier:

Size modifier = 2d8

Height = 4 feet + 8 inches + your size modifier in inches

Weight in pounds = 100 + (2d4 × your size modifier)

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 feet.

**Fey.** Your creature type is fey, rather than humanoid.

**Ram.** You can use your head and horns to make unarmed strikes. If you hit with them, you deal bludgeoning damage equal to 1d4 + your Strength modifier.

**Magic Resistance.** You have advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Mirthful Leaps.** Whenever you make a long or high jump, you can roll a d8 and add the number rolled to the number of feet you cover, even when making a standing jump. This extra distance costs movement as normal.

**Reveler.** You have proficiency in the Performance and Persuasion skills, and you have proficiency with one musical instrument of your choice.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write Common and Sylvan.

### MYTH OF XENAGOS THE SATYR GOD

The satyr Xenagos savored his reputation for presiding over the most raucous revels his people had ever known. However, when fate led him to discover the nature of the gods and how they were beholden to mortals for their very existence, the whole order of the world felt like a joke—one at his expense.

With immortal power no longer feeling so out of reach, Xenagos set into motion a plan that would propel him to godhood. His victory shook the pantheon, but his victory was short-lived. Heliod dispatched his champion, Elspeth, who faced many trials but ultimately killed the god-satyr by driving the spear, Godsend, through his heart.

Many satyrs remember Xenagos as a satyr who lived life to the fullest and who played tricks that stirred up even the gods. Yet, he's also an example of how bitterness can turn a great trick nasty and how schemes that get out of hand aren't fun for anybody. What satyr wants the responsibility of being a god anyway?





## TRITON

Tritons dwell throughout the Siren Sea, exploring a world of coral forests and secret mountains the “dry-folk” of the surface world will never know. While most live their entire lives beneath the sea, they’re not bound to the deep. Following their inherent curiosity, some tritons venture beyond the waves, seeking to explore a whole world of wonders beyond their own.

### BORN OF THE SEA

Tritons are an amphibious people, at home in the water but mobile on dry land. Their bodies are covered in fine scales that range from yellowish-green through shades of blue to deep purple. Their heads are crowned with prominent crests, and fins sprout from their forearms, calves, and shoulders. Their digits are webbed, allowing them to swim as quickly as they can run.

Well suited to life in the deep, tritons wear little clothing unless armored for battle. They fashion most of their clothes and other items from materials found in the ocean: coral, seaweed, shells, bone, sea urchin spines, the shells of monstrous crustaceans, and so on. Having an old, well-developed civilization, tritons know much of how to refine these materials into garb as rich and weapons as sturdy as any found on land.

### LAND AND SEA

For centuries, dryfolk have fished the seas of Theros and have used the sea’s surface as a means of travel.

## MYTH OF DALAKOS AND THE KRAKEN

Dalakos considered himself a triton like any other—curious, quick-minded, maybe even blessed with exceptional cleverness by the gods. But he was unfocused and easily distracted, his potential scattered like seeds on stone. It wasn’t until a kraken rose from the ocean’s deepest depths and began a rampage that threatened Dalakos’s community that he was forced to focus. As the beast drew closer, Dalakos sought ways to turn the monstrosity from its path. He worked day and night, but ultimately his plans failed. All that Dalakos knew was destroyed, obliterated by the might of the kraken.

Yet the kraken carried on, moving toward a coastal human settlement. Amid the ruins of his home, Dalakos had a revelation. Working desperately, the triton crafted a miraculous device, one that ultimately laid low the kraken and saved the town. Today, Dalakos resides inside the kraken’s shell, where he works day and night, his heart broken, but his mind forever focused on bringing his gifts to life.

Many tritons interpret this as an intrusion into their domains. As a result, some warlike triton communities respond with periodic strikes against sailors and fishing vessels. Others believe that turnabout is fair play and so venture onto land to hunt for meat, steal supplies from coastal travelers, or raid dryfolk poleis for riches.

Despite the tensions between tritons and the peoples of the surface, some tritons make their lives on land. Enchanted by the feeling of the winds, the rustle of leaves, the ingenuity of land-dwelling inventors, or any of countless other surface-world charms, every triton living beyond the waves does so for their own reasons. In some places, like the polis of Meletis, whole triton communities flourish among dryfolk neighbors. See chapter 3 for more details on the tritons of Meletis and the Siren Sea.

## HAND OF THASSA

While tritons pay respects to many gods, they tend to revere Thassa, god of the sea, above all other deities. Her devotees see her as the primary god of the pantheon, believing she will bring their people to ascendancy over the monsters of the sea and the poleis of the land.

## DEPTHS OF CURIOSITY

Many tritons are intrigued by surface culture. The curious among them venture into sunken ruins and shipwrecks, sifting through the debris for whatever grabs their attention. Often these tritons develop collections of a specific kind of object or lore, trading with one another as they develop a sort of expertise in their field. Some tritons approach investigations of the dryfolk with scientific rigor. Such scholars often hold theories to go along with their collections, hypotheses many are eager to test upon meeting new dryfolk.

## TRITON NAMES

A triton’s name is a symbol of choice. Upon reaching adulthood, a triton might shed the name they were given by their parents for one of their own choosing. Some opt to keep their name, but the majority select one that represents the adult they’ve become. Tritons might even go on to choose yet other names, as they shift

from one phase of life to another, or after significant life events. Leaving a home community or transitioning to live among dryfolk might constitute such life changes. Tritons also have a fluid concept of gender and might switch names freely as they shift gender identities.

**Female Names:** Amathe, Gnorcys, Leurybia, Margomestra, Nereones, Oleia, Samathe, Saphiro, Tethene, Theaneia, Thectra

**Male Names:** Bysseus, Cetos, Galaukus, Galiton, Kenessos, Odexes, Palamon, Pontreus, Rhe-teus, Thrasios

### TRITON TRAITS

Your triton character has the following racial traits.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Strength, Constitution, and Charisma scores each increase by 1.

**Age.** Tritons reach maturity around age 15 and can live up to 200 years.

**Alignment.** Tritons tend toward neutrality. Their culture encourages them to be mindful of life's currents, knowing when to harness fate's tides and when to flow along with them.

**Size.** Tritons are slightly shorter than humans, averaging about 5 feet tall. Your size is Medium.

Here's how to determine your height and weight randomly, starting with rolling a size modifier:

Size modifier = 2d10

Height = 4 feet + 6 inches + your size modifier in inches

Weight in pounds = 90 + (2d4 × your size modifier)

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 feet, and you have a swimming speed of 30 feet.

**Amphibious.** You can breathe air and water.

**Control Air and Water.** You can cast *fog cloud* with this trait. Starting at 3rd level, you can cast *gust of wind* with it, and starting at 5th level, you can also cast *wall of water* with it (see the spell below). Once you cast a spell with this trait, you can't cast that spell with it again until you finish a long rest. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Emissary of the Sea.**

Aquatic beasts have an extraordinary affinity with your people. You can

communicate simple ideas with beasts that can breathe water. They can understand your words, though you have no special ability to understand them in return.

**Guardians of the Depths.** Adapted to the frigid ocean depths, you have resistance to cold damage.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write Common and Primordial.

### SPELL: WALL OF WATER

3rd-level evocation

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 60 feet

**Components:** V, S, M (a drop of water)

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 10 minutes

You create a wall of water on the ground at a point you can see within range. You can make the wall up to 30 feet long, 10 feet high, and 1 foot thick, or you can make a ringed wall up to 20 feet in diameter, 20 feet high, and 1 foot thick. The wall vanishes when the spell ends. The wall's space is difficult terrain.

Any ranged weapon attack that enters the wall's space has disadvantage on the attack roll, and fire damage is halved if the fire effect passes through the wall to reach its target. Spells that deal cold damage that pass through the wall cause the area of the wall they pass through to freeze solid (at least a 5-foot-square section is frozen). Each 5-foot-square frozen section has AC 5 and 15 hit points. Reducing a frozen section to 0 hit points destroys it. When a section is destroyed, the wall's water doesn't fill it.





AN UNRIVALED ORATOR, THE CENTAUR PERISOPHIA GUIDES MELETIS AS A MEMBER OF THE POLIS'S RULING COUNCIL, THE TWELVE.

## SUBCLASS OPTIONS

At 3rd level, a bard chooses a Bard College and a paladin chooses a Sacred Oath. This section offers the College of Eloquence for bards and the Oath of Glory for paladins, expanding their options for that choice.

### BARD: COLLEGE OF ELOQUENCE

Adherents of the College of Eloquence master the art of oratory. Persuasion is regarded as a high art, and a well-reasoned, well-spoken argument often proves more persuasive than facts. These bards wield a blend of logic and theatrical wordplay, winning over skeptics and detractors with logical arguments and plucking at heartstrings to appeal to the emotions of audiences.

#### SILVER TONGUE

*3rd-level College of Eloquence feature*

You are a master at saying the right thing at the right time. When you make a Charisma (Persuasion) or Charisma (Deception) check, you can treat a d20 roll of 9 or lower as a 10.

#### UNSETTLING WORDS

*3rd-level College of Eloquence feature*

You can spin words laced with magic that unsettle a creature and cause it to doubt itself. As a bonus action, you can expend one use of your Bardic Inspiration and choose one creature you can see within 60 feet of you. Roll the Bardic Inspiration die. The creature must subtract the number rolled from the next saving throw it makes before the start of your next turn.

#### UNFAILING INSPIRATION

*6th-level College of Eloquence feature*

Your inspiring words are so persuasive that others feel driven to succeed. When a creature adds one of your Bardic Inspiration dice to its ability check, attack roll, or saving throw and the roll fails, the creature can keep the Bardic Inspiration die.

#### UNIVERSAL SPEECH

*6th-level College of Eloquence feature*

You have gained the ability to make your speech intelligible to any creature. As an action, choose one or more creatures within 60 feet of you, up to a number equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum of one creature). The chosen creatures can magically understand you, regardless of the language you speak, for 1 hour.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest, unless you expend a spell slot to use it again.

#### INFECTIOUS INSPIRATION

*14th-level College of Eloquence feature*

When you successfully inspire someone, the power of your eloquence can now spread to someone else. When a creature within 60 feet of you adds one of your Bardic Inspiration dice to its ability check, attack roll, or saving throw and the roll succeeds, you can use your reaction to encourage a different creature (other than yourself) that can hear you within 60 feet of you, giving it a Bardic Inspiration die without expending any of your Bardic Inspiration uses.

You can use this reaction a number of times equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum of once), and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

## PALADIN: OATH OF GLORY

Paladins who take the Oath of Glory believe they and their companions are destined to achieve glory through deeds of heroism. They train diligently and encourage their companions so they're all ready when destiny calls.

### TENETS OF GLORY

The tenets of the Oath of Glory drive a paladin to attempt heroics that might one day shine in legend.

**Actions over Words.** Strive to be known by glorious deeds, not words.

**Challenges Are but Tests.** Face hardships with courage, and encourage your allies to face them with you.

**Hone the Body.** Like raw stone, your body must be worked so its potential can be realized.

**Discipline the Soul.** You must marshal the discipline to overcome failings within yourself that threaten to dim the glory of you and your friends.

### OATH SPELLS

#### 3rd-level Oath of Glory feature

You gain oath spells at the paladin levels listed in the Oath of Glory Spells table. See the Sacred Oath class feature for how oath spells work.

### OATH OF GLORY SPELLS

Paladin Level	Spells
3rd	<i>guiding bolt, heroism</i>
5th	<i>enhance ability, magic weapon</i>
9th	<i>haste, protection from energy</i>
13th	<i>compulsion, freedom of movement</i>
17th	<i>commune, flame strike</i>

### CHANNEL DIVINITY

#### 3rd-level Oath of Glory feature

You gain the following two Channel Divinity options. See the Sacred Oath class feature for how Channel Divinity works.

**Peerless Athlete.** As a bonus action, you can use your Channel Divinity to augment your athleticism. For the next 10 minutes, you have advantage on Strength (Athletics) and Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks; you can carry, push, drag, and lift twice as much weight as normal; and the distance of your long and high jumps increases by 10 feet (this extra distance costs movement as normal).

**Inspiring Smite.** Immediately after you deal damage to a creature with your Divine Smite feature, you can use your Channel Divinity as a bonus action and distribute temporary hit points to creatures of your choice within 30 feet of you, which can include you. The total number of temporary hit points equals 2d8 + your level in this class, divided among the chosen creatures however you like.

### AURA OF ALACRITY

#### 7th- and 18th-level Oath of Glory feature

You emanate an aura that fills you and your companions with supernatural speed, allowing you to race across a battlefield in formation. Your walking speed increases by 10 feet. In addition, if you aren't incapacitated, the

walking speed of any ally who starts their turn within 5 feet of you increases by 10 feet until the end of that turn.

When you reach 18th level in this class, the range of the aura increases to 10 feet.

### GLORIOUS DEFENSE

#### 15th-level Oath of Glory feature

You can turn defense into a sudden strike. When you or another creature you can see within 10 feet of you is hit by an attack roll, you can use your reaction to grant a bonus to the target's AC against that attack, potentially causing it to miss. The bonus equals your Charisma modifier (minimum of +1). If the attack misses, you can make one weapon attack against the attacker as part of this reaction, provided the attacker is within your weapon's range.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum of once), and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

### LIVING LEGEND

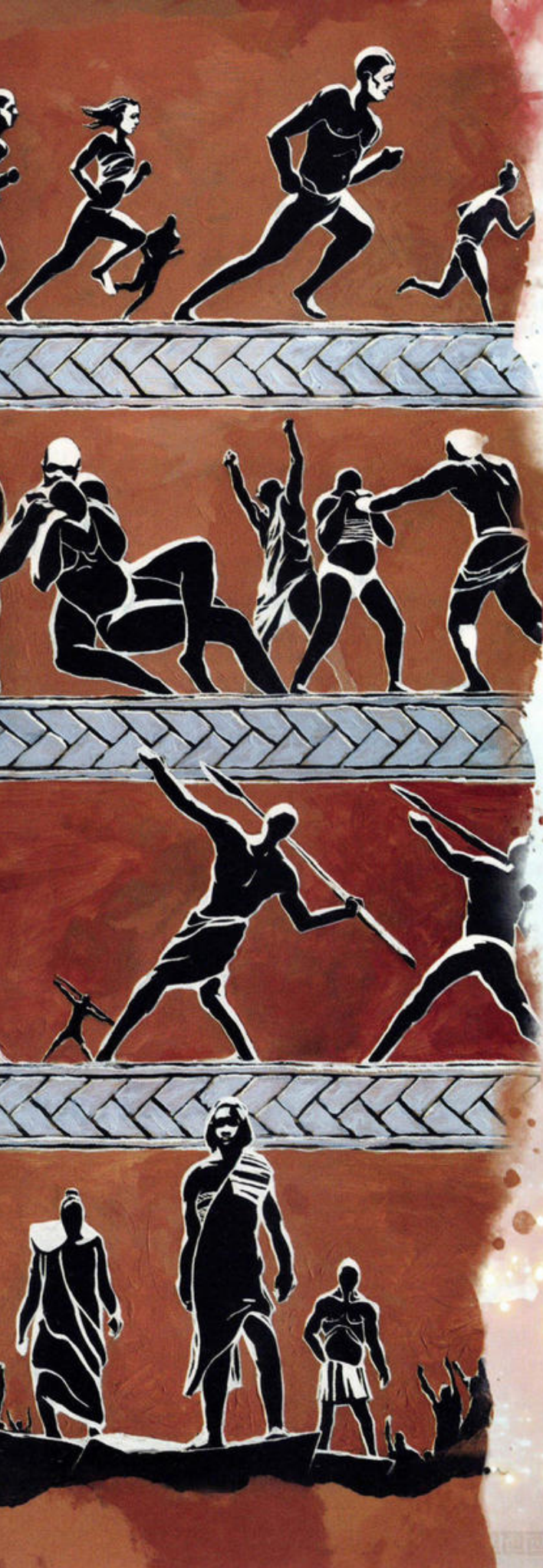
#### 20th-level Oath of Glory feature

You can empower yourself with the legends—whether true or exaggerated—of your great deeds. As a bonus action, you gain the following benefits for 1 minute:

- You are blessed with an otherworldly presence, gaining advantage on all Charisma checks.
- Once on each of your turns when you make a weapon attack and miss, you can cause that attack to hit instead.
- If you fail a saving throw, you can use your reaction to reroll it. You must use this new roll.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest, unless you expend a 5th-level spell slot to use it again.





## BACKGROUND

Remarkable individuals from all walks of life seek their destinies among the lands of Theros, from devout servants of the gods, to triumph-hungry athletes.

While the heroes of Theros might come from any of the backgrounds presented in the *Player's Handbook*, the gods have a way of interceding in the lives of those meant for greatness. When determining your character's backstory, consider how the gods have influenced your life. The gods are pervasive in the stories and cultures of Theros, and even their devout followers shouldn't feel bound to choose a faith-focused background like acolyte. The gods' followers come from all walks of life, and any heroic soul might find themselves thrust into the midst of divine schemes.

Whether or not your character is exceptionally devout, consider reviewing the deities presented in chapter 2 and see if you gravitate toward one. Perhaps this god has a special interest in you, is the deity your family has hailed as a patron for generations, or embodies values you hold close. Based on this, consider that chapter's possibilities for how you might have earned that immortal's favor (if indeed you have) and alternate background ideals related to their worship—along with other boons that might entice you into their service.

Your character doesn't need to be a follower of any of the gods, but if you're not, there's likely a reason why you've avoided them.

In addition to the gods, the supernatural gifts presented earlier in this chapter might influence your background. Consider what story emerges from your combination of supernatural gift, background, and other choices.

Beyond these options, the athlete background presented here provides a new way to seek glory through discipline and physical prowess.

### MYTHS OF THE IROAN GAMES

Competitors seeking a place among the athletes of legend endlessly push themselves to claim victory during Akros's world-renowned annual contest, the Iroan Games. The deeds of past victors set a high bar for those who follow.

In recent memory, the famed wrestler Lanathos bested all rivals and, after a day-long struggle, a wild Akroan bull.

When the pankratiast Nymosyne had her contest interrupted by a cyclops attack, she threw her rival at the creature, then snapped the brute's neck with her bare hands.

Perhaps most dramatically, though, was the recent victory of the Akroan hunter Arissa. While waiting to claim her second place award, Arissa witnessed a Nyxborn bat-creature snatch an infant from the crowd. The hunter threw her javelin an impossible distance, skewered the bat-thing, then caught the child as it fell. Collectively, the other assembled competitors gave Arissa their awards, and the hunter claimed her citizenship among the Akroan lektoi.

Who knows what legends will unfold during next year's Iroan Games?

## ATHLETE

You strive to perfect yourself physically and in execution of everything you do. The thrill of competition lights fire in your blood, and the roar of the crowd drives you forward. Tales of your exploits precede you and might open doors or loosen tongues.

Whether in one of the poleis, between them, or among the nonhuman peoples of Theros, physical contests and those who pursue them command respect bordering on reverence. Athletes arise from all walks of life and all cultures and quite often cross paths with one another.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Acrobatics, Athletics

**Languages:** One of your choice

**Tool Proficiencies:** Vehicles (land)

**Equipment:** A bronze discus or leather ball, a lucky charm or past trophy, a set of traveler's clothes, and a pouch containing 10 gp

### FAVORED EVENT

While many athletes practice various games and events, most excel at a single form of competition. Roll or choose from the options in the Favored Event table to determine the athletic event in which you excel.

#### FAVORED EVENT

##### d8 Favored Event

- 1 Marathon
- 2 Long-distance running
- 3 Wrestling
- 4 Boxing
- 5 Chariot or horse race
- 6 Pankration (mixed unarmed combat)
- 7 Hoplite race (racing in full armor with a unit)
- 8 Pentathlon (running, long jump, discus, javelin, wrestling)

### FEATURE: ECHOES OF VICTORY

You have attracted admiration among spectators, fellow athletes, and trainers in the region that hosted your past athletic victories. When visiting any settlement within 100 miles of where you grew up, there is a 50 percent chance you can find someone there who admires you and is willing to provide information or temporary shelter.

Between adventures, you might compete in athletic events sufficient enough to maintain a comfortable lifestyle, as per the "Practicing a Profession" downtime activity in chapter 8 of the *Player's Handbook*.

### SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

Competition can forge strong bonds between teammates and rivals or ignite bitter feuds that burn outside the arena. Athletes often apply lessons from their training to their lives in general.

## ATHLETE PERSONALITY TRAITS

### d8 Personality Trait

- 1 I feel most at peace during physical exertion, be it exercise or battle.
- 2 I don't like to sit idle.
- 3 I have a daily exercise routine that I refuse to break.
- 4 Obstacles exist to be overcome.
- 5 When I see others struggling, I offer to help.
- 6 I love to trade banter and gibes.
- 7 Anything worth doing is worth doing best.
- 8 I get irritated if people praise someone else and not me.

## ATHLETE IDEALS

### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Competition.** I strive to test myself in all things. (Chaotic)
- 2 **Triumph.** The best part of winning is seeing my rivals brought low. (Evil)
- 3 **Camaraderie.** The strongest bonds are forged through struggle. (Good)
- 4 **People.** I strive to inspire my spectators. (Neutral)
- 5 **Tradition.** Every game has rules, and the playing field must be level. (Lawful)
- 6 **Growth.** Lessons hide in victory and defeat. (Any)

## ATHLETE BONDS

### d6 Bond

- 1 My teammates are my family.
- 2 I will overcome a rival and prove myself their better.
- 3 My mistake got someone hurt. I'll never make that mistake again.
- 4 I will be the best for the honor and glory of my home.
- 5 The person who trained me is the most important person in my world.
- 6 I strive to live up to a specific hero's example.

## ATHLETE FLAWS

### d6 Flaw

- 1 I indulge in a habit that threatens my reputation or my health.
- 2 I'll do absolutely anything to win.
- 3 I ignore anyone who doesn't compete and anyone who loses to me.
- 4 I have lingering pain from old injuries.
- 5 Any defeat or failure on my part is because my opponent cheated.
- 6 I must be the captain of any group I join.



RESPONDING TO A SINGLE SAILOR'S SLIGHT, VENGEFUL KERANOS, GOD OF STORMS, SENDS LIGHTNING TO STRIKE A MELETIAN GALLEY ON THE SIREN SEA.



## GODS OF THEROS

**A**BIRD SHRIEKED AS IT TOOK FLIGHT FROM a branch above her. Through the gaps in the rustling canopy, she could see the god-forms shift in and out of focus. The night sky was known as Nyx, the realm of the gods. Every night, the heavens displayed fleeting visions of gods and celestial creatures. Some lingered for just seconds. But sometimes the pantheon enacted entire scenes for mortal eyes to witness. Lidia rarely took time to step outside her home and watch the heavens, but now there was no place else to rest her eyes. Tonight the god-forms were vivid, and her heart beat faster as she watched their battle unfold.

—Jenna Helland, *Godsend*

A pantheon of fifteen gods guides religious life on Theros. From the sun and agriculture to death and passage into the Underworld, the gods oversee the forces of nature and the most important aspects of mortal life. These gods are quite real to the people of Theros, who see them moving across the sky at night and sometimes encounter them face to face. Thus, most people perform rituals and devotions that honor various gods, hoping to win their favor and stave off their wrath. They tell and retell the stories of the gods' deeds—even as they watch those stories continue to play out in the vastness of the night sky.

Not every mortal serves or acknowledges the gods, though. Some philosophers in the schools of Meletis teach that the gods of the pantheon are subordinate to a higher reality, perhaps Nyx itself. And other people, particularly leonin, believe that the gods are undeserving of mortal reverence.

### DIVINE CHARACTERISTICS

The gods of Theros are far more active than the deities of most D&D worlds. But that doesn't mean they are ordinary creatures—they aren't mere mortals, nor are they monsters that can be fought.

Further, the gods of Theros aren't omnipotent. Although they are physically and magically powerful, ageless, and all but indestructible, their actions are bound by the decrees of Klothys. They can tangle the threads of destiny to a point, but they are forbidden from overstepping their assigned places in the pantheon.

The god Kruphix is able to confine them to Nyx, preventing any direct interaction between the gods and the mortal world.

Likewise, the gods aren't omniscient, though they see and hear everything that occurs inside their temples and before their altars. They have perfect recall of everything they experience. Certain liminal spaces—cave mouths, shorelines, crossroads, forest edges, and so on—enable mortal voices to reach the gods as well, though most gods have little reason to pay attention to what is spoken there.

Gods can speak directly to their oracles. They can appear in the dreams of mortals or manipulate natural phenomena to create omens. They can also create Nyx-born creatures to serve as messengers or emissaries.

Gods grant their clerics the ability to cast spells, and they can effortlessly duplicate the effect of any spell they could grant (any spell on the cleric spell list, as well as any domain spell from their domains). They also have broad influence over aspects of the world associated with their portfolios, beyond what can be defined by spell effects. For example, Purphoros can make a volcano erupt, and Thassa can call up a tidal wave. Gods can bestow supernatural blessings on mortals, and they can lay terrible curses (such as when Mogis turned a herd of cattle into catoblepases).

The gods can assume any form they choose. They most commonly appear as humanoids—the form in which the people of Theros most easily imagine them—but on an enormous scale. They often seem to be walking across the dome of the sky, with their feet disappearing just below the horizon. Any part of a god's body that isn't directly lit takes on the appearance of the starry night sky of Nyx. The gods sometimes also appear as animals or magical creatures, or they manifest in insubstantial forms like sunlight or wind.

When physically present in the mortal world, a god is capable of devastating physical attacks. Heliod's spear striking the polis of Olantin caused it to sink forever into the sea, and an errant blow from Purphoros's hammer shaped the mountains.

The power of the gods exceeds that of any mortal being. Even so, a god killing another god—let alone a mortal attempting the task—is virtually inconceivable. Any kind of direct confrontation against a god by mortals would require the assistance of at least one other god, and ideally more than one, to have any hope of success. A group of adventurers might try to convince

a group of gods to lend their aid against a god who has become a threat to the mortal world, hoping to get the gods to band together to restrain or punish the offender. Kruphix or Klothys might be able to force a god into a physical form that doesn't fill the sky (perhaps something similar to an empyrean or the tarrasque), which could enable adventurers to battle the god, especially if they have access to a divine weapon like the artifacts detailed in chapter 5. But defeating the god in that form would merely weaken the deity, allowing other members of the pantheon to capture, bind, or punish them.

## DIVINE RELATIONSHIPS

The pantheon of Theros is a family—a large, often dysfunctional family riven with petty jealousies and rivalries but also held together by genuine affection, admiration, and cooperation. It is easiest, after all, for mortals to conceive of gods that are very much like themselves, and the gods of Theros are very humanlike in their foibles and their exploits.

The pantheon of Theros has expanded through four generations of divine evolution. Some tales describe these as actual generations, suggesting (for example) that the storm god, Keranos, is the literal son of Thassa, god of the sea, and Purphoros, god of the forge. Others describe the generations in metaphorical terms, suggesting that Keranos represents the combination of Purphoros's creative energy and Thassa's deep knowledge, resulting in lightning-like flashes of inspiration (as well as the fury of a physical storm). In all their various forms, though, the myths agree on the basic structure of the pantheon's development.

The time of the first generation precedes the presence of what are commonly understood to be “gods.” Before mortals dreamed the gods into being, before they could even imagine beings as noble as the gods, the malleable dream-substance of Nyx gave shape to their fears in the form of the titans.

The titans were beings of utter chaos, representing everything that stands against order in the mortal

world, never worshiped but sometimes appeased. Myths recount how the gods battled and imprisoned the titans, sealing them in a prison beneath the Underworld. Now the titans are all but forgotten in mortal imagination. Scant mention of their names and epithets appears in the oldest tales, hinting at the nightmares that birthed them. Kroxa, Titan of Death's Hunger, embodied the terror of death—and its insatiable gluttony for new creatures to consume. Uro, Titan of Nature's Wrath, might be seen as a direct predecessor of Keranos and Thassa, but it was the incarnation of natural disaster, having none of the creativity and thoughtfulness of those gods. Phlage, Titan of Burning Wind, was an all-consuming whirlwind of fire, and Skotha, Titan of Eternal Dark, was the utter darkness of the starless night.

The oldest of the gods, often imagined as siblings or as some kind of offshoot of the titans, are Kruphix and Klothys. The origin of this second divine generation is mysterious. Perhaps Klothys arose from a sense of inevitability, a notion that the world was unfolding as it must, and thus the actions of mortals made little difference. Kruphix might have been born from a sense of mystery, supporting the idea that the workings of the universe are simply incomprehensible to mortal minds. It's also possible that Kruphix and Klothys are a different order of beings from either the titans or the other gods, and Klothys at least has existed for unknown ages despite being all but forgotten among mortal folk.

Once mortals could imagine a world beyond the horizon and a course of destiny that left behind the trials of life, they could formulate the notions of principles, order, and natural law. Out of those ideas, the third generation of deities was born: sun-crowned Heliod, deep-dwelling Thassa, bleak-hearted Erebos, bronze-blooded Purphoros, and keen-eyed Nylea. These gods are known to refer to each other as “brother” and “sister,” though they never speak of parents and almost certainly don't imagine Kruphix and Klothys in that role.

The other eight deities, the fourth generation, represent the application of abstract principles to the reality

## GODS OF THEROS

Deity	Alignment	Suggested Cleric Domains	Common Symbol
Athreos, god of passage	LE	Death, Grave*	Crescent moon
Ephara, god of the polis	LN	Knowledge, Light	Urn pouring water
Erebos, god of the dead	NE	Death, Trickery	Serene face
Heliod, god of the sun	LG	Light	Laurel crown
Iroas, god of victory	CG	War	Four-winged helmet
Karametra, god of harvests	NG	Life, Nature	Cornucopia
Keranos, god of storms	CN	Knowledge, Tempest	Blue eye
Klothys, god of destiny	N	Knowledge, War	Drop spindle
Kruphix, god of horizons	N	Knowledge, Trickery	Eight-pointed star
Mogis, god of slaughter	CE	War	Four-horned bull's head
Nylea, god of the hunt	NG	Nature	Four arrows
Pharika, god of affliction	NE	Death, Knowledge, Life	Snakes
Phenax, god of deception	CN	Trickery	Winged golden mask
Purphoros, god of the forge	CN	Forge,* Knowledge	Double crest
Thassa, god of the sea	N	Knowledge, Tempest	Waves

\* The Forge and Grave domains appear in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*.

of mortal life. For example, while Heliod stands for universal moral precepts, Ephara is the god of laws, the rules and structures that govern mortal societies. Nylea is the god of wild nature, predatory animals, and the change of seasons, and at the same time Karametra is the god of nature tamed for human use—agriculture and domestication—and of the natural cycles involved in human life, especially childbirth.

These gods recognize the previous generation as their elders but only occasionally as parents. Iroas and Mogis are widely considered to be brothers, but few myths describe their parentage, and those that do contradict each other—in keeping with the nature of these eternally warring gods.

## MYTHS AND DEEDS

Countless tales tell the history, deeds, and nature of the gods. Sometimes these stories play out among the constellations in the night sky. They are chanted in hymns during the gods' festivals, inscribed in temple walls, told around campfires and hearths, and collected on scrolls. Some are simple fables meant to illustrate a single facet of a god's character or of moral behavior. Others are monumental epics, most notably *The Cosmogony*, a poem by an unnamed Meletian sage that includes several (sometimes conflicting) tales of the creation of the world and beyond.

The people of Theros don't balk at contradictory myths. Is Keranos the literal child of Thassa and Purphoros? Did he spring unbidden from Thassa's heart when her rage grew too great for her to control? Or did he come into being when Purphoros tried to steal the secrets of Kruphix? To the people of Theros, it doesn't matter whether these tales describe historical facts, and each of them is true in its own way. Each tale about Keranos expresses a truth about the god, about inspiration and storms and secrets. Studying each one can lead Keranos's worshipers to a deeper understanding of and a closer relationship with their god.

Various writings, usually organized around a central theme, collect myths about the gods. *The Origin of Monsters* is one such collection, notable as an attempt to find commonality in a number of different tales about the birth of dragons. It also describes how Pharika hid secrets in the blood of basilisks, how the spirits of great warriors are reincarnated in the form of manticores, and dozens of other tales.

The epic poem called *The Theriad* is another such collection. It describes the exploits of various champions of Heliod, all of whom are simply called "the Champion," as if they were a single individual. Because the identities of the heroes aren't mentioned, the tales have more to say about the character of Heliod than about any champion's mortal deeds.

*The Callapheia*, by contrast, is about the exploits of a single mortal hero, Callaphe the Mariner, who snuck into Mount Velus and stole Purphoros's tears, hid behind Phenax and wrote down his secrets, and raced Thassa at the edge of the world before sailing into Nyx. Tales of this sort highlight the gods' pettiness and vanity and promote the somewhat blasphemous notion that a mere mortal can outwit the divine. *The Callapheia* also

serves as something of a gazetteer of Theros, describing its various lands and their inhabitants, at least as they existed some centuries ago.

Finally, the deeds of the gods are sung in paeans during their festivals. Naturally, these hymns portray the gods in the most favorable light, as benevolent (or at least indifferent) and all-powerful.

## WORSHIP

The idea of the existence of gods, as it grew in popularity among the mortals of Theros, didn't bring the gods into being by itself. Mortal reverence and worship turned universal ideas into deities. It wasn't until mortals trusted the gods to act on their behalf, in response to sacrifices and prayers, that the gods took shape from the dream-substance of Nyx. Worship remains crucial to the power of the gods, though mortals are generally not aware of their influence. Were a god to cease being worshiped, their might would dwindle.

The most prevalent form of expressing reverence is the practice of libation, pouring out a splash of wine or water in honor of the gods. Pious people perform a simple rite of prayer and libation every morning and evening at a household altar or hearth, while the less devoted might still pour out a splash of wine before drinking the rest.

The defining feature of a Theran temple is a statue of a god—which the actual god can occupy and animate at any time. Worshipers kneel before it, touch and kiss it, drape it in garlands and fine cloth, and leave offerings before it. These acts are sometimes spontaneous outpourings of love or gratitude, and sometimes petitions, imploring the god to cure an illness, send rain for crops, guarantee a safe journey, or perform any other favor related to the god's sphere of influence.

Most people aren't devoted to a single god, though many prefer some gods over others. Someone might ask Pharika to spare a loved one from disease, then later offer prayers to Karametra for a bountiful harvest or to Thassa for safety on a sea journey.

## CLERICS AND CHAMPIONS

It's far more common for a hero to be devoted to an individual god than it is for an ordinary mortal. A cleric almost always worships a single god of the pantheon and chooses a domain appropriate to that deity for their Divine Domain feature.

Often, heroes choose to devote themselves to particular gods either out of piety or self-interest. Sometimes, though, the gods choose champions who might not be entirely willing. Heliod, for example, takes pride in selecting only the best mortals to be his champions. He doesn't care how the mortals feel about being chosen, and his demands won't be refused.

Most heroes in a Theros campaign, and all clerics, are assumed to devote themselves to a god's cause, acting as that god's champion. All the characters in a party might serve the same god, but more likely, they represent the interests of different gods as they face the dangers of the world together.

## PIETY

Being a god's champion carries no benefits in and of itself. Each god's description in this chapter paints a picture of the god's typical champion, including ideas for how a player character might end up in that position and provides ideals that represent the god's interests.

The gods do reward the devotion of their champions, though. The strength of your devotion to your god is measured by your piety score. As you increase that score, you gain blessings from your god.

Piety has nothing to do with faith or belief, except insofar as a person's thoughts and ideals drive them to action in a god's service. Your piety score reflects the actions you have taken in your god's service—actions that the god richly rewards.

When you choose a god to worship as a beginning character, your piety score related to that god is 1. Your piety score increases by 1 when you do something to advance the god's interests or behave in accordance with the god's ideals. The gods expect great deeds from their champions, so your piety score typically increases only when you accomplish a significant goal (such as the completion of an adventure), make a significant sacrifice of your own self-interest, or otherwise when the DM sees fit. Each god's description in this chapter includes a discussion of the god's goals and ideals, which your DM uses to judge whether you earn an increase in your piety score. As a general rule, you can expect to increase your piety by 1 during most sessions of play, assuming that you are following your god's tenets. The DM decides the amount of any increase or decrease, but a single deed typically changes your piety score by only 1 point in either direction unless your action is very significant.

### BENEFITS OF PIETY

The gods bestow favors on those who prove their devotion. When your piety score crosses certain thresholds—3, 10, 25, and 50—you gain a benefit detailed in the sections describing the gods' champions throughout this chapter. If your piety score exceeds and then falls below one of those thresholds, you lose the benefit you gained at the higher tier.

If you choose the Oracle supernatural gift, you gain different rewards for your piety score, instead of the ones normally granted by your god. This gift and its benefits are described in chapter 1.

### INSPIRATION AND PIETY

To some extent, piety is its own reward. Behaving in accordance with your god's dictates and ideals inspires you and might enable you to succeed where you might otherwise fail. At your DM's discretion, whenever you increase your piety score, you might also gain inspiration, reflecting the improvement in the harmony between you and your god.

### IMPIETY

Not every hero chooses the life of a divine champion. Leonin, in particular, are known for rejecting the worship of gods. If you don't devote yourself to a god, you don't have a piety score and you gain no rewards for piety, but you don't suffer any negative consequences.

The Iconoclast supernatural gift (described in chapter 1) offers a way for characters to gain benefits similar to rewards for piety without being devoted to a god.

### CHANGING GODS

If events in your character's adventuring career warrant doing so, you can abandon the service of one god and turn to a different one. Once you abandon a god's service, you can rarely go back without performing some act of contrition.

Your DM decides whether your new god will accept you as a champion and what you might have to do to prove your commitment.

When you change gods, you lose all the benefits granted by your old one, including rewards for piety and any other divine blessings. You no longer have a piety score to your old god, and your piety score to your new god starts at 1.





All mortals are destined to face Athreos, the River Guide, when their lives come to an end. The god of passage ferries the dead across the Tartyx River, conveying each mortal soul to its destiny in the Underworld. For most people, Athreos embodies the greatest mysteries of existence—the terror and wonder of life's last moment and the revelation of one's ultimate fate in the afterlife. Athreos is no judge, though. The veiled, silent god undergoes no deliberations and makes no exceptions. The River Guide reads the truth of each soul and bears it unfailingly to its proper place in the Underworld. There is no haggling and no sympathy on Athreos's skiff, the god having heard and denied every conceivable mortal plea.

Athreos appears as a gaunt figure cloaked in ragged robes and a collection of golden masks. What little can be seen of his body is unsettling, its gray flesh stretched thin over a barely human skeleton. The River Guide is never without his ancient staff, *Katabasis*, which he transforms into the ferryboat he uses to ply the Rivers That Ring the World. Though the deity's shrouded form gives no clue, many mortals consider Athreos to be male, but the River Guide cares for terms or labels no more than any other force of nature. Athreos can change shape but rarely, if ever, takes on other forms.

## ATHREOS'S INFLUENCE

Most mortals focus on the River Guide's role in their own deaths. Countless mortal superstitions prescribe ways to garner Athreos's favor, but all Athreos demands of those he transports is payment: a single coin of any minting or value. The River Guide has an expansive definition of what constitutes a coin, from actual stamped currency and jewelry to shiny beads or opalescent shells. Ultimately, he seems most concerned with whether a mortal has prepared for death, keeping payment ready out of respect and as a personal memento mori. Those whose bodies are burned, buried, or otherwise disposed of along with valuables deliberately intended for the River Guide discover that they can make use of such items when trading for Athreos's services. Spirits that reach the shores of the Tartyx River unprepared, though, risk being stranded, as Athreos refuses to ferry those who can't pay.

Athreos is also invoked as the god of passage, as well as the deity with dominion over borders, boundaries, and that which is "neither." Those who undertake journeys, especially dangerous ones, often drop a coin into a fountain or a body of water in apotropaic acknowledgment of the River Guide. Bridges and borders are also places where Athreos is commonly remembered, with many such sites being marked by motifs of rivers or spirals. Additionally, phenomena that are neither one thing nor another, defying simple classification, are often considered to be within Athreos's province—most notably the state between life and death, but also echoes, phantom sensations, and the feeling of *déjà vu*.

## ATHREOS'S GOALS

Athreos endlessly works to maintain the balance between Nyx, the Underworld, and the lands of the living. The River Guide sees himself as a servant of the mortal world and knows nothing of the glamor, honor, or mystery mortals often ascribe such to him. Rather, he does what must be done, and should some cosmological condition fall out of sorts, the River Guide and his servants work with silent efficiency to restore balance.

## DIVINE RELATIONSHIPS

Athreos cares little for the dealings of the other gods. As long as other deities don't impinge on the border between life and death, either by overstepping their bounds or by trying to draw the dead back into life, the River Guide has little to do with them. More than once, this isolation has put Athreos in silent conflict with Heliod and Erebus, both of whom subtly resent Athreos for limiting how much each can meddle in the other's realm. At the same time, the River Guide's role as a buffer between the two vindictive gods actively prevents their grudges from exploding into divine warfare.

Thassa bears a chilly respect for Athreos. In a time before reckoning, boundaries divided the god of the sea's dominion from the Tartyx River. Though the god of the sea quietly resents sharing even a drop of water, she considers the River Guide to be a quiet, unobtrusive trespasser on her favored element and keeps her distance. Were her respect to wane, though, Thassa would eagerly vie to control the Rivers That Ring the World.

## WORSHIPING ATHREOS

Most funeral traditions include small offerings and words of reverence to Athreos. Predominant among these traditions is burying or burning the dead with a clay funerary mask, to "frame" the identity of the dead for Athreos, and with at least one coin, so a soul might pay Athreos to ferry them to the Underworld. Some people are laid to rest with large amounts of grave goods. Memorial practices vary widely by culture, from tearful, somber affairs to lively celebrations. These rituals serve more as catharsis for the living than as meaningful boons to Athreos, though. The River Guide cares only for the single coin he's owed by any who board his skiff.

During the feast of the Necrologion, which gives its name to the eighth month in the calendar of Meletis, pious souls silently spend the day reading ancient memoirs or writing messages for their own descendants.

## ATHREOS'S CHAMPIONS

**Alignment:** Usually lawful, often evil

**Suggested Classes:** Cleric, monk, rogue, wizard

**Suggested Cleric Domains:** Death, Grave (described in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*)

**Suggested Backgrounds:** Hermit, sage, sailor, urchin

Most worshippers of Athreos believe death is a natural part of life, to be neither rushed toward nor run from. They seek to do their part in fulfilling the natural order, easing the passage of the living into death. Most also respect their ancestors and honor them through tradition, ritual, and memory.

### ATHREOS'S FAVOR

As all mortals eventually bow before him, the River Guide doesn't seek worship. When mortal agents are necessary, though, Athreos often seeks the descendants of those who impressed him during their journey to the Underworld. The Athreos's Favor table offers several suggestions for the nature of your connection to the god.

#### ATHREOS'S FAVOR

##### d6 Circumstance

- 1 A family member died bringing you into the world.
- 2 You don't think or feel as others do, finding emotions messy and confusing.
- 3 In a brazen or desperate moment, you dared death to take you—and in a way, it has.
- 4 You sent a Returned back to the Underworld, restoring a measure of order to the cosmos.
- 5 Serving Athreos is your family tradition, a responsibility honored for countless generations.
- 6 You have died before, and in that moment, you glimpsed the mists that surround Athreos's skiff.

### DEVOTION TO ATHREOS

Servants of Athreos facilitate the passage from life into death. As a follower of Athreos, consider the possibilities on the Athreos's Ideals table as alternatives to those suggested for your background.

#### ATHREOS'S IDEALS

##### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Devotion.** My devotion to my god is more important to me than what he stands for. (Any)
- 2 **Tradition.** Honor the dead through rites of respect and by continuing their ways. (Lawful)
- 3 **Dread.** Mortals put their fear out of mind, but through me, they will remember the inevitable. (Evil or neutral)
- 4 **Apathy.** Life is but a rehearsal for death, and it's best not to grow too attached to it. (Neutral)
- 5 **Succor.** I offer balm to the dying—which, to varying degrees, includes all of us. (Good or neutral)
- 6 **Judgment.** Violations against the order of life and death must be set right. (Lawful)

### EARNING AND LOSING PIETY

You increase your piety score to Athreos when you honor him or the cycle of life and death through acts such as these:

- Providing coins and overseeing burial rites for those slain during a tragedy
- Ensuring that the deeds and knowledge of someone who has died are preserved
- Slaying a Returned and its associated eidolon

Your piety score to Athreos decreases if you diminish the River Guide's influence in the world, impede his work, or disrespect the dead through acts such as these:

- Denying a dying person their final rites
- Removing wealth from a corpse or defiling a tomb
- Aiding those who seek to escape from the Underworld, or who already have

### ATHREOS'S DEVOTEE

*Piety 3+ Athreos trait*

Your life is intertwined with the fate of the dead. You can cast *gentle repose* with this trait, requiring no material components, a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

### ATHREOS'S VOTARY

*Piety 10+ Athreos trait*

You can cast *speak with dead* with this trait, requiring no material components. Once you cast the spell in this way, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

### ATHREOS'S DISCIPLE

*Piety 25+ Athreos trait*

You can cast *false life* with this trait, requiring no material components. When you do so, you gain an additional 25 temporary hit points. Once you cast the spell in this way, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

### CHAMPION OF THE PASSAGE

*Piety 50+ Athreos trait*

You can increase your Intelligence or Wisdom score by 2 and also increase your maximum for that score by 2.



## MYTHS OF ATHREOS

Athreos eternally performs a remarkable labor, ferrying mortal souls to the Underworld. During the River Guide's ages of toil, he has inspired a number of legends.

**The Athrean Obols.** Some claim that Athreos doesn't collect coins out of greed but because he's looking for five specific treasures. Apocryphal writings in the Underworld library of Oneirrakthys say that Athreos was the first mortal to die. When he came to face the gods, he brought a single treasure as an offering to each of Theros's five mightiest deities, hoping to receive a peaceful place among them in return.

The gods realized what Athreos's spirit represented: the first of an endless flood of mortal souls that would soon begin to join Athreos in death. Unwilling to spend eternity sorting the endless stream of dead mortals themselves, the other gods did give Athreos a place among them, as well as charging him with his impossible task. They also offered him a measure of hope. The gods cast Athreos's offerings back into the mortal world in the form of five coins. They promised Athreos that, once he collected the coins anew, the gods would free the River Guide from his service and welcome him into their ranks. Ever since, Athreos has labored, both at ferrying the dead and in search of his five lost coins, called the Athrean Obols. It's said that any who bring the River Guide one of the coins will be rewarded with a wish for anything Athreos can grant—even exception from death.

**Death's Denier.** Some legends tell of an ancient shade who has tarried at the banks of the Tartyx longer than any other—a woman, ancient beyond years and clad only in her own flowing hair and sagging skin, who some passing souls mistake for Athreos. This figure is Solyssia, once an oracle of Meletis. Solyssia refuses to pay Athreos's price, or to have it paid for her. For untold centuries, she has harassed the newly dead, learning an incredible amount about the mortal world in the process. The only thing she's less impressed with than the state of the modern world is Athreos, whom she curses like a bitter old friend whenever the River Guide draws near. If any mortal has ever truly known Athreos, it is her.

**Eight Exceptions.** Eight times in the course of history, Athreos has purposely allowed a mortal to delay their death or temporarily return from the Underworld. These individuals were restored as living beings (not as Returned) to complete particular tasks. As a record of these exceptions, Athreos bears a Returned-like mask of each individual. Despite centuries between bargains, though, no one who Athreos has made an exception for has ever returned. As a result, the River Guide refuses to make another exception. He might be convinced to do otherwise were someone to bring one of the eight lost souls—such as Biaas the Poison Drinker, Dianyan Half-Heart, or Hundred-Damned Thasmudyen—before him for punishment.





## EPHARA

*God of the Polis*

As god of the polis, Ephara sees herself as the founder of civilization. She watches over cities, protecting them from outside threats. She is credited with establishing the first code of law, which Meletis has preserved and the other poleis have imitated. Even more important, she helps cities reach their highest potential, becoming centers of scholarship, industry, and art.

Ephara appears as a huge animated statue wearing a stone crown, resembling the capital of a column. When she chooses to walk about her cities at human scale, she often takes on the form of a human woman. In either form, she is always dressed in blue and white, and her expression is usually serious, but not unkind. She often carries a large urn on one shoulder, with the dark, star-studded sky of Nyx pouring from it and dissolving into mist as it hits the ground.

### EPHARA'S INFLUENCE

Ephara's sphere of influence is the polis. Although worshiped in many places, she is most beloved in Meletis, whose citizens credit her with the city's founding. Many city walls bear Ephara's face, fashioned thus in the belief that each of her images watches over the part of the city it looks upon.

Ephara is strongly affiliated with the daytime, when cities are awake, alive, and at work. Her followers generally pray at midday, with the sounds of the city forming an appropriate backdrop to their rites, as industry itself is sacred to Ephara. Many aspects of city life and culture fall under Ephara's influence. Scholarship is closely connected to Ephara, as is art—particularly poetry, sculpture, and architecture. Ephara is also highly concerned with civic wisdom and justice, and many politicians and other leaders seek her guidance in how to rule.

### EPHARA'S GOALS

Ephara seeks always to further cities: establishing them, protecting them, and seeing them grow. She supports those who build new cities and those who free others from tyranny. Ephara knows that not all threats to a city come from outside it, and she encourages her followers to watch out for tyranny and injustice from within. She seeks for justice to prevail in civilized lands.

Ephara seeks far more for her cities than mere safety. She drives every city to aspire toward efforts that help its people thrive. Civic responsibility is essential in Ephara's eyes, and having an engaged citizenry is important. The pursuit of knowledge is also a vital task, and she encourages advances in philosophy and science. As the scholars in her cities obtain or derive new knowledge, Ephara's magic scrolls grow ever longer. Finally, art is of critical importance to a thriving city. Ephara particularly supports architecture, the creation of which often drives industry and sculpture, though she doesn't scorn other varieties of artistic expression.

### DIVINE RELATIONSHIPS

Ephara and Heliod have aligning interests, since they both value structure and justice. Ephara works toward establishing judicial systems that enforce the laws and uphold the values that Heliod holds dear.

Ephara is also on good terms with Thassa, the god of the sea, because Ephara recognizes the necessity of water for a thriving polis. She also admires Purphoros's craft, realizing the essential role of the forge and other forms of industry to build a city.

Ephara and Nylea are almost polar opposites, and there is no shortage of bad blood between the god of the cities and the god of the hunt. Nylea resents the construction of every building in a place that once held plants and animals, and Ephara has no patience for any wild creature that encroaches on a settlement. Ephara looks at the wilderness and sees only wasted potential, while Nylea looks at cities and sees only destruction.

Ephara has a deep-seated hatred for Phenax. While Ephara can appreciate the perspective of most of her peers, she has no such understanding for those who would deliberately try to undermine a thriving social structure. Ephara opposes Phenax and what she sees as his utter disdain for everything she stands for.

Her relationship with Karametra is a difficult one from either perspective. Ephara approves of agriculture, a key ingredient for the development of cities, and both gods are concerned with defense of settlements. Even so, Karametra is tied to Setessa and the wild lands, where Ephara is distrusted, and although Karametra and Nylea have their own complicated relationship, Karametra strongly favors Nylea over Ephara.

### WORSHIPING EPHARA

To an extent, Ephara's devout show their faith by going about their lives and contributing to society. Midday services at Ephara's temples often feature a brief prayer, followed by a longer talk from an industrial or civic leader on a topic of general interest. Attendants often bring meals to eat while on a break from their jobs.

Ephara's face is a common sight in cities. Marble buildings, stone walls, and similar surfaces usually feature a sculpture or relief of her visage. People often swear oaths or engage in verbal disputes in front of these images, believing she won't let a falsehood told in front of her go unpunished. Whether she actually intervenes is unclear, but conflicts that play out this way are often resolved peacefully, without a need for the justice system to get involved.



## MYTHS OF EPHARA

Ephara's deeds demonstrate her commitment to the poleis and those who seek their improvement.

**Founding of Meletis.** The city-state of Meletis was once part of the archon Agnomakhos's empire. The archon ruled his territory with absolute cruelty. Ephara bestowed her magic on the subjugated populace to enable them to fight back and overthrow Agnomakhos. The newly freed people then established Meletis, as the settlement on that site is known today. The founding of Ephara's favored city is still celebrated today, both in Meletis and elsewhere among the god's followers, as the summer holiday of Polidryson, which gives its name to the fourth month in the Meletian calendar.

**Earthquake in Meletis.** The temple of Ephara in Meletis is the god's largest and grandest place of worship on Theros. It is kept in perfect repair, and worn or damaged pieces of the structure are quickly replaced. During an enormous earthquake, many of the structures in Meletis crumbled. Ephara kept her temple standing throughout the mighty quake, making it a place for Meletians to take refuge in the following days during the aftershocks. After the cataclysm, she shared designs from her scrolls of sacred knowledge with the architects of Meletis so they could rebuild the city to be much more resistant to earthquakes.

**The Library of Glossion.** The small town of Glossion boasts a remarkable library that according to local legend was a gift

from Ephara. Other tales suggest that the library was actually founded by an ancient sage named Anatheia, but then a terrible fire destroyed the place, and along with it generations of collected knowledge. Once the people finished rebuilding the structure to start the library over, Ephara is said to have appeared and restored the books and scrolls the library had lost, copying the information from her personal scrolls of sacred knowledge.

**Savior of Altrisos.** A kraken that escaped its sea lock once threatened the small seaside city of Altrisos. Recently weakened by a triton raid, the city had no defenses left and would be destroyed by an attack. The people prayed to Ephara, and the large image of her face on the city's wall came to life. The walls of the city grew impossibly high and strong, and the kraken could do no more than dash its head against the impassable barrier. The monster soon returned to the ocean to find an easier meal.

**Trial of Aristhenes.** A man named Aristhenes committed many murders, targeting members of the government and some of their family members. When he was arrested and put to trial, he claimed that no one could fairly judge him because every qualified judge was personally affected by the case. Ephara herself came to the city to serve as judge for the trial, since no one could accuse her of anything but perfect impartiality, and she found Aristhenes guilty.



## EPHARA'S CHAMPIONS

**Alignment:** Usually lawful, often neutral

**Suggested Classes:** Bard, cleric, monk, paladin, wizard

**Suggested Cleric Domains:** Knowledge, Light

**Suggested Backgrounds:** Acolyte, athlete, guild artisan, noble, sage, sailor, soldier, urchin

Most champions of Ephara believe cities represent the pinnacle of achievement and do what they can to uphold the law and keep society functioning. Some of the god's most devout followers work as architects, artists, or philosophers, all striving to serve the public good.

### EPHARA'S FAVOR

Ephara seeks champions who will defend her cities fiercely, both from external threats and internal corruption. She asks them to protect not only the people, but also the structures that comprise a polis. The circumstances that led you to worship Ephara most likely involved the polis you call home. The Ephara's Favor table provides just a few possibilities.

#### EPHARA'S FAVOR

##### d6 Circumstance

- 1 You grew up in a polis like Meletis and never feel safe outside one.
- 2 You grew up in a home that was next to a wall or a building with Ephara's face on it, and you felt like she was always looking after you.
- 3 You were part of a revolution to fight off tyrants and establish freedom in your city.
- 4 Your family members have all been architects, going back several generations, and all worshiped Ephara.
- 5 You are a highly skilled poet, scholar, or philosopher, and Ephara took notice of your talent.
- 6 You are a civil servant or a city leader, taking an active role in the welfare of your home.

### DEVOTION TO EPHARA

Followers of Ephara support their cities, protecting them while helping them thrive. As a follower of Ephara, consider the ideals on the Ephara's Ideals table as alternatives to those suggested for your background.

#### EPHARA'S IDEALS

##### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Devotion.** My devotion to my god is more important to me than what she stands for. (Any)
- 2 **Justice.** Laws keep society functioning, and I must see to it that they are enforced. (Lawful)
- 3 **Community.** We are stronger together, and I must improve and support my community. (Lawful or good)
- 4 **Scholarship.** I serve my community and my god by learning new information or creating art. (Any)
- 5 **Civic Duty.** It is my responsibility to serve my city. (Lawful)
- 6 **Protection.** I must keep my city safe from threats both external and internal. (Any)

## EARNING AND LOSING PIETY

You increase your piety score to Ephara when you expand the god's influence in the world in a concrete way through acts such as these:

- Defending a city from a major threat
- Defeating a tyrant who threatens a city's freedom
- Creating a masterwork, such as a building or a poem

Your piety score to Ephara decreases if you diminish Ephara's influence in the world, contradict her ideals, or let her down through acts such as these:

- Betraying one's trust to commit acts of corruption or tyranny
- Destroying a civic institution or sowing chaos within a city
- Willfully breaking just laws for personal gain

### EPHARA'S DEVOTEE

*Piety 3+ Ephara trait*

Ephara grants you insight into how people communicate. You can cast *comprehend languages* with this trait, requiring no material component, a number of times equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest. Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

### EPHARA'S VOTARY

*Piety 10+ Ephara trait*

You gain advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks while you are within a city.

In addition, when you fail an Intelligence check or Intelligence saving throw, you can reroll the die, and you must use the new roll. Once you use this reroll, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

### EPHARA'S DISCIPLE

*Piety 25+ Ephara trait*

You can cast *Mordenkainen's private sanctum* with this trait, requiring no material components. Once you cast the spell in this way, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest. Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

### CHAMPION OF THE POLIS

*Piety 50+ Ephara trait*

You can increase your Intelligence or Charisma score by 2 and also increase your maximum for that score by 2.



## EREBOS

*God of the Dead*

Erebos is the god of death and the Underworld, lord of all that has ever lived. He presides over the bitterness, envy, and eventual acceptance of those who suffer misfortune. His hoarding of both souls and the treasures the dead carry into the Underworld see him worshiped by those who desire to collect and keep wealth.

Erebos's very presence is stifling, and those who come face to face with him often depart in despair. He is jealous and tyrannical within his realm, but unlike his brother Heliod, he neither blusters nor tries to expand his influence. He waits patiently, secure in the knowledge that everything belongs to him in the end.

Erebos most frequently appears as a slender, gray-skinned humanoid with two large, outward-curving horns, wielding an impossibly long black whip. He also appears in the form of a black asp, a cloud of choking smoke, or an animated golden idol.

### EREBOS'S INFLUENCE

Born from Heliod's shadow and then banished to the Underworld, Erebos claimed dominion over that desolate realm. He sees it as his duty and his right to ensure that those who enter his realm remain there for all time. Within the Underworld, only the relative paradise of Ilysia is sheltered from his influence. In the other four realms of the dead, his will is law.

Mortals typically fear death, yet death is the inevitable end of each one's time in the mortal world. Erebos, having long ago come to terms with his own banishment, teaches his followers to accept the inevitability of death and the often unavoidable tragedies of life.

Although Erebos forbids souls from leaving the Underworld, some escape his clutches. Generally such souls are beneath his notice, but he sometimes sends agents to retrieve those he has particular interest in.

### EREBOS'S GOALS

Erebos wants above all to maintain his position of absolute authority over the realm of the dead. He lashes out at anyone who aids souls in escaping from him or otherwise tries to subvert the inevitability of death.

Erebos is patient, usually willing to wait for souls to come to him, but he does interfere in the mortal realm on occasion. When the other gods displease him, he

sends mortal agents or Nyxborn monsters to kill the worshipers of the offending gods and spread despair.

Many of Erebos's schemes target those who escape his clutches. He regularly sends agents to retrieve the Returned soul or the wayward eidolon of a hero of great renown who has succeeded in returning to Theros. If any of the dead, renowned or otherwise, escape the Underworld fully intact—without identities erased—Erebos will spare nothing to make an example of the fugitive and any who provided assistance.

### DIVINE RELATIONSHIPS

Erebos loathes Heliod, who banished him to the Underworld eons ago, forever severing him from the world of life and light. Erebos takes particular delight in profaning Heliod's temples, defiling the raiment of his priests, slaughtering his worshipers, and claiming the souls of his champions. Erebos believes that Heliod will one day challenge him for control of the Underworld. He looks forward to that day, certain that his lesser brother can't possibly prevail within Erebos's own territory.

Erebos holds a special grudge against Phenax. Phenax readily teaches others how to escape the Underworld as the Returned and even sneaks into the Underworld to assist them, earning him Erebos's undying ire.

Pharika and Karametra understand, better than many of the other gods, that life and death are closely intertwined. Pharika's tinctures can either extend a life or snuff it out, and Karametra's planters know that reaping follows sowing in turn. Although he appreciates what these gods have in common with him, Erebos occasionally feels the need to remind them that the dead are his, and other gods' acceptance of death's inevitability doesn't make them masters of it.

Erebos has no true allies but operates closely with Athreos and Klothys. Athreos is one of the few beings Erebos trusts to be as committed as he is to ensuring that the passage into death is a one-way trip. Klothys, too, would see the dead remain dead, concerned as she is with the acceptance of destiny.

### WORSHIPING EREBOS

To many mortals, Erebos is primarily concerned not with death, but with gold. Most of his followers downplay his association with death and misfortune, instead praying to him for material wealth. Others pray to him because they want to be more accepting of their misfortune. These individuals see themselves as beyond hope of improving their lot in life, asking only that Erebos grant them the strength to endure until they enter his realm at their predestined time.

A smaller but more dangerous group of Erebos worshipers are those who actively glorify death. These cultists and assassins congregate in secret in communities across Theros, engaging in campaigns of violence.

The only major festival dedicated to Erebos, called the Katabasion or "the Descent," features a ceremony in which worshipers make a symbolic journey into the Underworld. The supplicants enter a cave, offer prayers and sacrifices to Erebos in utter darkness, and slowly make their way back to the surface just before sunrise.

## EREBOS'S CHAMPIONS

**Alignment:** Usually neutral, often evil

**Suggested Classes:** Cleric, fighter, rogue, wizard

**Suggested Cleric Domains:** Death, Trickery

**Suggested Backgrounds:** Acolyte, charlatan, criminal, noble, urchin

Most worshippers of Erebos seek to enforce the boundary between life and death, whether absolutely or selectively. They often find grim satisfaction in serving the covetous but patient god, knowing that all will ultimately know their patron's embrace.

### EREBOS'S FAVOR

As Erebos sees it, he already owns the soul of every living being. For him to bestow special favor or power on a mortal would be an act of generosity, and he expects to be compensated for it. Those who rise to the ranks of true champions of Erebos, though, embrace death and their inescapable destiny in the Underworld. Did you pledge yourself to Erebos by joining his priesthood, or did you come to find his favor through a prayer of quiet desperation? The Erebos's Favor table offers a handful of suggestions.

#### EREBOS'S FAVOR

##### d6 Circumstance

- 1 You follow Erebos seeking financial success, expecting service to translate into rewards.
- 2 In a moment of anguish, you prayed to Erebos. He granted you acceptance of your fate and his favor.
- 3 You were pledged to another god, but when you lost a loved one, only turning to Erebos could ease your grief.
- 4 After you recovered from a mortal injury, Erebos appeared and claimed your service.
- 5 Ever since the first time you saw someone die, Erebos has whispered in your ear.
- 6 You can't bear to witness suffering, so you serve Erebos to bring peaceful ends to the unfortunate.

### DEVOTION TO EREBOS

Just as every life ends at the same destination, many different paths can lead a worshiper to Erebos. As a follower of Erebos, consider the ideals on the Erebos's Ideals table as alternatives to those suggested for your background.

#### EREBOS'S IDEALS

##### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Devotion.** My devotion to my god is more important to me than what he stands for. (Any)
- 2 **Mortality.** I will enforce the most important law: anything that lives must one day die. (Lawful)
- 3 **Consolation.** Everyone deserves the solace that comes with accepting their destiny. (Good)
- 4 **Acceptance.** Whatever my fate, I will embrace it with Erebos's blessing. (Neutral)

##### d6 Ideal

- 5 **Wealth.** Death is forever, so I'm going to get rich while I still can. (Neutral)
- 6 **Power.** I relish having mastery over life and death. (Evil)

### EARNING AND LOSING PIETY

You increase your piety score to Erebos when you expand the god's influence in the world in a concrete way through acts such as these:

- Convincing a group of people to accept misfortune
- Easing someone's death or assisting with funeral arrangements
- Retrieving a prominent figure's eidolon or Returned form
- Thwarting the schemes of Heliod

Your piety score to Erebos decreases if you diminish Erebos's influence in the world, weaken his dominion over death, or alleviate misfortune without good cause through acts such as these:

- Saving a life without securing compensation for Erebos
- Forsaking your duties for personal gain or pleasure
- Allowing a soul to escape the Underworld

### EREBOS'S DEVOTEE

*Piety 3+ Erebos trait*

As a devotee of Erebos, you have proven yourself an executor of the Underworld's grim laws. You can call on Erebos's favor to cast *bane* with this trait, requiring no material components, a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

### EREBOS'S VOTARY

*Piety 10+ Erebos trait*

You can cast *vampiric touch* with this trait. Once you cast the spell in this way, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

### EREBOS'S DISCIPLE

*Piety 25+ Erebos trait*

When a soul is sent to its rightful place, you can draw on the energy of the Underworld to empower you. When a creature dies within 10 feet of you, you can use your reaction to gain a number of temporary hit points equal to your level.

### CHAMPION OF THE DEAD

*Piety 50+ Erebos trait*

You can increase your Constitution or Wisdom score by 2 and also increase your maximum for that score by 2.



## MYTHS OF EREBOS

Erebos appears in many god-stories, often as a villain or a foil to the other gods. The stories told by his followers emphasize his power, the wealth of the Underworld, and the inevitability of death.

**Kytheon's Escape.** Many know the story of Kytheon Iora, an Akroan orphan who took up Heliod's spear and attempted to kill Erebos himself. The tale ends in tragedy, as Kytheon was struck down along with his friends. Only the high priests of Erebos, however, know that Kytheon's soul isn't in the Underworld, having somehow escaped right before Erebos's eyes. Suspecting that either Heliod or Kruphix knows where Kytheon's soul went, Erebos will reward anyone who can tell him.

**Menelaia's Song.** Long ago, a master lyrist named Menelaia mourned her lover, Pero. She entered the Winter Nexus, a cave on the edge of Setessa that leads to the Underworld, and played a love song to lure Pero's soul back to the mortal world. When Erebos saw this, he became furious, and he extended his whip to draw both of the lovers back. But Menelaia was beloved of Nylea, and that god blocked Erebos's whip with vines. The two lovers lived long lives together. Erebos had the last word, however, tormenting both of the lovers in the Underworld. To this day, this turn of events plagues Nylea, who seeks a way to bring the lovers peace.

**The Return of Daxos.** Daxos of Meletis was a powerful oracle who heard the voices of all the gods. Daxos tragically died at the hands of his lover, the champion of Heliod, Elspeth, through the duplicity of the satyr Xenagos. Daxos's soul passed into the Underworld, and Elspeth sought Erebos's help to travel into Nyx. After passing Erebos's test for admittance, Elspeth demanded an additional reward: she would trade her life for Daxos's. Erebos, always eager to claim a champion of the sun god, agreed. Elspeth died shortly after her triumph over Xenagos, whereupon Erebos kept his word—but in a treacherous fashion, allowing Daxos's body to go back to the mortal world as a Returned. Bereft of memories, he wanders aimlessly.

**A Shadowed World.** Heliod's followers maintain that their god gave rise to Erebos by casting a shadow in the sun's first light. Followers of Erebos say that this tale is self-refuting. Before there ever was a sun, the entire world stood in shadow, and the shadow was Erebos—elder to Heliod. Only with the first dawning was Erebos's form diminished enough that Heliod could overpower him, and the god of the dead has never forgiven his upstart brother. The faithful of both Erebos and Heliod viciously argue the details of their gods' origins, some risking their lives in battle over which of their gods came into being first.





Heliod is the radiant god of the sun. According to myth, he ensures that the sun rises every day to provide light and warmth to the world. Every inhabitant of Theros acknowledges his dominant presence, and nearly everyone at least pays lip service to the idea of giving him worship and honor.

Pride and self-assurance radiate from Heliod as light floods from the sun. He is cheerful and sociable, enjoying the company of others and forming bonds easily. His friendship can be as easily lost, though, turning him from ally to enemy as the consequence of a single misstep or perceived betrayal.

Heliod has appeared to mortals in a variety of forms, but he prefers the appearance of a sun-bronzed male human in his forties, dressed in a flowing tunic of golden cloth. His profile is noble, highlighted by a strong chin and a short beard, and he boasts the broad chest of a perfectly fit athlete. His hair is glossy black, and his head is crowned with a golden wreath. He is also fond of appearing as a brilliant white pegasus or a radiant golden stag. In any guise, he looks lit by the sun, even when he travels across the night sky.

## HELIOD'S INFLUENCE

Heliod personifies the light of day, and by extension, he is associated with many metaphorical aspects of the sun's circuit.

As the sun rises without fail every morning, so Heliod values faithfulness in oaths and bonds. Courtroom testimony and marriage vows are sworn on his name, for he can't tolerate the breaking of a solemn promise. He is the arbiter of morality, virtue, and honor.

The sun's nightly descent into darkness symbolizes bravery and self-sacrifice—the willingness to endure the horrors of the dark for the sake of others. Those who protect innocents in his name receive Heliod's favor.

As sunlight casts out darkness, Heliod's justice casts out chaos and lawlessness. He is the god of the laws that govern society and the laws that punish the wicked. He is interested not only in punitive justice, but also in the establishment of fair and equitable relationships among people and gods, in service to the common good. He also takes an interest in the bonds of family—the relationships that tie people most closely to each other.

## HELIOD'S GOALS

In Heliod's mind, he is the ruler of the gods, and he wants merely for his rightful place to be recognized. He imagines Nyx rebuilt as his personal palace, where all can witness him in his glory. He considers himself a kind and beneficent ruler—a benign autocrat, not a tyrant—and he doesn't expect abject servility from anyone, god or mortal. He just wants everyone to defer to his will and carry out his orders. He believes that his decisions are always just and right, and that if his sovereignty were properly respected, there would be peace and order in Nyx and the mortal world alike.

## DIVINE RELATIONSHIPS

Heliod's repeated attempts to establish himself as the ruler of the pantheon anger Erebus and Purphoros, who both have a degree of the arrogance he demonstrates.

Thassa and Nylea, by contrast, aren't bothered by his efforts because they see themselves as being safely outside his reach. He could declare himself the ruler of the pantheon, they reason, but his dictates can't alter the rhythms of the sea and the cycles of nature. Thassa and Nylea will continue as they are, as they always have been, whatever squabbles their brothers might have.

Ephara, Karametra, and Iroas are closely aligned with Heliod in attitude and philosophy. In some ways, these three gods represent the principles and the abstract nature of Heliod made tangible and concrete through the lives of mortals. Heliod represents a divine, natural, moral law; Ephara gives those laws a concrete manifestation by establishing mortal society in the poleis. Heliod controls the radiant sun that makes the natural world flourish; Karametra brings the interplay of light and nature to life for mortals in the practice of agriculture. And while Heliod stands for justice, Iroas actually fights for it, taking up arms against brutality and injustice in defense of what is good and right.

Heliod hates and fears Erebus, his dark twin and his shadow. He views the god of the dead as a pathetic liar and coward who wallows in self-pity in his exile.

Heliod is also plagued by a nagging suspicion that the true ruler of the pantheon is Kruphix, a mysterious being who is capable of sealing the borders between the mortal world and the divine realm of Nyx. Kruphix is perhaps the only being who can impose limits on the other gods' actions, which makes Heliod resent and fear the god of horizons.

## WORSHIPING HELIOD

The brilliance of Heliod's sun is impossible to ignore. Thus, virtually everyone on Theros pays at least grudging respect to the sun god in forms of worship that range from simple gestures to days-long celebrations.

Some families, particularly in the polis of Meletis, follow a practice of bowing in the direction of dawn's first light—or winking, in a gesture of respect for the sun god's luminous “eye.” More dedicated worshipers offer short litanies at dawn, noon, and dusk, acknowledging the sun's passage across the sky.



## MYTHS OF HELIOD

Many legends about Heliod highlight his mercurial nature, even while acclaiming him as a god of bravery and justice.

**Battle with Purphoros.** In his desire to establish himself as the leader of the pantheon, Heliod attempted to commission Purphoros to rebuild Nyx in Heliod's image. Angered by Heliod's claim to rulership, Purphoros forged the sword *Godsend* to fight Heliod. As their conflict raged, Purphoros's sword cut the fabric of Nyx, opening the boundary between the realms of gods and mortals. As a result, the hydra Polukranos fell to the mortal world, but Heliod and Nylea joined forces to bind the hydra in the Nessian Wood. Years later, the hydra broke free of its bonds, and Heliod chose a mortal, Elspeth Tirel, to slay the hydra as his champion—using a spear called *Godsend*, forged from Purphoros's sword.

**Birth of Erebos.** Some myths claim that Heliod was the first of the gods, though most people believe that distinction belongs to Kruphix. These myths also say that when the light of Heliod's own sun fell on him, Heliod saw his shadow and feared it. He banished the shadow to the land beyond the Rivers That Ring the World, and it became Erebos, god of the dead and ruler of the Underworld.

**Origin of the Catoblepas.** When a herder boasted that his cattle were the finest in Theros because Heliod and Nylea had created them, the gods grew angry at this falsehood. Heliod persuaded Mogis to curse the cattle, transforming them

into the first catoblepases. As a result, many animal breeders prove excessively modest to this day, with humble-boasts being common and well understood among both buyers and sellers. Livestock that are “as Heliod intended” or “praiseless beasts” might be considered second to none.

**Road to the Sun.** After a life in Heliod's service, the aged oracle Solsemon departed on a final pilgrimage: setting forth to visit the sun. Day after day he journeyed east, seeking the lands from which the sun rose. He journeyed far and was mocked everywhere people learned of his quest. Worse, his sight grew ever weaker as he spent days staring at the sun. Yet still he traveled on. Even when blindness claimed Solsemon's sight, the oracle continued undaunted. Finally, one day, Solsemon found a warm, calm place. There, a powerful voice he'd heard in his dreams welcomed him to his journey's end. Praising Heliod, the oracle took his rest, and after several long, contented hours, peacefully died. Ever since, the tale of Solsemon has been argued as both a parable of determination and a warning not to pursue that which is divine.

**Spear of Heliod.** Heliod wields the spear *Khrusor*, which can strike any point on Theros, even in the depths of the Underworld. One tale describes how a wrathful Heliod used his spear to smite a human polis whose people angered him with their hubris: the entire city of Olantin sunk beneath the sea when Heliod struck it with his spear.



## HELIOD'S CHAMPIONS

**Alignment:** Usually lawful, often good

**Suggested Classes:** Cleric, fighter, monk, paladin

**Suggested Cleric Domains:** Light

**Suggested Backgrounds:** Acolyte, athlete, noble, soldier

Champions of Heliod are typically either exemplars of light, law, and truth or conflicted heroes motivated by revenge and sworn vows. Most can't imagine serving those they consider lesser gods.

### HELIOD'S FAVOR

Heliod seeks out champions in the mortal world because he believes that a great champion reflects well on him. The ruler of the gods, as he imagines himself, should have champions who represent the best of mortals.

That said, the reason for his initial interest in a champion isn't always obvious. What made the sun god turn his attention to you? What sets you apart from the masses of people who offer him prayers and sacrifice? What made him think you would be a good champion? The Heliod's Favor table offers a handful of suggestions.

Heliod can be a fickle god, but once you have devoted yourself to him as a champion, he will not desert you—as long as you remain faithful and your actions continue to reflect well on him.

### HELIOD'S FAVOR

#### d6 Circumstance

- 1 You were born at noon on the summer solstice—perhaps even in the midst of Heliod's great feast.
- 2 One of your parents is also a champion of Heliod.
- 3 You once rescued a pegasus that was trapped in a net, demonstrating your courage and your respect for this sacred creature.
- 4 You proved your mettle in a dramatic contest of strength, charisma, or a similar quality.
- 5 Calling on Heliod to witness you, you swore an oath to end some great evil.
- 6 You have no idea why Heliod showed interest in you, and you might sometimes wish he hadn't.

### DEVOTION TO HELIOD

Following Heliod means devoting yourself to the cause of law and justice. In fact, champions of Heliod are sometimes more constant in their pursuit of those ideals than the god himself, who can be emotional and short-tempered. As a follower of Heliod, consider the ideals on the Heliod's Ideals table as alternatives to those suggested for your background.

### HELIOD'S IDEALS

#### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Devotion.** My devotion to my god is more important to me than what he stands for. (Any)
- 2 **Honor.** I behave nobly and always keep my promises. (Lawful)

#### d6 Ideal

- 3 **Protection.** I face the horrors of the darkness so the common people don't have to. (Good)
- 4 **Enforcement.** Those who violate the laws that hold civilization together must be punished. (Lawful)
- 5 **Justice.** The purpose of law is to establish fair and equitable relationships among people and gods. (Lawful and good)
- 6 **Kinship.** It's essential to preserve the bonds of family—my own family first, and others after. (Lawful)

### EARNING AND LOSING PIETY

You increase your piety score to Heliod when you expand the god's influence in the world in a concrete way through acts such as these:

- Carrying out punishment on a fugitive from justice
- Exacting vengeance for a significant wrong done to you
- Defending a polis from attacking monsters
- Building or restoring a temple to Heliod

Your piety score to Heliod decreases if you diminish his influence in the world, contradict his ideals, or make him look ridiculous or ineffectual through acts such as these:

- Breaking an explicit promise or oath
- Violating any just law
- Putting others at risk through your own cowardice

### HELIOD'S DEVOTEE

*Piety 3+ Heliod trait*

As a devotee of Heliod, you have proven yourself a worthy champion of the sun god. You can call on Heliod's favor and cast *bless* with this trait, requiring no material components. Heliod's blessing manifests as a nimbus around the affected creatures, causing them to shed dim light in a 5-foot radius until the spell ends. You can cast the spell in this way a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

### HELIOD'S VOTARY

*Piety 10+ Heliod trait*

You can cast *daylight* with this trait. Once you cast the spell in this way, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

### HELIOD'S DISCIPLE

*Piety 25+ Heliod trait*

You grow accustomed to the blazing radiance of the sun; you have advantage on saving throws against being blinded, and you have resistance to fire damage.

### CHAMPION OF THE SUN

*Piety 50+ Heliod trait*

You can increase your Strength or Wisdom score by 2 and also increase your maximum for that score by 2.



Iroas is the steadfast god of honor and victory in war. When soldiers march to battle, his voice is the thunder of their footsteps and the crash of spear on shield. Soldiers, mercenaries, and athletes all pray for Iroas's favor in securing victory. Common folk pray to Iroas for courage and fortitude in times of struggle, for his is the battle nobly fought and won.

Bold and confident with a soldier's demeanor, Iroas is the pinnacle of martial pride and bearing. He is stoic almost to a fault, but also exhibits a wry sense of humor. Those who honorably shed blood in Iroas's name can count on his support. Cowards and oath breakers are to be despised, and traitors don't deserve mercy in battle.

Iroas most often appears as a powerfully built centaur with a bull's body rather than a horse's, clad in gleaming armor and wielding a spear and shield. He speaks in a booming baritone that projects power, confidence, and courage. He has been known to appear as a burly soldier or a mighty bull before his followers. Whatever form he chooses, Iroas carries himself with precision and majesty at all times and doesn't tolerate disrespect or undue informality from those who would deal with him.

## IROAS'S INFLUENCE

Iroas personifies the glory of victory, honorable combat, and physical competition. He is the unspoken bond between soldiers on the eve of battle, the courage of the standard bearer holding colors aloft in the midst of battle, and the exultation that comes after a hard-won victory. Iroas pushes his followers to excel in their chosen fields, particularly war and athletics, and gain honor through superior skill, training, and dedication.

War is, fundamentally, a terrible experience filled with pain, loss, and fear. Unfortunately, as Iroas sees it, war is also necessary. He sees preparing for and winning life's essential battles as being of paramount importance and the highest calling one can experience.

The true warrior fights with honor, courage, and dedication, and values training, discipline, strength, and *esprit de corps*. In Iroas's eyes, nothing is more valuable or honorable than a honed blade wielded by a trained warrior loyal to a just cause. This message is ingrained in the ethos of Akros, the polis that claims him as its patron. His precepts and codes of conduct are incorporated in the civil and military laws of Akros.

Iroas values strength and determination in less deadly pursuits, as well. He believes sports are a fine proxy for war, as just as in a battle, superior skill and strength lead to a victory. What Iroas truly loves is a winner.

Lastly, Iroas urges his followers to blunt the advance of his brother, Mogis. This directive inevitably means combat, since Iroas knows of no other way to solve problems. Diplomacy isn't an act of cowardice per se, but because it isn't an activity Iroas is prepared to engage in, it isn't something he expects of his followers.

## IROAS'S GOALS

Iroas sees existence as a series of glorious battles to be won by both him and his followers. War is a testing ground from which only the bravest and strongest emerge. Between battles, there are feats of endurance and physical prowess to perform. Iroas exhorts his followers to hone their bodies and minds just as they hone their blades. He is certain that to slacken his vigilance and grow lazy would guarantee his demise at the edge of his brother's blood-soaked axe. Iroas pushes his followers to be ready at all times to meet conflict head-on.

## DIVINE RELATIONSHIPS

Iroas is defined by his opposition to his twin brother, Mogis. Although both love battle, Iroas holds an honorable and valorous view of warfare, whereas Mogis lusts for carnage and butchery. Iroas firmly believes that mortals will always fight, whether in war or in less consequential pursuits. His charge is to ensure that war is waged with a code of honor and to prevent his brother's depravity from spreading through the world.

Iroas holds an abiding respect for Purphoros, who girds his warriors in the products of his artifice. Iroas sees finely crafted arms as the highest form of art, sublime and deadly at once. Still, Iroas finds Purphoros's volatile temper and bouts of passion unbecoming of one with such talent at creating weapons of war.

Iroas champions the cause of justice and thus seeks Heliod's guidance and counsel from time to time. During Heliod's piques of arrogance and temper, Iroas is the one who advocates restraint and calm. More often than not, the two deities agree where matters of justice and honor are concerned.

## WORSHIPING IROAS

Iroas is interested not in pretty words, but in great deeds. The faithful of Iroas show their piety by comporting themselves well in contests of athleticism or skill. Swearing an oath to win a battle in Iroas's name and failing to do so is a great shame upon a warrior, thus such a promise is never uttered lightly.

The fifth month of the Meletian calendar is Thriambion, named for an annual commemoration of the Meletian conquest of Natumbria. This victory cemented Meletis's control over the entire peninsula. But in Akros, the month is called Iroagonion, for the Iroan Games. These games are the grandest display to honor Iroas. To even compete in the Iroan Games is considered noteworthy, as the polis send only their finest athletes. The grand prize, besides a ceremonial wreath, is the opportunity to be visited by Iroas himself.

## IROAS'S CHAMPIONS

**Alignment:** Usually chaotic, often good

**Suggested Classes:** Barbarian, cleric, fighter, paladin, sorcerer

**Suggested Cleric Domains:** War

**Suggested Backgrounds:** Athlete, folk hero, soldier

Many champions of Iroas are warriors for honor and justice. They often seek to embody martial courage and are motivated by strong personal codes of honor.

### IROAS'S FAVOR

Iroas has a soft spot in his heart for underdogs, even if they lack the strength to win the fight. It is easier, he believes, to make a hero from a weakling who has a heroic heart than it is to turn a brute into a defender of justice. What's more, the victory of the strong gives them glory, but the victory of the weak gives glory to Iroas.

Why did Iroas seek you out as a champion? Perhaps you proved your courage even when victory eluded your grasp, or you demonstrated a willingness to use your strength for good. Occasionally, Iroas's choice of a champion has as much to do with his enmity toward Mogis as it does with the mortal he chooses; is there some connection between you and the god of slaughter? The Iroas's Favor table offers a few suggestions.

#### IROAS'S FAVOR

##### d6 Circumstance

- 1 You were born on the eve of a major battle.
- 2 Your twin sibling is a champion of Mogis.
- 3 You showed great courage in a losing battle.
- 4 You proved yourself in a contest of strength and skill at the Iroan Games.
- 5 You called upon Iroas to witness an oath of victory in battle, and he took notice.
- 6 Despite having been knocked down repeatedly in life, you show grit and determination in all you do.

### DEVOTION TO IROAS

Following Iroas means making a commitment to combat in pursuit of righteous aims, not as a way of applying coercion or domination. It also means dedicating yourself to the pursuit of excellence, for the god of victory desires victorious champions. As a follower of Iroas, consider the ideals on the Iroas's Ideals table as alternatives to those suggested for your background.

#### IROAS'S IDEALS

##### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Devotion.** My devotion to my god is more important to me than what he stands for. (Any)
- 2 **Courage.** No fear or pain can turn me away. (Any)
- 3 **Loyalty.** War forms bonds that are more real and lasting than the ties of love or family. (Any)
- 4 **Heroism.** The powerful must protect the weak. (Good)
- 5 **Liberty.** The strong mustn't exploit the weak. (Chaotic)
- 6 **Excellence.** People should look to me as an example of the best that mortal folk can be. (Any)

### EARNING AND LOSING PIETY

You increase your piety score to Iroas when you expand the god's influence in the world in a concrete way through acts such as these:

- Achieving a great victory
- Overcoming long odds honorably
- Defeating a skilled foe in single combat
- Winning a great feat of strength or skill

Your piety score to Iroas decreases if you diminish Iroas's influence in the world, contradict his ideals, or make him look weak and cowardly through acts such as these:

- Showing cowardice in battle
- Besting an honorable foe through deceit
- Harming innocents or noncombatants

### IROAS'S DEVOTEE

*Piety 3+ Iroas trait*

As a devotee of Iroas, you have earned his favor through victories won in his name. You can cast *compelled duel* with this trait a number of times equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

### IROAS'S VOTARY

*Piety 10+ Iroas trait*

You can cast *crusader's mantle* with this trait. Once you cast the spell in this way, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

In addition, you have advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

### IROAS'S DISCIPLE

*Piety 25+ Iroas trait*

As a bonus action, you can call on Iroas's blessing, gaining the following benefit for 1 minute or until you are incapacitated: creatures within 30 feet of you can't gain advantage on attack rolls against you. Once you use this trait, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

### CHAMPION OF VICTORY

*Piety 50+ Iroas trait*

You can increase your Strength or Charisma score by 2 and also increase your maximum for that score by 2.



## MYTHS OF IROAS

The myths told about Iroas's deeds acclaim his valor and bravery as well as his inflexibility and stubbornness. Countless tales tell of him or his champions besting terrible beasts, enemy armies, or threats to the world. Still other stories rise beyond accounts of his victories.

**Bulwark of Brotherhood.** Iroas carries a battle-worn bronze shield called the Bulwark of Brotherhood. It symbolizes the protective bond shared by all soldiers at war and his determination, ironically, to defeat his own brother. In the myth of Rygyra the Slinger, the soldier never missed when she launched stones from her magic sling. Yet, even so, her every shot bounced off the giant minotaur, Raksolcs Ravage-Soul. As the minotaur terror closed in on her, Rygyra whispered a prayer to Iroas and braced her flimsy wooden shield, knowing it would offer no defense against the giant's strikes. Yet, when the blow came, the shield resounded with the barest metallic clang—like a pin falling on bronze. Opening her eyes, Rygyra discovered that her shield had transformed into a gleaming bulwark—Iroas's own shield. Enraged, Raksolcs beat on the shield, leaving not even a dent. After hours of this, the minotaur collapsed, panting and exhausted. Only then did Rygyra emerge and strangle the brute with his own tongue.

**Draught of Glory.** Followers of Iroas often push their physical and emotional limits, pursuing victory above all things. Even as priests of Iroas coach their followers to be the best,

the most experienced religious leaders—particularly those who have retired from athletic competition—warn of growing addicted to triumph. Ultimately, they teach, only Iroas can drink endlessly from the river of glory and suffer no ill effects. Mortals, though, can grow intoxicated by victory and sickened by unattainable ideas of honor or eternal praise. Therefore, wise competitors are encouraged to seek only their draught of glory—a finite amount that they might revel in but that allows them to experience a life beyond grasping for greatness. Those who don't find themselves upon the path to despair, personal harm, and the temptations of Mogis.

**Kalemne, Disciple of Iroas.** One of the greatest of Iroas's champions, Kalemne is a stone giant sworn to the service of the god of war. A warrior of tremendous strength and tactical skill, she has imposed martial discipline on the most unruly of troops and has led squads of giants and minotaurs to glorious victories. Her devotion to Iroas is absolute, and her commitment to victory is unwavering. Countless petitioners have sought out Kalemne over the years, seeking her aid in righting wrongs or preventing disasters. Though she sympathizes with all who tell her their tragic tales, Kalemne has committed to aiding only those who can defeat her in a contest of athletic skill or a test of speed. Those who do can count on her aid, and possibly that of her troops. Those who can't must seek other answers to their problems.





Karametra is recognized as the serene, maternal god of the harvest, her arms spread wide as she offers bounty to her worshipers or cradles communities in her embrace. Almost every human settlement contains at least a modest shrine to solicit her favor, and she is closely associated with Setessa, the center of her worship.

Wise and even-tempered, Karametra values community, stability, and the balance of nature. She is the god of maternity, family, orphans, domestication, and agriculture, as well as defense of the home and territory.

Karametra appears to mortals as a motherly figure with hair made of ordered rows of leaves that shroud her eyes from view. She is always shown in art (and often seen in Nyx) seated on her throne, which is formed from a tangle of grape vines growing out of a collection of jugs and amphorae that surround her. An elaborately carved wooden canopy extends above her, and a giant sable—her faithful companion—curls around the base of the throne at her feet. In one hand, she holds a harvester's scythe.

## KARAMETRA'S INFLUENCE

Karametra governs nature as it comes into play in the lives of mortals, representing domesticated nature—a bounteous, nurturing provider. But she also reminds mortals that they are part of the natural world; they are animals that eat and digest and reproduce and sleep, and Karametra is influential in all of that, as well.

Mortals seek her favor because the fertility of nature is necessary for their existence. It isn't her wrath they fear—she is not a god of storms or plagues—but her withdrawal. Without her, plants, livestock, families, and communities simply fail to thrive. Her goodwill is a bulwark against both physical starvation and starvation of the spirit: despair, loneliness, and moral weakness.

Karametra promises that spring will always come again, trees will always bear fruit, and flocks will always bear young. Children will always be born, parents will always care for them and be cared for in their turn. Great fortune or adventure might not be at hand, but the little joys of life—the smell of spring blossoms, the sweetness of ripe fruit, the flaming beauty of autumn leaves, the fellowship of community—can be savored.

In many ways, Karametra represents the essence of the divine relationship with mortals: fertility and protection are the nucleus of the aid mortals have always sought from gods, and Karametra doesn't complicate these basic needs by couching them in terms of abstract ideals of honor or law or justice. She is the distillation of an ancient and primal exchange: mortal devotion in return for divine blessing.

## KARAMETRA'S GOALS

Karametra doesn't engage in underhanded politicking or petty disputes. She seems to stand above the quarrels and tumultuous rivalries of other deities, and equally aloof from the machinations of the mortal world. Her fundamental concern is for the well-being of mortal folk, starting with their physical health but also including their need for security, love, and belonging.

## DIVINE RELATIONSHIPS

Karametra might not want to wield power over other gods, but her position of detached compassion lends her significant influence to wield as she chooses. The other gods trust her to be impartial in their disputes and honest about her motivations, and they look to her for wisdom and even sometimes comfort.

Karametra's closest relationship is with Heliod. He respects her civilized demeanor, and she recognizes the vital role the sun's brilliance plays in nurturing life.

The relationship between Karametra and Nylea is respectful but strained. Nylea is disappointed by Karametra's decision, as a nature deity, to subordinate nature to the needs of mortals. Karametra is frustrated by what she sees as Nylea's refusal to recognize mortal folk—and all their civilizations—as part of the natural world. Despite this tension, both gods encourage their worshipers to leave offerings at each other's shrines.

The gods who provoke Karametra's sharpest disdain are Iroas and Mogis, who seem devoted to the idea of preventing mortal life from fully flourishing. War—even if it's couched in noble terms, as Iroas's followers like to do—is fundamentally an instrument of death, bringing a premature and pointless end to mortal life. That said, Karametra does recognize the need to fight in defense of one's life, family, and community when they come under attack, so she and Iroas are able to find some common ground in that matter—and in their shared hatred of Mogis.

## WORSHIPING KARAMETRA

The earth's fertility is essential for mortal life to continue. Those who live in the modern poleis might not be as aware of that fact as those who farm their own food, but even they long for children, know the pinch of hunger, and feel the turn of the seasons.

Prayers to Karametra focus on asserting Karametra's constancy and bounty, praising the god's love and generosity. Worshipers of Karametra gather for a feast once a month, on the evening of the full moon, that celebrates the god's role in parenthood and community. New parents receive gifts and blessings, and young couples sneak away into the woods in hopes of finding sweet berries and sweeter kisses.



## MYTHS OF KARAMETRA

Karametra rarely engages in legendary undertakings. It is her unshakable reliability that makes her a popular deity.

**The Miraculous Field.** Outside Setessa is a farm that produces incredible fruits and grains that can heal illnesses, increase fertility, and stave off hunger for days. The field is said to be Karametra's tribute to her beloved human priest, Thamuzus, who died there. While many seek the farm, it is said that the vineyard around it is so labyrinthine that few have ever reached its center.

**The Old Harvest.** In rare, remote settlements, high summer ceremonies acknowledge ancient rural practices devoted to a less merciful vision of Karametra. These communities offer abundant sacrifices to the god, but also guard their ancient rituals from outsiders, as Karametra's organized clergy harshly forbids discussion of abandoned religious practices. However, occasionally, a centuries-old depiction of the goddess breaks, revealing an ancient icon inside, typically a primitive mud idol of a woman bearing a sheaf of grain in one hand and a skull in the other.

**Partners in Possibility.** The fall holiday known as the Blessing of the Beasts (or, in Meletis, the Therimakarion) celebrates humans' partnership with domestic animals. The horses and oxen that pull plows, the cats that guard the granaries, and the roosters that wake families and call them

to their work are given blessings, special treats, and a day of rest. Stories say that strays found on this day are servants of Karametra and destined for great things. Others claim that on this day domestic animals can speak—that is, if they have anything they care to say to their supposed owners.

**Striving for Perfection.** Although Karametra delights in nature's bounty, she ever strives to tap its greater potential. Her followers recount legends of breeders and horticulturalists who cultivated remarkable new types of plants and animals—such as the everfruit of Dakra or the storied Oraniad dragon-hens. Yet, while Karametra looks on such innovations with delight, some other gods see them as blasphemies.

**The Years of Rage.** The tales about Karametra don't specify what ignited the god's rage in ancient times, but they do record that for a year, she tore down her own temples and refused to let any plants grow. The mortals of the world, threatened with starvation, beseeched her to curb her wrath. In an effort led by Karametra's priests, nearly all of humanity prayed for a week, neither eating nor sleeping, praising Karametra for her serenity and generosity. After that time, she relented and produced a miraculous crop of grapes that cured illness and fed the people. Ever since then, her statues have been adorned with twining grape vines around their left wrists in commemoration of that event.



## KARAMETRA'S CHAMPIONS

**Alignment:** Usually neutral, often good

**Suggested Classes:** Cleric, fighter, paladin, ranger

**Suggested Cleric Domains:** Life, Nature

**Suggested Backgrounds:** Acolyte, folk hero, guild artisan, soldier, urchin

Most champions of Karametra are advocates of community and family. They typically form tight-knit squads or surrogate families and take care of their people.

### KARAMETRA'S FAVOR

Karametra grants her favor to champions in the mortal world who advance the cause of civilization and community. She nurtures the power and influence of those who provide food and care to others and has little patience for those who display arrogance and self-centeredness, instead elevating those who seek to elevate others.

Although Karametra's demeanor is gentle, her call to service is nonnegotiable. She lavishes fortune and prosperity on those who serve her, but she will not be ignored. It is rare for her to abandon a champion, but neither will she allow a champion to abandon their service. The Karametra's Favor table offers suggestions for what might make the god of the harvest take notice of you.

### KARAMETRA'S FAVOR

#### d6 Circumstance

- 1 You were an orphan who wandered into one of Karametra's temples seeking a meal and a safe place to spend the night.
- 2 You are a village leader who sees caring for your neighbors as your most important job.
- 3 You pioneered an agricultural innovation.
- 4 Though you have no children of your own, you have assembled a tight-knit chosen family.
- 5 You nearly bled to death in a farm field.
- 6 You sought Karametra's help on behalf of your community during a drought or natural disaster.

### DEVOTION TO KARAMETRA

Following Karametra means dedicating yourself to caring for others, promoting civilization and community, and putting the needs of others above your own. After all, Karametra asks nothing for herself. As a follower of Karametra, consider the ideals on the Karametra's Ideals table as alternatives to those suggested for your background.

### KARAMETRA'S IDEALS

#### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Devotion.** My devotion to my god is more important to me than what she stands for. (Any)
- 2 **Civilization.** Nature achieves its highest calling when human communities make use of it. (Lawful)
- 3 **Humility.** I put the needs of others above my own and strive to lead through service. (Any)
- 4 **Protection.** I devote myself to ensuring that the vulnerable and the innocent can live in safety. (Good)

#### d6 Ideal

- 5 **Bounty.** I am generous and share what I have, hoping to improve the well-being of all around me. (Good)
- 6 **Community.** I strive to deepen the bonds of my family, companions, and neighbors. (Any)

### EARNING AND LOSING PIETY

You increase your piety score to Karametra when you expand the god's influence in the world in a concrete way through acts such as these:

- Turning a wild field into fertile cropland
- Feeding those who are starving
- Defending a farm from monsters
- Building or restoring a temple to Karametra

Your piety score to Karametra decreases if you diminish her influence in the world, contradict her ideals, or undermine her civilizing influence through acts such as these:

- Destroying a settlement's food source
- Releasing and scattering domestic animals
- Diverting a water source needed for irrigation
- Starting a fire that threatens a settlement

### KARAMETRA'S DEVOTEE

*Piety 3+ Karametra trait*

As a devotee of Karametra, you have proven yourself a worthy potential champion of the harvest god. As a bonus action, you can invoke her protection; spectral plants cover you, providing you with a +1 bonus to AC for 1 minute. Once you use this trait, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

### KARAMETRA'S VOTARY

*Piety 10+ Karametra trait*

You can cast *create food and water* with this trait. Once you cast the spell in this way, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

In addition, you have advantage on saving throws against being poisoned.

### KARAMETRA'S DISCIPLE

*Piety 25+ Karametra trait*

By performing an hour-long ritual, you can conjure enough grapes to fill three vials (4 ounces each) of wine. Each vial serves as a *potion of healing* for 24 hours, after which it loses this property. Once you use this trait, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

### CHAMPION OF HARVESTS

*Piety 50+ Karametra trait*

You can increase your Constitution or Wisdom score by 2 and also increase your maximum for that score by 2.



## KERANOS

*God of Storms*

Keranos is the god of storms and wisdom. Merciless and impatient, Keranos is equally likely to strike out at mortals with a bolt of inspiration or a blast of lightning. To revere Keranos is to exult in the power of wisdom, clarity of purpose, and the fury of the storm. He is favored by tinkerers, inventors, and sailors as well as those seeking solutions to intractable problems. He doesn't tolerate the company (or the worship) of fools, and he despises vagidity and indecision.

Keranos rarely appears directly to mortals, preferring to communicate through an epiphany or a crashing bolt of lightning. When he does deign to manifest in the mortal world, Keranos prefers the form of a stout, bearded, male human wearing a purple loincloth girdled in a mithral chain belt with a clasp in the form of a dragon's skull. His bearing is upright and stern, with a clipped, brusque way of speaking. Particularly clever plans and observations bring a hint of a smile to his face. When interacting with mortals, Keranos sometimes appears in the form of a great horned owl with lightning strikes flashing in its eyes.

### KERANOS'S INFLUENCE

Keranos is the embodiment of wisdom and insight unhindered by compassion or patience. Just as the storm vents its fury unpredictably and without warning, so does Keranos deliver the wisdom he chooses to impart.

A storm, for all its unpredictability, can still be weathered by those who apply foresight and knowledge. So it is when dealing with Keranos. He rewards those who act with forethought and decisiveness and punishes the reckless for their stupidity.

Those who seek to solve enigmas and create wonders of art and science often invoke his name. The creative process is fraught with frustration, and his insights make short work of such hindrances as easily as the lightning parts a mighty oak.

Keranos dispenses inspiration without regard for the morality of its application. He is just as likely to reward the shrewd general seeking to topple a polis as a gentle healer searching for a cure for a malady. Good and evil don't color his thinking, only action and the thrill of birthing new ideas into the world. Furthering the act of creating—be it ideas, weapons, art, or magic—is what matters most.

### KERANOS'S GOALS

For good or ill, Keranos exists as a disruptive force. He doesn't desire authority over other gods and, in fact, doesn't particularly enjoy their company. Keranos finds satisfaction in investing bright mortals with prescient visions to see how they adapt. Those who prove themselves decisive and intelligent, such as the missing Queen Cymede of Akros, earn his grudging respect and continued blessings of precognition. He finds satisfaction not only in granting insight, but also in expressing the awesome fury of the storm. Where others see only chaos and destruction in storms, he sees them as shaping the firmament in ways that challenge and engage mortals. His blasts of lightning set house and forest ablaze, thus rendering the soil clear for new life and new creations. His is a vision he alone is equipped to see. He is content to watch his divine kinfolk scheme and plot while he looks on, stern and inscrutable.

### DIVINE RELATIONSHIPS

Keranos is neither friendly nor sociable, so his dealings with most of the rest of the pantheon tend to be terse, formal, and brief. This doesn't mean that no interactions of note take place, however.

Of all the gods, Thassa has the most cordial relationship with Keranos. He enjoys the sea god's love of ancient lore, introspection, and complex patterns. The two sometimes talk for days at a time debating the flaws in ancient sophistries and discussing the meaning of the stars. Thassa, imperturbable and constant, makes the ideal counter to the wise yet temperamental Keranos.

Another interesting relationship exists with Purphoros. The passions of the divine blacksmith run hot, as does the need to create. The melding of Keranos's inspiration with Purphoros's passion is a formidable combination. This partnership resulted in the creation of Epiphany, Keranos's mighty javelin.

### WORSHIPING KERANOS

Keranos's name is often invoked by those amid a storm who seek safety, or by someone who is faced with a particularly difficult problem. Only the foolhardy call out to Keranos frivolously or in jest, since he might well smite the offender with a bolt from the blue.

In Akros, where Queen Cymede actively promoted the worship of Keranos, elaborate ceremonies are conducted beginning just before the first summer thunderstorm. Intricate, open-framed sand paintings with complex geometric shapes are created by dancers in flowing blue silken wraps. Then, as the rains fall, the paintings are washed away, symbolizing the impermanence of genius and the power of change. Akroan oracles strive to predict the exact time of the first storm in hopes of allowing enough time to stage the celebration. A similar festival in Meletis, called the Lightning Festival, gives its name (Astrapion) to the third month of the year.

On the last day of every month, Keranos's priests and laity bring offerings of fish and distilled spirits to his temples. The fish are cooked under a skylight open to the stars, with a shot of spirits thrown on the fire.

## KERANOS'S CHAMPIONS

**Alignment:** Usually chaotic, often neutral

**Suggested Classes:** Barbarian, bard, cleric, druid, sorcerer, wizard

**Suggested Cleric Domains:** Knowledge, Tempest

**Suggested Backgrounds:** Acolyte, entertainer, guild artisan, noble, sage, sailor

Most champions of Keranos are calm under pressure, creative, and clever. They often seek to challenge the status quo and thrill at wielding the power of the storm.

### KERANOS'S FAVOR

Keranos chooses champions who are deliberate and wise, yet able to bring the storm's fury when needed. He expects his champions to be aggressive and self-reliant and disdains the lazy and the foolish, who deserve whatever ill fortune befalls them.

The god of storms is inscrutable at the best of times; thus, it can be difficult to discern why you've earned his favor. What prompted him to gift you with foreknowledge of important events? How have you demonstrated your potential? The Keranos's Favor table offers a handful of suggestions.

#### KERANOS'S FAVOR

##### d6 Circumstance

- 1 You were born amid a great storm that destroyed most of your village.
- 2 One of your parents was struck by lightning.
- 3 As a child, you were favored by an oracle of great power who saw Keranos's spark within you.
- 4 You solved a riddle, puzzle, or cipher that was previously thought unsolvable.
- 5 You were born under auspicious stars.
- 6 You have no idea why Keranos grants you visions, and the burden weighs heavily on your soul.

### DEVOTION TO KERANOS

Just as the storm is unpredictable and often dangerous, so is service to the lord of storms. Keranos's devotees hatch their grand designs always with an eye on the darkening sky. As a follower of Keranos, consider the ideals on the Keranos's Ideals table as alternatives to those suggested for your background.

### KERANOS'S IDEALS

##### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Devotion.** My devotion to my god is more important to me than what he stands for. (Any)
- 2 **Wisdom.** The pursuit of knowledge and insight is the highest aspiration one can achieve. (Any)
- 3 **Foresight.** Fortune favors the prepared, not so much the bold. (Neutral or lawful)
- 4 **Fury.** I am the storm and will not be denied. (Chaotic)
- 5 **Impatience.** Whatever it takes to reach an epiphany, I will do it. (Chaotic)
- 6 **Change.** There are no constants in this life. If we don't innovate and adapt, we are doomed. (Chaotic)

### EARNING AND LOSING PIETY

You increase your piety score to Keranos when you expand the god's influence in the world in a concrete way through acts such as these:

- Solving a challenging riddle or puzzle
- Smiting the unwise and foolish in Keranos's name
- Helping a polis successfully plan for or adapt to a threat
- Building or restoring a temple to Keranos

Your piety score to Keranos decreases if you diminish Keranos's influence in the world, contradict his ideals, or make him look ridiculous or ineffectual through acts such as these:

- Jeopardizing others through rash or foolish actions
- Willingly subverting or impeding a wise course of action
- Failing to plan appropriately for a challenge
- Giving in to wanton fury and destruction

### KERANOS'S DEVOTEE

*Piety 3+ Keranos trait*

As a devotee of Keranos, you have proven your wisdom and your allegiance to the storm lord. Once on each of your turns when you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you can deal an extra 1d6 lightning damage to the target. You can use this trait a number of times equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

### KERANOS'S VOTARY

*Piety 10+ Keranos trait*

When you fail an Intelligence or a Wisdom saving throw, you can reroll the die, and you must use the new roll. Once you use this trait, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

### KERANOS'S DISCIPLE

*Piety 25+ Keranos trait*

The energy of the storm fills your being, granting you advantage on initiative rolls.

### CHAMPION OF STORMS

*Piety 50+ Keranos trait*

You can increase your Intelligence or Wisdom score by 2 and also increase your maximum for that score by 2.





## MYTHS OF KERANOS

The myths and legends told of Keranos's deeds demonstrate his wisdom and wrath, dispensed in equal measure.

**Epiphany.** The lightning bolt is a symbol of both Keranos's fury and his ability to inspire. Pondering this combination, he entreated Purphoros to create a mighty weapon, a javelin that strikes with the force of the storm. Keranos channeled his anger into a furious storm, which Purphoros then captured and smithed into a gleaming javelin that hummed with power. When Keranos wants to send a message, of either destruction or enlightenment, Epiphany is his tool of choice.

**Font of Fortunes.** In ages past, Keranos created a bronze font fed by a pure mountain stream that would grant great oracular power if one drank deeply from it. As Keranos wanted only the wisest and most clever mortals to gain his favor, the font lies at the end of a series of fierce traps and riddles. It exists both in and out of Nyx, hidden to all but the most diligent of seekers.

**Lightning Diadem.** Years ago, Keranos received an exquisitely cut sapphire set in a delicate silver diadem as an offering. Deeply appreciative of the skill and craftsmanship required to create it, Keranos imbued the gem with a spark of divine genius. Inventors and philosophers coveted the diadem, for it conferred a fraction of Keranos's inspiration to the wearer—granting incredible insights or fracturing the

wearer's sanity. Its last owner, the tormented genius Zexso the Unblinking, is said to have created a massive contraption to assure that the lightning diadem wouldn't shatter the mind of any other mortal. The inventor's machine launched the diadem into the heavens, where it's said to have landed upon a griffin-inhabited island floating in the clouds.

**Riddle of Lightning.** Once, an arrogant oracle boasted of her infallible insight, which flowed from Keranos himself. Bemused, the storm lord arranged for the oracle to meet a particularly cunning sphinx and engage in an epic battle of wits. The objective set forth by Keranos was to solve the Riddle of Lightning, an enigma devised by Keranos himself. After days of deliberation, the oracle realized the answer, only to be struck down by a bolt from the heavens. Among the faithful nowadays, the term "Riddle of Lightning" is used to denote a question that one is better off not knowing the answer to.

**Silent Storm.** Occasionally, Keranos seeks to make his will known with all the subtlety of the master of storms. Should lightning strike the same point multiple times yet never echo with thunder, followers of Keranos claim that is the way their god draws attention to secrets he wishes to share. While repeat lightning strikes would normally cause considerable damage, strikes that convey the god's will often leave a scorch in the shape of Keranos's symbol or no mark at all.





Believed to have sprung into existence during Theros's earliest days, Klothys is the god of destiny and, along with Kruphix, one of the plane's original deities. She oversees the order of the cosmos, ensuring that all things remain in their proper place, knowing how easily the cosmic balance could be undone if she were not vigilant. On the heels of a near-catastrophic upset of the cosmic order—the rise to godhood and subsequent defeat of the satyr Xenagos—Klothys has emerged from the Underworld for the first time in mortal memory to untangle the strands of destiny and set the world right.

Klothys typically appears as a woman with six curling horns and an impossibly long mane of pale hair that cascades around her horns, drapes over her eyes, and spools into her spear-like weapon and the various other spindles she carries.

Beneath her outward calm, Klothys seethes at the way mortals and gods alike have pulled apart and rearranged the threads of destiny to feed their petty ambitions. Her peaceful mien falls away in the presence of such villains. In her rage, her red-glowing eyes come into view through the veil of her hair, and she wields burning strands of hair as a devastating weapon.

## KLOTHYS'S INFLUENCE

Klothys is the embodiment and enforcer of destiny. Largely forgotten after ages spent in the Underworld, Klothys has only recently emerged, brimming with silent frustration at the state of Theros.

Each strand of Klothys's hair is part of the fabric of destiny, the natural order that underpins all existence. Her followers claim to see these strands woven into all things, granting them understanding of cosmic truths and insights into how the future should unfold.

Klothys withdrew to the Underworld ages ago to keep watch over the imprisoned titans and ensure they couldn't escape and destroy the order she had established. Due to this undertaking, she is also the god of secrets best kept quiet and powers best untouched.

## KLOTHYS'S GOALS

Once content to oversee and preserve destiny from the Underworld, Klothys now endeavors to undo the cosmic damage caused by Heliody, Xenagos, and ambitious

mortals in recent years. The ways in which they ravaged reality to realize their selfish dreams has threatened Theros, and only by untangling the strands of destiny can Klothys set things right. The status quo she seeks to restore, however, comes with a cost in mortal casualties and societal upheaval that would accompany this process. She intends to humble the same institutions that condoned or committed these crimes against Theros. When her efforts have laid low the proud, the defiant, and the exploitative, then Klothys will have restored the natural order and ensured the world's survival.

## DIVINE RELATIONSHIPS

Klothys views many of the gods with disdain, considering them to be complicit in Xenagos's theogenesis, Heliody's acts of arrogance, or both. She reserves special contempt for Heliody and his champions, relishing every opportunity to teach them humility.

Klothys also clashes with other gods associated with order and progress, seeing their defiance of the natural order as a dangerous affront. Ephara's ravenous colonization, Iroas's passion for overcoming insurmountable odds, and Karametra's taming of nature all run the risk of inspiring ambitious mortals who lust for ever more power and strain to break away from their proper place in the cosmos.

Klothys respects the other gods whose interests balance creation and destruction, such as Thassa, Purphoros, and Nylea, considering them better attuned to Theros's needs and destiny's myriad outcomes. Nylea shares Klothys's delight in the world's natural cycles. Purphoros's willingness to build and demolish appeases Klothys—as well as the fact that he despises Heliody as much as she does.

Klothys's relationships with Erebus and Athreos are complicated. Ages spent in the Underworld with Erebus have driven home for her how arrogant and tyrannical he is, as ready to commit the same sins as Heliody if given the opportunity. Even so, Erebus and Klothys maintain a level of mutual respect. Until recently, Klothys and Athreos were unflappable allies. But now her emergence from the Underworld has blurred the borders between the realms, as she draws horrors into the mortal realm with her and thereby raises Athreos's ire.

Of course, Klothys trusts no other god as much as she does Kruphix, who also recalls Theros's earliest hours. The two have a deep respect for one another.

## WORSHIPING KLOTHYS

Klothys doesn't trace her origins to mortal devotion, and she has languished in obscurity for almost the whole of human history. Unlike the other gods (except Kruphix), she doesn't need worship to sustain or empower her, and she doesn't seek out reverence or demand it. By and large, mortals are irrelevant to her, except insofar as they have played a role in tangling the strands of destiny by defying nature's order.



## MYTHS OF KLOTHYS

Klothys is barely remembered in the mortal world, having sequestered herself in the Underworld while human civilization was in its infancy. Some surviving myths speak of a personified “destiny” in a way that vaguely suggests the possibility of an actual god’s involvement.

**Rage of Titans.** The greatest threat to the young world of Theros was the godlike race of titans, born from the same swirling chaos as the world itself. Before any order could be imposed on the world, the titans had to be contained. Kruphix and Klothys worked together to imprison the titans in the deepest pits of the Underworld. Klothys voluntarily bound herself in the Underworld to keep the titans imprisoned, but that is, after all, the nature of destiny: once the natural order of the world had been put in place and preserved, no further action should have been required on her part to maintain it.

**The Smoking Strand.** Hidden far from civilized coasts lies a strand of Klothys’s hair that she purposefully plucked. Knotted in on itself, the strand appears as a seething ball of dense smoke. Any who touch the strand risk having it invade them, infecting them with a pernicious destiny that Klothys herself tore from the natural order. None can say what terrible destiny the Smoking Strand drives its possessor

toward, but the ruins within which it lies might give some hint—caverns burrowed deep into a mountain of petrified bodies, the twisted obsidian corpses of humanoids and animals alike.

**Twins at War.** The newly formed gods Kruphix and Klothys emerged from opposite sides of the roiling tangle of possibilities that eventually gave birth to Theros. At first the two battled for supremacy, but they soon realized their conflict left their young world vulnerable to dangers from both inside and out. Putting their rivalry aside, the pair agreed it was better to share and have something than let their struggles destroy all creation.

**Walkers of Woe.** The nightmarish creatures known as woe striders are said to be products of Klothys’s punishment. These beings descend from an age when some mortals learned to unshackle themselves from the strands of destiny. To what end is a question lost to time, but Klothys put a quick end to these blasphemers and eradicated nearly all knowledge of their methods. Ever since, the shades of these accursed mortals have walked the Underworld as woe striders, monstrosities endlessly seeking strands of destiny that they might use to replace their own discarded lots.



## KLOTHYS'S CHAMPIONS

**Alignment:** Usually neutral

**Suggested Classes:** Barbarian, cleric, ranger, warlock

**Suggested Cleric Domains:** Knowledge, War

**Suggested Backgrounds:** Folk hero, hermit, outlander, sage

Most champions of Klothys believe it is their destiny to fulfill a particular role or seek answers to omens they struggle to understand. They are passionate about punishing those who violate the cosmological order.

### KLOTHYS'S FAVOR

Klothys hasn't had a mortal champion before. Upon emerging from the Underworld, she created a host of Nyxborn agents to help her restore Theros to its proper path. You might be one of these so-called Agents of Destiny (if you choose the Nyxborn supernatural gift, described in chapter 1), single-minded in the purpose for which you were made. Or you might be among the first of a new cadre of followers of Klothys. The Klothys's Favor table suggests some possible connections between the god and a mortal follower.

#### KLOTHYS'S FAVOR

##### d6 Circumstance

- 1 Your family suffered during the rise of Xenagos, leaving you with unresolved rage.
- 2 You swore yourself to Klothys, offering your service in exchange for reprieve from a mundane destiny.
- 3 Born under an ill omen, you were victimized by your neighbors' superstitions before realizing that you were destined to serve Klothys.
- 4 You lost a loved one to the upheaval that followed Klothys from the Underworld. You planned revenge, but were awed at the sight of her and devoted yourself to her service.
- 5 You were a champion of Heliod until the emergence of Klothys showed you the danger of Heliod's hubris.
- 6 You don't know why Klothys has shown interest in you.

### DEVOTION TO KLOTHYS

To follow Klothys is to accept the natural order of the cosmos and your place in it. It means accepting your destiny even as you strive against the bonds of fate. As a follower of Klothys, consider the ideals on the Klothys's Ideals table as alternatives to those suggested for your background.

#### KLOTHYS'S IDEALS

##### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Devotion.** My devotion to my god is more important to me than what she stands for. (Any)
- 2 **Stewardship.** Preservation of the natural order supersedes the needs of civilization. (Neutral)
- 3 **Humility.** It is hubris to aspire to a higher place in the natural order than we are given. (Lawful)
- 4 **Vigilance.** Those who defy or manipulate destiny are menaces that must be stopped. (Neutral)

##### d6 Ideal

- 5 **Fury.** The world must be cleansed to make way for a new start. (Chaotic)
- 6 **Protection.** When gods or mortals go mad with power, it's the powerless who suffer, and I mean to keep them safe. (Good)

### EARNING AND LOSING PIETY

You increase your piety score to Klothys when you expand the god's influence in the world in a concrete way through acts such as these:

- Defeating a creature that has stepped out of its place
- Repairing a significant wound dealt to destiny by the gods' ambitions
- Teaching people about Klothys, her nature, and her return

Your piety score to Klothys decreases if you diminish her influence in the world, contradict her ideals, or threaten the integrity of destiny through acts such as these:

- Undoing a deserved punishment or curse suffered by another creature
- Willfully destroying a natural wonder
- Assisting a creature in undermining the natural order or exploiting destiny

### KLOTHYS'S DEVOTEE

*Piety 3+ Klothys trait*

As a devotee of Klothys, you can manipulate the bonds of destiny that invisibly entangle every living thing. You can cast *command* with this trait a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

### KLOTHYS'S VOTARY

*Piety 10+ Klothys trait*

You can cast *clairvoyance* with this trait, requiring no material components. Once you cast the spell in this way, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

In addition, you have advantage on saving throws against being charmed.

### KLOTHYS'S DISCIPLE

*Piety 25+ Klothys trait*

You develop a second sense, allowing you to intuit the tug and pull of destiny. You can't be surprised, provided you aren't incapacitated.

### CHAMPION OF DESTINY

*Piety 50+ Klothys trait*

You can increase your Strength or Wisdom score by 2 and also increase your maximum for that score by 2.



## KRUPHIX

*God of Horizons*

Kruxphix is the enigmatic god of mysteries, horizons, and the passage of time. His followers claim that he knows not only everything that is known at present, but everything that has ever been known by anyone.

Quiet surrounds Kruxphix like a shroud. Standing apart from the other gods, he speaks rarely, even to his most favored followers. When he does communicate, it is often as a barely audible whisper. Kruxphix can speak with a booming voice directly into the minds of all the other gods simultaneously, though, doing so when something threatens the cosmic order.

Kruxphix's true form is more abstract than that of any of the other gods. He appears only in star-filled silhouette, usually as a hooded, four-armed figure of indeterminate species and gender. Two of the stars in his "body" often shine brightly, suggesting eyes. Kruxphix's starry silhouette sometimes takes the form of a bird or a whale.

### KRUPHIX'S INFLUENCE

Kruxphix holds dominion over everything unseen or unknown. He is associated with the horizon—the brink of the unknown—and with navigation. His followers include scholars, sages, and a handful of sailors who have an inclination toward the mystical.

Perfect understanding is like the horizon: easy to move toward, but impossible to reach. Kruxphix knows everything that has ever been known on Theros, so he and only he decides which secrets should be loosed upon the world, and which must be kept forever hidden. He has existed since before mortals occupied Theros and numbers among the few who understand the role of mortal belief in shaping the younger gods—a concept even most gods don't fully comprehend.

Kruxphix is the only being who has the ability to seal the borders between the mortal realm and Nyx. He uses this power to safeguard the mortal world from reckless divine meddling and enforce the balance of power among the gods and their faithful.

Because of his lack of followers, many mortals consider Kruxphix a minor god, even obscure. To the other gods, however, he is a force within the pantheon, worthy of both respect and wariness.

### KRUPHIX'S GOALS

More than any other god, Kruxphix simply *is*. He seeks nothing but to oversee the acquisition of knowledge, maintain the cycles of time, and uphold the divine order. He views his fellow gods as petty and vengeful, and he opposes anyone who tries to obtain power that would upset the delicate balance of the pantheon.

Kruxphix is the eldest of the gods and sees it as his responsibility to rein in the excesses of his younger siblings. Unlike Helioid, Kruxphix knows that he isn't powerful enough to impose his will unilaterally. Instead, he plays the other gods against one another and serves as a mediator in their endless disputes. He takes care to ensure that the other gods view him as impartial, which he considers essential to maintaining his authority.

### DIVINE RELATIONSHIPS

Kruxphix strives to hold himself above the disputes of the gods, but like any other god, he has both rivals and allies. Chief among the former is the sun god Helioid, whom Kruxphix sees as an arrogant, dangerous threat to the balance of power among the gods. He seldom acts against Helioid openly, preferring to warn others about the sun god's efforts to seize power at their expense.

Since every mortal soul must eventually pass beyond the horizon and into death, Kruxphix respects both Erebus and Athreos. He sees Erebus as a necessary check on Helioid's power, and he even allowed Athreos to continue his vital work on the fringes of the mortal world when he bound all the other gods within the fabric of Nyx. Erebus and Kruxphix blame one another for Klothys's recent emergence from the Underworld, a situation neither seems able to control.

Purphoros loathes Kruxphix for temporarily hobbling his mind following an attack against Helioid, but Kruxphix holds no grudge against Purphoros. That particular punishment upset the balance too far in the other direction, and Kruxphix is more likely to side with Purphoros than Helioid in the future.

Of all the gods, only Klothys truly concerns Kruxphix. He hoped that she would remain secret and secluded in the Underworld, and he doesn't know what her emergence portends. She is the only other god whose existence predates mortal belief, and though he is unlikely to draw her ire by manipulating destiny, he doesn't know how her return will affect the pantheon.

### WORSHIPING KRUPHIX

Many pray to Kruxphix when they need to find something lost, but few dedicate themselves to his worship. Cults devoted to Kruxphix fiercely guard their secrets, and their initiates refrain from drawing attention to themselves. Some followers and champions of Kruxphix travel the world in secret, searching for hidden truths. Many use secret signals to enable them to find safe lodging with other worshipers nearly anywhere.

Rituals honoring Kruxphix are usually performed at boundaries, both temporal and spatial: shorelines, riverbanks, equinoxes, and sunsets. One of the god's greatest festivals is the Agrypnion ("the Watching"), which marks the end of winter and the close of the year.

## KRUPHIX'S CHAMPIONS

**Alignment:** Usually neutral

**Suggested Classes:** Bard, cleric, druid, monk, ranger, wizard

**Suggested Cleric Domains:** Knowledge, Trickery

**Suggested Backgrounds:** Hermit, outlander, sage, sailor

Most champions of Kruphix seek to learn the secrets of the universe and maintain the balance of the world. They largely view the other gods as petty and seek to separate themselves from divine squabbles.

### KRUPHIX'S FAVOR

Kruphix's champions are less his agents than his charges, and he is loath to release them. Even those who leave his service often find themselves unwittingly aiding his agenda for years to come. How did you initially attract the god's attention? The Kruphix's Favor table offers a few suggestions.

#### KRUPHIX'S FAVOR

##### d6 Circumstance

- 1 Followers of Kruphix claim you were born under a bizarre omen, but will not explain what it means.
- 2 You were secretly instructed in the worship of Kruphix by a parent or a mentor.
- 3 You uncovered a dangerous secret during your studies, and followers of Kruphix sought you out and recruited you to keep the knowledge within their ranks.
- 4 Beset by strange dreams, you consulted an oracle of Kruphix. Since then, they've only gotten stranger.
- 5 You wanted to learn truths that only Kruphix knows. Now you're starting to wonder if you know too much.
- 6 You have no idea why Kruphix showed interest in you, and you might sometimes wish he hadn't.

### DEVOTION TO KRUPHIX

Kruphix doesn't demand adherence to any philosophy, and the reasons to follow him are as numberless as the stars. As a follower of Kruphix, consider the options on the Kruphix's Ideals table as alternatives to those suggested for your background.

#### KRUPHIX'S IDEALS

##### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Devotion.** My devotion to my god is more important to me than what he stands for. (Any)
- 2 **Balance.** Too much power in any one place is a threat to us all. (Lawful)
- 3 **Selflessness.** I accept the burden of knowledge so that others don't have to. (Good)
- 4 **Knowledge.** I seek out dangerous secrets so that I can know the nature of reality. (Neutral)
- 5 **Power.** The best thing about knowing a secret is getting to use it against everyone else. (Evil)
- 6 **Mystery.** The cosmos is more beautiful if its greatest truths remain unknown. (Any)

### EARNING AND LOSING PIETY

You increase your piety score to Kruphix when you expand the god's influence in the world in a concrete way through acts such as these:

- Keeping a dangerous secret despite personal cost
- Revealing a critical truth at an important moment
- Mediating a major dispute or conflict
- Aiding the weak or impeding the strong

Your piety score to Kruphix decreases if you diminish Kruphix's influence in the world, upset the balance of power, or make him look biased or petty through acts such as these:

- Revealing a secret that should remain unknown
- Selfishly refusing to share information
- Showing favoritism toward any other god or group
- Furthering the aims of another god in defiance of Kruphix's will

Kruphix doesn't care about the righteousness of a cause, only about upholding impartiality in both appearance and action. This sometimes means that his followers stay out of situations that seem morally straightforward, such as refusing to help a squad of hoplites finish off a band of vicious raiders.

### KRUPHIX'S DEVOTEE

*Piety 3+ Kruphix trait*

As a devotee of Kruphix, you have proven yourself a devotee of reality's mysteries and laws. You can cast *detect magic* with this trait a number of times equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

In addition, you know the *mage hand* cantrip. Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

### KRUPHIX'S VOTARY

*Piety 10+ Kruphix trait*

You can cast *detect thoughts* with this trait, requiring no material components. Once you cast the spell in this way, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest. Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

In addition, you have advantage on saving throws against being charmed.

### KRUPHIX'S DISCIPLE

*Piety 25+ Kruphix trait*

As a true champion of Kruphix, you can use your *mage hand* cantrip to protect yourself. While your spectral hand is within 5 feet of you, you gain a +2 bonus to your AC against ranged attacks.

### CHAMPION OF HORIZONS

*Piety 50+ Kruphix trait*

You can increase your Constitution or Intelligence score by 2 and also increase your maximum for that score by 2.



## MYTHS OF KRUPHIX

Kruphix appears in stories in an ancillary role, often as the impartial judge who ends a conflict between gods. Initiates in Kruphix's mystery cult know other stories in which he plays a more active role, including special versions of well-known legends, but they seldom share these tales with others.

**The First Nyxborn.** According to one tale, it was Kruphix, not Purphoros, who was the first to fashion living Nyxborn creatures from the fabric of Nyx. Kruphix created the divine artisan Nykthos and ordered him to build altars to the gods. Nykthos's story isn't widely known among mortals, but the Shrine to Nyx is still called Nykthos in his honor.

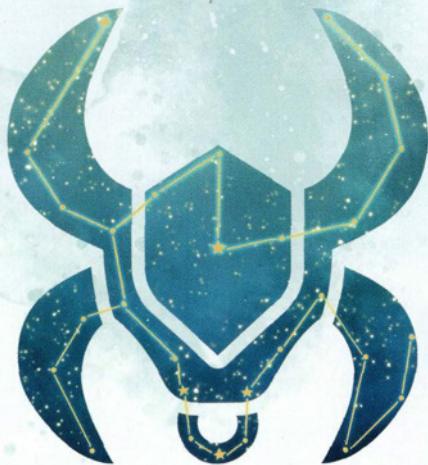
**Kruphix's Warning.** When Purphoros attacked Heliad in a destructive rage, Heliad demanded that Kruphix intervene. Kruphix constrained the forge-god's mind and memory in punishment for his attack. He warned all the gods that if they threatened the mortal realm with their disruptive quarrels, he would bind them to Nyx for as long as he saw fit. As of yet, no god has dared to test Kruphix's threat, but there are certainly those among them who might try if they could see a way to retain their own powers.

**The Silence.** When the squabbling of the gods threatened the world once more despite Kruphix's warning, he etched all their names—including his own—in the bark of his great

tree at the edge of the world. Immediately, the gods' oracles could no longer hear them, their blessings faded, and the night sky held only unmoving stars. The great Silence of the gods serves as the backdrop for numerous tales of heroism and sacrifice. Many alive today witnessed the sky go dark and the temples grow quiet. Most consider the Silence a terrible mistake that led to the rise of the usurper god Xenagos, but followers of Kruphix know that it was a grim necessity to prevent far worse calamity.

**Theophilian Mysteries.** Some of Kruphix's worshipers don't identify with their inscrutable deity, but with Theophilia, a legendary naiad who entered Nyx and whose transcendent encounter with Kruphix each initiate strives to duplicate. The naiad's journey is celebrated in hushed chants as blindfolded initiates are led across a boundary—often stepping into a river or over a low stone wall, an act that symbolizes crossing the horizon. Then the blindfolds are removed as the faithful intone a paean to Kruphix. The hope is that Kruphix will choose to reveal himself at the climax of the ritual, whether by the appearance of some omen or in a personal epiphany. Such a revelation isn't always positive, though, as Kruphix often imparts a glimpse of cosmic truths for which mortals have no possible context.





## MOGIS

*God of Slaughter*

Mogis is the god of slaughter, violence, and war. He is hatred unrestrained, empathy denied, and mercy forgotten, an entity whose very presence incites mortals to violence. Soldiers fear succumbing to his blood lust lest they dishonor themselves, but the vengeful and forsaken call to him for the gift of his rage. He is the brother of Iroas, god of victory, and his antithesis in matters of warfare.

The anger and malice radiating from Mogis is almost palpable. He exercises no control over his temper or his urges and lashes out at subordinates at the slightest provocation. Akroan soldiers are warned that to give in to his seductive battle rage is to risk becoming an *androphage*—a bloodthirsty killer wholly consumed by Mogis's fury.

Mogis cuts a terrifying figure, appearing as a four-horned minotaur of incredible size clad in spiked bronze armor and wielding a massive ebon greataxe. He doesn't debase himself by appearing in other guises to mortals—to behold him is to behold the cruelty of war personified. He hungers endlessly to defeat his brother Iroas in combat and thus become the sole avatar of war among mortals.

### MOGIS'S INFLUENCE

Mogis, like his brother, governs the sphere of warfare. But while Iroas thrives on the glory of honorable victory, Mogis revels in sadism, destruction, and the utter humiliation of the vanquished. He drives warriors to acts of cruelty and malice in their pursuit of victory. Only those who have experienced the terror and violence of war truly understand the seductive nature of Mogis's power. To feel rage, to be an instrument of wrath—these emotions override the fear of battle. In hatred there is strength, and Mogis revels in this fact. But mortals must beware, for the price he exacts in exchange for this strength is the sacrifice of decency, honor, and compassion.

### MOGIS'S GOALS

To Mogis, the world is a canvas upon which he paints in blood. His goals are easy to understand, thus easily fulfilled by his minions. Mogis wants to unmake the world through savagery. Let every polis fall and the works of

mortals burn—everything comes to ruin in time, and Mogis believes that time should be now. Only the most brutal and savage among the mortals should survive—his chosen few. Once the world lies in ruin with his brother dead at his feet, Mogis's goals will be achieved.

### DIVINE RELATIONSHIPS

Mogis's existence is defined by his eternal struggle against his twin brother, Iroas. (Only a handful of contradictory myths address the parentage of these gods, but they are universally described as twins.) Any of Mogis's actions and endeavors contribute to undermining and ultimately destroying Iroas. Any divine relationships Mogis might enter into are born of convenience and as a means to the end. Mogis is incapable of loyalty and should be expected to break any pact or agreement once it has outlived its usefulness.

Erebus appreciates Mogis's single-minded desire to destroy because it serves as a means to bring ever more souls into his realm. Also, Erebus occasionally steers Mogis's rampages in directions that inconvenience Heliod. This disruption inevitably leads to Heliod calling on Iroas to battle his brother, perpetuating the endless cycle of conflict between the twins.

Of all his fellow gods, Mogis holds the most respect for Phenax. Mogis can't help but smile at the chaos Phenax is able to cause and the carnage the Returned wreak on the world. Phenax has a talent for inciting conflict, which allows Mogis to revel in the resulting strife.

Mogis harbors an abiding disrespect, verging on hatred, for Ephara and Karametra. Ephara's neat, orderly cities are a delight to destroy, especially given her fussy, precise adherence to rules. Likewise, Ephara's close relationships with Iroas and Heliod provoke Mogis's disgust. Mogis disdains Karametra because she aids mortals and provides succor to the weak. These are acts of foolishness because the weak don't deserve aid—they are fodder for the strong. Setting fertile fields ablaze and witnessing the resulting famine is a source of enjoyment for Mogis, though he has been surprised more than once by the ferocity of Karametra's reprisals.

### WORSHIPING MOGIS

Mogis exhorts his followers to channel their hatred and rage into ever greater acts of cruelty and violence. He demands actions over words, making his followers an active and dangerous lot. From the spurned lover thirsting for revenge to the blood-drenched warrior on the battlefield, all honor Mogis with the shedding of blood in anger.

Minotaurs are the most ardent worshipers of Mogis and regularly hold bloody rites in his honor. Warchanters, the minotaur clergy of Mogis, whip their marauders into a near-mindless frenzy before battle; the ensuing slaughter gives glory to Mogis's name.

The appearance of the blood moon is a most holy occasion for the faithful of Mogis, since the moon represents his hateful crimson eye. At such times, his followers prepare and consume a feast of meat, either raw or barely cooked, along with copious amounts of intoxicants, followed by ritual self-mutilation—scarring themselves to demonstrate their devotion to Mogis.



## MYTHS OF MOGIS

The tales of Mogis's deeds exemplify his need to unmake, his brutality, and his desire to destroy his hated brother.

**The Endless Feud.** One legend claims that Mogis and Iroas were once a single being, the act of war personified. But the inherent tension between honor and brutality in combat led to a dichotomy of purpose too great for a single god to reconcile. Ripping himself apart, the god split in two, and so did Mogis and Iroas come into existence, embodiments of the two aspects of war that are forever in conflict. Though no tales of either Mogis or Iroas's faith speak of such, whispers among the servants of other gods claim that there might be a way to piece the fractured god back together. Doing so would require an incredible feat, though, likely involving the cooperation of both Mogis and Iroas themselves.

**Mogis's Warhound.** Mogis generally fights alone, because he often loses control of his temper and strikes allies as well as foes in the heat of battle. Still, Mogis sought a creature that would go before him, instilling fear in his foes before his mighty axe fell upon them. Mogis took a ferocious cerberus and bound it together with the fires of his eternal rage. This terrible new creation became his personal harbinger and battle companion. The god of slaughter didn't name his pet, refusing to do so until the beast had claimed a hundred thousand lives and so proved itself truly worthy of his esteem.

**Origin of the Minotaur.** In ages past, a warrior of tremendous strength stalked the battlefield. As a lone combatant, he was unbeatable, but he suffered when groups rose to oppose him. After one such defeat, the warrior was so filled with wrath that he murdered his entire village in Mogis's name. The god, delighted by this display, gifted the warrior with his own ferocity, remaking him as a reflection of Mogis's wrath and an engine of destruction in combat. This warrior became the first minotaur, and many minotaurs still worship Mogis, as he is their creator and they were made in his image.

**Revel in Ruin.** The summer festival of the Megasphagion is a domesticated version of Mogis's typical rites. It involves the sacrifice of many cattle to avert Mogis's wrath. The meat is then cooked and distributed among all who attend the festival. The grand feast that follows tends to devolve into a drunken revel. In some tales, individuals or communities with long-held grudges find themselves incensed during the festival, leading them to seek violent ends to their rivalries.

**Wrathbringer.** Shortly after his birth, Mogis decided to create a weapon with which to kill his brother. Mogis assembled his champions and sent them out to battlefields, where they collected the essences of rage, hatred, and bloodlust. Under a blood-red moon, Mogis used those ingredients to forge a black iron greataxe of manifest violence, Wrathbringer.



## MOGIS'S CHAMPIONS

**Alignment:** Usually chaotic, often evil

**Suggested Classes:** Barbarian, cleric, druid, fighter, warlock

**Suggested Cleric Domains:** War

**Suggested Backgrounds:** Athlete, criminal, outlander, soldier

Most champions of Mogis are antiheroes motivated by rage and a thirst for war. Many are tortured souls with a thirst for vengeance.

### MOGIS'S FAVOR

Mogis's favor isn't difficult to earn for someone who lacks a moral compass. Mogis demands that blood be spilled in his service, preferably the blood of Iroas's followers. Would-be champions should realize, though, that the god of slaughter invests in his followers with the expectation of receiving great returns. Those who disappoint, proving themselves incapable of sufficient cruelty or bloodshed, might find themselves on the wrong end of his blade.

To Mogis, the ideal follower is one who sheds all moral compunctions in the course of bringing suffering to the world. He also cultivates grievances and bitterness in those not ordinarily disposed to acts of wanton violence. Over the eons, he has found that the betrayed, the disgusted, and the disfavored are readily turned to a life of murderous service, to be discarded just as easily if they don't satisfy him. The Mogis's Favor table suggests a few ways that a mortal might come to Mogis's attention, or vice versa.

### MOGIS'S FAVOR

#### d6 Circumstance

- 1 You were born under a sanguine moon, the symbol of Mogis's red eye.
- 2 Your twin sibling is a champion of Iroas.
- 3 You successfully carried out a brutal vendetta against a rival family.
- 4 You proved yourself dramatically (and perhaps violently) worthy in a contest of strength, a feat of endurance, or a similar accomplishment.
- 5 You called on Mogis's power to settle old scores by becoming an instrument of his wrath.
- 6 You have no idea why Mogis chose you, but his hate seeps into your being day by day nonetheless.

### DEVOTION TO MOGIS

Following Mogis is a definitive rejection of ethical codes and adoption of bloodlust and rage. As a follower of Mogis, consider the ideals on the Mogis's Ideals table as alternatives to those suggested for your background.

### MOGIS'S IDEALS

#### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Devotion.** My devotion to my god is more important to me than what he stands for. (Any)
- 2 **Savagery.** I express my rage through combat. (Chaotic)

#### d6 Ideal

- 3 **Hate.** Hatred of my foes warms my heart and gives me power. (Any)
- 4 **Fury.** My only release from life's endless grind is surrendering to my inner beast. (Evil)
- 5 **Ruthlessness.** The ends justify the means and victory is to be obtained at any cost. (Evil)
- 6 **Pride.** No one can best me in my chosen endeavor and woe to those who try. (Any)

### EARNING AND LOSING PIETY

You increase your piety score to Mogis when you expand the god's influence in the world in a concrete way through acts such as these:

- Defeating a champion of Iroas
- Taking vengeance against a powerful foe
- Burning a polis or a settlement to the ground
- Desecrating a temple to Iroas as an offering to Mogis

Your piety score to Mogis decreases if you diminish Mogis's influence in the world, contradict his ideals, or make him look weak or ineffectual through acts such as these:

- Failing to carry out a sworn vendetta
- Publicly displaying weakness or compassion
- Rejecting a duel or a challenge out of fear

### MOGIS'S DEVOTEE

*Piety 3+ Mogis trait*

As a devotee of Mogis, you have shown yourself to be a brutal combatant. You can call on Mogis's favor and cast *wrathful smite* with this trait. Mogis's blessing manifest as a blood-red glow around your weapon, causing it to shed dim light in a 5-foot radius until the spell ends. You can cast the spell in this way a number of times equal to your Constitution modifier (minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest. Constitution is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

### MOGIS'S VOTARY

*Piety 10+ Mogis trait*

You can cast *blinding smite* with this trait. Once you cast the spell in this way, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest. Constitution is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

### MOGIS'S DISCIPLE

*Piety 25+ Mogis trait*

Countless battles and vicious visions have given you focus. You have advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

### CHAMPION OF SLAUGHTER

*Piety 50+ Mogis trait*

You can increase your Strength or Constitution score by 2 and also increase your maximum for that score by 2.



Nylea is the wild, carefree god of the hunt. She claims dominion over the whole of the natural world, particularly hunger and predation, the seasons, metamorphosis and rebirth, and the forest.

Nylea is among the most gregarious of the gods, and can be spotted frolicking joyfully with her Nyxborn lynx, Halma, or her favorite nymph, Theophilia. But she also savors solitude, and on the hunt she is deadly serious, almost animalistic, in her mood. She is nearly as quick to anger as her brother Purphoros, enacting swift revenge on those who harm the natural realm.

Nylea usually appears as a green-skinned dryad with woody extremities. Her hair is made of vines and leaves that change with the seasons. She might also appear as a majestic specimen of any animal, most frequently a lynx or a wolf. When she desires stealth or solitude, she might take the form of a tree, usually an oak or an olive.

## NYLEA'S INFLUENCE

Nylea is worshiped by hunters, but her concerns go far beyond humanity's ability to subsist on the bounty of the natural world. She controls the turning of the seasons. Usually, she ushers each one in and out on schedule, but when angered, she might refuse to change to the next season, or even call upon one out of its proper time. Mortals pray to her to ward off unseasonable weather, both natural and supernatural in origin.

Nylea is the best archer in the world, and contests of archery are often held in her name. Those who hunt their own food pray to Nylea for success, and Nylea blesses their natural predation. Poachers and those who kill for sport, however, know that she loathes such activity, and they try to stay hidden from her at all costs. Nylea has personally slain many of those who killed wantonly in her sacred Nessian Wood.

Nylea's association with metamorphosis makes her the target of prayers from those who seek to dramatically change their own nature or identity. She is worshiped by those who want to reform or transform society in ways less violent than those favored by gods such as Purphoros and Mogis. She is also revered by those who cherish the solitude and serenity of the forest.

Birth falls under Nylea's influence as well, and her priests often double as midwives in their communities, blessing babies as they come into the world.

## NYLEA'S GOALS

Compared to the other gods, Nylea's goals are modest. She wants only to keep the natural world free and healthy, shepherd the seasons through their yearly cycle, and enjoy the beauty of the land. But in her darker moments, she realizes that the very existence of civilization on Theros is a mounting threat to nature—perhaps even an effort by the rest of the pantheon to destroy her. If it were up to her, she might well wipe away all the poleis and larger communities, leaving only scattered tribes of mortals to live in an enforced balance with nature. She isn't out to eradicate sapient beings, blaming her fellow gods for the spread of civilization rather than the mortals themselves.

## DIVINE RELATIONSHIPS

Nylea seldom comes into open conflict with the other gods, and she would say that all her clashes with them result from their encroachment on her territory. The most frequent targets of her irritation are the gods who encourage the spread of civilization. Heliod and Ephara brought law and ambition to mortals, persuading them to congregate in stone-walled cities and consider themselves separate from her realm.

Purphoros oversees some of the natural processes of earth and fire that help Nylea's realm flourish, but he also gave mortals the gift of bronze, enabling them to make axes and spears. In both his destructive and creative guises, Purphoros might threaten what Nylea holds dear. As a result, she remains wary of his designs.

Nylea is disappointed in Karametra, precisely because of the overlap in their spheres of influence. Karametra insists on transforming nature into a mockery of itself, yoking once-wild beasts and contorting plants through agriculture to feed the ever-swelling population centers.

Iroas and Mogis are harbingers of warfare, which is always devastating to the natural world. Nylea is virtually incapable of distinguishing between the "noble" and "brutal" aspects of their shared bailiwick, considering all forms of war a senseless waste of life and energy.

Nylea acknowledges death as a crucial part of the life cycle, but scorns Erebos's obsession with the afterlife. What matters is that nature takes nourishment from the bodies of the deceased, not from the disposition of their intangible souls. She blames Erebos, Athreos, and Phenax in equal measure for the existence of the Returned, which she considers abominations.

## WORSHIPING NYLEA

Mortals all over Theros pray to Nylea when they rely on hunting or nature's whims for their livelihood. Her most ardent followers are satyrs, centaurs, humans (particularly those who live in Setessa and in the wilds), and nymphs of all kinds, especially dryads. Few leonin worship any of the gods, but of those who do, many favor Nylea with their prayers.

Nylea blesses those who are kind to animals, considering such acts as wordless prayers. Those who must kill a dangerous natural animal or cut down trees often pray to Nylea for forgiveness, sometimes leaving food for other animals or planting new trees as atonement.

## NYLEA'S CHAMPIONS

**Alignment:** Usually neutral, often good

**Suggested Classes:** Barbarian, cleric, druid, ranger

**Suggested Cleric Domains:** Nature

**Suggested Backgrounds:** Folk hero, hermit, outlander

Most champions of Nylea understand the cycles of nature—embracing life, death, and rebirth. They might commit violence when necessary but never revel in it, advocating for the proper treatment of animals, plants, and the natural world.

### NYLEA'S FAVOR

Nylea chooses champions who will tirelessly defend the natural world, regardless of their mortal ties and associations. She cares more for consistency of actions than for vows of loyalty and expressions of devotion. Whether you are silently devoted to her or vociferous in your praise, it is your actions in her name that will prompt her to continue her support—or withdraw it.

Because her interests are often tied to natural forces, Nylea's attentions can be unpredictable. What made the god turn her attention to you? What act of charity or feat of skill made her think you would be a good champion? The Nylea's Favor table offers a handful of suggestions.

### NYLEA'S FAVOR

#### d6 Circumstance

- 1 You were born at dawn on the spring equinox, a sign of Nylea's favor.
- 2 You healed an injured wolf, which then revealed itself to be Nylea in disguise.
- 3 You won an archery contest with a truly stunning shot, but afterward chastised onlookers who compared your skill to Nylea's.
- 4 Lost in the forest as a child, you were raised by wolves. Nylea intervened to teach you language and enable you to one day take your place in society as one of her champions.
- 5 A unicorn has appeared to you several times in your life, often after protecting animals or nature.
- 6 You lived alone in the wilderness for a year. In all that time you never heard another mortal's voice, but Nylea spoke to you regularly.

### DEVOTION TO NYLEA

Nylea calls upon her followers to defend the natural world and oppose those who would bring it harm through cruelty or greed. As a follower of Nylea, consider the ideals on the Nylea's Ideals table as alternatives to those suggested for your background.

### NYLEA'S IDEALS

#### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Devotion.** My devotion to my god is more important to me than what she stands for. (Any)
- 2 **Nature.** The beauty of the natural world fills me with serenity. (Neutral)

#### d6 Ideal

- 3 **Freedom.** I yearn to run wild. (Chaotic)
- 4 **Stewardship.** We must care for the natural world as it cares for us. (Good)
- 5 **Savagery.** It's eat or be eaten, and I plan to be the one with the full belly. (Evil)
- 6 **Purity.** I won't sully my body or my soul with the taint of civilization. (Any)

### EARNING AND LOSING PIETY

You increase your piety score to Nylea when you expand the god's influence in the world in a concrete way through acts such as these:

- Healing a sick or injured wild animal
- Stopping those who hunt for sport or profit
- Proving your worth in a contest of archery
- Slaying an aberration, a fiend, or an undead

Your piety score to Nylea decreases if you diminish Nylea's influence in the world, fail to defend nature, or offend her sensibilities through acts such as these:

- Killing an animal for any reason other than necessity
- Dedicating a building or making a sacrifice to any god, including Nylea
- Protecting a city or farm from natural dangers

### NYLEA'S DEVOTEE

*Piety 3+ Nylea trait*

As a devotee of Nylea, you have proven yourself a guardian of the wilds. You can cast *hunter's mark* with this trait a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

### NYLEA'S VOTARY

*Piety 10+ Nylea trait*

You can cast *speak with animals* with this trait a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

In addition, you have advantage on saving throws against being poisoned.

### NYLEA'S DISCIPLE

*Piety 25+ Nylea trait*

When a beast is about to attack you, it must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the creature must choose a different target, or the attack automatically misses you. On a successful save, the creature is immune to this trait for 24 hours.

### CHAMPION OF THE HUNT

*Piety 50+ Nylea trait*

You can increase your Dexterity or Wisdom score by 2 and also increase your maximum for that score by 2.



## MYTHS OF NYLEA

Most of the myths about Nylea are cautionary tales about the fate of mortals who profane her sacred forests.

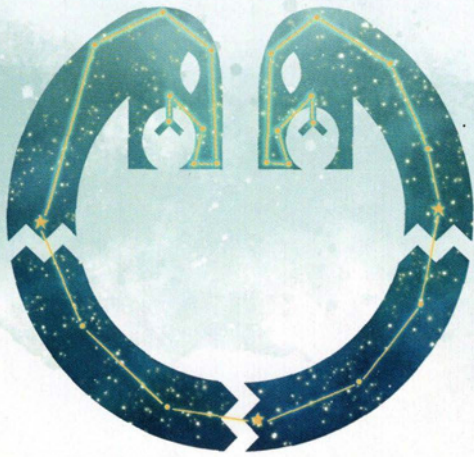
**The First Hunt.** Each spring, communities observe the festival of the First Hunt, the Protokynion. In ancient times, the festival involved hunting, but in the modern form of observance, it is a day of picnics, outdoor games, and frolicking that has little to do with Nylea except that it celebrates the full flowering of spring. Tales tell of Nylea being passingly bitter about the celebration and, annually, visiting a First Hunt celebration in disguise. If she finds herself duly honored during the revelry, she blesses the event and might personally participate. If she finds no mention of her works, she curses those in attendance, sometimes sending rampaging beasts to disrupt the event or turning participants into game animals for true hunters to stalk.

**Origin of the Catoblepas, Another Perspective.** When a herder boasted that his cattle were Theros's finest because Heliad and Nylea had created them, Heliad persuaded Mogis to curse the cattle, transforming them into the first catoblepases. Heliad had hoped to win Nylea's favor by defending her honor in this way, but she was outraged to be associated with the creation of these abominations. To this day, Nylea offers a boon to anyone who hunts down a catoblepas and brings its head to her sacred grove.

**The Three Hunters.** Three young men from wealthy families were hunting for sport in the Nessian Wood. Nylea accosted them before they had taken any prey and gave each man a chance to bring her a gift that would atone for his intentions. The first man killed a stag and made an offering of it in her name, so she turned him into a stag to compensate for the one he had killed. The second offered wealth from his family coffers, so she turned him into a tree clinging to a cliff face by one root. The third, remorseful, threw himself on a bed of moss, and a cerulean butterfly came to rest on his hand. Carefully, he carried the butterfly back to Nylea. She not only spared him, but blessed his house and all his descendants.

**The Tragedy of Arasta.** In ages long past, Nylea loved her dryad companion, Arasta, as a sister and the two spread wonders across Theros. One day, Phenax, envious of the pair and stung by some forgotten slight, transformed Arasta into a terrible monster to prove that the goddess's love was based on beauty, not true kinship. Seeing the unfamiliar creature, Nylea was horrified and drove her away. Shattered, Arasta retreated and has terrorized the gods' servants ever since. To this day, Nylea remains deeply pained by Arasta's loss. Knowing that only Phenax can undo the curse he laid upon the dryad, Nylea often sends her champions to learn the secret of what might restore her friend.





## PHARIKA

*God of Affliction*

Pharika is a god of affliction and medicine, alchemy and aging. In the earliest days of Theros, Pharika seeded the world with countless secret truths—mysteries of medicine, minerals with strange properties, nexuses of magic, and the like—which she hid among Nylea's wilds and the shadows of Erebos's Underworld, leaving clues where mortals might find them. It isn't altruism that drives her; she studies the innovation and suffering of mortals, deciphering in them ever greater mysteries as she treats Theros as her personal laboratory.

Pharika typically takes the form of a green-skinned human woman with the lower body of a snake. Her hands are thickly scaled and a pair of bronze-scaled vipers seamlessly emerge from her chest. She is never without her kylix, a drinking cup within which she can produce virtually any medicine or toxin. When her aims require subtlety, Pharika often takes the form of a serpent or a medusa, or sometimes an aged human.

Little escapes Pharika's cool gaze. Even when outwardly friendly, she is cunning and calculating, watching for the slightest sign of weakness or desire that she can exploit later. Those who offend her rarely recognize their misstep until she strikes.

### PHARIKA'S INFLUENCE

Pharika represents the duality of life and death distilled into a single draught that can serve as tonic or toxin, depending on the dosage. She is most associated with affliction, whether that phenomenon takes the form of a disease, a venom, a drug, or the passage of years. Her cures are reliable but come at a cost. In some cases, that cost is pain as the medicine courses through the imbibers' body. In other cases, she demands years of life, either from the patient's lifetime or the researcher's labor.

In her oversight of life and death, Pharika acts as a patron of alchemists. Pharmacists offer prayers to her while crafting potions, as do the ill or infirm before imbibing a supposed remedy. Likewise, a body's slow transformation is sacred to her, whether it be the inevitable effects of aging or the petrification of her medusa children's victims.

### PHARIKA'S GOALS

To Pharika, Theros is an ongoing experiment and mortals are her agents in carrying it out. Rather than limit her knowledge to what her own insights yield, she revels in watching mortals decipher the world's wisdom and unearth its hidden knowledge, and she delights in seeing each sage interpret their findings in novel ways. She is willing to do anything to perpetuate experimentation and discovery, even at the cost of turning her less devout followers into specimens.

### DIVINE RELATIONSHIPS

Despite her venomous reputation, Pharika has provided nearly every god with a cure or an otherwise essential tonic at a crucial moment. As a result, she's rarely in outright conflict with her fellow gods, yet she's always willing to jeopardize peace with her peers if it means indulging some audacious new experiment.

The gods of the Underworld have cordial relations with Pharika. She and Athreos enjoy each other's silent company, and Erebos appreciates her agenda, which ultimately bolsters his realm. Pharika rankles somewhat at the attention Erebos gets from dying mortals, chafing at their tendency to appeal to him when they could beg her for healing or for a painless death.

Pharika and the gods of civilization cautiously maneuver around one another's territory, with Ephara and Karametra recognizing Pharika's medicinal virtues, and she is always seeking subtle ways to use city-states in her experiments without provoking her peers. She disdains Ephara's and Karametra's desire to tame the world rather than understand it.

Pharika has her most complex relationships with the gods of knowledge. Pharika loathes that Keranos gifts wisdom to the undeserving, while Kruphix represents mysteries even she has yet to fathom.

No god is more precious to Pharika than Nylea. She adores Nylea as the source of nature's abundant bounty and delights in Nylea's warmth. Anyone who threatens or offends Nylea is likely to also earn Pharika's enmity.

### WORSHIPING PHARIKA

The diseased and the dying alike often make written entreaties to Pharika for a remedy. Prayers are written on scraps of paper or shards of pottery, sealed in small pots, and buried in bogs, leaving them as secrets for others to exhume years later. Many people pray to her before undergoing a medical procedure, picking herbs, or confronting a venomous animal. Nights of a waxing crescent moon (roughly the first week of each month, when a sliver of moon lingers in the early evening) are sacred to Pharika and are thought to be an auspicious time to harvest medicinal plants.

Pharika's followers include members of several small mystery cults, which embrace varying aspects of her divine nature. The most infamous of these is the Cult of Frozen Faith, led by a medusa. Initiates receive a lethal dose of poison, become petrified, and then are restored to flesh one year later. Petitioners who have Pharika's favor emerge alive and healthy; those she doesn't care for fail to survive the transformation.



## MYTHS OF PHARIKA

Tales of Pharika emphasize her secret knowledge, with many legends hinting at apocrypha that a listener might track down to discover the god's most exalted lore.

**Aestraste's Reward.** So impressed was she with the deeds of her champion Aestraste that Pharika offered to fill her kylix with any draught for Aestraste to imbibe. The champion asked to taste the nectar of pure joy, and the god obliged. But when Aestraste took a sip, passion took hold of her, and she quaffed the entire elixir. Overwhelmed with ecstasy, the champion perished, having forgotten that too much of anything—even happiness—can be fatal.

**The Basilisk's Greed.** In Pharika's earliest days, her mind overflowed with knowledge, and she retreated to a secret, verdant glen. There, she set to scribing her secrets into the garden's fruits, hiding within each a dozen deaths and their cures. When she retired wearily to bathe, a lizard crept into her grove and gobbled up much of the fruit. It's said that this original basilisk and its progeny are still heavy with undigested secrets, and that if basilisk blood is distilled into ink, it can be used to write out forgotten lore.

**Day of Affliction.** During the first week of the eleventh month, Meletis observes Pharika's winter festival, the Cheimazion. The sick and infirm sleep in the god's temples during this festival in hopes of receiving a miraculous cure,

and the truly devout imbibe near-lethal doses of poison, trusting Pharika to oversee their recovery. In some tales, a cobra with rainbow scales appears in Pharika's temple and bites some incurable soul. The envenomed victim pitches and babbles for three days, but their disjointed words prove to be a font of alchemical truths, sometimes bearing the secrets to healing others around them. In most of these myths, the victim expires at the end of these three days—Pharika's price for sharing her secrets—but in some, the patient recovers, thereafter exhibiting remarkable resistance to illness and poisons.

**Dragon Balm.** Some texts of Pharika claim that within the chemical makeup of each individual dragon lies the cure to one specific disease or venom. Those desperate for a cure to a rare affliction often pray to the goddess to reveal the monster that embodies the malady tormenting them. Such insight, though, rarely decreases the danger of dragon hunting.

**The Medusa's Curse.** To seed the world with knowledge, Pharika gathered her medusa children and granted a hundred secrets to each, bidding them to hide their revelations throughout the mortal realm. Selfishly, the medusas each kept secrets for themselves, using these as currency to bargain with mortals. Angered that her children would hoard any of her secrets, Pharika cursed them, so that they could never after behold their own reflections without risking death.



## PHARIKA'S CHAMPIONS

**Alignment:** Usually neutral, often evil

**Suggested Classes:** Cleric, druid, ranger, rogue, warlock, wizard

**Suggested Cleric Domains:** Death, Knowledge, Life

**Suggested Backgrounds:** Criminal, guild artisan, hermit, outlander, sage

Most champions of Pharika seek to uncover the world's greatest secrets through science, alchemy, and magic. They are often enamored with the mysteries of life and death, along with snakes or other venomous creatures.

### PHARIKA'S FAVOR

Pharika craves champions who support her ongoing experiments, torment her enemies, and deliver cutting-edge aid to the suffering. Yet, just because someone serves Pharika doesn't mean they are immune to her whims. Why did Pharika turn her gaze upon you, and how did you survive long enough to earn her approval? The Pharika's Favor table provides several suggestions.

#### PHARIKA'S FAVOR

##### d6 Circumstance

- 1 You were born in a plague-struck village's final days, ultimately being the only survivor.
- 2 Exposure to a rare toxin granted you visions of Pharika, and you have sought her wisdom ever since.
- 3 Your medical attention proved crucial to a stranger's survival, and now your acquaintances periodically fall ill, as though Pharika is testing you again and again.
- 4 A sagacious serpent once offered you guidance and has influenced your studies ever since.
- 5 You are dying. As death grows nearer, you are increasingly adept at deciphering nature's mysteries.
- 6 You have no idea why Pharika showed interest in you, and you might sometimes wish she hadn't.

### DEVOTION TO PHARIKA

In accepting Pharika as your patron, you entrust your health and your knowledge to her. As her follower, consider the ideals on the Pharika's Ideals table as alternatives to those suggested for your background.

#### PHARIKA'S IDEALS

##### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Devotion.** My devotion to my god is more important to me than what she stands for. (Any)
- 2 **Scholarship.** Unlocking the natural world's secrets is a challenge I welcome. (Neutral)
- 3 **Balance.** My work shall save as many lives as it takes, balancing the deserving and the insufferable. (Neutral)
- 4 **Immortality.** Those who discover nature's darkest and direst secrets earn the right to live forever. (Evil)
- 5 **Fatalism.** Everyone dies. As a result, I may employ their brief lives to further my agendas. (Evil)
- 6 **Tutelage.** The world is a deadly classroom, and students need an expert guide to survive. (Neutral)

### EARNING AND LOSING PIETY

You increase your piety score to Pharika when you expand the god's influence in the world in a concrete way through acts such as these:

- Creating a cure for a dangerous affliction
- Defeating a powerful foe by using poison
- Discovering or documenting an unknown people or a poorly understood creature
- Building or restoring a temple to Pharika, or a site that glorifies serpentine creatures

Your piety score to Pharika decreases if you diminish Pharika's influence in the world, contradict her ideals, or make her look ridiculous or ineffectual through acts such as these:

- Destroying alchemical, medical, pathological, or similar research
- Performing a notable act of healing without exacting a significant price
- Slaying a medusa or serpent

### PHARIKA'S DEVOTEE

*Piety 3+ Pharika trait*

As a devotee of Pharika, you have power over affliction. You can cast *ray of sickness* with this trait a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

### PHARIKA'S VOTARY

*Piety 10+ Pharika trait*

Pharika's blessing shields you from most maladies. You have advantage on saving throws against being poisoned, and you are immune to disease.

### PHARIKA'S DISCIPLE

*Piety 25+ Pharika trait*

Pharika blesses you with Pharika's Balm, an effect that can cure or enfeeble. As an action, you can touch a creature and choose one of the following:

- The target regains hit points equal to 1d8 + your Wisdom modifier, and you can cure the target of one disease or neutralize one poison affecting it.
- The target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, or for 1 minute, the target deals only half damage with weapon attacks. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success.

You can use this action a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

### CHAMPION OF AFFLICTION

*Piety 50+ Pharika trait*

You can increase your Dexterity or Wisdom score by 2 and also increase your maximum for that score by 2.



## PHENAX

*God of Deception*

Phenax is the masked patron of lies and cheats. He is Heliod's ethical antithesis, governing the spheres of gambling, deception, and betrayal. Phenax was once a mortal who was trapped in the Underworld, but he learned how to forsake his identity to prevent Erebos from detecting what he was doing. He crossed back over the Rivers That Ring the World wrapped in the tattered cloak of Athreos, the River Guide, who ushers the dead to their final rest. Hidden by illusion as he was, neither Athreos nor Erebos could find Phenax and bring him back.

Able to play whatever role the situation calls for, Phenax is a consummate actor. His incisive wit and cunning enable him to read the desires of his marks, adjusting his approach to suit the moment. In his rare moments of candor, Phenax is calm and calculating, always looking toward his next scheme.

Phenax is a shadowy and mysterious figure. When appearing before mortals, he prefers the form of a willowy humanoid with ashen gray skin, clad in elegant robes. He has also been known to appear in a variety of animal forms, including the shapes of asps, mockingbirds, or rats. Regardless of his shape, a mask forever conceals the blank face of the first Returned.

### PHENAX'S INFLUENCE

Subtlety and manipulation—of mind, word, and deed—are the cornerstones of Phenax's power and his influence over mortals and immortals alike. Even gods enjoy hearing what they prefer to hear instead of the truth, and Phenax is happy to give them what they want.

He takes pleasure in finding ways to subvert or corrupt champions of law, order, and justice, turning them to his cause. Whether by feeding the hubris of a champion of Heliod or subverting the moral code of a stalwart of Iroas, he tempts mortals by confronting them with seemingly inconsequential decisions, each of which offers an opportunity for the person to compromise their principles. One by one, these acts move the needle of a person's moral gauge by a small amount. Over time, these choices accumulate until the individual's fall from grace is complete.

### PHENAX'S GOALS

Phenax doesn't want to rule Nyx. He is the perennial outsider, existing only to disrupt the plans of his fellow

gods. Every lie, every betrayal, delights him as it sows discord in the world. He respects a well-planned and executed grift or heist, sometimes rewarding able followers with opportunities to serve as his champions.

As the metaphorical progenitor of the Returned, Phenax also takes time to provide shelter and opportunities for his children to disrupt the mortal world.

### DIVINE RELATIONSHIPS

It stands to reason that the god of secrets, deception, and betrayal isn't close with the rest of the pantheon. This is not to say that Phenax doesn't have active relationships with others in the pantheon, but his position as the patron of lies doesn't lead to close, lasting friendships.

Erebos and Athreos despise Phenax, which delights him to no end. Phenax revels in the fact that, as a lowly mortal, he was able to outwit both the Lord of the Underworld and the River Guide. Still bitter over Phenax's deception, Erebos concocts ways to torment the upstart god. Were he to discover a method to slay Phenax and return him to the Underworld, the god of the dead would pursue it over all other goals.

Phenax finds Heliod and Iroas overbearing and insufferable. Both represent ideologies diametrically opposed to Phenax's, and both have followers who regularly try to foil his schemes. In turn, Phenax does his best to upend their plans through lies and deception. After all, a fair fight isn't worth fighting.

Nowhere is Phenax's commitment to upending the status quo and angering his fellow gods more evident than in his role in the rise of Xenagos, the now destroyed god of revels. Xenagos's attacks left many of the gods disconnected from their followers, inciting a panic in Nyx. Phenax, basking in the chaos of Xenagos's plot, found myriad ways to covertly aid him until the satyr's apotheosis. Helping another mortal ascend to godhood was, to Phenax, the ultimate subversion of authority.

### WORSHIPING PHENAX

Every lie is an homage to Phenax. Because his most devout followers are criminals and gamblers, his influence is keenly felt in gambling halls and dens of thieves. But everyone has their own reasons to stray from the truth at times, and thus, they also find small ways to seek Phenax's favor as they go about their daily lives.

Formal services to Phenax are conducted at night, with the most sacred rituals performed on nights of the new moon. Offerings are made to attract Phenax's favor, with valuables from successful robberies, parchment filled with lies, or loaded dice being thrown into deep crags or buried at crossroads. Such sacrifices often vanish soon after, claimed by the god or his servants. Devout criminals often offer Phenax stolen goods as part of their preparations for premeditated crimes.

Phenax is worshiped openly in the necropoleis of Asphodel and Odunos, though the Returned who are loyal to Erebos's agent, Tymaret, refuse to worship the god they're hunting (see chapter 3). Somber ceremonies are intoned to bless the golden funeral masks the Returned wear.

## PHENAX'S CHAMPIONS

**Alignment:** Usually chaotic, often neutral

**Suggested Classes:** Bard, cleric, monk, rogue, warlock

**Suggested Cleric Domains:** Trickery

**Suggested Backgrounds:** Charlatan, criminal, entertainer, sailor (pirate), urchin

Most champions of Phenax are exemplars of deceit, motivated by greed, revenge, or a good swindle. They have chosen to serve a mortal who ascended to godhood, possibly because they want to emulate him.

### PHENAX'S FAVOR

Phenax expects his champions to be cunning and self-sufficient, much as he was when he escaped the Underworld. He has great respect for a sound plan that is craftily executed and might offer all manner of clever assistance to mortals he deems worthy.

What did you do to garner his attention? What set you apart in his eyes from petty schemers, grifters, and criminals? What made him think you would be a good champion? The Phenax's Favor table offers a handful of suggestions.

#### PHENAX'S FAVOR

##### d6 Circumstance

- 1 You were born at midnight under the new moon.
- 2 One of your parents is a champion of Phenax.
- 3 You pulled off a daring theft or escaped from confinement at a young age.
- 4 You have proven yourself a capable liar and teller of tall tales.
- 5 You dedicated your life to upsetting the balance of power in a corrupt polis.
- 6 You have no idea why Phenax showed interest in you, and you might sometimes wish he hadn't.

### DEVOTION TO PHENAX

Following Phenax means devoting yourself to a life of trickery and guile. To a champion of Phenax, a life without risk is no life at all. Some rules are meant to be broken, some secrets meant to be shared, and order must be upended from time to time. As a follower of Phenax, consider the ideals on the Phenax's Ideals table as alternatives to those suggested for your background.

#### PHENAX'S IDEALS

##### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Devotion.** My devotion to my god is more important to me than what he stands for. (Any)
- 2 **Pragmatism.** The ends justify the means; I do whatever it takes to win. (Evil)
- 3 **Duplicity.** I lie when it suits me, which makes things so much easier. (Chaotic)
- 4 **Secrecy.** All deception requires secrecy, but not all secrets are meant to deceive. (Any)
- 5 **Luck.** Want more luck? Take more chances! (Chaotic)
- 6 **Adaptability.** Plans change, circumstances go awry. I must bend in response to changes, not break. (Any)

### EARNING AND LOSING PIETY

You increase your piety score to Phenax when you expand the god's influence in the world in a concrete way through acts such as these:

- Helping a fugitive escape justice
- Pulling off a daring robbery
- Obstruct champions of other gods
- Building or restoring a temple to Phenax

Your piety score to Phenax decreases if you diminish Phenax's influence in the world, contradict his ideals, or make him look ridiculous or ineffectual through acts such as these:

- Forthrightly assisting lawgivers in their duties
- Swearing and then honoring an oath
- Bringing order in times of chaos

### PHENAX'S DEVOTEE

*Piety 3+ Phenax trait*

As a devotee of Phenax, you have proven yourself accomplished at deception. You can call on Phenax's blessing and cast *disguise self* with this trait. While the spell is active, your shadow still resembles your original form. You can cast the spell in this way a number of times equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

### PHENAX'S VOTARY

*Piety 10+ Phenax trait*

Your words are inspired by Theros's greatest liar. You have advantage on Charisma (Deception) checks.

### PHENAX'S DISCIPLE

*Piety 25+ Phenax trait*

When you are hidden from a creature and miss it with an attack, making the attack doesn't reveal your position.

### CHAMPION OF DECEPTION

*Piety 50+ Phenax trait*

You can increase your Dexterity or Charisma score by 2 and also increase your maximum for that score by 2.



## MYTHS OF PHENAX

The tales told of Phenax's deeds speak of his duplicity, cunning, and wit.

**The Path of Phenax.** Phenax was once a mortal who, like all mortals, passed on to Erebos's care in the Underworld when his time among the living came to an end. But Phenax found a way to escape the Underworld by sacrificing his identity to the memory-draining waters therein. He was able to cross the Rivers That Ring the World wrapped in a shred of Athreos's cloak. Since he had no identity, Athreos couldn't detect him, and thus Erebos couldn't use his great lash to pull Phenax back. When he emerged back into the realm of mortals, he did so as the first of the Returned. In time, others discovered this quandary of metaphysics, which is now known as the Path of Phenax.

**Black Oak of Odunos.** Before Odunos became a necropolis, it was a thriving city akin to Akros or Meletis. When the city fell before Phenax's assembled forces, some of the populace begged the god of lies to spare them the touch of Erebos's dread lash. Never one to miss an opportunity to cheat Erebos, Phenax made a solemn promise to those asking for his mercy, assuring them that they wouldn't be forced into the Underworld, on his honor. Soon afterward, the Returned that had invaded the city murdered these people to the last one—whereupon Phenax, true to his word, bound their bodies and

souls to a great oak, making a terrifying amalgam of undeath to guard Odunos and haunt the living for eternity.

**Feud with Nylea.** A pair of accomplished hunters, both fervent followers of Nylea, had a bet with one another to prove who was better with a bow. After countless tests found them equally matched, the hunters' rivalry drew Phenax's attention. Assuming the form of a dryad, Phenax goaded and taunted the hunters. Though amusing at first, Phenax's words cut deep, making the hunters careless. Thus, when the dryad suggested a blindfolded test of marksmanship, the hunters agreed. Once blinded, Phenax positioned the hunters to shoot one another. In the moment they fired, though, Nylea noticed Phenax's trick. She curved her hunters' arrows mid-flight and multiplied their number. Phenax's disguise shattered as he was riddled with arrows that pinned him to a great tree. Nylea appeared to the trapped god, mocked his pointless duplicity, and warned him never to threaten her followers again. She then left him to struggle free from the deeply embedded arrows, an escape that took him over a week. During that time, the god concocted plot after plot to have his revenge on Nylea. Some tales claim that this embarrassment directly led to tragedy for Nylea's favorite dryad companion, while others warn that Phenax's revenge has only just begun.





## PURPHOROS

*God of the Forge*

Purphoros is the god of the forge, the restless earth, and fire. He rules the raw creative force that infuses sapient minds. Purphoros is also the god of artisans, obsession, and the cycle of creation and destruction.

As a forge radiates heat in the area around it, Purphoros's influence provides inspiration to mortals. He makes exquisitely crafted objects almost constantly, sometimes absentmindedly working while he holds conversations with the other gods, only to destroy the finished product and begin again. Impulsive and mercurial, Purphoros is prone to bouts of either joyous productivity or frustrated anger. He often feels constrained by the limits of imagination, yearning to realize ideas that seem just out of reach.

Purphoros's preferred form is that of a muscular man whose coal-hued skin is mostly covered in mutable organic bronze. He might also appear in the form of a fiery phoenix or a bull made of cooling lava, and for that reason, both of those creatures are associated with him. When angered, he might appear as an enormous mass of lava, a blazing fire, or a volcanic eruption. Mortals who see Purphoros in one of those forms seldom live to tell about it.

### PURPHOROS'S INFLUENCE

The raw creative force that Purphoros embodies is chaotic, but Purphoros isn't a god of unbridled chaos. Rather, he shows mortals how to harness that primal energy, shaping it through passion and labor into something usable.

Purphoros is primarily associated with forging, metallurgy, and related activities. It was his followers who first brought bronze to Theros, and a few of his most favored have begun working with a new metal—iron—said to come directly from their god's forge-fires.

Though Purphoros is largely interested in physical craft, he has influence over all forms of creation. Keranos also inspires new ideas, but it is Purphoros who oversees the advancement of the craft that brings these ideas to life in the world.

Purphoros is always ready to obliterate what is to make room for what could be, and to start the cycle again when what could be becomes what is. When he is inspired, the night sky glitters with new constellations,

and anvilwrought creatures appear in the countryside. When he is wrathful, stars vanish in molten rain, and his hammer blows annihilate whole mountaintops.

### PURPHOROS'S GOALS

Purphoros acts not because of grand plans or high ideals, but on the whims of his restless, creative mind. On the rare occasions when he contemplates what he would do if he were ascendant in the pantheon, his most fervent wish is to be left alone. To Purphoros, that would mean spending time by himself in his forge, creating anything he desires. But it also would mean being free to uproot mountains, topple cities, and reroute rivers without any of the other gods interfering.

### DIVINE RELATIONSHIPS

Purphoros has few strong relationships with his fellow gods, considering most of them arrogant ingrates. According to legend, it was he who created the weapons of the gods, asking nothing in return. But his infrequent though memorable bouts of destructive fury have earned him more ill will in the pantheon than he realizes.

Heliod despises Purphoros's unpredictable impulses even as he envies the forge god's ability to create grand works. Purphoros resents Heliod's attempts to impose laws that constrain the passion of creation. In many ways, the two gods represent opposing approaches to the contradictions and challenges of mortal life, and they have more than once fought titanic battles in Nyx.

Thassa is Purphoros's closest ally in the pantheon. Imbued as she is with the malleable, quenching power of water, she knows that he can neither destroy her waves nor reforge them. Because she has no fear of him, she treats him as a friend. Purphoros frequently makes wondrous gifts for Thassa, and her underwater palace holds countless unique creations of the god of the forge.

Purphoros holds Kruphix in contempt for hobbling his mind after he engaged in a particularly destructive battle with Heliod. The forge god spent years addled and incomplete. He has since recovered his faculties, but he mourns the things he might have made during that lost time. Taking revenge on Kruphix would require careful planning, however, and Purphoros is unlikely to undertake such an effort unless another god goads him into it.

Ephara and Karametra are, like Purphoros, deeply involved in the project of civilization. Purphoros's desire to overturn the established order with violence stands in stark contrast to their measured ways. As a result, Purphoros stands aloof from them.

### WORSHIPING PURPHOROS

Purphoros holds dominion over everything that springs from mortal ingenuity. Most artisans say a small prayer to him upon beginning or completing the construction of nearly anything, from swords to fortresses to ships.

Naturally, Purphoros is strongly associated with the forge, and nearly every smithy on Theros is a sort of ad hoc temple to him. Charms and idols of Purphoros hang from the walls in such places, intended both to inspire the artisans and protect them against accidents. Regardless of their professions, worshipers of Purphoros often light small fires in the god's honor, burning wooden crafts or drawings of their inventions to gain his favor.



## MYTHS OF PURPHOROS

The myths about Purphoros revolve around one of two themes: his wonderful creations or his explosive anger.

**The Gift of Bronze.** Long ago, mortals on Theros fought and hunted using weapons made of stone and wood. According to legend, it was a satyr smith named Tecton who discovered how to refine copper ore and work it into tools and weapons. Purphoros, delighted, saw this as the mortals' first tentative steps toward true craft. Some smiths, hastily copying Tecton's methods, devised a way to blend copper and arsenic into a crude form of bronze, but the forging method was dangerous and often yielded defective results.

To reward the smith who took the first steps, Purphoros appeared to Tecton and granted the satyr the secret of smelting copper and tin into true bronze. The manufacture and use of bronze weapons spread across Theros, launching an age in which heroes conquered the wilds and founded great civilizations. Bronze is still the most used metal on Theros—and will remain so, at least until Purphoros decides that more than a few are ready for the secret of iron.

**Purphoros's Twin.** When the world was young, Purphoros was jealous of Iroas and Mogis and wanted a twin of his own. He created Petros, a Nyxborn double of himself crafted of divine bronze with a touch of mortal flesh. Petros aged as the eons passed, and Purphoros was forced to patch cracks

with strips of bronze and refill the vessel of his Nyxborn twin. Petros lacks the spark of true life, though, and can't speak. He toils day and night in Purphoros's forge, making wonders that would shame any mortal smith but can never match Purphoros's work in beauty or originality.

**The Stone Winter.** In Theros's earliest days, the people vociferously honored Heliad, Nylea, and Thassa for the comforts of nature. Gradually, Purphoros grew bitter that mortals never acknowledged his flames, which kept the earth warm and fertile. So, Purphoros quenched the world's core. For a year, a lifeless winter gripped the world, with neither the sun nor the seasons warming the corpse-chill earth. Ultimately, it was the mortal engineer Chersio who brought about the winter's end. Instead of cursing the situation, Chersio sought a solution, creating a hypocast system to bring warmth to her community. Delighted with the innovation, Purphoros waited until Chersio completed and lit her substructure furnace. When she did, the god returned warmth to the entire world. Today, an autumnal festival called the Kindling or the Forge-Lighting (the Chalcánapsion) lends its name to the seventh month in the Meletian calendar. During this festival, worshipers keep a bonfire burning from sundown to sunrise, acknowledging that Purphoros warms the earth and makes the harvest possible.



## PURPHOROS'S CHAMPIONS

**Alignment:** Usually chaotic, often neutral

**Suggested Classes:** Barbarian, bard, cleric, fighter, sorcerer

**Suggested Cleric Domains:** Forge (described in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*), Knowledge

**Suggested Backgrounds:** Acolyte, entertainer, guild artisan

Most champions of Purphoros are unswerving advocates of passion and creativity who change the world by doing what they believe is right in the moment.

### PURPHOROS'S FAVOR

Purphoros is notoriously impulsive, often selecting champions based on momentary whims. Despite this seemingly blasé attitude, he is dedicated to all his champions, no matter how they came into his service.

What made the forge god turn his attention to you? What set you apart from the masses of people who offer him prayers and sacrifice? What whim came over him that made you the perfect choice in the moment he tapped you? The Purphoros's Favor table offers a handful of suggestions.

Purphoros's mood is highly changeable, and having his favor doesn't always mean having his attention. But if you follow your passions and do what you believe is right, he will stay true to you as well.

### PURPHOROS'S FAVOR

#### d6 Circumstance

- 1 Mount Velus erupted at the moment of your birth, signifying Purphoros's blessing of the event.
- 2 As a young artist, you breathed the intoxicating fumes of a volcano and found mystical inspiration.
- 3 You are an artisan who crafted a work of such high quality that Purphoros took notice.
- 4 After you were orphaned by a fire at your parents' forge, Purphoros took you under his protection.
- 5 Your parent or mentor was a master artisan, and you also yearn to create something worthy of a god's attention.
- 6 As a reckless youth, you joined a group of young artists and rabble-rousers who sought to tear down the established order in Purphoros's name.

### DEVOTION TO PURPHOROS

Purphoros encourages freedom and self-expression, so it is only natural that his champions follow him for many different reasons. As a follower of Purphoros, consider the ideals on the Purphoros's Ideals table as alternatives to those suggested for your background.

### PURPHOROS'S IDEALS

#### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Devotion.** My devotion to my god is more important to me than what he stands for. (Any)
- 2 **Passion.** I will follow my heart and help others do the same. (Chaotic)

#### d6 Ideal

- 3 **Aspiration.** With Purphoros's blessing, I will create something magnificent. (Any)
- 4 **Change.** The old must be swept away to make room for the new. (Chaotic)
- 5 **Generosity.** I want to create things that will enrich the world. (Good)
- 6 **Rage.** I follow my passions, no matter how dark they might seem to others. (Evil)

### EARNING AND LOSING PIETY

You increase your piety score to Purphoros when you expand the god's influence in the world in a concrete way through acts such as these:

- Fighting against those who would rule over others
- Taking decisive action on impulse
- Destroying something that has outlived its usefulness
- Creating something wondrous in Purphoros's name

Your piety score to Purphoros decreases if you diminish Purphoros's influence in the world, work against freedom or self-expression, or allow tyranny to take hold through acts such as these:

- Following an unjust law despite your misgivings
- Creating something shoddy or flawed
- Backing down from a fight or a contest

### PURPHOROS'S DEVOTEE

*Piety 3+ Purphoros trait*

As a devotee of Purphoros, you have drawn the notice of the forge god with your skill. You can cast *shield of faith* with this trait, requiring no material components, a number of times equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

In addition, you know the *mending* cantrip. Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

### PURPHOROS'S VOTARY

*Piety 10+ Purphoros trait*

You can cast *heat metal* with this trait, requiring no material components. Once you cast the spell in this way, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest. Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

In addition, you have advantage on saving throws against being knocked prone.

### PURPHOROS'S DISCIPLE

*Piety 25+ Purphoros trait*

While you are standing and an effect would push you 1 foot or more, you can use your reaction to not be pushed.

### CHAMPION OF THE FORGE

*Piety 50+ Purphoros trait*

You can increase your Strength or Intelligence score by 2 and also increase your maximum for that score by 2.



## THASSA

*God of the Sea*

Thassa is the god of the sea, aquatic creatures, and the unknown depths. She also holds sway over less tangible concepts such as ancient knowledge, long voyages, and gradual change.

Impassive and slow to anger, Thassa is secure in the knowledge that there are no mortals and few gods who can threaten her status. Once her ire is aroused, however, it is as unstoppable as a cresting wave. She often speaks in the future tense, referring to what tomorrow will bring. She seldom laughs, and when she does, it is usually out of smugness rather than genuine mirth.

Thassa usually appears to mortals in the form of a female triton-like being with octopus-tentacle hair and a crown of crab legs. She seldom adopts the same size as her followers, preferring to be seen from a distance as she towers over the ocean. When she moves closer to the view of mortals, she takes many other forms, often shifting from one to another: a giant squid, an ocean storm, a school of sharks, a fog bank, or a crab, her favored animal. She sometimes speaks out of the ocean itself, in droplets hissing across the surface of the waves.

### THASSA'S INFLUENCE

To most mortals, Thassa is the sea, and the sea is Thassa. The wind and waves, the tides, and the ocean's bounty, ranging from small fish to the enormous krakens—all these are Thassa's dominion. The sea has many metaphorical aspects that Thassa oversees as well: ancient knowledge, long-term change, introspection, voyaging, and repetitive patterns such as the tides.

Thassa governs the slow changes wrought by the passage of time, such as the weathering of rocks and the erosion of beaches. Where Nylea controls the eternal cycle of the seasons and Kruphix monitors the flow of time, Thassa holds sway over the slow-acting but irresistible forces that alter the world over hundreds or thousands of years.

Krakens and other behemoths of the deepest oceans move at Thassa's command. She is protective of what she calls the greatest of her children, and she usually keeps them out of harm's way in the darkest depths. A mighty kraken sighted close to shore is a sure sign of Thassa's displeasure.

### THASSA'S GOALS

Thassa is never satisfied with the status quo, and she also never advocates hasty, uncontrolled change. She constantly resculpts the physical world, altering coastlines and upending familiar trade routes. There is no ultimate goal to this ongoing transformation; the purpose is change itself. Thassa believes that change is essential to existence, and she opposes anyone who tries to establish or maintain a permanent order to the universe. She aids and inspires forces of change, the rivers that wear down mountains and the tides that claim whole continents. She sometimes seems disinterested in the intrigues of the present, even in her own current schemes, as her thoughts drift toward what the future holds.

### DIVINE RELATIONSHIPS

Thassa disdains the shortsightedness of her fellow gods, most of whom have convinced themselves that they can impose lasting order on the cosmos. At the same time, her realm is unassailable, and she believes that the changes she advocates are inevitable in the long term. So although Thassa frequently disagrees with the other gods, she doesn't fear them.

Heliod considers Thassa his favorite sibling, despite her unwillingness to agree with his plan for a permanent order. Thassa, who rules depths that have never seen the sun, considers most of Heliod's schemes pointless and opposes them if they seem to threaten harm.

Thassa took pity on Purphoros and aided him when Kruphix hobbled his mind, and Purphoros has not forgotten it. The two of them agree that old things must make way for new things, but Purphoros's bursts of destructive energy stand in sharp opposition to Thassa's gradual alterations. Purphoros regularly makes gifts for Thassa, most recently gifting her a new spear to replace her lost weapon.

Thassa has little use for the gods who oversee work she believes best left to mortals: Ephara with her cities, Karametra with her fields, Pharika with her tinctures, Mogis and Iroas with their armies. To Thassa's mind, her peers are building castles in the sand, unaware or unmindful that the tide will sweep them away.

### WORSHIPING THASSA

Most of Thassa's dedicated worshipers are tritons, and the vast majority of tritons are wholly devoted to Thassa. Tritons spend much of their lives in Thassa's realm, with their god omnipresent. They weave prayers to Thassa into nearly everything they do.

Among humans, Thassa is worshiped by those who rely on bountiful seas for sustenance or calm waters for safety. Sailors, fishers, and residents of Theros's coasts and islands all pay her at least nominal respect and sacrifice. Her center of worship on land is in the coastal polis of Meletis, where sailors and philosophers pray to her for guidance. The week-long Lyokymion festival (the Feast of the Melting Swell) marks the start of the new year by celebrating the bounty of the sea.

Thassa's most fervent human worshipers offer prayers at high and low tide. If possible, they do so at the water's edge. At low tide they walk barefoot out onto the tidal flats, relishing the touch of Thassa's seabed.

## THASSA'S CHAMPIONS

**Alignment:** Usually neutral

**Suggested Classes:** Cleric, fighter, rogue, wizard

**Suggested Cleric Domains:** Knowledge, Tempest

**Suggested Backgrounds:** Acolyte, outlander, sage, sailor

Thassa's champions typically work on behalf of change, embrace new ideas, don't automatically defend the status quo, and wish to serve the god who controls pounding waves and massive krakens.

### THASSA'S FAVOR

In much the same way that the sea and its secrets simply exist, Thassa trusts that the lives and actions of her champions will serve her long-term goals because of their connection to her. What made the god of the sea turn her attention to you or how did she show her interest? The Thassa's Favor table offers a few possibilities.

#### THASSA'S FAVOR

##### d6 Circumstance

- 1 You nearly drowned in a shipwreck, but Thassa answered your prayers for deliverance.
- 2 You were found on the shore as a newborn, in a basket woven of ocean grasses.
- 3 You dreamed of a great kraken. When you followed your dreams to the sea, the kraken appeared to you and gave you Thassa's blessing.
- 4 You grew up on a fishing boat, and your parents taught you Thassa's rites.
- 5 You were born with a pearl in your mouth, an obvious sign of Thassa's favor. You still have the pearl.
- 6 You have no idea why Thassa showed interest in you, and you might sometimes wish she hadn't.

### DEVOTION TO THASSA

Following Thassa means devoting yourself to a particular way of perceiving the world. Thassa herself seldom takes a stand on moral issues, preferring to let matters play out, but her mortal champions can't usually afford to be so patient. As a follower of Thassa, consider the ideals on the Thassa's Ideals table as alternatives to those suggested for your background.

#### THASSA'S IDEALS

##### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Devotion.** My devotion to my god is more important to me than what she stands for. (Any)
- 2 **Knowledge.** I will learn the secrets of the hidden depths. (Any)
- 3 **Freedom.** The sea can take me anywhere, and I'm not going to tie myself down. (Chaotic)
- 4 **Bounty.** The ocean always provides, and I will share its gifts with those less fortunate. (Good)
- 5 **Change.** Everything's just waiting to be something else, including me. (Chaotic)
- 6 **Power.** Like the waves, I answer only to Thassa. (Evil)

### EARNING AND LOSING PIETY

You increase your piety score to Thassa when you expand the god's influence in the world in a concrete way through acts such as these:

- Supporting those who would reform or overturn institutions
- Preventing cataclysmic change
- Offering a treasure to the sea
- Defending or maintaining a temple to Thassa

Your piety score to Thassa decreases if you diminish Thassa's influence in the world, contradict her ideal of gradual change, or attempt to impose artificial order through acts such as these:

- Trying to keep a secret from Thassa
- Using magic to calm the sea's fury
- Upholding an institution not devoted to Thassa
- Bowing to the desires or demands of another god

### THASSA'S DEVOTEE

*Piety 3+ Thassa trait*

As a devotee of Thassa, you have proven yourself a worthy representative of the god of the sea. You can cast *fog cloud* with this trait. Fog created in this way smells strongly of the sea. You can cast the spell in this way a number of times equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest. Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

### THASSA'S VOTARY

*Piety 10+ Thassa trait*

You can cast *blink* with this trait. Once you cast the spell in this way, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest. Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

### THASSA'S DISCIPLE

*Piety 25+ Thassa trait*

You are inspired by the tempestuous, uncontrollable nature of the sea; you have advantage on saving throws against being charmed or restrained.

### CHAMPION OF THE SEA

*Piety 50+ Thassa trait*

You can increase your Dexterity or Intelligence score by 2 and also increase your maximum for that score by 2.



## MYTHS OF THASSA

Tales about Thassa typically demonstrate that she is often patient, but never kind.

**Callaphe the False.** During the last great Silence of the gods, a triton appeared, impersonated a mariner named Callaphe, and traveled the waves aboard Callaphe's living ship, *The Monsoon*. This false Callaphe misled the tritons with false prophecies and pulled a kraken from the depths, hoping to harness his power. When the Silence was lifted and Thassa returned to the world, she struck the impostor down with such fury that she shattered her bident. Purphoros, remembering Thassa's kindness to him on many occasions, replaced her sacred weapon.

**Dreams in the Deep.** While Purphoros is renowned for his endless creations and desires to bring new ideas into being, Thassa secretly shares similar creative desires. Endlessly bored with the predictable denizens of the land and sky, in the deepest ocean trenches, Thassa wills immortal dreams and nightmares into being. Delicate beauty, undulating grace, and tentacular terrors are birthed in the absolute dark, iterate for generations, and suffer swift extinctions at the god's whim, never knowing the sun's touch. Sapient mortals aren't welcome in these maddening ateliers; Thassa remains bitterly unwilling to reveal her work until her creations—and the time—are absolutely perfect.

**Every Tear the Sea.** Few myths tell of those who escaped Thassa's wrath. This isn't one of them. When the infamous explorer Rasiao failed to steal one of Thassa's Tidelock Pearls, wave-controlling treasures protected by vicious mollusks, she spent years avoiding the waves before finding her way back to the mainland. Although she'd failed to abscond with one of Thassa's treasures, she'd avoided the sea god's wrath, a claim she valued more precious than gold. For years, Rasiao lived far from ocean or river, making her home in the driest reaches of Theros. She lived a long life, but on one trip to Akros to resupply and brag, she drowned in a bowl of ox stew. Those who found Rasiao discovered a pearl, too large to pass her lips, lodged in her mouth. Fearing further reprisal, Rasiao's daughters committed their mother's body to the Deyda River and Thassa's clutches. The explorer's daughters never forgot that just as countless drops make the sea, so too is every raindrop, tear, and cup part of Thassa's domain.

**Thief's Fate.** According to legend, a mortal sailor once stole Thassa's bident and used it to sink an enemy fleet. Thassa cared nothing for the vanquished fleet, but punished the sailor for his thievery by turning his family into eels. The sailor tried to care for the eels, but they blamed him for their fate and disappeared into the sea, leaving the sailor weeping on the shore.





SOARING ABOVE THE POLIS OF MELETIS IN THEIR FLYING CHARIOT, HEROES OF THE REVERENT ARMY SEND OFF THE UNRIVALED MELETIAN FLEET.



## REALMS OF GODS AND MORTALS

WHAT IS THE FARTHEST EXPLORED POINT ON the known world?" Elspeth asked.

*"In the east, beyond the leonin lands, there's another forest," Daxos told her.*

*"Larger even than the Nessian Forest. No one knows how far it goes."*

*"What's to the west beyond the sea?" Elspeth asked.*

*"The world ends at the waterfall where Kruphix's Tree grows," he explained. "The sea falls off the edge and into the void below."*

*"My home was beyond your infinite forest," she said.*

*—Jenna Helland, Godsend*

The world of Theros, as its inhabitants understand, includes three realms: the mortal world, the divine realm of Nyx, and the Underworld. They are three distinct planes of existence, tucked into their own pocket of the multiverse and shielded from the rest of the cosmos by the power of the gods. This chapter discusses each of these realms in turn, with a focus on the mortal realm where the schemes of the gods intersect with mortal lives.

### THE MORTAL REALM

Compared to most worlds of the Material Plane, the mortal realm of Theros is small. The known world is barely two hundred miles across, with unexplored wilderness beyond. And some unknown distance beyond that is the edge of the world, where the sea flows off the disk of the world and into the starry void.

The known world of Theros consists of a long stretch of coastline forming the eastern edge of the vast Siren Sea. Eastward from the sea, the land rises up to two ridges of mountains. The lofty peaks of the second ridge form a barrier that few mortals have passed, so only rumors of a vast forest describe the land beyond.

To the north, the coastal lands become a barren region of badlands crossed by a labyrinth of arid canyons, with minotaur lands beyond. The minotaurs speak of impenetrable mountains rising amid a dark forest to the north.

The Siren Sea is studded with islands large and small. The largest cluster near the mainland, called the Dakra Isles, is poorly charted, and even those sailors who attempt to explore the isles return with contradictory

information. Westward from those islands, some have successfully sailed to the edge of the world, though no one can say for certain how far it is—the journey never unfolds in a straight line. In theory, it is equally possible to sail south to the edge of the world, but those waters are stormier and more forbidding.

The heart of mortal civilization lies in and around three poleis—cities and their surrounding territories. Together the three poleis, Akros, Meletis, and Setessa, encompass most of the human population of Theros. Meletis covers the whole territory of the southwestern peninsula, Akros forms the northern frontier, and Setessa lies at the northern edge of the wild Nessian Wood.

Two bands of centaurs—the Lagonna and the Pheres—roam the hills and grasslands between the three poleis. The leonin hunt in the valley of Oreskos, nestled between the two mountain ranges. Satyrs dwell in a smaller sylvan vale northeast of the Nessian Wood. And tritons live primarily in the coastal shallows of the Siren Sea, though some manage to make comfortable homes among the humans of Meletis.

The badlands of Phoberos, northwest of Akros, are the frontier where Akroan soldiers clash with minotaurs. Farther north is the minotaur city of Skophos, little known to humans.

The necropoleis of Asphodel and Odunos are home to the Returned—zombie-like beings who have escaped the clutches of the underworld at the cost of their identities. The lands around these cities are bleak and barren, as if the Returned brought the pall of the underworld out with them into the mortal realm.

### LIFE IN THE POLEIS

Human civilization in Theros is centered in three poleis: Akros, Meletis, and Setessa. These poleis exemplify the human drive to settle the land, to shape nature according to their needs, and to organize into political structures that can withstand the changing fortunes of the passing centuries.

Each polis is centered in a city but includes a wide region of surrounding territory, and each one has its own distinct society and culture. To the people of Theros, "Meletis" is more or less synonymous with "Meletians"—the polis isn't just the people who live in the city of Meletis or even those who dwell in nearby villages; it is the people who follow the Meletian way of life, wherever they might be found.

# THE WORLD OF **THEROS**

## MAP KEY

- Polis
- City
- Town
- Village
- ◆ Site
- ▲ Mountain



## EXPLORING THEROS

Vast and varied lands comprise the world of Theros, from the territories of the great human poleis to the dizzying peaks of the Oraniad Mountains. The line between legend and location often blurs in Theros, though. While the residents of a polis can be relatively certain their homes will remain where they left them when they venture off to work, the specific locations of legendary sites prove more nebulous. Even well-known locations are typically noted referentially, like how the city of Neolantin is often described as being along the coast, far to the southwest of Meletis.

Some sites prove even more elusive. The Dakra Isles, for example, move at the whims of the gods and so prove impossible to map.

As a result, Map 3.1 serves largely as a vaguely agreed upon arrangement of locations, fuzzy borders, and general distances. While the scale and placement of sites are true by mortal standards, details might change as the gods please. As such, journeying between places is most reliably conducted by employing guides or maps specific to a single destination.

If you are running a campaign in Theros, you can adjust distances between locations to suit the needs of your adventures. The distance might not be the same for two successive journeys; any trek across Theros can expand or contract to accommodate adventures and encounters as you wish.

## CITIZENSHIP AND GOVERNMENT

In every polis, civic responsibility and full protection are afforded only to citizens. Citizenship is limited to those whose parents were both citizens of the polis. Citizens of other poleis, and their children, aren't permitted to participate in the government of the polis. In Akros, citizens must meet one additional requirement: they must serve in the army.

The three poleis have different political structures, but each one has a council elected by popular vote of the citizenry. The Twelve, Meletis's council of philosophers, is the democratically elected ruling body of the polis. Akros is ruled by a hereditary monarch who is advised by a council of elders elected by and from among the citizenry. Similarly, Setessa's Ruling Council is formed by popular vote, and they govern the polis while its queen—the goddess Karametra—is absent.

## TRADE AND CURRENCY

Trade between Akros and Meletis is constant and productive. Caravans make the two-day journey between the poleis at least once a week, carrying fine Akroan metalwork and pottery to Meletis, and Meletian fabric, stonework, and fish northward. Both poleis mint coins of copper, silver, and gold, with equivalent value.

Setessa trades with the other poleis as well, but less extensively. Its Abora Market, just inside the city gates, is open to outsiders only on certain days, and Setessan merchants prefer to barter goods rather than accept currency. Despite these restrictions, Setessan food, woodwork, and trained falcons are highly valued in the other poleis.

Aside from the other human poleis, Meletis and Setessa both trade with the centaurs of the Lagonna band. The centaurs don't work metal, so they trade woodwork, the produce of the plains, and woven blankets to the human poleis in exchange for weapons and armor.

## RECREATION

The people of the poleis enjoy the opportunity for some recreation, as time and money allow.

Gymnasia are popular gathering places, offering athletic training as well as space for philosophical discussion and friendly socializing. A resident of the city might visit a gymnasium one day to exercise, the next to view a wrestling match between celebrated competitors, and the next to hear a renowned philosopher give a lecture on ethics.

Another important venue for recreation is the theater. The works of celebrated playwrights, past and present, are regularly produced by casts of professional actors. On occasion, a storyteller, accompanied by a small orchestra, draws crowds to a theater for a recitation of one of the great epics, such as *The Theriad* or *The Cal-lapheia*. Such a performance might stretch over two or three days.

## THE MELETIAN CALENDAR

The astronomers and philosophers of Meletis have established a calendar that has found some adoption in Akros and Setessa. It divides the year into twelve months of twenty-nine or thirty days, each beginning with the new moon. About every three years, an extra thirty-day month is added at the end of the calendar to keep it aligned with the solar year.

The beginning of the year is considered the end of winter, so the new year begins with the spring. Each month is holy to a specific god and named after a major festival celebrated in Meletis during that month. Setessa and Akros have adopted the same names even though they don't share all the same observances, with one exception: the fifth month (Thriambion in Meletis) is called Iroagonion in Akros, after the Iroan Games, which are held in that month every year.

The Meletian Calendar table summarizes the months, their lengths, and the god each is associated with.

### MELETIAN CALENDAR

Month	Name	Length	God
1	Lyokymion	30 days	Thassa
2	Protokymion	29 days	Nylea
3	Astrapion	30 days	Keranos
4	Polidryson	29 days	Ephara
5	Thriambion	30 days	Iroas
6	Megasphagion	29 days	Mogis
7	Chalcanapsion	30 days	Purphoros
8	Necrologion	29 days	Athreos
9	Therimakarion	30 days	Karametra
10	Katabasion	29 days	Erebos
11	Cheimazion	30 days	Pharika
12	Agrypnion	29 days	Kruphix
13*	Anagrypnion	30 days	Kruphix

\* This month occurs only once every three years.

# AKROS

ONLY VICTORY ENDURES.

—Akroan motto

The walled polis of Akros stands defiantly atop a precipitous cliff. The unforgiving mountains around it serve as a shield between its holdings and the rest of Theros. Few have ever dared to attack its famed fortress, the Kolophon, and no attack has ever breached its walls. To the residents of Theros, the Akroans hold near-mythical status: feared warriors produced by a culture that centers around perfecting the mind and body for war. Their armies have rarely tasted defeat as they expand the borders of Akros, seizing new lands and bounty.

## PEOPLE OF AKROS

For most of Akros's neighbors, the term "Akroan" evokes legendary warriors, trained from birth in every martial discipline known to humankind. It brings to mind songs of tight-knit martial bands, holding strong in the face of unbeatable odds. It sings of a great yearly competition that crowns the preeminent warrior-athlete in Akros, and—by extension—the world. The majority of Akros's inhabitants, though, aren't members of its martial elite. The famed warriors of Akros have the means to devote their lives to studying and training in the ways of war because they rest atop a rigid social structure of serfs and servants that largely dwell beyond the Kolophon's walls. Those who stand at the heights of Akroan society, or outside it, are detailed here.

### THE MONARCHY

Traditionally, Akros is ruled by a monarch drawn from the lineage of lektoi. The monarchy passes from parent to eldest child, but any sibling or first cousin of the heir can challenge this succession and claim the throne by besting the heir in single combat.

Currently, the monarchy is in a state of turmoil. King Anax has died, and his wife, Queen Cymede, has disappeared. An oracle of Keranos, the queen is said to have transformed into a pillar of fire and vanished into the wind, but until her death is certain, the lektoi are reluctant to name a new monarch. Anax and Cymede have no children, so the king's niece, Taranika, acts as regent, attempting to guide the polis through what is sure to be a difficult transition.

As if the situation weren't complicated enough, rumors have it that Anax isn't dead. He, or perhaps some shimmering Nyxborn simulacrum of him, has been seen at the head of squads of satyr hoplites, wielding an axe that billows with smoke and drips searing lava.

### LEKTOI

At the apex of Akroan society are the lektoi, the large warrior class of Akros. Members of this class claim descent from the seven warriors who first established the Kolophon after the fall of the archons. Though the families now number more than seven, each one uses an animal associated with one of the seven warriors as its symbol, either the ram, lion, horse, boar, badger, bull, or hart. The ram, associated with Akros's first king,

Elektes, is commonly used as a symbol for the lektoi as a whole and for Akroan strength, determination, and resilience. It is a popular theme in clothing, jewelry, and weapon ornamentation, and some lektoi even wear their hair braided into stylized ram horns.

Although the lektoi claim descent from heroes, membership in this noble class isn't strictly hereditary. Anyone can earn a place among them by claiming a victory in the annual Iroan Games. More commonly, members of lektoi families lose their place of privilege if they fail to fulfill their obligation to serve in the Akroan military.

### STRATIANS

The Akroan military is formed of wandering bands of warriors (drawn from the lektoi families) known as strati-ans. Outside the walls of the Kolophon, the strati-ans camp in the forests and fields, hunt game for food, and train younger warriors as they go. Their tasks are to search for monsters that have strayed into Akroan territory and to protect travelers.

Stratian forces are divided into three types of duty and armed appropriately for the task before them:

**Alamon.** Rugged forces of wanderers patrol Akros's borders, defending against invasion or attack by monsters that dwell in the mountains, foothills, and badlands around Akroan territory. They are armed and armored for speed and agility, allowing them to move stealthily and strike unexpectedly.

**Lukos.** The most elite forces among the strati-ans, the so-called wolves contend with threats that the Alamon can't handle alone. After the guerrilla tactics of the Alamon have softened up a target, the heavily armored Lukos march to finish the task.

**Oromai.** The watchers are the guardians of the Kolophon who protect the fortress from invaders and maintain order within its walls.

### FLAMESPEAKERS

Prominent spellcasters, the flamespeakers are reclusive priests of Purphoros who revere nature spirits and who inhabit fiery rifts in the mountains. The ancient practice is viewed as primitive but powerful, and Akroans of any background might risk making a pilgrimage into the mountains to hear a flamespeaker's prophecies.

### SERVANTS AND SERFS

Lektoi who complete their military service with honor often retire to the Kolophon or their family estates and go about the leisured life of aristocrats. Their households are run by a class of servants made up of lektoi who were unable or unwilling to undertake a military career. These servants lack citizenship's full privileges but retain a position of some honor thanks to their class.

Below these servants, at the bottom of Akros's social hierarchy, are the serfs. Comprising the vast majority of Akros's population, the serfs largely reside outside the protection of the Kolophon, laboring to grow the staple crops that support Akros's citizens and its trade. A relatively small number of serfs are skilled artisans who manage to build a more prosperous life for themselves with their crafts. But even these wealthier serfs can't own the land they live on, and they enjoy few rights or legal protections.



THE KOLOPHON STANDS WATCH OVER  
THE POLIS OF AKROS.

### NONHUMANS IN AKROS

Akros maintains a standoffish—and often hostile—stance toward its neighbors, particularly the minotaurs of Phoberos, the leonin of Oreskos, and the centaurs of the Pheres band. Members of those peoples rarely find a warm welcome in Akroan territory. However, Akroans respect prowess, loyalty, and self-sacrifice, and might welcome any who embody such virtues. Some stratians also seek to learn the martial practices of other peoples, and might invite individuals or small communities to Akros to learn their ways.

During the Iroan Games, everyone is welcome in the stadium. Satyrs flock to the city to witness the competition, and some take up permanent residence, celebrating the outcome of one year's games until it's time to start watching the next.

### FEATURES OF AKROS

At the center of the polis of Akros rises the Kolophon, a mighty fortress and the seat of Akroan power. This many-tiered structure perches upon a vast cliff, which drops into a deep canyon carved by the Deyda River. Nature and Akroan ingenuity conspire to make the Kolophon one of the most intimidating fortresses in Theros.

Beyond the polis stretch craggy hills and mountains broken by narrow stretches of arable plains. It is a nearly impassable landscape, save for a few roads hewn through passes. Residents claim that only a fool would attempt to invade the heartlands of Akros, yet Akroans obsessively guard against invasion nonetheless.

Beyond its thick walls, the streets of Akros are dotted with towering statues of heroes. Red-tiled roofs soar over square-topped sandstone columns, and holy sites dedicated to Iroas, Purphoros, and Keranos, among the other gods, are many. The architecture is formidable, spare, and militaristic, thick with sharp, angular shapes.

### TEMPLE OF TRIUMPH AT AKROS

At the heart of the walled city is the huge stadium that hosts Theros's greatest sporting event, the Iroan Games. A grand temple of Iroas stands beside it, serving as the venue for award ceremonies. A wide plaza connects the stadium to the city's outer gates, offering plenty of room for celebration around the annual games.

When the stadium isn't hosting the actual Iroan Games, it is still used daily for training and for lesser athletic events. Many of the buildings surrounding the stadium are dedicated to serving it: smaller training facilities, providers of athletic gear, stables, and other shops.

### CITADEL

The uppermost tier of the city, perched on a rocky outcropping at the southwestern corner of the Kolophon, is the great citadel. The Oromai (the “watchers” who maintain order and defend the Kolophon) are quartered within the citadel's imposing walls, and the monarch's palace is built atop it. Temples of Iroas, Heliod, and Keranos also adorn the top of the citadel, the latter commissioned by the late Queen Cymede, built with an open roof to give her a clear view of stormy skies.



## MYTHS OF THE AKROAN WAR

Centuries before the polis of Olantin sunk beneath the sea (a myth told in chapter 4), its queen left her husband for the king of Akros. Slighted and heartbroken, the Olantian king summoned his whole host of loyal spears and sails to wage war on the fortified mountain polis.

What followed was a siege that stretched on for decades. Whole parts of Akros were destroyed and rebuilt in the fighting. There were heroes who knew only a life of conflict, performing feats of incredible prowess for the honor of Olantin, or who awed the gods with their sleepless commitment to defending the gates of Akros.

Most people today know of the event from an embellished account laid down in an epic poem, *The Akroan War*. Although its author has been lost to time, the poem is considered to be a definitive accounting of the greatest war in history. Countless soldiers aspire to fight with the honor and purpose that inspired the heroes of the Akroan War.

## AKROS'S SURROUNDINGS

Arable land is scattered across small plateaus and valleys in Akros, meaning that the serf communities that farm the land are small and just as scattered. Volcanic rifts, landslides, and venomous animals make travel dangerous for anyone who doesn't know the terrain, and visitors wishing to avoid suspicion from patrolling strations would be wise to stick to the roads.

### OUTPOSTS

The Alamon soldiers spend most of their time patrolling Akros's outlying areas, centering their patrols around scattered outposts. These serve as staging grounds for Alamon and Lukos units to prepare as they venture out to raid or guard against monsters and invaders.

**One-Eyed Pass.** The outpost in One-Eyed Pass serves to keep an Akroan eye on the large cyclops population of the area, but the strations also use the cyclopes to their advantage. Any time dangerous creatures come down from the mountains and pose a potential threat to Akroan holdings, the Alamon harry the enemy and try to funnel them into the pass. The cyclopes of the pass viciously defend their territory against all intruders, weakening or even eliminating the danger before it can reach the Akroan outpost, where the Lukos finish off any stragglers.

**Pharagax Bridge.** On the western border of Akros gapes a massive chasm rumored to descend all the way to the underworld and belch forth foul creatures. The great stone bridge that spans it is the only way into Akros from this direction. Strations consider it a high honor to be assigned to guard the bridge.

**Titan's Stairs.** These stone "stairs," seemingly carved into the granite cliffs that protect Akros and haunted at all times by eerie, whistling winds, provide natural access to Akros. The strations guard it fiercely and use it as a staging ground for invading the lowlands.

**Phoberos Outposts.** Several semipermanent encampments dot the badlands between Akros and the wilds beyond. Fresh cadres of troops come here every month to relieve soldiers who are worn out by relentless assaults from raiders, fire-breathing dragons, and other threats.

**Mountain Shrines.** The Akroans believe that the gods are best worshiped at the places closest to Nyx—mountain peaks. Small temples and shrines are found throughout Akroan territory. Some are tucked in caves or nestled in crevices or canyons, while others are bare altars exposed to the elements.

## PHERES LANDS

Between the mountains of Akros and the vast Nessian Wood to the southeast, Pheres-band centaurs roam across the dry, hilly landscape. Gathered in small bands of fierce raiders, the Pheres centaurs plunder whatever prey they can find: merchants and other travelers moving between Akros and Setessa, settlers trying to eke out an existence in the region, leonin tribes, Lagonna-band centaurs who range too far to the north, and any others they encounter.

# MELETIS

EVIL FLOURISHES WHERE IGNORANCE THRIVES.

—Perisophia the philosopher

Meletis is a polis devoted to learning, magic, and progress. It is the most populous city-state and home to progressive thinkers, pious thaumaturges, and wise oracles. Born from the defeat of tyranny, to this day it pursues the ideals of free thought, societal betterment, and reinvention over stagnation and totalitarianism.

The archon Agnomakhos ruled the area that is now Meletis for centuries. Impressing those he conquered into his legions, Agnomakhos aggressively expanded his empire, spreading it as far as the forests to the east and the mountains to the north. Ultimately, though, the heroes Kynaïos and Tiro overthrew the archon. From the empire's ruins rose Meletis, a land that endeavors to reject cruelty and oppression throughout the world, and guards against hypocrisy within its own borders.

For a time, Kynaïos and Tiro ruled Meletis, striving to govern in accordance with the highest philosophical and ethical principles, which ultimately led them to relinquish their power and establish a philosopher-led republic. After the kings' deaths, the council of scholars known as the Twelve took up rule of the polis, with the sage Elpidios serving as the senior member.

## PEOPLE OF MELETIS

The people of Meletis take pride in their city's grand architecture, especially the great temples to the gods. They value philosophy and other intellectual pursuits, especially the practice of magic. Meletis's army is known for its discipline and its piety, and its navy is unparalleled. The city observes every one of the gods' holy days in various ways, and most residents try to live as the gods demand.

Rich fields and the bounty of the sea support most people throughout Meletis. The people have reputations for being accomplished weavers, skilled sailors, and cunning merchants. Books and literacy are also common throughout the land, and the work of scribes, cartographers, musicians, and storytellers is well regarded. The people of Meletis believe themselves to be the inheritors of a heroic tradition, and each person owes it to themselves and to society to strive for greatness. Beyond Meletis's common folk, a few groups that hold noteworthy standing are detailed here.

## THE TWELVE

A council of philosophers called the Twelve serves as the ruling body of Meletis. They are elected by popular vote among the citizens of Meletis and serve for terms of four years at a time. They are supposed to govern by philosophical principles of justice and social order, and many of them do strive to uphold the highest ideals in their decisions. Others are more grimly realistic, and a few are deeply corrupt, serving only their own interests.

The most senior member of the council is recognized as its leader, responsible for bringing the assembly to order and moderating its debate. Currently, this position is held by the renowned philosopher and orator named Perisophia.

## PHILOSOPHERS

Though they aren't necessarily heroic, philosophers are highly valued in Meletis, which is renowned as the center of philosophical thought. They form a privileged class, often coming from wealthy families but also supported by stipends from the polis's academies and their own students. Different philosophical schools hold political as well as intellectual power in the polis, with five schools of philosophy dominating Meletian discourse.

THE SEA WALL AND STATUES OF THE POLIS'S  
FOUNDERS GUARD MELETIS BAY.



**Elpidians.** Perisophia's optimistic Elpidian school currently predominates Meletian thought and politics, carrying on the works of the heroic Epharan oracle Elpidios. The Elpidian school strives to put magic and philosophy to use in improving the lives of all Meletians. Elpidian mages embrace magic in all its forms.

**Formalists.** Formalist philosophers believe in a realm populated by abstract entities such as numbers and theories. They focus their efforts on trying to improve the moral fabric of the polis, hoping to create the ideal society, where people live together in peace, and where war and crime disappear.

**Uremideans.** This school emphasizes logical reasoning, rhetorical excellence, and theories of ethics and virtue. Uremideans are eminently practical governors who seek to balance ethical ideals and realistic necessities.

**Nykleans.** Nyklean philosophers teach that reason or destiny underlies all of reality, so that everything that takes place must unfold just as it does. These philosophers train themselves to accept and endure whatever befalls them, enjoying good fortune but not grieving its loss.

**Anapsians.** Anapsian philosophy embraces the fine delights of life: the pleasures of love and friendship, fine food and drink, art and music. Anapsians have few strong opinions about governance, except that an ultimate good end should be kept front of mind in all decision.

### THAUMATURGES

Meletians view magic as one of the greatest art forms, and they call the most accomplished mages thaumaturges ("wonder workers"). Many Meletian mages are trained at the elite academy of the Dekatia, but countless smaller schools and private tutors teach the magical arts. These lessons in magic typically include a well-rounded education in the sciences and philosophy. Some thaumaturges find their magical studies aligning with popular Meletian philosophies and choose the schools of magic they focus on based on such teachings.

The mark of a true thaumaturge, though, is a gift or positive omen from the gods; even the most accomplished student of magic can't earn the title without such a sign of divine approval. One mage might receive the gift of a spear from Helioid, another could receive a clockwork owl from Ephara, and still another might experience a wild, creative vision from Keranos.

### THE REVERENT ARMY

The hoplites of Meletis practice battlefield tactics in an environment saturated with religious devotion. The military force of the polis is called the Reverent Army, and aims as much to exalt the glory of the pantheon as to defend Meletis. The soldiers are clever and resourceful, believing their piety leads the gods to smile upon them. More likely, though, their extensive training in battlefield tactics and magic gives them an edge over other soldiers, with most Meletian hoplites knowing at least a little magic.

### NONHUMANS IN MELETIS

Meletis strives to be a beacon to all of Theros's people. Well-intentioned members of any culture are welcome on Meletis's streets, and the polis's people work to earn the trust of their neighbors.

Of all the poleis, Meletis has the closest relationship with the tritons of the Siren Sea. Several communities of tritons consider the harbors of Meletis and secluded coastal sanctuaries their home. Many take part in work near and under the water that other peoples are ill-suited to, but increasingly tritons find work not related to the sea, with triton restaurants, chemists, and members of the Reverent Army being increasingly common.

Meletis maintains a fragile peace with centaurs of the Lagonna band, engaging in regular trade. It's not uncommon for small groups of centaurs to set up shop in the polis market for short periods, though few spend more than a night or two in the city, most finding it claustrophobic at best.

Few leonin journey to Meletis, knowing little of the land beyond what their stories remember of Agnomakhos's tyranny. Even an age after the archon's rule, most leonin view Meletis as a cursed place. Those few who have traveled to the polis in recent years find it changed, with great potential for trade and cooperation, but no Meletian or leonin has yet initiated an official dialogue between the two peoples.

Most satyrs have little patience for Meletian philosophy, visiting largely out of curiosity or on elaborate larks. Minotaurs are rarely seen in Meletis, though those who visit with peaceful intentions are welcome.

### FEATURES OF MELETIS

The architectural and academic marvels of Meletis testify to the achievements of civilized humanity. The streets are paved with bricks made in interlocking geometric shapes, meant to demonstrate principles of both mathematics and magic. Grand temples line the streets, testifying to the Meletians' devotion to the gods. These rise as both mighty bastions dedicated to individual deities and various neighborhood shrines devoted to the pantheon as a whole.

Inside the city, the wild lands feel like a remote threat. Perils from the sea present more obvious dangers, but a great sea wall protects the polis's port on the Bay of Meletis, while a lengthy channel cuts through the surrounding land to reach Meletis Harbor on the Siren Sea.

### PYRGNOS

Many Meletians speak of the "edifice of knowledge," referring in the abstract to the sum of all learning and scholarship. Every citizen is expected to help improving this edifice for the good of the polis, whether through philosophical exploration, advancements in magical technique, investigation into the nature of the gods, or perfection of techniques in crafting and trade.

But the edifice of knowledge in Meletis is a literal structure as well as a metaphorical one: the Pyrgnos is a glowing stone tower standing near the coast. It is literally formed from the collected learnings of the polis, recorded on carved stone tablets and glowing letters hovering in the air. At night, the Pyrgnos shines like a



lighthouse where the sea wall meets the shore, gleaming on the waters of the Siren Sea.

A decade ago, the Pyrgnos was partly demolished by a kraken that attacked the city, but it has been repaired and continues to grow, reflecting the continued learning of the polis's citizens.

### THE DEKATIA

Meletis boasts many centers of learning, but the preeminent academy for philosophers and mages is the Dekatia. Students who display remarkable promise over the course of their earlier education can go on to spend up to ten years in arduous training at the Dekatia, apprenticed to master priests, thaumaturges, philosophers, and military heroes. Those who manage to complete this decade of training are renowned as the wisest of the wise and the bravest of the brave, combining all the essential learning of the polis into one heroic package.

### THE OBSERVATORY

The Observatory is a tall viewing platform and a windowed structure offering a splendid view of the sky, renowned as a place to study Nyx, the home of the gods. Special crystals shaped by thaumaturges and blessed by the oracles of the gods enhance the view, making it easier for observers to see the workings of the gods among the stars and constellations. Priests, mages, and philosophers interpret what they see in the Observatory as signs and omens from the gods.

### MYTH OF THE FALL OF AGNOMAKHOS

From the back of his flying bull, the archon Agnomakhos led armies across the face of Theros, carving out an empire that stood for generations. While numerous rebellions attempted to cast off the archon's rule, each was crushed by his armies of giants, leonin, and other fearsome creatures. So, when the heroes Kynaïos and Tiro sought to inspire an uprising, few flocked to their banner.

Undeterred, the rebels soldiered on against impossible odds. Seeing their dedication to the cause of freedom, the goddess Ephara came to the heroes. She offered to aid Kynaïos and Tiro in their battle against the tyrant, supplementing their martial skill with a new weapon: magic.

With their new power, Kynaïos and Tiro inspired the people to rise up against Agnomakhos, ultimately defeating his armies and striking the archon down. From their victory rose the polis of Meletis and the use of magic among mortals.

Agnomakhos's fall remains a point of honor in the minds of Meletis's people, a moment immortalized in relief upon countless civic buildings throughout the polis.

### MELETIS'S SURROUNDINGS

Meletis sits on the coast of the Siren Sea, surrounded by rivers, sparse woodlands, and vast, stepped grasslands. Fields of barley provide sustenance to Meletians and their animals. Well-trod roads wind their way through the region, but most locals travel along the coast in simple boats.

## MELETIAN HOLDINGS

The polis of Meletis embodies the heart and mind of what it means to be Meletian, but the polis's lands also includes numerous other settlements and wildernesses. The people who live in these holdings are no less Meletians than the inhabitants of the city, and they share the values of other Meletians even if their lifestyle affords them little opportunity to study magic and philosophy.

**Altrisos.** This small walled city is famous for Ephara's intervention to protect it from a kraken, her face coming to life on the marble wall and making the barrier grow so tall that the kraken couldn't get through. Altrisos now has Ephara's face on nearly every building and wall in the entire city in gratitude.

**Glossion.** Glossion is a small coastal town that would be completely unremarkable, except that it's accumulated a truly impressive library. The bulk of the town's economy revolves around maintaining the library and meeting the needs of travelers who come to visit it.

**Krimnos.** Renowned as the home of Anapse, the philosopher who founded the Anapsian school, the village of Krimnos attracts many philosophers who share Anapse's delight in the pleasures of a simple life.

**Listes.** Listes is a fortress marking the northeastern border of the polis. The civilian population is hardly less disciplined than the members of the Reverent Army stationed there, and the whole population observes Iroas's holy days together.

**Natumbria.** The residents of Natumbria are famous for training sea animals as skillfully as Setessans train land and air animals. They train sea snakes, dolphins, and even sharks on a few occasions to be combatants, working animals, aquatic mounts, and companions.

**Neolantin.** Though they are regarded as Meletians, the people of Neolantin view themselves as citizens of Olantin—a coastal polis that long ago vanished into the sea. According to legend, an angry Heliod smote the polis with his spear, sinking it in punishment for its people's utter hubris. The fact that the Neolantians were spared this fate, they say, is evidence of their humility, and they take special care in their sacrifices to Heliod.

**Oxus.** Oxus is a quiet town with a notably wealthy population, consisting largely of merchants who have retired from trade with large fortunes at their disposal. The tomb of Kynaïos and Tiro also stands in the center of the town, the subject of many local legends.

**Phaela.** A small fishing village, Phaela is most noted as being the literal "end of the road" for travelers venturing south from Meletis. The rugged lands beyond are rocky and scattered with forgotten ruins.

**Sitrium.** This coastal town is known for the way many of its buildings are on stilts to accommodate the changing tides. Sitrium is famed for its skilled shipwrights.

**Thesteia.** The village of Thesteia is little more than a crossroads, but it's notable for its temple to Karametra. The site draws farmers from the region who offer a portion of their crops to the god of agriculture.

## LAGONNA GROUNDS

At the northern edge of Meletian territory, between the sea and the Nessian Wood, roam the centaurs of the Lagonna band. Unlike the ferocious Pheres band, the Lagonna-band centaurs are generally peaceful and don't engage in raids upon Meletian territory. They are frequent visitors in Listes, Krimnos, and Meletis itself, and often carry goods between Meletis and Setessa, since they are more at home in the Nessian Wood than most Meletian merchants.

PEOPLE FROM ACROSS THEROS VISIT MELETIS, LEAVING THEIR MARKS ON THE POLIS'S ARCHITECTURE AND PHILOSOPHIES.



## SETESSA

THIS CITY SAVED ME WHEN I WAS AN ORPHANED CHILD,  
sold into chains. Now is my turn to save it.

—Kallias, Ophis Tower commander

Setessa is the favored polis of Karametra, and its buildings blend so perfectly into the forest that it's difficult to tell the difference between inside and outside. The populace lives in harmony with the thick forests, terraced farms, and trained animals of Setessa, and they celebrate the cycle of seasons with grand holidays.

Setessa is also unique among the poleis of Theros in that few of its adult residents are men. Women comprise the bulk of the population, holding almost all of the leadership roles and carrying out most work. Men are few and far between, mostly performing roles at the polis's edge. Children run freely around the polis. They're so important, in fact, that Setessa's people take in abandoned children from all over Theros.

### PEOPLE OF SETESSA

The populace of Setessa live in a beautiful paradise, and they're prepared to fight to the death to protect it. The constant training in archery, falconry, riding, and close combat can seem out of place among the idyllic forests and beautiful gardens and orchards, but that is the way of life in Setessa.

#### GENDER IN SETESSA

Setessans believe that women become heroes through martial exploits, while men do so by finding their own way in the world. As a result, the polis is populated mostly by women and children.

When young men reach the age of fourteen, their rites of passage culminate in a journey called *peregrination*, where they wander the world until they find a new place to call home. The few men who reside permanently in Setessa live in the Amatrophon, training and caring for the animals there. Some of these men never peregrinated, but others left and then returned to Setessa.

The women of the polis form a tight-knit community where property is held in common. There is no marriage, and ancestry is traced matrilineally.

Despite the very different roles played by men and women, Setessans are flexible when it comes to any individual's place in that structure. Some men set out on peregrination after spending a number of years identified as women, and some women return from peregrination (or never undertake it) after a period of realization. Some people move fluidly between roles, and a few choose a special role that Setessans view as standing outside the dichotomy of gender, living in Ophis Tower.

The warriors of Ophis Tower are martially trained as women are but wander the world as men do. They gather information for the Ruling Council, search out routes for peregrination (including identifying sympathetic individuals and households who will mentor young men at the start of their journeys), and rescue lost and abandoned children from other communities, bringing them back to Setessa.

### THE RULING COUNCIL

Karametra is the queen of Setessa, but of course gods have more important concerns than the day-to-day governance of a human polis. So a five-member council attends to the daily tasks of leadership on the deity's behalf. The council is made up of the commanders of the four prominent fortress-watchtowers that guard the polis. These commanders are elected by popular vote: Anthousa of Leina Tower, Phaedra of Hyrax Tower, Niketa of Bassara Tower, and Kallias of Ophis Tower. The fifth member is Silverbrow, a centaur oracle who reads the Kelema Veil at the Nexuses of the Seasons and advises action based on her visions. Anthousa is the head of the council, considered Karametra's closest advisor and the *de facto* ruler of the city.

### DEFENDERS AND THE FOUR TOWERS

Karametra includes defense of the home in her domains, and the residents of Setessa follow suit. Setessan military forces are organized into four major regiments, each associated with a fortress tower.

**Bassara Tower.** The tower of the fox stands near the Summer Nexus and watches for interlopers who enter the Nessian Wood without permission. During their training, troops there focus on archery and guerrilla tactics. Their leader is Niketa, a woman in her fifties who spends most of her time in the tower since she parted ways with her dryad partner.

**Hyrax Tower.** The tower of the falcon lies on the ridge near the Autumn Nexus. Its regiment includes contingents of scouts and falconers. Its leader is Phaedra, a nineteen-year-old master falconer and orphan from Metletis who was rescued by the Ophis regiment.

**Leina Tower.** The tower of the lion stands near Karametra's temple at the heart of Setessa. Its regiment, led by the hero Anthousa, is dedicated to the defense of the polis and the training of its children. The Leina warriors favor double-edged axes.

**Ophis Tower.** The tower of the serpent nestles at the center of Setessa. Its wandering warriors travel the world, working on behalf of the Ruling Council. Their leader is Kallias, who was sold into slavery as a child. They lost an eye and several fingers before they were rescued and brought to Setessa, where they have devoted themselves to saving others in a similar plight.

### THE "LITTLE BEARS" OF SETESSA

Children in Setessa are reared by the polis as a whole and treated with the highest respect; their welfare is paramount and their training is a significant part of every warrior's occupation. Orphans and abandoned children are sacred to Karametra, so they are brought into the city and tended just as Setessa's own children are.

In contrast to the discipline associated with educating children in other poleis, Setessan youngsters enjoy tremendous freedom. Called *arkulli*, meaning "little bears," they are welcome anywhere in the city. They often wander in and out of the temple, training grounds, the hall of the Ruling Council, the market, and anywhere else their paths take them. Such freedom is meant to cultivate a curious spirit and help the children find the path they're most interested in following later in life.

## NONHUMANS IN SETESSA

Setessa doesn't welcome outsiders, as a rule, except the orphaned and abandoned children brought to live in the polis. But the polis can be more hospitable to nonhuman outsiders than to humans (especially male humans) from other poleis. A few centaurs of the Lagonna band, leonin, and satyrs have earned the right to live in Setessa. Dryads and naiads from the Nessian Wood rarely try to enter the polis, but they are often friendly with the Bassara soldiers who patrol the forest.

## FEATURES OF SETESSA

Setessa fuses nature and civilization into a single living organism. The polis extends from a huge tree at its center, like the rings of a still larger tree. A dense circle of vegetation forms the city's outer wall, with the treetops magically woven together to create a barrier against intruders. Expertly trained archers stand guard on platforms nestled among the upper branches. Inside these natural walls, patches of thick forest alternate with open spaces where the Setessans build their homes and civic buildings amid the trees. Out of deference to Nylea, the residents of Setessa never construct a building that isn't absolutely necessary, and their homes and buildings are seamlessly integrated into the environment, with magic coaxing vegetation to weave together into walls or roofs.

### TEMPLE TO KARAMETRA

In the very center of the city is the temple to Karametra, patron of Setessa. Three ancient trees grow from an earthen rise and spiral around the heart of the city. The temple, built of glittering limestone, nestles amid the massive trunks. Strong magical wards protect the temple, since Karametra herself sits here when she visits her beloved polis. All manner of civic functions are based in the temple, and most of them are carried out by Karametra's attendants. These attendants serve as healers, advisors, teachers, chroniclers, and oracles.

### NEXUSES OF THE SEASONS

Four holy sites, corresponding to the four seasons, stand in or near the polis and serve as temples—primarily for the rites of Karametra and Nylea, but also to the other gods to an extent. These nexus points between the mortal world and Nyx—a phenomenon called the Kelema Veil—are where omens manifest amid star fields that glitter in the shadows and where oracles seek messages from the divine. The four nexuses are each distinct in their own ways.

**Spring Nexus.** Associated with Karametra, the Spring Nexus is located in a lavish garden just behind her temple in the city of Setessa. A large arch of vines and flowers leads into the nexus itself and stays fresh and green all year long. Spring is the most celebratory time for Setessans—a time for planting and hope. Worshipers leave gifts for both Karametra and Nylea here.

**Summer Nexus.** Located in an olive grove west of the city proper, the Summer Nexus is covered by a leafy green canopy. As a shelter from summer's heat, the nexus is a favorite resting spot for people and animals alike, and Nylea and Iroas are worshiped here.

**Autumn Nexus.** Near the southern edge of Setessa, in an orchard filled with golden apples, a small cave behind a basalt arch holds a perpetually burning flame. Priests keep a strict rotation to ensure the fire never goes out, as it represents Purphoros's fire that keeps the world warm through the colder seasons and allows the autumn harvest. In addition to Purphoros, Setessans come here to worship Iroas and Mogis, when necessary.

**Winter Nexus.** At the eastern edge of Setessa hides a rocky cave that was once a lion's den. The cave contains a burial ground and is rumored to lead all the way into the underworld. Setessan children occasionally dare each other to see who can make it the farthest into the cave, but the morbid atmosphere usually sends the children scurrying back before long. Setessans come here to worship Pharika and Erebus, paying respects to the dead or hoping to fend off death for a while yet.

### ABORA MARKET

The Abora Market is a giant, open-air market just inside the main eastern gate of Setessa. Every day it is thronged with citizens buying and selling food, crafts, and curiosities. On the seven days surrounding the full moon, outsiders are even allowed into the market, though they are still prohibited from roaming the rest of the polis. Visitors who try to explore beyond the market are typically banned from the polis and must forfeit any goods they brought into the city.

The most impressive part of the market is the raptor hall, where falconers show off the trained raptors available for sale. Hunters all over Theros come to buy famous Setessan falcons.

### CARYATID GROVES

Scattered throughout the city are several groves that are sacred to Karametra and Nylea, made up of slender trees with almost humanlike forms. It is said that whoever enters one of these sacred groves in search of peace will find it—and take root, becoming part of the grove. The trees here are caryatids, capable of animating in defense of the groves or the city (as **animated trees**) but otherwise resting in silent stillness.

## SETESSA'S SURROUNDINGS

Beyond the city's encircling trees, the territory of Setessa extends to cover about a third of the Nessian Wood and a wide swath of the open chaparral. In contrast to Meletis and Akros, no villages or military outposts mark Setessan territory, but a few key features in the Nessian Wood define the area under Setessan control.

### AMATROPHON

The Amatrophon encompasses a large forested region at the northwestern edge of Setessan territory, and it provides a safe haven and training ground for the diverse range of animals that occupy an honored place as natural protectors in Setessan society. Experts train the renowned falcons of Setessa here, along with horses for riding and for combat. More unusual animals are found here as well: trainers work with pegasi, wolves, and lions to get them ready to accompany Setessans in battle. Here men live and work alongside women, collectively training and caring for the animals that live here.



NATURE AND CIVILIZATION MELD  
HARMONIOUSLY IN THE POLIS OF SETESSA.

### NESSIAN WOOD

The vast wilderness of the Nessian Wood is considered Nylea's domain. Its trees are as old as the world, twining together to form an impenetrable canopy shielding the wood from Heliad's angry glare. Their roots stretch deep into the earth, and some say they drink from the Rivers That Ring the World, the waters of the Underworld. All manner of wild and magical creatures dwell in the Nessian Wood, far from the reach of human civilization.

Nylea allows limited hunting in the Nessian Wood, but she has been known to kill those who poach without her permission. Setessa's Bassara regiment helps the god keep an eye out for such illicit hunters, as well as any intruders who might bring danger upon the polis.

**Cypress Gates.** A natural gap between two mountains on the west side of the Sperche River provides access into the Nessian Wood from the east. Ancient Setessans carved an impenetrable fortress into the mountains to guard the pass. Bassara patrols from Setessa still check in on the fortress regularly, and they occupy the fortress when there is reason to suspect danger from the east. More than once, though, patrols have reached the fort only to find something else has taken up residence, whether it be rowdy satyrs, grim Returned, or worse.

**Hunter's Crossing.** Setessa once extended its claim over more of the Nessian Wood, establishing military outposts like those of Akros. At the western end of the

### MYTH OF NIKAIA THE FIRST CARYATID

A Setessan archer named Nikaia claimed that she could outshoot anyone, even Nylea. Word of this unwise boast spread, and in response Nylea appeared at the next archery contest at the Spring Nexus. She challenged Nikaia to an impossible feat of archery: to shoot an arrow into one of the twin trunks of Kruphix's great tree at the edge of the world. Nikaia immediately realized that neither refusal, failure, nor success would forestall Nylea's wrath. Nonetheless, she held her head high, she and Nylea both let fly, and both arrows hit. Impressed by the mortal, Nylea took Nikaia to her sacred grove and planted her there as a caryatid, immobile but forever occupying a place of honor.

Since then, Nylea has honored dozens of other champions and worthy mortals, blessing them with the long lives of mighty trees. The grown seedlings of Nikaia and Nylea's other favored continue to share their wisdom and protect Setessa to this day.

forest, along the road from Meletis known as the Guardian Way, the ruins of a round tower lie beside a rushing stream. This marks the greatest extent of ancient Setessa's reach. A site of rich natural beauty, with lilacs growing along the riverbank and silver fish darting in startlingly clear water, it is abandoned by Setessa and favored by travelers as a resting point on the road before coming under the eaves of the forest.

# ORESKOS

OUR WORLD STANDS ON THREE FEET: PRIDE, DIGNITY, and independence. When voices claim we've lost these virtues, do not listen. Those are the words of thieves, convincing you you've already lost what they aim to steal.

—Liala, matron of the Sun Guides

A vast valley of dry grasslands nestled between the Katachthon and Oraniad Mountains, Oreskos is the home of the leonin. Here roam vast herds of knot-horned gazelle, flocks of elephant birds, prides of lean lions, and a menagerie of other beasts. Predatory griffins and manticores regularly range over the region's grassy seas, while beings like the anvilwroughts of Mount Velus or the Nyxborn from Nykthos often experience Oreskos as their first glimpse of the wider world.

## LEONIN OF ORESKOS

Close-knit prides of several dozen to a few hundred leonin make their homes throughout Oreskos. These communities treat every member as family, with all taking equal roles in hunting, cooking, family care, and other daily responsibilities. Status in the tribe typically comes with age and by forming relationships with other members of the community, whether through childrearing, friendships, romances, teaching, or otherwise. Leonin women tend to remain part of their mothers' prides, while males often leave to join new prides when they find partners. Councils of matriarchs make decisions for most prides, these leaders rising from among the oldest or best-respected women of the pride.

Generally, leonin communities avoid outsiders, particularly armed groups of soldiers and champions of the gods. Many leonin suffered under the rule of the archons and at the whim of fickle gods, a grim history that taught them well-remembered lessons about trusting strangers or relying on deities. Most leonin understand that people aren't their culture, though, and individuals who prove themselves trustworthy might find gradual acceptance among the prides. Even so, leonin prides accept centaurs, minotaurs, and satyrs more readily than unpredictable humans and alien tritons.

## LEONIN COMMUNITIES

Leonin prides typically occupy dens or mobile tent cities, or possibly both at different times of the year. Their dens commonly lie amid the foothills at the edge of Oreskos, particularly along the Oraniads to the east. Dens are usually comprised of small, interconnected networks of underground chambers. Large, shared spaces in these dens are typically decorated with rich woven textiles, bone crafts, and rich clay and crystal pottery. The dens are cool in the summers, but leonin are a sun-loving people and prefer to be outside—even sleeping outdoors—whenever weather permits.

Numerous beasts migrate across Oreskos during the spring and fall. During this time, hunters from nearly every leonin pride participate in extended expeditions. In some cases, the entire pride takes part, emptying their dens to journey across the plains. While on the

hunt, prides dwell in lavish tent-cities, largely comprised of tents capable of housing whole families. These temporary homes surround brightly colored pavilions, where craftspeople turn game into meals, clothing, and materials, honoring their animal neighbors by wasting nothing. While these encampments are obvious and well supplied, they are also heavily guarded by wary leonin. As a result, strangers who approach such camps tend to receive cold receptions.

## THE SPEAKER

Each year, on the day of the first full moon after the autumn equinox, matriarchs from all the leonin prides gather at Tethmos to select a monarch, who acts as a representative of the prides in the wider world. While terms like “queen” or “general” are often applied to this leader by outsiders, the meaning of the leonin title, *zib-ynth*, is closer to “speaker.”

As the sun rises on this festival day, the leonin gather to renew pacts of friendship. The matriarchs of all the prides hold council during this time. As dusk falls, the council announces a new speaker. A fantastic celebration ensues, involving dancing, feasting, singing, public professions of deep feelings, and trading oaths.

Traditionally, the speaker reigns for a single year. As the leonin have grown less isolated, though, they have come to explore greater continuity in their leadership, and the current speaker, Brimaz, has held the office for several years. One of the few men to ever be speaker, he is broadminded, humble, and determined, with a deep connection to the land. He is quick to seek opinions from the matriarchs of the leonin prides, and often defers to their wisdom. While his focus has largely been within the grasslands' borders, he cautiously explores engaging in trade with the human poleis

## IRONMANES

One collection of leonin prides, the Ironmanes, doesn't recognize the authority of the speaker. These fearsome warriors live in the foothills of the western Katachthon mountains, acknowledging no authority but their own. The warriors of the tribe stain their fur with rust to declare their status and ornament themselves with claws and small bones taken from defeated opponents. While intensely territorial, the Ironmanes sometimes offer their services as guards or guides, though they generally disdain working for anyone but other leonin. Numerous leonin fighters and rangers count themselves as Ironmanes.

## SUN GUIDES

True children of Oreskos, the Sun Guides have lived in the grasslands for countless generations. They know the way of Oreskos's beasts and seasons better than any. Both mystical and knowledgeable, the Sun Guides read the messages in plant growth and animal migrations, and make their place in the natural cycle.

Sun Guide prides might be found throughout Oreskos, but most orbit the lake known as Sun's Mirror. While these prides sometimes seek their dens during the harshest winters, many will spend years on the open plains. Many druids, monks, rangers, and sorcerers hail from Sun Guide prides.



SPEAKER BRIMAZ LOOKS BEYOND ORESKOS AND WONDERS  
IF THERE IS A FUTURE FOR HIS PEOPLE IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD.

### SWIFTCLAWS

Among the greatest hunters of Oreskos, the Swiftclaws are known for speed and efficiency. Their hunts are known to be among the shortest and most fruitful. While their martial prowess earns them respect, it also affords many leonin more time to share tales and study the lore of their people. As a result, some of the greatest leonin storytellers and historians number among the Swiftclaws. Fighters and rogues are also common among the Swiftclaws, and many bards and wizards come from these prides as well.

### GRASSLANDS OF ORESKOS

Unspoiled by roads or buildings, Oreskos is a land of striking natural beauty, where the plains and sky appear to go on forever. Craggy stone formations and ancient ruins dot windswept grasslands and plateaus, shading into scrubby badlands, rocky hills, and unwelcoming mountains. At the sun's height, the grasslands shine like beaten gold, and the sunsets are incomparable. Magnificent storms spread clouds in a rainbow of colors, creating vistas exhilarating to those brave enough to weather them. The hills yield ancient treasures and a bounty of precious metals and stones. At night, the movements of Nyx are striking, but images of the gods seem to keep their distance from this land where few pay them honor.

Yet most non-leonin will never see this beauty. The leonin prides guard their lands implacably, and without a good reason to be there—or a leonin guide to vouch for one's presence—outsiders are often chased away.

### TETHMOS

Tethmos serves as the default capital for Oreskos, a meeting place for the tribes, and the home of leonin leaders. Stone buildings and slender windmills jut above the plain, their pale colors and metal decorations shimmering in the light and changing color as the sun moves across the sky. Many leonin matriarchs and other wise souls retire to Tethmos to share their wisdom with all the prides. In recent years, a few non-leonin traders have been admitted into Tethmos, provoking exaggerated tales of the leonin sages and their golden city.

### MOUNT KURE

Atop Mount Kure rises a massive temple, open-roofed and accented in gold. This temple of Helioid, his closest to Oreskos, is rarely visited, but on the god's highest holy days, worshipers journey there to commune with the sun god. These pilgrimages occasionally bring the god's servants into conflict with wary leonin hunting nearby.

### SUN'S MIRROR

This vast, placid lake sits at the center of Oreskos. No matter the weather around it, the lake's surface remains undisturbed, and often reflects the sunlight so brightly that it's difficult to look at. Those who approach the lake and gaze into its waters usually see their own reflections, but on rare occasions, they see visions of places far away. The leonin claim that these visions show not just the present, but even the past and the future.

# PHOBEROS AND SKOPHOS

MOGIS RESHAPED OUR ANCESTORS, GIVING FORM TO  
*their great rages and pains. We are not our ancestors,  
though. We are god-carved for greatness, but each of us  
determines how.*

—Gysios, Bronzebones veteran

The western edge of Akroan territory is a region of arid canyons and caverns called Phoberos, a land of harsh natural whims haunted by ravenous monsters. Fierce bands of wild minotaurs haunt these badlands, and for centuries these brutal marauders were the only minotaurs the human poleis ever knew—which contributed to the minotaurs' reputation as bloodthirsty brutes.

But to the north of Phoberos, far from the walls of Akros, stands the sprawling, labyrinthine polis of Skophos. Skophos is mentioned in a few ancient odes, but only a handful of humans have ever beheld Skophos, and hardly any have successfully navigated its labyrinthine passageways and returned to tell of it.

The founding of Skophos and its troubled history with Akros are the stuff of myth, and it is difficult to distinguish the mortal history of the two poleis from tales of the twin gods, Iroas and Mogis. The gods warred with each other, their followers and champions vied for control of scarce land, and two ideals—the nobility of heroic struggle and victory versus the brutality of savage slaughter in war—competed for a place in the mortal mind. Just as Mogis is the dark shadow of everything Iroas stands for, so is Skophos the reflection of Akros. And Phoberos is the bloodstained battleground where the eternal conflict between the gods and their poleis is waged.

## MINOTAURS OF PHOBEROS

Most of the minotaurs that roam the badlands of Phoberos are outcasts from the society of Skophos. They are bandits and marauders, bloodthirsty killers infected by the wild rage of Mogis. These minotaurs have more in common with the monsters in the *Monster Manual* than with the civilized people described in chapter 1 of this book (including their Large size). Most of them use only the barest minimum of technology—tattered clothes, piecemeal armor, and heavy weapons, all scavenged from their fallen foes. They wander alone or gather in bands under the leadership of the strongest among them, and in either case tend to kill any human they encounter. Three distinct bands are particularly well-known by their Akroan foes.

### BLOODHORN MINOTAURS

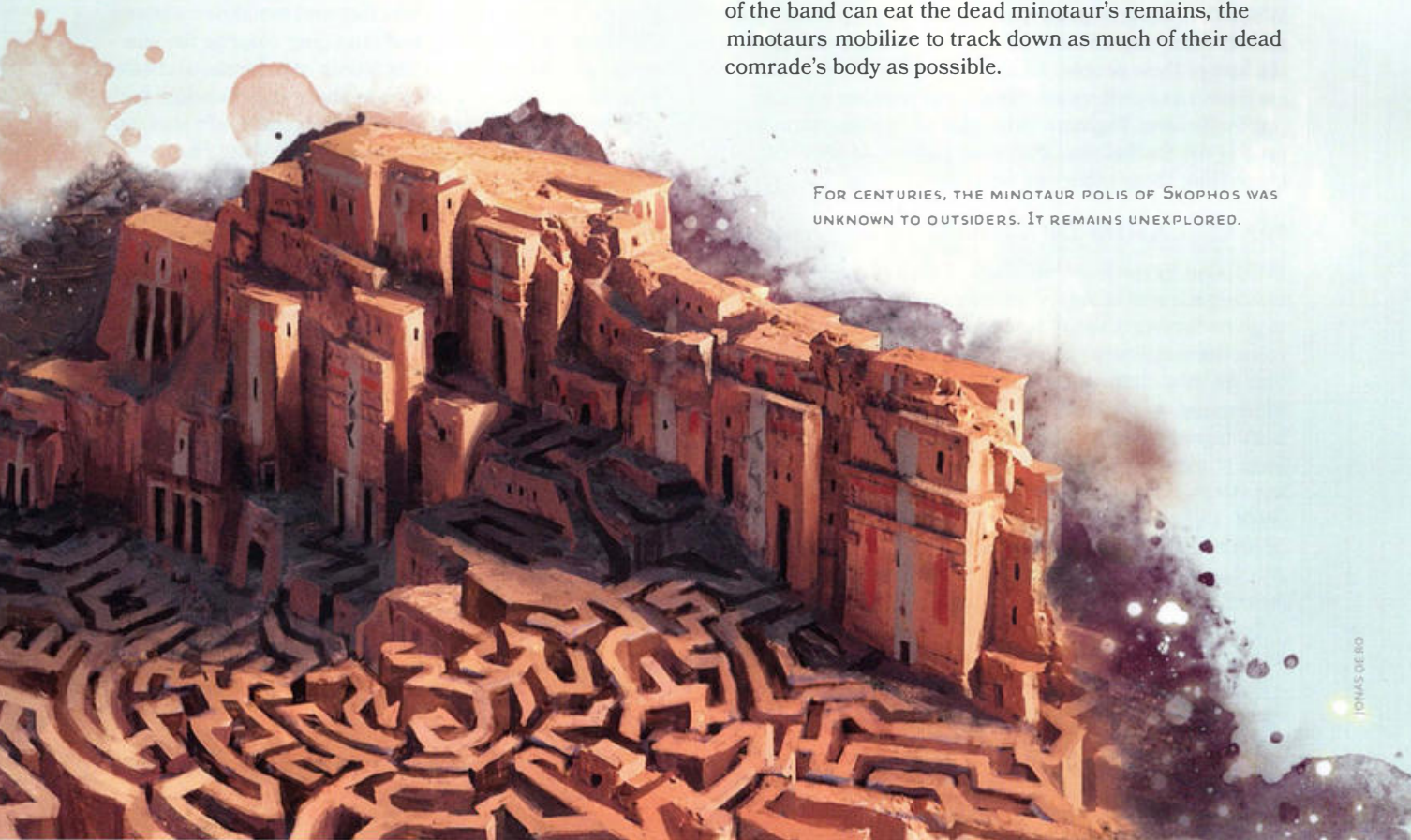
Named for their blood-caked horns, the Bloodhorn minotaurs have ragged claws to supplement their charges and gores. Gleeful in their brutality, they slaughter and devour any intruders they encounter in the badlands, and particularly value the bone marrow of young humans. They take pride in their overlarge, razor-sharp horns.

### FELHIDE MINOTAURS

The notoriously dour Felhide minotaurs are descended from the warlord Thyrogog of the Ashlands. *The Thriad* recounts the brute's defeat and the loss of his great axe, Goremaster. Viewing Thyrogog's defeat as a divine sign, the warlord's descendants retreated into the Ashlands.

Burial rites among the Felhide minotaurs involve devouring those who fell in battle, to remove their shame from memory and fuel the survivors' revenge. Should another scavenger reach a fallen Felhide before the rest of the band can eat the dead minotaur's remains, the minotaurs mobilize to track down as much of their dead comrade's body as possible.

FOR CENTURIES, THE MINOTAUR POLIS OF SKOPHOS WAS  
UNKNOWN TO OUTSIDERS. IT REMAINS UNEXPLORED.



## RAGEGORE MINOTAURS

Ragegore minotaurs are the most ferocious of their kind, deeply infected by the bloodlust of Mogis. Ragegores never withdraw from a battle, entering a frenzy of furious delight at the sight of an enemy's blood. While in the heat of battle, a Ragegore minotaur seems to feel no pain and barely notices wounds that would kill a human. Some Ragegores have been known to fall dead immediately at the cessation of battle, their life sustained only by their fury.

## CITY OF SKOPHOS

When Akroan soldiers encounter minotaurs in ordered squads, patrolling the badlands on predictable routes, clad in armor and wielding bronze weapons, they tend to speak of the "Bronzebone band," as if these minotaurs were just one more faction competing for dominance in Phoberos. But these minotaurs aren't just one more raiding band; they are the soldiers of Skophos, the minotaur polis.

Skophos stands as a literal maze, its twisting streets carved from the red sandstone of the badlands. The walls of the maze rise as narrow buildings that serve as homes, shops, and defensible fortresses for the city's predominantly minotaur population. Mighty stone outcroppings tower over the labyrinth, including temples to Mogis (the most prominent), Erebos, Keranos, and Purphoros. The fortress-palaces of tyrants, the lairs of monstrous oracles, and cavernous indoor markets also stand as destinations at the end of confounding avenues.

Priests and warlord champions of Mogis rule the city, with individuals serving as tyrants over city districts. The city's rulers rarely meet in council, and when they do, the quarrelsome tyrants rarely find common cause or any basis for agreement. Only the priests of Mogis can force the city's leaders to put aside their quarrels and work toward a single goal.

## LESSER PERISTYLE

The minotaurs of Skophos acknowledge the entire pantheon of gods, though they are far enough inland that they have little cause to honor Thassa, and many of them view Iroas as an enemy of their people. They worship a more ancient aspect of Karametra, who demands blood to ensure the fertility of the earth. In the shadow of Mogis's great temple, most of the gods are honored with some kind of violence.

In that context, the small temple known as the Lesser Peristyle is an oddity. Dedicated to Ephara, it is a place where minotaurs debate philosophy and strive to rein in the excesses of the tyrants who govern the city. The existence of Skophos is a testimony to the benefits of an ordered society, as Ephara teaches, and that self-evident lesson is the strongest argument that Ephara's handful of priests can make to justify their presence in the city. From that starting point, they pursue their vision of a better way of life, aspiring to nobler principles than senseless slaughter and better governance than iron-fisted tyranny. Under the leadership of the temple's priests—Haraksi, an ingenious smith and mother of eight, and Olakia the Torn, an oracle who experiences

visions from both Mogis and Ephara—a school of minotaur philosophers aspires to a vision of Skophos that can coexist in some measure of peace with the wider world.

## MOGIS'S CHALICE

Many grand temples to Mogis stand in Skophos, presenting a stark contrast to the crude shrines that usually serve as sites of worship for the god of fury. Near the center of the polis, one temple larger and more elaborate than the rest serves as a holy site and the seat of the minotaur government, called Mogis's Chalice.

Fires always burn in two great copper bowls on either side of the temple entrance. Iron-spiked crenellations ring the temple roof, many decorated with skulls. Red clay is smeared at the entrance and the altar, often anointed with fresh blood. Inside, a massive bronze minotaur head hangs above the black marble altar.

Legend holds that if anyone, minotaur or otherwise, kills a hated rival or enemy in the main room of the Temple to Mogis, they will be blessed by the god of wrath. Even the minotaurs of Skophos will not interfere with such a battle, and the victor is always allowed to depart without further bloodshed.

## BADLANDS OF PHOBEROS

Between Skophos and the human polis of Akros stretches the desolate wilderness of Phoberos. Numerous canyons, said to have been cut in the earth during battles between Mogis and Iroas, crisscross the rocky badlands. As minotaurs prove adept at navigating such natural mazes, they often make camp in these crags, hidden from the sun and heat. A variety of other raiders and monsters similarly make their lairs in such places—particularly cyclopes, basilisks, and harpies.

## DEATHBELLOW CANYON

Deathbellow Canyon is known for its stinking bogs, cave-riddled spires, and the ominous markings of Ragegore minotaurs. At the canyon's heart yawns the Kragma, a vast cave that resembles a screaming mouth. The Kragma is the grim meeting place of the Ragegore minotaur bands, where these Mogis-worshiping raiders make brutal sacrifices and endlessly quarrel, their war cries echoing through the canyon.

## THE STRATIAN FRONT

Soldiers from the Akroan army monitor Phoberos and patrol the borders of Akros, confronting any threats that might bring harm to their homeland. Such is an endless war that demands Akros's constant attention. While a few permanent encampments exist—like raucous Camp No Hope and the cavern Fort Sandmouth—most stratian patrols follow their own path through the badlands.

## THE ASHLANDS

Buried in white ash, the Ashlands offer a vivid reminder of the last time Mount Vesios erupted. Numerous undead wander these lands, many not realizing that they're dead as they wander half-buried ruins. These lands are also the home of the Felhide minotaurs and the bleached dragon oracle known as Timedrinker.

# REALMS OF THE RETURNED

DEATH AND LIFE ARE TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN.

*Opposite, but eternally connected. One cannot exist without the other.*

—Slighos the Body-binder

Before becoming a god, Phenax died, passed into Erebus's realm, and ultimately escaped the Underworld. His escape route, the Path of Phenax (see chapter 4), has since been employed by rare, but over the ages innumerable, individuals. These Returned find the world of the living far different from how they experienced it in life—not that they remember their lives. Although they've escaped from the Underworld, the Returned still find themselves separate from the living, their memories lost and their unnatural states striking fear in most mortals. As a result, most Returned come to follow certain paths of behavior and gravitate toward two city-states, known as the necropoleis—cities of the dead.

## THE RETURNED

Walking the Path of Phenax doesn't restore a soul to its life. Those who return from the Underworld are hollow shells inhabited by grim and purposeless spirits. These Returned are separated from their memories, which become wandering eidolons (see chapter 6). They retain their personalities and skills, but each Returned tends to be a very different being from who they once were. Their second life is theirs to do with as they please, but it's typically a confused, cursed life, plagued by frustration, bitterness, loneliness, and melancholy. Such leads many Returned along dark paths.

### ANOGRAPHERS

Anographers are the scribes of the Returned. On long scrolls of bleached white parchment, they write half-remembered names, images from dreams, and descriptions of places and people that might once have held meaning. Other Returned visit anographers and describe what scraps of memory they retain. Some believe hidden wisdom lies upon these scrolls, clues to ancient mysteries, or hints at the lost identities of the Returned.

### GRAY MERCHANTS

Traders recognize Gray Merchants by their hooded gray cloaks and their carts piled high with useless trinkets. Their wares include components for sinister rituals, jewelry stolen from graves, cursed magic items, and other ominous goods. In return, they demand kitchen utensils, worn bridles, waterlogged books, and other unremarkable trash. There's no rhyme or reason to what the Gray Merchants seek, and the merchants themselves never speak. They conduct business through gestures, making their unusual trades and plodding off into the shadows.

### KAKOMANTEIS

Returned kakomanteis employ powerful magic at a price paid in blood. Some theorize that in life each kakomantis was a spell caster, and the trip along the Path of Phenax corrupted their abilities. Regardless of how

they came upon their grisly magic, kakomanteis keep small animals, such as rodents, snakes, and insects, close at hand to power their spells, though more potent magical effects demand more significant sacrifices.

### PALAMNITES

While most of the Returned are listless and quiet, palamnites burn with envy and rage. They are vicious killers, destroying what no longer brings them joy. Palamnites burn villages, slaughter innocents, and steal wealth only to discard it later. Most stories of vengeful Returned stem from reports of these tortured souls.

### PSEUDAMMAS

Pseudammas are cursed by fleeting memories of their lost children. They know that they were parents in life and that they will never again experience the love of their child. Though their plight is heartbreaking, pseudammas turn tragedy into horror by snatching mortal children and attempting to raise them. However, the Returned have forgotten the needs of the living and they have no concept of how to care for a child.

## ASPHODEL AND THE DESPAIR LANDS

The influence of the Underworld leaches life and color from a peninsula south of the Nessian Wood. Here, the necropolis of Asphodel sprawls amid the bleak region called the Despair Lands.

The Returned of Asphodel seek to be left alone with their ennui. They rarely leave the city, venturing out only when spurred by fugues of emotion or fleeting memories. The streets are dusty and rarely walked, though the windows of dilapidated hovels glimmer with the staring masks of listless Returned. Asphodel is an echo of the grim cities of the Underworld, making it a tragically ironic home for those who risked so much to escape the land of the dead.

### COLISEUM OF THE APHONAI

Three ancient Returned called the Aphonai rule Asphodel. They wear simple, identical golden masks and long, drab robes, making them nearly impossible to distinguish from one another. From the Coliseum of the Aphonai, a perfectly circular stone building that stands at the heart of Asphodel, the leaders listen to cases brought before them and decide on the few matters of importance to the city. Trespassers caught within the city are often brought before the Aphonai for judgment. The elder Returned never speak, rendering their judgments only in gestures.

### ORDER OF PHAIOS

A cabal of mages known as the Order of Phaios defend Asphodel with their magic. The mages of the order devote themselves to studying arcane mysteries that could never be unraveled in a single life. Like all Returned, though, they have difficulty remembering what they learn. For this reason, the rooms of their order's vaulted hall, the Stoa of Shadows, are covered with coded engravings that collect their wisdom. While the research of the Returned rarely leads them to epiphany, some of the few living mages who have stolen into the stoa escape with remarkable knowledge.



## HETOS, THE BLEAK MIRE

Asphodel perches at the edge of a sprawling marsh called the Hetos Mire. The necropolis stands on an elevated piece of land surrounded by treacherous bogs and tangled thickets. The inhospitable territory serves the Returned as a first line of defense against any intruders. Near the southern edge of Hetos stands an ages-old, crimson cypress called the Blood Tree. Color from the tree bleeds into the surrounding bog, making the swamp waters look like a charnel pit. Vicious and venomous swamp creatures are drawn to the Blood Tree and frequently drag prey into its foul midst.

## ODUNOS

The Returned of Odunos despise the living, feeling sparks of pleasure when they destroy whatever the living value, be it property or people. Within their city, armed Returned gangs roam the streets, quarreling for no apparent reason. Beyond the city's walls, undead raiders strike out, menacing the lands of Akros, Meletis, and Phoberos. These raids are led by the city's de facto ruler, Tymaret the Murder King, a servant of Erebos tasked with returning Phenax to the Underworld. Knowing that Phenax could disguise himself as anyone, Tymaret slaughters all living souls, just to be thorough.

Those who would strike back against Odunos's raiders must venture through mires corrupted by sucking bogs and necromatic horrors. Those who survive to reach the city find it heavily guarded, its towers bristling with sleepless guards and abominations of unliving flesh.

## MYTH OF TYMARET THE MURDER KING

When Phenax made his escape from the Underworld, there was one witness to his escape, an unremarkable soul called Tymaret. Sharing what he'd seen with the god of the dead, Tymaret received a cursed blessing from Erebos: he would be restored to the mortal world, but as a Returned, and with the task of slaying Phenax. Tymaret took up the quest, but as Phenax was masked, he proved difficult to locate. So Tymaret began slaughtering every mortal he encountered, confident that one of these victims would be Phenax. Yet, when Phenax became a god, he evaded his pursuer, leaving Tymaret and his legions of Returned to eternally, fruitlessly kill in Erebos's name.

## THE BOTHROS

A bottomless chasm yawns at the north edge of Odunos. Nothing that has fallen into its depths has ever been recovered. After a successful raid, warriors from Odunos usually dispose of their spoils in the Bothros—caring nothing for their pillage. Occasionally this includes captives, forced into the pit during wordless executions.

## CRYPTS OF THE LOST

Beyond Odunos rises a cluster of tors honeycombed by countless tombs. Few know who were originally buried in this morbid labyrinth, but the Returned care nothing for the corpses and dust. Occasionally, Returned who've grown tired of their half-lives congregate here, waiting for a final death to claim them. Some tales claim that treasures lie amid the crypts, but others say that Phenax first emerged from the Underworld here, and his path could be retraced back into Erebos's domain.

## THE SIREN SEA

CALLAPHE GAZED ON THE COASTLINE,  
certain her destiny called her  
here, where the mist-shrouded rocks sang,  
promising glories undreamed of.

—*The Callapheia*

The vast Siren Sea extends west from the known lands of Theros to the edge of the world. As Thassa's domain, the sea hides an amazing array of creatures, including the entire triton civilization. Its legendary dangers range from deadly reefs and wandering islands to predatory beasts and devastating krakens (see chapter 6). Ever-changing, the Siren Sea is a realm of impossible sights and constant danger, the setting of legendary odysseys and the crucible of heroes.

### TRITONS OF THE SIREN SEA

Most tritons make their homes in the Siren Sea, either migrating with the shifting tides or raising hidden cities of outlandish beauty. The majority are devoted servants of Thassa who rigorously protect her domain, often treating surface-dwelling sailors as trespassers. Tritons make most of their goods from materials harvested from the deep, but have also developed ingenious forms of metallurgy—largely based around volcanic sea vents—and chemical etching, crafting wares that rival those made on land. The endless array of life and unpredictable changes of the sea make tritons regular witnesses to wonders. As a result, most tritons have a natural curiosity, ever seeking to see and learn more, but know they'll never fathom all the wonders of the world.

Although numerous triton cultures exist throughout the Siren Sea, many of those closest to shore are led by priests of Thassa. Triton warriors enact their leaders' will, with many specializing in doing battle against massive beasts or ships sailing the surface. The most wary communities might even employ shorethieves, tritons adept at using magical disguises to infiltrate land-bound towns to watch and steal from "dryfolk."

## DAKRA ISLES

The Dakra Isles were created when Thassa wept over the death of Korinna, a triton queen killed by a human's harpoon. Where the god's tears fell onto the sea there exploded forth an isle suffused with immortal magic and memory. Ages later, the Dakra Isles—also called the Isles of Enchantment—harbor strange sights and fierce monsters. Thassa's power makes it impossible to keep an accurate chart of the islands' positions, which roam as they please. Thus, even the most famed locations appear on no map, and sailors might spot them when or wherever Thassa wills. A few of the Dakra Isles' legendary locations are noted here, and chapter 4 presents guidance for creating more magical shores.

### ARIXMETHES

Tales tell of the lost island of Arixmethes, whose population was wiped out by disaster. In truth, generations of hapless humans raised their city, realizing too late that they'd done so upon the back of a titanic kraken. When the kraken Arixmethes awakened, its throes devastated the city upon its back and wiped out the residents. Since returning to its slumber, Arixmethes drifts where it will, still bearing the ruins of a legendary city upon its back.

### CRONEMOUTH COVE

This tiny island lies in the midst of perpetual doldrums and holds a known gate to the Underworld. It is guarded by a coven of sea hags who share a single tongue that is perpetually trying to escape from their clutches, wriggling out of reach with a mind of its own.

### KETAPHOS

Famed for its role in *The Callapheia*, the island of Ketaphos supposedly exists in Nyx during the night and in the mortal realm during the day. Callaphe and her crew were welcomed there and fed by a band of Nyxborn centaurs when a storm drove them to the island, then found themselves stranded on a barren rock when the sun rose and the island shifted to the mortal realm.

### SKATHOS

The island of Skathos was once a sacred meeting place for a secret cult of Pharika whose rites revolved around consuming a magical flower native to the island. The island is now home to the medusa queen, Hythonia (described in chapter 6).



## SKOLA VALE

TASTE THE WORLD BEFORE EREBOS RIPS YOUR tongue out.

—Thisbi, satyr dawninggreet

Nestled in the highlands of the Oraniad Mountains, the Skola Vale is blessed by Nylea, covered in lush grass, and dotted with copses of trees. Satyrs roam the comfortable valley with no need for permanent settlements, all their needs provided for by the valley's magic. According to legend, Nylea was so taken with the valley's beauty that she poured the contents of her wineskin onto the vale to make it flourish forever. When wild goats drank of this wine, they became the first satyrs who made the magical land their home.

While the Skola Vale is a place of revelry, it isn't without its dangers. The satyrs themselves can become too raucous in their merrymaking, and monsters lurk in the shadows of the trees and the surrounding mountains.

### SATYRS OF THE SKOLA VALE

The satyrs of the Skola Vale are wild and free. They have taboos, but not laws, influence fluctuates constantly, and all are free to make merry in any way they please, so long as it doesn't impede on others' ability to do the same. Disagreements are typically turned into opportunities for public competition. Irreconcilable issues are usually solved by a strict application of "you go over there, and you go over there." True intentional crimes, however, are violations known deep in the satyr soul. If needs be, revelry can halt in an instant to help someone who's been hurt, and true criminals are exiled from the Skola Vale for life. Satyrs quickly bury negative thoughts, though, and the loss of one friend merely leads them to redouble efforts to make more.

Distinctions are few among satyrs, but several notable groups are detailed here.

#### DAWNGREETES

Dawninggreetes are satyr emissaries, explorers, and storytellers sent to other communities throughout the world. They arrange satyr-style celebrations wherever they go, spreading their people's carefree philosophies, praising Nylea, sharing news, and creating friends the Skola Vale can rely on when necessary.

#### NYLEA'S FAVORED

A circle of satyr druids, Nylea's Favored protect the Skola Vale, restoring nature after damage by wildfires or too rowdy satyr parties. They also defend the vale by growing dense underbrush and supporting populations of wild beasts at their territory's borders.

#### SIBYLS

The closest people satyrs have to leaders are their sibyls, who are blessed with limited ability to see into the future. Sibyls warn the community when danger threatens the valley, select dawninggreetes, and oversee the "initiation rites" of the Cult of Horns. The oldest sibyl is a gray-furred satyr named Cresa. She insists that the more she drinks, the further she can see into the future.

## SKOLA VALE REVELS

Satyrs hold regular revels called rollick nights. These lengthy festivals are full of merrymaking, contests, impromptu performances, and song, all accompanied by good food and sweet drinks. Beyond these celebrations, tales are also told of *bakkeia*, revels that occur in deep caves and that involve ancient sacrificial rites. Most satyrs say these traditions were abandoned ages ago, though.

### CULT OF HORNS

Some non-satyrs looking for pleasure without consequences visit the Skola Vale, encouraged by dawninggreetes and tales of wild revels. After spending some time with the satyrs, dark-humored sibyls might invite outsiders to join the Cult of Horns. If they agree, the non-satyr might be crowned with a circlet of horns, marking them as "stubs" (for their crown's stubby horns). A period of hazing follows, where the stubs are enticed to perform menial or humiliating tasks. When the satyrs grow bored—or a respected, sober satyr steps in—the hazing ends, which typically results in the stub later waking up alone in the mountains. Most satyrs who participate in such ungenerous behavior are chided and are themselves made to serve at the next revel, but the satyr memory for consequences is short and the tradition persists. As for former stubs, most never share details about their experiences, their secrecy contributing to tales of dark rites and sinister enchantments in the vale.

### FEATURES OF THE SKOLA VALE

The Skola Vale is a wild place where majestic animals run free, trees, vines, and bushes provide fruit, and Nylea's magic enhances the land. Plants and animals grow rapidly in the valley. The chaotic satyrs may upend a copse of trees one night only to have it regrow by morning. Most of the Skola Vale consists of greenery rolling over gentle hills. During the day, the vale's residents hunt small game and gather wild fruit for wine. Other predators, such as bears, lions, and rocs, hunt the region as well. Some of these beasts, whether predator or prey, have become Nyxborn legends that appear again and again through the generations, either as threats or the stuff of incredible meals. Satyrs speak of both Kexosrexos the Braided Lion and Hulp the Pork Bird with equal awe.

#### WOODLANDS

The Skola Vale's trees grow in twisted, climbable shapes allowing inhabitants shady places to play and sleep. Dryads protect the largest of these trees, especially from drunken satyr antics. During the day, the copses are idyllic forests, filled with the music of panpipes. At night, though, the forests grow more menacing. Nocturnal monsters roam the wood—particularly chimeras, cockatrices, and harpies—striving to pick off drunken satyrs wandering alone after a revel. Satyrs rarely travel alone at night, believing that noise and music scare away evil, but revelers aren't always as wary as they should be.

## THE KATACHTHON MOUNTAINS

While folk wisdom holds that the eastern Oraniad Mountains are blessed by the gods, dark, older magic supposedly holds sway in the Katachthons. While the Katachthons are a smaller range than the Oraniads, they are harsher and more volcanically active, with regular avalanches, storms, and unpredictable microclimates. Clouds obscure heavenly signs, guides become disoriented, and explorers wander in ever-smaller circles. And above it all, dragons rule the range—fire-belching creatures whose bellies, it is said, are filled with the flames of Purphoros's forge.

Those who live in the foothills of the Katachthons are loath to acknowledge any tales of wondrous treasure or mysterious creatures to be found there, only repeating a warning to travelers: if you must cross them, keep to the passes. The two passes, One-Eyed Pass and the Cypress Gates, aren't safe, but they are generally considered less lethal than attempts to blaze one's own trail.

### MOUNT VELUS

Visible from Akros, Mount Velus is an energetically active volcano. The fiery mountain serves as nothing less than Purphoros's home in the mortal world.

While the volcano has only erupted a few times since Akros's founding, those minor catastrophes were enough to demonstrate that a major eruption might destroy the entire region. Akroans regularly leave offerings at the foot of the volcano, and rigorously dissuade travelers from venturing up to the sacred peak, hoping to avert the great explosion they fear is coming.

While some adventurers have climbed to the volcano's caldera, met Purphoros, and lived, the god's anger isn't the only danger. A red dragon called Thraxes makes his home in the halls of Purphoros's first residence, which the god abandoned to create a larger and more ornate home deeper in the volcano. The dragon occasionally uses the old forge to craft his own creations, melting gold from his treasure hoard. He sometimes gives these creations to Purphoros as offerings. In exchange the god allows the dragon to stay in the volcano.

Purphoros's forge lies in the deepest part of Mount Velus, near a vast lava pool. The massive iron forge is surrounded by the finest ores, metals, and gems. Some of the greatest treasures Purphoros ever crafted are contained in the god's residence, a forge-palace warded by an enormous, gilded iron door. Occasionally these doors crack open, admitting a curious anvilwrought creature into the world, or burst wide, unleashing some manifestation of Purphoros's fury.

### MOUNT VESIOS

Mount Vesios, also known as the Little Sister, is a smaller volcano that resembles Mount Velus and erupts concurrently with Velus. A monastery on its western slope houses scholars and spellcasters who study the volcano, believing that through it, they might be able to control the eruptions of Mount Velus. Numerous oreads and Akroan flamespeakers offer their omens from the volcano's heights.

## THE ORANIAD MOUNTAINS

The Oraniad mountains stretch along the east side of Oreskos. While they don't share the dark reputation of their western neighbor, they are the more dangerous territory. Tall, timeless mountains, the Oraniads are said to be closer to Nyx than any other point on Theros. Ancient shrines lie among the lonely peaks, their origins lost to mortal memory, and their halls haunted by mysterious supernatural phenomena. A wanderer might come upon a shrine to a forgotten god, only to find it gone upon looking back. Travelers might also catch glimpses of mysterious creatures here, beings that should have long ago passed into Nyx, or that have slipped from the divine realm before the gods intended from them to appear upon the world.

### EMPTY EYE

On the western edge of the Oraniad range's widest point stands its tallest peak, a smooth-sided, towering, extinct volcano. Its caldera is a gaping dark hole, and no expedition sent to plumb its depths has ever returned.

### NYKTHOS

The Nykthos is a nexus point between the mortal realm and Nyx. The site bears the name of the first Nyxborn, a divine artisan tasked with building altars to the gods so they could be worshiped by mortals.

Built on a vast plain high in the mountains, the temple forms a mighty semicircle upon a field of starry marble. Its position at the peak of Mount Carian affords it an unobstructed view of the horizon in all directions. Statues of gods, champions, and oracles adorn the shrine, and each deity has an altar in a distinct alcove. Towering pillars of light rise from each altar and vanish into the starry night sky. Unseen in the heavens above, these pillars connect to counterparts in an identical temple in the foyer to Nyx—the entrance, as it were, to the realm of the gods. The few brave souls that complete a pilgrimage to Nykthos and sleep on the peak experience extremely vivid dreams of divine entities, sometimes talking with the gods themselves or gaining visions of the future.

### PHOENIX STAIRS

An eerie natural formation of hexagonal pillars creates a natural staircase up to a small volcanic peak in the Oraniads. A phoenix makes its nest in the caldera at the top, tending its precious egg. Phoenix feathers bring high prices in markets across Theros, though misfortune hunts those who ascend to the creature's lair, even if they succeed at obtaining only a single feather.

### WINTER'S HEART

Among the northern Oraniads stands a blizzard-gripped mountain that resembles a volcano. What breathes forth from the crater isn't fire, though. The caldera's interior is coated with ice so cold it freezes anything it touches. Even the fumes that issue forth cause instant frostbite. At the volcano's heart stands a glass statue of a haunting, androgynous figure offering a diamond crown. None who have attempted to claim this strange gift have survived. Even the gods prove reticent to speak of the place, denying its existence or speaking of it with shame.

## REALMS OF THE GODS

The mortal world of Theros isn't the only realm where the gods hold sway. The mortal realm is closely linked to two other realms, the domains of the gods themselves, Nyx and the Underworld.

### Nyx

Nyx is an endless plane of existence where the powers of potentiality and belief hold sway. It is the realm of the gods, of belief given form, of dreams, and of rising and fading philosophies. From here, the pantheon of Theros watches the mortal world and guides the living. Though the gods live in a veritable paradise, they can't sever themselves from the mortal world. To do so would be to lose the faith of their followers, the source of their magic and a power they will not relinquish.

Nyx can be perceived in the night sky, with its ever-changing brilliance marked by constellations and cosmic phenomena. Its power slips into the world in the same form, with star fields filling the shadows of Nyx-born beings that are infused with its power (see chapter 6 for details on Nyxborn).

While Nyx is impossible to map, distinct regions do exist, and some travelers have returned to the mortal realm with tales of these incredible locations.

### MOUNT HIASTOS

This drifting mountain rises in sharp relief against the starry sky of Nyx, culminating in a golden orb that can be seen from a great distance. Some speculate that this orb is the source of Nyx's vibrant colors and lights, and

that without it, the plane would be plunged into eternal darkness. Several gods make their homes on the mountain's slopes. Heliod maintains a sprawling palace of gold and white marble, with a rooftop throne where he receives guests. Purphoros maintains a forge beneath the mountain, where he crafts philosophies, energies, and creations that would be impossible to manifest in the mortal world. Keranos lives near the summit of the mount, where he sends lightning bolts of inspiration to manipulate forces throughout dreams and the cosmos. Nylea, too, is known to visit Mount Hiaostos, maintaining a sanctuary there within an ancient, knotted wood.

### MYSTIC SEA

This body of mist and water hides endless secrets within its depths—both literal secrets that manifest from mortal minds and unimagined concepts not yet fully formed. Thassa's palace floats underwater, its buildings suspended in giant bubbles that drift with the currents. At its edge, in a city of divine copper and marbled hopes, Ephara makes her home.

### TOVIAN FIELDS

Nyxborn legends battle here in ceaseless, glorious war. Unlike any mortal environment, the Tovian Fields are an expanse of energies, the clash of opposing philosophies manifesting as throngs of legendary combatants. In the midst of this riot rise the palatial war-tents of Mogis and Iroas, who lead the endless battle.

Kruphix claims the borders of the Tovian Fields as his territory. He doesn't maintain a central residence. Rather, his influence binds the conflict, encompassing all perspectives and preventing the battle from spilling forth into the rest of Nyx.



## THE UNDERWORLD

The Underworld is the place of final rewards and endless suffering. Although many believe the Underworld is literally beneath the ground, in truth the plane is distinct from the mortal world, reachable only via magical means, hidden pathways, or by death. The souls of all dead sapient creatures awake on the banks of the Tartyx, where they meet Athreos the River Guide. From there, those capable of paying for his service are ferried to their new home in the Underworld.

Most imagine the Underworld's wards as being stacked atop one another, but their actual relationships defy mortal understanding. While the Tartyx River reaches each ward, Phylas is typically defined as the entry to the Underworld, while Tizerus is farthest from this entrance. The other wards hold their own equal places in between. Regardless, souls destined for each realm reach their destinations with equal efficiency and permanency. (See chapter 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details on planar arrangements.)

Each distinctive Underworld ward is effectively infinite in scale, with the space between noteworthy locations endlessly expanding and contracting. Traveling between locations is typically impossible on foot. Secret paths that defy mortal logic, magical steeds, and the intervention of powerful Underworld denizens all might speed one's travels, though. Attempting to escape the Underworld is an entirely different, nearly impossible matter, though (see chapter 4 for details).

Although vast beyond understanding, the Underworld's most noteworthy regions are detailed here.

## THE TARTYX RIVER

The Tartyx forms the boundary between the mortal realm and the Underworld. It is also known as the Rivers That Ring the World, as it is formed from the confluence of five tributaries, each originating in one of the Underworld's five wards. The Tartyx is vast, with one far shore impossible to see from the other. Countless drifting islands dot the river, some forested by leafless trees, others heaped with crumbling ruins. Still others are the domains of powerful demons and strange entities that death proves not quite able to claim. None of these tiny lands are hospitable to either the living or the dead. Even the waters of the Tartyx hold their own threats, both mysterious creatures that slither beneath its rippling waters, and their own infamous power to wash away memories and all sense of identity.

## AGONAS

Agonas is the last home of warriors and soldiers who battled in life without honor, as well as the souls of cowards, mercenaries, and others who lived by the sword. Their cries of pain and triumph echo on the faintest wind, stirring bloodlust in all who hear them.

The clash of weapons echo over every ridge and canyon of Agonas's rocky expanse. Great stadiums and platforms rise from the arid landscape, some carved from the remains of titanic ruins, others hanging from massive, rusting chains. The many theaters of battle blend with dwellings carved into natural rock towers, forming an extensive network of arenas and errant fortifications. At the ward's heart thrums the Stadium of Dishonor. Here fierce soldiers test their blades against one another and against the teeth and claws of vicious monsters.

Upon arriving, dishonorable souls relegated to Agonas are met by oreads (see chapter 6), the souls of other dead champions, and cyclopes, who guide them to the scene of their endless battle.

## PHYLAS

The souls that occupy Phylas were uninspired and didn't strive for greatness in life. They plodded through existence and left no mark upon the world through their deeds or their deaths. In the afterlife they perform repetitive tasks in close quarters with others just like themselves, all in a mockery of a living community.

Artless architecture of plain, gray stone gives Phylas an outward appearance of normalcy at first glance. But the buildings are titanic, blocky masses of hodgepodge construction erected seemingly without plan. Although the structures might be impressive in size or number, they are cold and hollow, derelict monuments in an endless slum.

Those who arrive in Phylas are met by no one. They are simply left to wander away and slip into a place among the shuffling masses.

SHORE OF THE TARTYX RIVER





#### THE UNDERWORLD WARD OF NERONO

### ILYSIA

In Ilysia the souls of heroic mortals and of those who died unjustly find eternal rest and comfort. Erebos's grim influence holds no sway here.

Ilysia is a sanctuary of peace and tranquility. Majestic temple-palaces stand amid lush forests, the colorful vegetation draping luminous marble in living mantles of flowers and sweet fruit. At the ward's heart towers the Citadel of Destiny, where heroic souls gather to honor the gods, trade tales of glory, and feast with worthy companions. They also hold elaborate physical contests in which any Ilysian soul is welcome to participate.

When the worthy dead arrive in Ilysia, they are welcomed by dryads, majestic chimeras, or the souls of legendary heroes.

### NERONO

Nerono is the final home of souls haunted by their memories and of mariners who were lost at sea.

Vast oceans fill Nerono, a realm dotted by lonely islands and crisscrossed by aimless ships. Titanic ruins and great, algae-slick chains rise out of the sea, as do the weathered hulls of legendary shipwrecks. The sky is a misty blur of color that hangs over water as still as glass. Despite the ocean's normally placid appearance, mighty storms often arise from nowhere, casting souls into waves and whirlpools by the scores. Somewhere within the great oceans hides a twisting tangle of tides

and winds called the Labyrinth of Memories. This maze of waterways confounds unwary travelers and twists their course into an inescapable path for eternity.

When a soul reaches Nerono, sirens, naiads (see chapter 6), or sphinxes might guide them into the ward.

### TIZERUS

The deepest ward of the Underworld, Tizerus is the final punishment of murderers and those who committed unforgivable offenses against the gods themselves.

The ward is a gloomy, miserable expanse where the ruins of titanic architecture loom over a wasteland of black rock. At its center looms Erebos's palace, an ominous structure of polished darkness embellished with gold ornaments and streamers of crimson silk. The god of the Underworld broods in his halls, occasionally striking out with his lash to drag wayward souls into his realm. Deep beneath the palace lies the lone glimmer of hope amid the ward's gloom: the portal called Lathos, which leads back to the world of the living. Beyond Erebos's palace sprawls a stinking swamp of rotting muck and dead vegetation known as the Mire of Punishment. Souls trapped there suffer eternal torment at the claws of demons and other monstrous creatures.

When souls damned to Tizerus arrive, they quickly find themselves dragged away in a whirlwind of pain and terror. Demons, Underworld harpies, lamias, and nightmares compete for the chance to haul the doomed away to their own personal punishments.



AS WITH THIS CLASH BETWEEN THE GODS KARAMETRA AND PHARIKA, THE QUARRELS OF DEITIES AND DEMIGODS OFTEN SPILL FROM NYX INTO THE REALM OF MORTALS.

## CREATING THEROS ADVENTURES

**C**AN THE GODS DETERMINE MY FATE?" Elspeth asked. "What is truly the extent of their power? Can they make what I want happen—if only I please them enough?"

"If you want a god to determine your fate, you must ask the god for an ordeal," Sarpedon said. "They will only grant it if they think you are worthy—whatever 'worthy' means for them. If you accomplish it, you may request a hand in your own destiny."

—Jenna Helland, *Godsend*

As exemplified by the labors of Anthousa, the exploits of Haktos the Unscarred, the wondrous inventions of Dalakos, and Elspeth's escape from the Underworld, the heroes of Theros chart their own fates—and so will the player characters in your campaign.

What adventures might Heliod's champions undertake? What villains and monsters are associated with Phenax? How might adventurers get entangled in divine schemes? This chapter explores these questions, providing abundant advice, tools, and maps for players to create their own exciting stories. The options presented here expand on the material in chapter 3 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to help you craft adventures for your own Theros campaign. Each god of Theros's pantheon has a section here, describing how the deity interacts with the mortal world. Beyond the gods, tools for running nautical odysseys and descents into the Underworld appear in this chapter, along with an adventure that explores the machinations of immortals and the dead.

Monsters and nonplayer characters mentioned in this chapter can be found in this book (*MOT*), the *Monster Manual* (*MM*), *Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes* (*MTF*), or *Volo's Guide to Monsters* (*VGM*). When a creature's name appears in bold type, that's a visual cue pointing you to the creature's stat block. If the stat block appears in chapter 6, the text tells you so.

### GOD-BASED ADVENTURES

Three elements combine to form the adventures recounted in the epics of Theros: heroes, gods, and monsters. Each god's section in this chapter provides the ingredients to build your own epics: champions and blessings, villains and monsters, divine schemes, and adventure locations.

### CHAMPIONS AND QUESTS

Each god's entry in this chapter begins with a discussion of the god's champions: quests for them to undertake, how you might structure a campaign around that god's champions, and blessings the god might bestow.

#### SERVING TWO OR MORE MASTERS

Often, each of the characters in an adventuring party is the champion of a different god—or no god at all. What brings the characters together? How do you motivate the whole party? Consider these options:

**Divine Coalition.** The characters represent a coalition of gods who have joined forces against a common foe (or cabal of enemies). For example, you might build a campaign around the idea that Erebus, Mogis, and Pharika are conspiring to unleash slaughter and plague on the mortal realm. Perhaps heroic champions of Ephara, Heliod, Karametra, Nylea, and other gods unite to protect the world from this threat.

**Friendly Cooperation.** If Thassa's champion helps Heliod's champion today, perhaps Heliod's champion will help Thassa's champion tomorrow. As long as the aims of gods aren't in opposition, those gods take no issue with their champions helping each other.

**Together by Circumstance.** A group of characters might find themselves on a galley foundering in a storm, in a polis under attack, or on the same side in a war. In such a case, when divine champions contend against a common threat, their allegiance to different gods might be less important than the urgency of their current situation, and they might forge lasting friendships that transcend their religious allegiances.

#### QUESTS

A mortal champion is a vessel of divine power and an agent of divine will. A champion's role is to act as the god's eyes and hands, upholding the deity's ideals and shaping the world to conform to those ideals.

In return for the gods' divine blessings, champions are expected to do the god's bidding. The quests in each god's section throughout this chapter provide examples of tasks the gods might assign to their champions. As long as at least one member of the adventuring party is a champion of the god in question, these ideas might serve as adventure seeds.

**Completing a Quest.** When a champion undertakes a quest on a god's behalf, the champion can expect a reward for doing so. As long as the champion is actively

pursuing the quest and upholding the god's ideals along the way, you can increase the character's piety score, using the general rule of raising it by 1 every session. Upon completing a quest bestowed by the god, the character might earn a blessing (such as those described in this chapter) as well as a piety score increase.

**Declining a Quest.** The cost to a champion for refusing to accept a god's quest can be steep. Sometimes, a champion can safely put the task on hold for a time, such as when helping another champion complete a quest for a different god. As long as undertaking the quest isn't a matter of urgency, gods usually don't punish champions who procrastinate. But if a champion willfully ignores a god's quest or pursues opposite aims, they might suffer any of the following consequences:

- The character's piety score might decrease by 1 each day, or each play session, for as long as the character continues to refuse the quest.
- The god might intervene to steer the champion toward the quest: Thassa could cause a storm to blow the character's ship off course, for example, bringing the champion to where the god wants them to be.
- In extreme instances, the god might place a magical command on the character, similar to a *geas* spell.

### GOD-BASED CAMPAIGNS

Each god's entry in this chapter explores the themes and events that could drive a campaign focused on the champions or agenda of that god. Typically, in a campaign centered on a god, one or more of the player characters are champions of that god, so it's natural—and perhaps even necessary—for them to become directly embroiled in how events unfold.

## VILLAINS AND MONSTERS

Just as many heroes serve as champions of the gods, many villains also serve their wills. Each god's section offers ideas for NPCs whose devotion turns their behavior in a villainous direction. It also provides suggestions for the kinds of monsters that might be associated with that god and serve as foes in an adventure. Generally, monster suggestions exclude foes that could work for most gods, like **acolytes** and **priests** from the *Monster Manual* and **oracles** from chapter 6 of this book.

### GODS AS CAMPAIGN VILLAINS

You can build a campaign around the villainous plans and deeds of a god, pitting the heroic adventurers against that god's servants and emissaries throughout their careers. Each god's entry offers suggestions on how such a campaign might progress. Additionally, a table of divine schemes suggests ambitions a god might pursue, or threats they might unleash, as a campaign's primary antagonist.

## ADVENTURE LOCATIONS

Each god's section includes a map of an iconic location often associated with a specific god. The description of each location includes tables that list possible goals for an adventure based there and villains the characters might face there.

## DIVINE ASSISTANCE

STORM-TOSSED AND BROKEN, FOUNDERING,

*Callaphe cried out to Thassa.*

*Tritons came swiftly to save her,*

*bringing her north to the Lindus.*

—The Callapheia

The gods are fond of meddling in mortal affairs, and heroes sometimes call on their gods for aid in times of desperate need. Spells such as *divination* and *commune* give characters the opportunity to ask their gods for information, and clerics who beseech their gods for assistance sometimes receive miracles in answer. Heroes also have the opportunity to ask the gods for favors, after proving their worth by enduring a divine ordeal.

At other times, the gods take the initiative to reach out to mortal heroes, sending them on quests or meddling in their adventures. Dreams, omens, and emissaries are the most common means by which gods might make their wishes known.

Two crucial principles should guide your use of divine involvement in your campaign:

**Don't eliminate character choice.** The gods can tell characters to do things, and even threaten to punish them if they don't do things, but the gods can't control mortal actions.

**Don't eliminate risk and danger.** The intervention of a god should never guarantee success or victory, nor should a god's interference portend immediate defeat. Gods can act to change the balance of an encounter or offer an avenue of escape, but they count on their champions to be heroes and act accordingly.



## COMMUNICATION

Communication between the mortal world and the divine can take a variety of forms, from omens that get mortals' attention by distorting natural phenomena to face-to-face conversations between a mortal and the manifestation of a god.

As explained in chapter 2, the gods aren't all-knowing, so theoretical limits do exist on the information a god might be able to pass on to a human champion. That said, the gods are tremendously knowledgeable, with perfect recall of their past experiences and a reliable ability to predict the short-term future. The gods don't like to reveal their ignorance of any matter, so they might give a purposefully unclear or misleading answer rather than admit they don't know the right one.

### OMENS

When the lynx-constellation paces restlessly in the night sky, it is an omen that Nylea is worried. When the tides rise high in defiance of the natural cycle, that is an omen that Thassa is distressed. When rain falls on a sunny day, Keranos and Heliod must be in conversation. Through supernatural events such as these, evidence of the gods' presence and influence is demonstrated, metaphorically manifesting their divine wishes.

**Weal and Woe.** The gods usually send omens as either warnings or as signs of their favor. The response to the *augury* spell takes the form of an omen foretelling weal or woe, and the gods might use omens in the same way, even without being asked to provide a sign. When a divine champion sets out on a course of action, a god might express approval or disapproval, hoping to either encourage or dissuade the mortal.

The *augury* spell requests an omen. At your option, you can simply provide the short answers offered in the spell description—weal, woe, weal and woe, or nothing—but you can also describe more elaborate omens. The form of the response might vary depending on the method of divination used, which can go beyond the inlaid sticks, dragon bones, or ornate cards mentioned in the spell description. Diviners in Theros look for signs in the stars, in the patterns of flocks of birds in flight, in the shapes of clouds, in the organs of sacrificed animals, in the sounds of thunder, in the designs left by waves on sand, and through many other means. So if an oracle stands on a beach imploring Thassa for an augury regarding a course of action you believe to be disastrous, you might describe the waves washing over the beach—and circling around the oracle's feet, leaving them completely dry. (If necessary, though, you should clarify that the oracle knows the answer to be “woe.”)

**Other Messages.** An omen can also have a more direct meaning beyond simply “weal” or “woe.” You can use omens to nudge the characters to an adventure location, to lead them to an oracle who lives far from the polis, or to hint at the true identity of a villain. Nylea might cause a flock of birds to suddenly rush eastward, inviting her champion to follow in that direction, or an animal might snarl whenever the villain's name is spoken. Omens should communicate important messages from the gods, something meaningful enough that deities have deigned to interfere in mortal efforts. The gods

don't provide omens to address unimportant questions (unless the characters use a spell for this purpose).

**Interpreting Omens.** A degree of mystery surrounds every omen, but the more complex an omen is, the more confusing mortals might find it. In addition, it's sometimes not clear whether a strange occurrence in the natural world is the work of the gods or has some other origin.

If a character struggles to interpret the meaning of an omen, you might allow them to make a DC 14 Intelligence or Wisdom check (perhaps modified by proficiency in Arcana, Nature, or Religion) to determine the nature of simple omens, with a success indicating that the correct message has been gleaned. Alternatively, characters might need to seek out oracles to interpret complicated omens for them.

**Omen Examples.** The tables on the following pages provide examples of phenomena that could serve as omens of the various gods. Although they each have their own areas of concern, any god can manipulate the natural world as they please. You can choose a god to closely align the omen with and roll either a d6 or a d8 to get an omen associated with that god, or you can roll a d100 to get an omen from any of the god's omen tables at random.

### DIVINATION

Clerics and oracles have spells at their disposal that allow them to ask the gods for insight. The *divination* and *commune* spells contact a god and promise a truthful reply to the caster's questions. The reply takes the form of a simple “yes” or “no,” a cryptic rhyme, or an omen. It might be transmitted through a disembodied voice, a vision only the caster can see, or any other mystical manner. A verbal reply to a *divination* or *commune* spell must be truthful, but it might still be misleading. A god can't speak a deliberate lie in response to either spell, but they can be evasive while remaining within the boundaries of the truth. If a character casts one of these spells more than once in the same day, however, there is an increasing chance of receiving an unclear answer or none at all (as described in the spells' entries in the *Player's Handbook*). This might happen because another god, alerted to the connection between the caster and their god by the first casting of the spell, intercepts the second one and chooses to mislead the character. Or it could simply mean that the god is tired of the character's pestering and chooses not to answer.

### DREAMS AND VISIONS

When mortals sleep and dream, they are said to “visit Nyx.” During this time, mortals are particularly susceptible to divine contact. A god might communicate with a sleeping mortal as if by casting *dream*—including the ability to transform the mortal's dreamscape into a nightmare. Whatever form such a dream takes, they are often similar to omens, making heavy use of symbol and metaphor.

## OMENS OF ATHREOS

d6	d100	Omen of Athreos
1	01	Faintly glowing wisps of fog or mist coalesce into shapes in the air.
2	02	Ghostly whispers come from nowhere.
3	03	The ground beneath a character's feet flows like water in a river.
4	04	A veiled figure observes the character from a distance, then vanishes.
5	05	Silent mourners carry a body past.
6	06	Echoes produce words different from the ones originally spoken.

## OMENS OF EPHARA

d6	d100	Omen of Ephara
1	07	A carved image or face-like pattern on a wall animates and speaks.
2	08	The streets of a city seem to alter course to lead to a specific destination.
3	09	Birds fly in parallel rows, like a marching army.
4	10	Eddies in a stream subside, and the water flows in a straight line.
5	11	A grove of trees has a perfectly symmetrical configuration.
6	12	A clay vessel overflows with water.

## OMENS OF EREBOS

d8	d100	Omen of Erebus
1	13	Small animals drop dead within an area.
2	14	A gold coin hangs like a piece of fruit from the branch of a dead tree.
3	15	The sun's light does not penetrate an area.
4	16	A character is stung as if struck by a whip.
5	17	Words can be heard in the sounds made by clinking coins.
6	18	An eclipse suddenly occurs.
7	19	Crows or vultures drop bones in an ominous pattern.
8	20	Swirling smoke forms macabre shapes.

## OMENS OF HELIOD

d8	d100	Omen of Heliod
1	21	A brilliant pattern appears around the sun.
2	22	A shaft of sunlight breaks through cloud cover or foliage to shine on a specific spot.
3	23	A pegasus appears and invites a character to touch it.
4	24	The sun remains in the same place in the sky for far too long.
5	25	The sun blinks.
6	26	No shadows are cast.
7	27	A specific area can't be made dark.
8	28	The sky turns blood-red at sunrise or sunset.

## OMENS OF IROAS

d6	d100	Omen of Iroas
1	29	The rousing blare of distant trumpets drowns out other sounds.
2	30	Clouds limned by sunlight take a form that resembles Iroas.
3	31	A character's weapon or shield shatters dramatically, then repairs itself.
4	32	A four-winged bird circles overhead.
5	33	The sun or moon appears to have four glowing wings.
6	34	Water or wind sounds like cheering.

## OMENS OF KARAMETRA

d6	d100	Omen of Karametra
1	35	Patterns form in fallen leaves or in the scattered leavings of grain in a field.
2	36	Rustling plants produce sounds that resemble words.
3	37	Fruit begins mewling and giggling like delighted infants.
4	38	Hearth fires blaze or small fires start up, attracting small creatures to curl up in front of them.
5	39	Wild animals act domesticated.
6	40	Food multiplies or heals when bitten.

## OMENS OF KERANOS

d6	d100	Omen of Keranos
1	41	Lightning strikes, thunder rumbles, or rain falls in a clear sky.
2	42	A powerful thought springs unbidden to mind, like a shout in one's head.
3	43	Rain produces a melody that sounds like a familiar song.
4	44	A lightning-scarred tree stands alone in a forest clearing.
5	45	A fierce wind blows in a particular direction.
6	46	A character sees distinct figures or patterns in the sky when lightning flashes.

## OMENS OF KLOTHYS

d6	d100	Omen of Klothys
1	47	A character experiences an extended episode of <i>déjà vu</i> .
2	48	Spider webs gleam as if they were made of silver threads.
3	49	The sky turns a rich gold color.
4	50	A character's hair grows several inches and braids itself.
5	51	Glowing green threads create a pattern or follow a path in the air.
6	52	A character experiences a powerful episode of <i>déjà vu</i> .

## OMENS OF KRUPHIX

d6	d100	Omen of Kruphix
1	53	The natural world falls utterly silent.
2	54	An aurora shimmers on the horizon.
3	55	The attention of every celestial figure in the night sky is suddenly focused on one character or place.
4	56	Nyx appears in the shadows of all things.
5	57	Two extra ethereal arms sprout from a character's body.
6	58	The night sky appears to wheel overhead as though years are streaming by.

## OMENS OF MOGIS

d6	d100	Omen of Mogis
1	59	A creature spontaneously starts bleeding, their blood pooling in a bull shape.
2	60	Normally harmless animals turn aggressive—the smaller, the angrier.
3	61	Water (a stream, pool, rain, or a liquid in a container) turns to boiling blood.
4	62	A bestial roar erupts from over the horizon or deep within the earth.
5	63	The stars turn red.
6	64	A character develops a ravenous hunger for raw meat.

## OMENS OF NYLEA

d8	d100	Omen of Nylea
1	65	Butterflies land on a character or fly together in a particular direction.
2	66	Fallen leaves blow perpendicular to the wind.
3	67	The weather suddenly changes radically.
4	68	A colored arrow strikes nearby, arching from an impossible direction.
5	69	Plants sprout and grow to maturity instantly.
6	70	Trees and vines coil to hinder movement.
7	71	Animal tracks appear where nothing walks.
8	72	A celestial lynx paces back and forth across the night sky.

## OMENS OF PHARIKA

d6	d100	Omen of Pharika
1	73	Hundreds of snakes, spiders, or centipedes crawl from the ground.
2	74	A strong chemical smell follows a character.
3	75	A character exhibits a disease's symptoms.
4	76	Leaves shrivel and turn black, while flowers pour acidic nectar.
5	77	A snakeskin wraps around a way marker or personal possession.
6	78	Patterns of clouds or stars slither away, moving with an audible susurrus.

## OMENS OF PHENAX

d6	d100	Omen of Phenax
1	79	Shadows move independently of whatever casts them, appearing to run away.
2	80	A gold mask momentarily appears over the face of every living creature in sight.
3	81	Objects, landmarks, even stars momentarily vanish, as if pilfered in plain sight.
4	82	Everything turns shades of gray.
5	83	Creatures' mouths momentarily vanish and they can't make sounds or speak.
6	84	The sun momentarily melts, raining gold coins that vanish soon after landing.

## OMENS OF PURPHOROS

d8	d100	Omen of Purphoros
1	85	The sound of a hammer rings in the air.
2	86	Noxious gas suddenly vents from underground.
3	87	The ground or a metal object becomes uncomfortably hot.
4	88	An animal moves in a mechanical manner.
5	89	Huge plumes of smoke rise from the horizon.
6	90	The earth shakes in a deliberate rhythm.
7	91	Something that was broken is reshaped into something new.
8	92	A statue or metal object comes to life.

## OMENS OF THASSA

d8	d100	Omen of Thassa
1	93	A lustrous seashell or small fish appears in someone's drink.
2	94	The tide goes out (or in) at the wrong time.
3	95	The sound of crashing waves fills the air.
4	96	Ripples in water form patterns of ships and sea creatures.
5	97	A beautiful coral pillar rises from the earth.
6	98	A flock of dozens of noisy seabirds land.
7	99	A school of sea creatures swim in the air.
8	00	Someone starts drowning on dry land.



## DIVINE INTERVENTION

As with Callaphe the Mariner's desperate cry to Thassa, heroes in dire straits sometimes implore their gods for help. Occasionally, the gods answer. Whether a response is elicited by a hero's desperate prayer, a cleric's use of the Divine Intervention class feature, or a god's decision to intervene in mortal affairs for good or ill, an answer can manifest in a variety of ways.

### BLESSINGS

As described in chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, the gods sometimes use blessings to reward their faithful servants for momentous deeds. Completing a quest bestowed by the god is an accomplishment that might merit a blessing as a reward. Occasionally, a god might also offer a blessing when sending a champion on a quest, helping them to prepare for the task ahead.

A character retains the benefit of a blessing until it is taken away by the god who granted it, which might happen if a character's piety score is reduced. Unlike a magic item, a divine blessing can't be suppressed by an antimagic field or similar effect. There is no limit on the number of blessings a character can receive, but a character can't benefit from multiple applications of a blessing at the same time.

If you choose to award blessings to the characters in your campaign, use the guidelines in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. If a blessing duplicates the effect of a magic item, it requires a minimum piety score based on the rarity of the item:

- Uncommon magic item:** requires piety 3 or higher
- Rare magic item:** requires piety 10 or higher
- Very rare magic item:** requires piety 25 or higher
- Legendary magic item:** requires piety 50 or higher

You can use these additional blessings for your campaign, or use them to inspire more supernatural gifts.

**Blessing of Farsight (Requires Piety 3+).** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**Blessing of Protection (Requires Piety 3+).** As a bonus action, you can invoke your god's protection, providing you with a +1 bonus to your AC for 1 minute. Once you use this blessing, you can't use it again until the next dawn.

**Blessing of Resilience (Requires Piety 3+).** When you are about to take acid, cold, fire, lightning, or thunder damage, you can use your reaction to gain resistance to that damage type until the end of your next turn. Once you use this blessing, you can't use it again until the next dawn.

**Eyes of Nyx (Requires Piety 10+).** As an action, you can imbue your eyes with enhanced vision for 10 minutes. While the blessing is active, your eyes look like the starry void of Nyx, and you can see invisible creatures and objects within 60 feet of you that are within your line of sight. Once you use this blessing, you can't use it again until the next dusk.

**Weapon of Nyx (Requires Piety 10+).** You can use a bonus action to cause one weapon you are holding to surge with divine power for 1 minute. On a hit, the

weapon deals an extra 1d8 radiant damage. (Depending on your god, it might deal a different damage type—necrotic for Erebus, lightning for Keranos, or fire for Purphoros, for example.) Once you use this blessing, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

### EMISSARIES

A divine emissary is a creature woven from the fabric of Nyx as a tool to carry out a god's divine will. Emissaries have no will of their own; they are extensions of their creators' divine substance, brought into the mortal world to fulfill a specific mission. When that mission is complete, they return to Nyx.

While certain deities are associated with sending favored animals as their emissaries—such as the stag often associated with Heliod and Nylea's lynx—any animal might be a god's emissary. In each case, divine emissaries have a few shared characteristics:

- They are Nyxborn and have one or two of the Nyxborn traits described in chapter 6, commonly magic resistance and magic weapons.
- They're of remarkable size, being at least one size category larger than normal.

### MIRACLES

As the simplest form of miracle, a god can produce the effect of any cleric spell or any spell associated with one of the god's domains, and have the spell take effect anywhere in the mortal realm. The gods' capabilities aren't limited by spell lists, though, and their miraculous intervention can have any effect you want. Direct godly intervention tends to be subtle and rare, though, as it attracts the attention of other gods and might encourage them to meddle in their own ways.

## DIVINE ORDEALS

Life as a champion of a god offers abundant opportunities to escape life's tedium, but a mortal who wants to truly take control of fate can request an ordeal from one of the gods. An ordeal, as the name indicates, is no easy task. To receive one, a candidate must accomplish at least one near-impossible feat to even make the request: finding a pathway into Nyx. But the reward for triumph is appropriate to the scale of the challenge.

### JOURNEY INTO NYX

The first stage of a divine ordeal is entering Nyx. Callaphe the mariner is said to have sailed her ship over the waterfall at the edge of the world and right into Nyx, where she can still be seen among the constellations. Additionally, Kruphix's Temple of Mystery at the edge of the world and the shrine of Nykthos are known to hold portals that lead to the gates of Nyx.

In theory, high-level characters can use spells such as *plane shift* or *gate* to move from the mortal realm to Nyx. In practice, securing the proper material component to travel to Nyx through the *plane shift* spell is roughly as difficult as sailing to the edge of the world, and Kruphix can (and usually does) prevent the *gate* spell from opening a portal into Nyx.

There might be other ways to get into Nyx, and each one is a challenge suited for the greatest heroes.



## ASK AND RECEIVE

After reaching Nyx, a hero must next ask a god for an ordeal. Asking for an ordeal is as simple as calling out one's intention to the god: "Erebos, I request an ordeal!"

The gods grant ordeals only to those they consider worthy. The hero need not be a worshiper of the god being beseeched, or be concerned with upholding the god's ideals. As a rule, any hero capable of reaching Nyx is worthy of receiving an ordeal in most gods' eyes. Additionally, a god will typically only grant a champion one ordeal in their lifetime—allowing more only under exceptional circumstances.

A god might test multiple members of a group, confronting each with their own ordeals. Alternatively, champions devoted to different deities might all request ordeals from their own gods. Those who don't participate in an ordeal, though, still have plenty to do in Nyx and might find themselves contacted by agents of the gods or that realm's other legendary inhabitants.

## THE ORDEAL

Assuming the god deems the hero worthy, the ordeal gets under way. The hero falls into a trance and steps alone into a dreamscape constructed by the god.

Work to craft an ordeal that provides a significant challenge for the character to overcome. Fundamentally, an ordeal is a test of the character's heroic drive, as described in chapter 1. Will the character's drive prove strong enough to overcome everything else?

An ordeal is a single encounter, which might involve combat, interaction, a series of ability checks, or other activities. It takes place in a dream state, so it's not

essential that you give this encounter anything more than a narrative framing. The point is that the ordeal should test whether the hero's drive can counteract their other personality traits. The god who grants an ordeal shapes it. Keranos, for example, might challenge a hero with saving innocents during a dangerous storm, or Thassa might throw a mortal into a dreamscape where their ship is attacked by a kraken. Beyond the obvious challenge, the ordeal should create tension between a character's heroic drive and their other characteristics.

You can use these guidelines to determine the appropriate degree of challenge for elements of an ordeal:

**Combat with One Creature.** Use a monster or an NPC with a challenge rating equal to half the character's level.

**Combat with Multiple Creatures.** Use 2d4 creatures, each of which has a challenge rating of about one-fifth the character's level.

**Ability Checks.** Set the DC at 20 for most checks and 25 for checks that are crucial to the ordeal.

## THE REWARD

There's typically no penalty for failing an ordeal, but the reward for success can be great. A character can request anything from a god. Consider these examples of what a god might grant to a successful hero:

- A miracle or other form of divine intervention
- A supernatural gift of your choice from those described in chapter 1
- A magic item of a rarity appropriate to the character's level



# ATHREOS

The River Guide straddles the line between life and death, maintaining the cosmological balance with no regard for the morals and emotions of mortals. Athreos's champions seek to further his goals, and rarely do so with greater sympathy than their grim patron.

## ATHREOS'S CHAMPIONS

Athreos expects his champions to maintain the balance between the living and the dead, just as he does. Beyond this, his servants take it upon themselves to maintain funerary customs unique to their cultures and preserve the memories of the departed. Beyond the mortal world, the River Guide opposes any who disrupt the cycle of life and death, behavior that occasionally brings him into conflict with other deities—particularly Erebos and Helioid, but also occasionally Phenax and Pharika.

The Athreos's Quests table suggests a few adventures the god's champions might involve themselves in.

## ATHREOS'S QUESTS

### d6 Adventure Goal

- 1 Seal a secret path that the Returned use to escape the Underworld.
- 2 Strike against one of the necropoleis, either Asphodel or Odunos, curtailing its growth or bringing it to ruin.
- 3 Seek out a lampad nymph who has fallen in love with a soul he was supposed to lead to the Underworld.
- 4 Hunt down a rampaging cerberus and return it to its place guarding the Underworld.
- 5 Reconsecrate a grand but neglected mausoleum, putting the unquiet spirits there to rest.
- 6 Defeat an agent of a god who seeks to free a loved one, a mentor, or a champion from the Underworld.

## AN ATHREOS CAMPAIGN

Early in a campaign, Athreos's champions likely face dangerous or wayward undead, such as ghouls and ghosts, or monsters that have taken up residence in sacred burial sites. As the story progresses, the Returned and eidolons might feature more prominently, along with situations that force champions to oppose those seeking the souls of loved ones or the spirits of those with work left undone. At some point, Athreos's champions might come to oppose the arrogance and treachery of Erebos, Helioid, and Phenax, or the machinations of demons or the necropoleis of the Returned.

The River Guide's mortal servants will likely find their emotions tested—particularly their sense of morality and their inclination toward sympathy. Any mortal might be moved to restore a ruler whose death will ignite a war or by the plight of lovers separated by death. Athreos cares not for such things, and he expects his followers to guard the borders between life and death as emotionlessly as he does. If one of his servants falters, Athreos is quick to revoke his blessings.

## ATHREOS'S VILLAINS

Athreos's champions readily forsake their connections to other mortals. Working among endless throngs of the dead and grieving can sap one's empathy and harden any soul. As a result, Athreos's followers make grim opponents when they prioritize the needs of the dead over the living. Their mission also makes them ready foes of the Returned and their allies. Some seek to achieve greater efficiency in the transition of the doomed into death, such as by impeding medical treatment or wrecking warships destined for hopeless wars. Athreos doesn't approve of utter cruelty, but neither does he particularly care, so long as the dead meet him with coin.

The Athreos's Villains table suggests a variety of foes that might arise from among the god's followers.

## ATHREOS'S VILLAINS

### d6 Villain

- 1 An **oracle** (see chapter 6) follows omens to find those who have been resurrected, claiming they owe Athreos a debt.
- 2 A mercenary (**gladiator**) accuses a community of harboring Returned and threatens to claim their leader's life to restore the balance.
- 3 A warmongering **noble** rallies the public against a necropolis, encouraging a war between the living and the dead.
- 4 A group of **cult fanatics** charges exorbitant prices for funeral rites, threatening to lead the dead astray unless they're shown proper respect.
- 5 A **priest** of Athreos speaks out against healers and Pharika's followers during a plague, offering death as the only alternative to suffering.
- 6 A **lampad** (see chapter 6) hunts the offspring of an ancient hero who escaped death, claiming they shouldn't exist.

## ATHREOS'S MONSTERS

Most creatures that serve Athreos aid the god in destroying the undead. Beyond that, the Athreos's Monsters table presents a few creatures likely to serve the god.

## ATHREOS'S MONSTERS

Challenge	Creature	Source
1	Giant vulture	MM
2	Two-headed cerberus	MOT
3	Hell hound	MM
3	Lampad	MOT
6	Invisible stalker	MM
6	Underworld cerberus	MOT
8	Spirit naga	MM
9	Phylaskia	MOT

## ATHREOS AS CAMPAIGN VILLAIN

Athreos sees his responsibilities as necessary, but doesn't cherish them. Were there a more efficient way to maintain the cycle of life and death, or to create some sort of stasis, he might pursue it. Alternatively, wittingly or otherwise, Athreos might allow some less reliable being to take over his labors. Regardless of the circumstances, any change in the River Guide's role would have dramatic effects on the living and the balance of power between Theros's immortals. Adventurers caught in Athreos's machinations have the potential to influence nothing less than the underpinnings of existence.

Correcting any imbalance in the cycle of life and death likely involves the assistance of other gods. If Athreos ever truly abandons his duties, it might be necessary for another to take up his labors. Candidates could include titans or gods, but a selfless mortal might also sacrifice themselves to become the new Athreos.

## ATHREOS'S DIVINE SCHEMES

If Athreos were to have desires beyond his responsibilities to the dead, he would likely keep them secret and act with slow, nearly invisible, deliberateness. The Athreos's Divine Schemes table suggests just a few of the god's potential objectives.

### ATHREOS'S DIVINE SCHEMES

#### d4 Scheme

- 1 Athreos tires of his responsibilities but refuses to abandon them. Secretly, he has allowed the same spirit to be reborn again and again, allowing it to see all of life and death so it might one day take his place. When this apprentice disappears, Athreos refuses to ferry any more souls until his student is returned.
- 2 The wealth Athreos collects in payment for his work has gone missing, stolen from his sanctuary at the end of the Tartyx River. The River Guide needs the treasure returned swiftly, not out of greed, but as it is payment for something beyond the gods.
- 3 The Rivers That Ring the World are drying up. As the tides recede, great ruins are revealed, rising from the river bottom. Athreos sends agents to the headwaters of the Tartyx River, seeking the cause of the problem before whatever the river had kept drowned emerges.
- 4 War between Heliod and Erebus is inevitable. Rather than letting it explode unpredictably, Athreos puts a plan into motion to mitigate the damage. Ultimately, all it takes to end the war is Heliod's death or Erebus joining the Returned.

THE SHORES OF THE RIVERS THAT RING THE WORLD ARE WATCHED BY ATHREOS AND HIS SERVANTS.



## UNDERWORLD CROSSING

The Tartyx River is dotted with ruined temples of Athreos on either side of its banks that serve as crossing points between the mortal world and the Underworld. Souls of the dead wait on the riverbank at these desolate places for the River Guide to appear and grant them passage to the Underworld side.

The ruined temple buildings are as enigmatic as their patron. No priests inhabit or care for these places, though they are guarded by cerberi and phylaskia (both described in chapter 6). When living mortals enter these shrines, the buildings come alive with magic traps meant to keep the living out of the realm of the dead and the dead from returning to the land of the living.

### UNDERWORLD CROSSING ADVENTURES

Adventures in Underworld crossings usually involve the characters entering or exiting the Underworld or helping or preventing someone or something from doing so. Souls with coin left after crossing the Tartyx often discard their excess valuables upon reaching the Underworld—their treasures proving useless in the realm of the dead. The dunes of discarded coins that pile up on the Underworld's shores might be enough to tempt mortal treasure hunters, even at the risk of being eternally pursued by Athreos's servants.

Alternatively, it might be souls rather than riches that tempt adventurers to the Tartyx's banks. A spirit who died without payment for Athreos might linger at the river's edge. Perhaps adventurers seek to help such a lost soul pass on to the Underworld, or they might offer to pay for passage if a spirit shares valuable information with them. In either case, adventurers might offer the dead help in reaching their final resting place.

The Underworld Crossing Adventures table offers ideas for adventures that could occur in such a place.

### UNDERWORLD CROSSING ADVENTURES

#### d12 Adventure Goal

- 1 Enter the Underworld without alerting Athreos to your presence.
- 2 Escape the Underworld.
- 3 Force someone to lose their identity in the waters of the Tartyx River.
- 4 Escort a **Returned sentry** (see chapter 6) escaping from the Underworld into the mortal world.
- 5 Bargain with a **lampad** (see chapter 6) to learn where the body of a lost hero lies entombed.
- 6 Get information from a soul waiting to be ferried to the Underworld.
- 7 Pay for a stranded soul to cross the Tartyx River.
- 8 Steal a specific valuable from the banks of the Tartyx River and escape unseen.
- 9 Sail from the crossing to a nearby, haunted island in the center of the Tartyx River.
- 10 Convince an innocent spirit who keeps returning to their mortal home to pass into the Underworld.
- 11 Seek an audience with Athreos.
- 12 Capture an **Underworld cerberus** (see chapter 6).

## UNDERWORLD CROSSING MAP

The Underworld crossing shown in map 4.1 is made up of two halves of a bleak, broken temple on either side of the Tartyx River. Each half of the temple facing the river ends in a dock. The riverbank on the mortal side is covered in gold coins. This half of the temple holds a large sanctuary with a cracked floor and sinking altar where phylaskia and cerberi stand guard. Surrounding this cavernous hall, shadowy corridors that lead to the dock are covered in trapped glyphs that explode with energy and collapse ceilings when activated by the presence of mortals.

The temple half on the Underworld side of the river consists of twisting crypt halls that hold no bones, bodies, or other remains—only dust and guardians. These halls give way to a second sanctuary filled with somber funeral music—though there are no instruments in sight. It's said that living creatures that hear this song are driven to the depths of despair. A massive statue of Athreos watches over this chamber and the guardians who reside there.

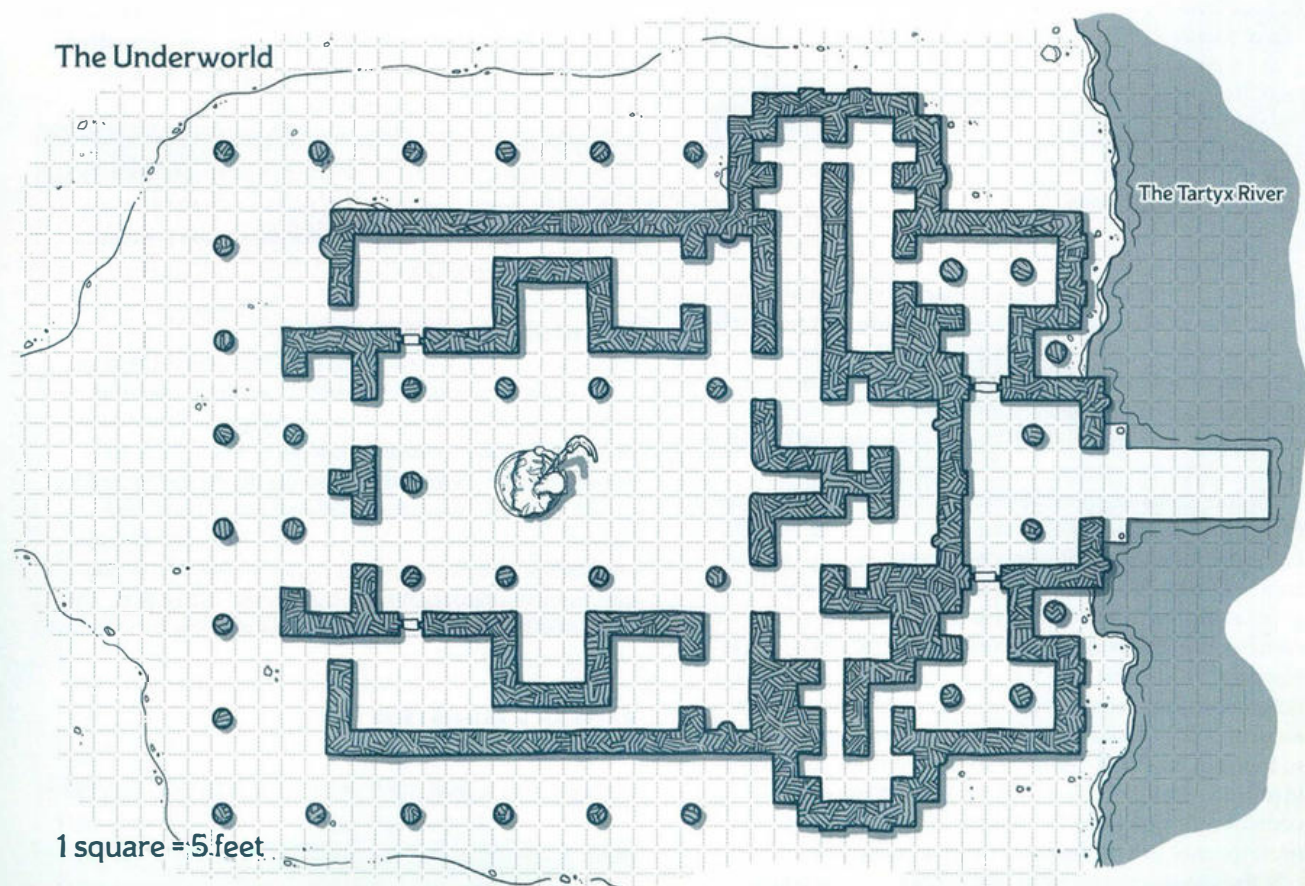
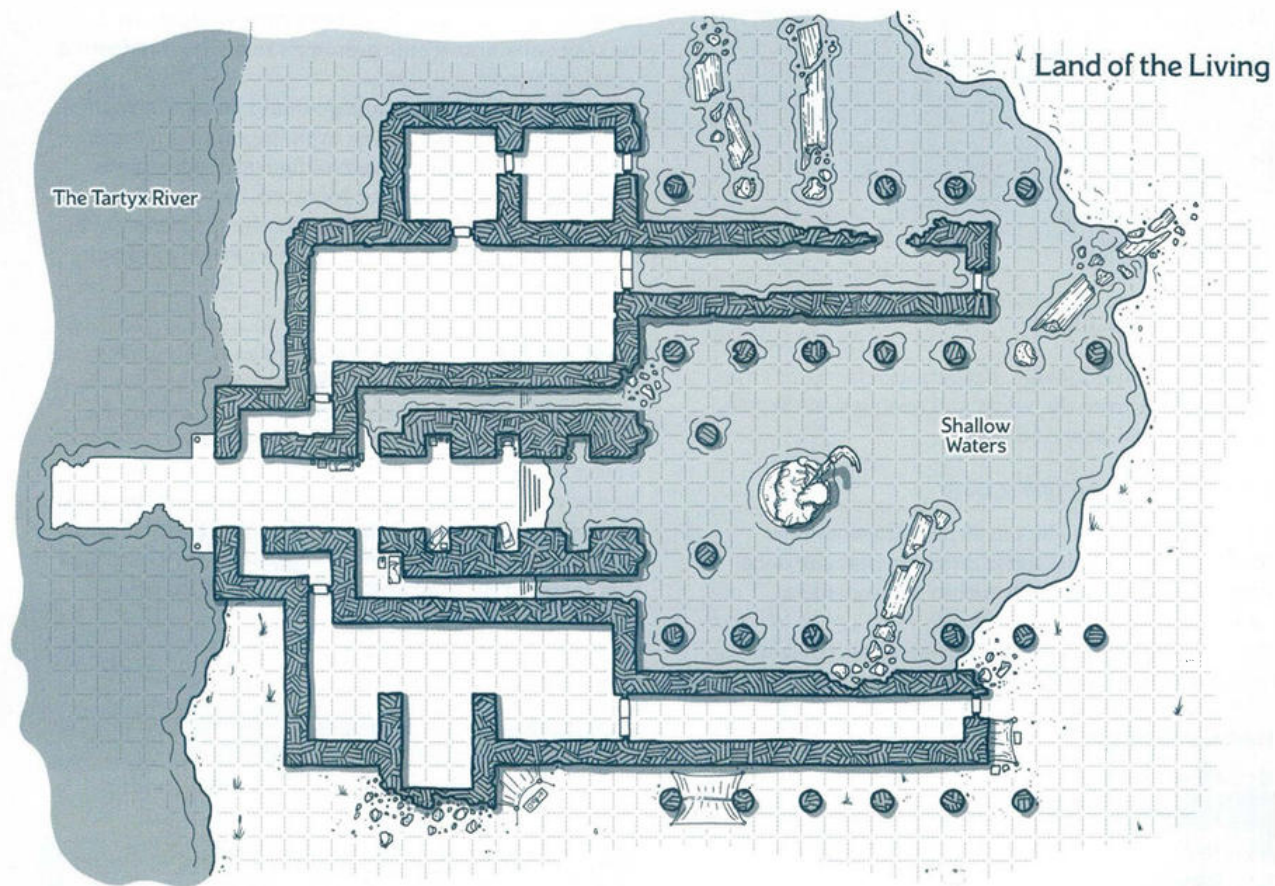
### UNDERWORLD CROSSING VILLAINS

Mortals who adventure in an Underworld crossing are likely to battle foes trying to enter or escape the Underworld—or trying to prevent the characters from doing so. Examples of such villains appear on the Underworld Crossings Villains table.

### UNDERWORLD CROSSINGS VILLAINS

#### d6 Villain

- 1 A **Returned palamnite** (see chapter 6) seeks to destroy all Underworld crossings so the dead can freely enter the mortal world.
- 2 A conquering general captures a number of **Underworld cerberi** (see chapter 6), plotting to unleash the terrifying beasts during a war.
- 3 A greedy **priest** of Erebos steals coins from the dead before they are buried, thereby filling a crossing with stranded souls.
- 4 A **nightmare shepherd** (see chapter 6) takes over a crossing and doesn't allow souls to pass into the Underworld. As a result, they become **specters** that harass the living in the mortal world.
- 5 A **priest** of Athreos becomes annoyed with the dead returning and sends armies of clergy to secure the mortal side of the crossing.
- 6 A **satyr reveler** (see chapter 6) seeks to throw an eternal revel! By stealing coins from the dead, the satyr traps souls at his morbid, Tartyx-side bacchanal.



MAP 4.1: UNDERWORLD CROSSING



# EPHARA

Serious and knowledgeable, Ephara watches over cities, protecting them from the wilds and seeing that they develop in a just and beautiful way.

## EPHARA'S CHAMPIONS

The god of the polis seeks out those who would defend their cities with the same devotion that she does, fighting against threats both within and outside a city's walls.

The Ephara's Quests table suggests a few adventures the god's champions might involve themselves in.

### EPHARA'S QUESTS

d6	Adventure Goal
1	Oust the corrupt leader of a town or a city.
2	Reclaim a city that has been overrun by creatures of the wild.
3	Help establish a new city in a sparsely populated area.
4	Find a treasure to adorn a major landmark of a city.
5	Hunt down a criminal who is causing devastating damage to a city, such as by arson.
6	Defeat a champion of an opposed deity, most likely Phenax or Nylea.

## AN EPHARA CAMPAIGN

A campaign centered around Ephara is almost by necessity an urban campaign, and likely one that primarily or entirely takes place within a single city. Ephara is concerned with the establishment, development, and protection of cities, and a campaign centered on her champions and goals might focus on just one of these aspects over the course of the campaign.

A game focused on establishment might see the characters founding a new city, or perhaps reviving a dead one. One focused on development could go beyond the basics of what a city needs to survive and get into what a city requires to thrive—which could easily lead to campaigns less focused on combat and more on social encounters and intrigue. Lastly, a campaign focused on defending a city could present a range of threats, from external foes—like wild creatures or invading armies—to internal enemies—like corrupt leaders or dangerous criminals. In any of these cases, Ephara cares about protecting cities from the poison of corruption and tyranny as well as threats from armies or the wild.

If the characters falter in any of these major goals, they could lose Ephara's favor and have to prove

themselves again worthy of her grace, perhaps by making substantial improvements to a city or defeating a major threat.

Foes in an Ephara campaign could be deadly monsters, corrupt politicians, or even impending natural disasters. The reappearance of figures from a city's past, either as Returned or Nyxborn, can also throw a community into disorder. Who has the greater right to rule: the current ruler or the city's legendary founder?

## EPHARA'S VILLAINS

Many see Ephara and her followers as villains, treading on the wilderness to expand cities and civilization. Even people who live in urban environments might not be safe from foes who profess to be in Ephara's service. Those who become excessively focused on rules and justice could overstep their bounds, using the law to oppress countercultural or nonconforming populations.

The Ephara's Villains table suggests a variety of foes that might arise from among the god's followers.

### EPHARA'S VILLAINS

d6	Villain
1	A neighborhood leader enacts punitive laws, preventing people from expressing themselves.
2	A <b>guard</b> imprisons people who worship gods opposed to Ephara, such as Phenax and Nylea.
3	A <b>noble</b> is building a new development directly in a forest, where it will displace wildlife that has lived there for millennia.
4	A <b>soldier</b> begins killing people who have committed terrible crimes but have been acquitted because of loopholes in the judicial system.
5	A group of <b>magics</b> who follow Ephara want to build a city on an island, heedless of the current residents.
6	An <b>oracle</b> (see chapter 6) leads a cadre of scholars secretly destroying work that they deem antithetical to proper society.

## EPHARA'S MONSTERS

Ephara isn't often associated with monsters. Even so, a few monsters common in urban settings might be involved with the deity or her worshipers. Since many of Ephara's most devout followers are scholars, they commonly use magically constructed creatures in their plans. The vast majority of villains associated with Ephara are humans: soldiers, politicians, priests, and scholars who believe that Ephara's vision of a proper city is more important than the people living in it. The Ephara's Monsters table presents just a few foes likely to serve the god's will.

### EPHARA'S MONSTERS

Challenge	Creature	Source
1/8	Guard	MM
1/2	Anvilwrought raptor	MOT
3	Meletian hoplite	MOT
9	War priest	VGM

Challenge	Creature	Source
11	Gynosphinx*	MM
15	Hundred-handed one	MOT
17	Androsphinx*	MM
23	Empyrean	MM

\* See chapter 6 for details about these creatures in Theros.

## EPHARA AS CAMPAIGN VILLAIN

A campaign with Ephara as the villain might be well suited to a wilderness-based campaign. Many people of the wilds see the patron of cities as inherently villainous—a colonialist monster who crushes the wilderness in the name of supposed civilization. For player characters who are affiliated with the wilderness or who worship Nylea, Ephara makes an obvious antagonist.

A likely storyline with Ephara as the main villain would involve the characters trying to stop champions of Ephara from establishing a new city or expanding an existing city into the wilderness, displacing the people and creatures that inhabit the area. This wilderness could be where the characters live, or the residents of the area might ask the characters for help. Since the followers of Ephara see cities as inherently superior to other locations, they are unmoved by simple pleas to leave the wilderness as it is, and the characters likely must stop them by force.

## EPHARA'S DIVINE SCHEMES

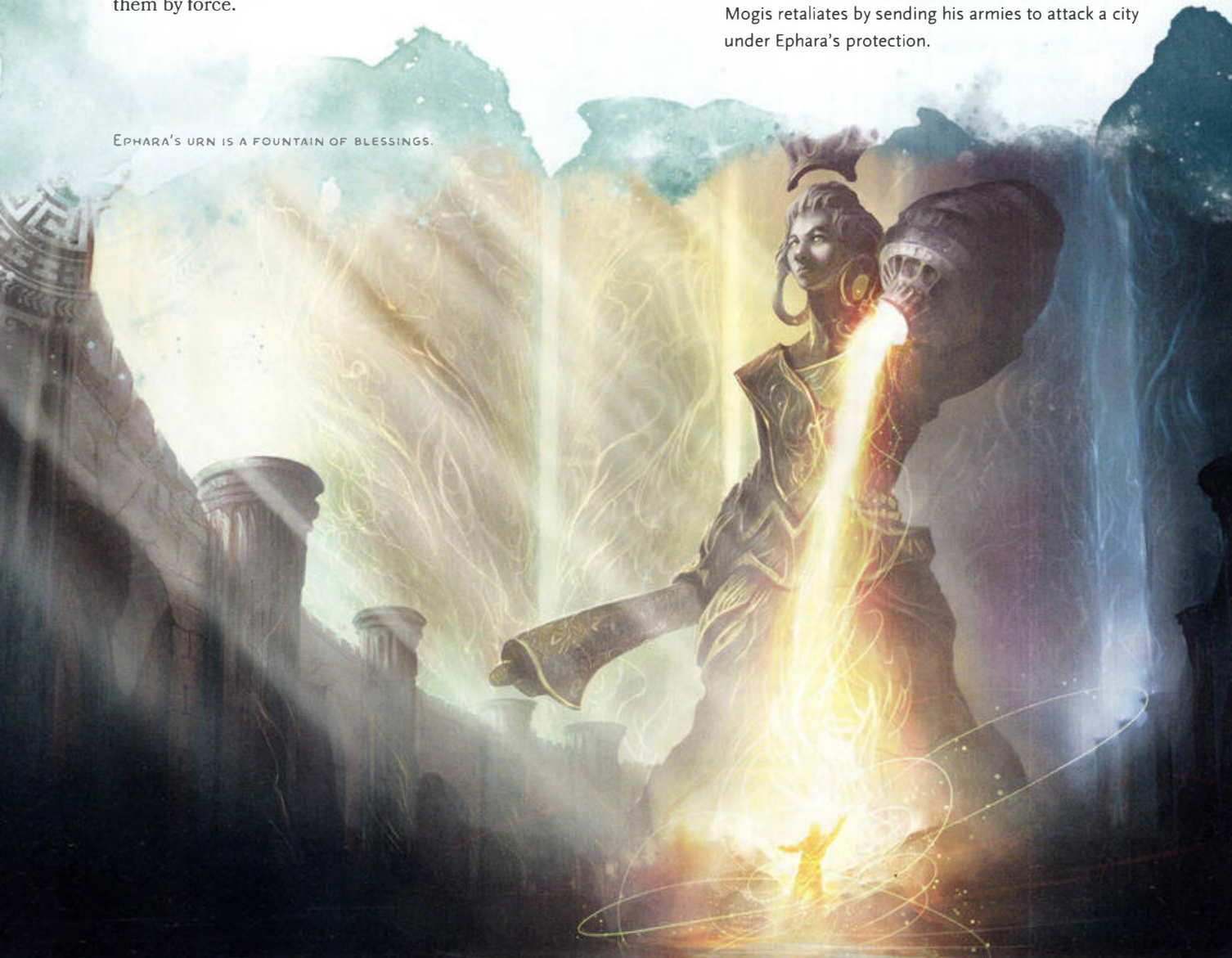
Ephara's power struggles with other deities often have a ripple effect that touches the mortal followers of all gods involved. The Ephara's Divine Schemes table presents just a few conflicts the god might be involved in.

### EPHARA'S DIVINE SCHEMES

#### d4 Scheme

- 1 Ephara tries to curry Karametra's favor, hoping to persuade her to use her influence over agriculture to help the cities under Ephara's protection flourish. But Karametra, as the patron of Setessa, thinks that Ephara's focus on cities is dangerous and damaging to the lands. Nylea lashes out at both Karametra and Ephara, believing them to be working together.
- 2 Ephara attempts to strip Phenax of his "stolen" divinity, outraged by his influence over criminals.
- 3 A recent earthquake has changed the coastline, exposing a new island with a verdant and lush landscape. Ephara and Nylea are locked in a battle for control over the island, with Nylea wanting it to remain wilderness and Ephara seeking to build a city on the fertile ground.
- 4 Ephara sends champions to free a city from the control of tyrants who worship Mogis, god of wrath. Mogis retaliates by sending his armies to attack a city under Ephara's protection.

EPHARA'S URN IS A FOUNTAIN OF BLESSINGS.



## AGORA

Many settlements in Theros have a centrally located agora, or public forum, where artists perform, politicians give speeches, philosophers debate, vendors hawk their wares, and people congregate. Many agoras are surrounded by stoas, covered walkways that lead to other areas of the settlement. People in the agora might retreat beneath the awnings for privacy and shade, while others stand on the roofs of the porticos to shout messages to the assembled crowds.

In addition to activities involving art, commerce, politics, and religion, people come to the agora for socializing and learning the latest news and gossip. The crowds attract less savory folk, like spies and thieves. Priests of Ephara often bless agoras because they are so central to civilized life in Theros, but all the gods are usually honored in these forums with statues or other works of art.

### AGORA ADVENTURES

An agora is the perfect location for adventures where roleplaying takes center stage. The characters could use the crowd as cover for a clandestine meeting or as an audience to rally to action. A simple shopping trip in an agora can turn into an adventure when a thief steals from the characters or they overhear a sinister conversation. The Agora Adventures table offers ideas for adventures that could occur in such a place.

#### AGORA ADVENTURES

##### d12 Adventure Goal

- 1 Apprehend the ringleader of a thieves' guild who frequently targets people in the agora.
- 2 Protect a civil leader giving a speech.
- 3 Perform for an audience.
- 4 Humiliate someone giving a speech or performing.
- 5 Make a profit running someone's market stall.
- 6 Sabotage business for the entire market.
- 7 Eavesdrop on a private meeting under a stoa.
- 8 Incite a crowd to action with a public speech.
- 9 Debate a well-loved politician or philosopher and convince the audience to take your side.
- 10 Recapture an escaped beast that was up for sale.
- 11 Stop a public execution.
- 12 Quell a riot without violence.

### AGORA MAP

The agora shown in map 4.2 is surrounded by stoas, with statues of different gods on their roofs overlooking the public area. Market stalls stand in orderly lanes, and vendors position their carts between them.

Two stages stand at either end of the forum. One is a huge platform where performers, politicians, and philosophers address the crowds. The smaller stage has steps that lead up to a higher platform. Criminals sentenced to death are thrown from this height onto the ground below, where the crowd then finishes the job. Stocks are also set up at the top of this stage for petty criminals to be publicly humiliated.

At the agora's center stands a grand fountain with a larger-than-life sculpture depicting all the gods sharing a feast. On holy days, priests invite people to wash their feet in the fountain and receive blessings from the gods.

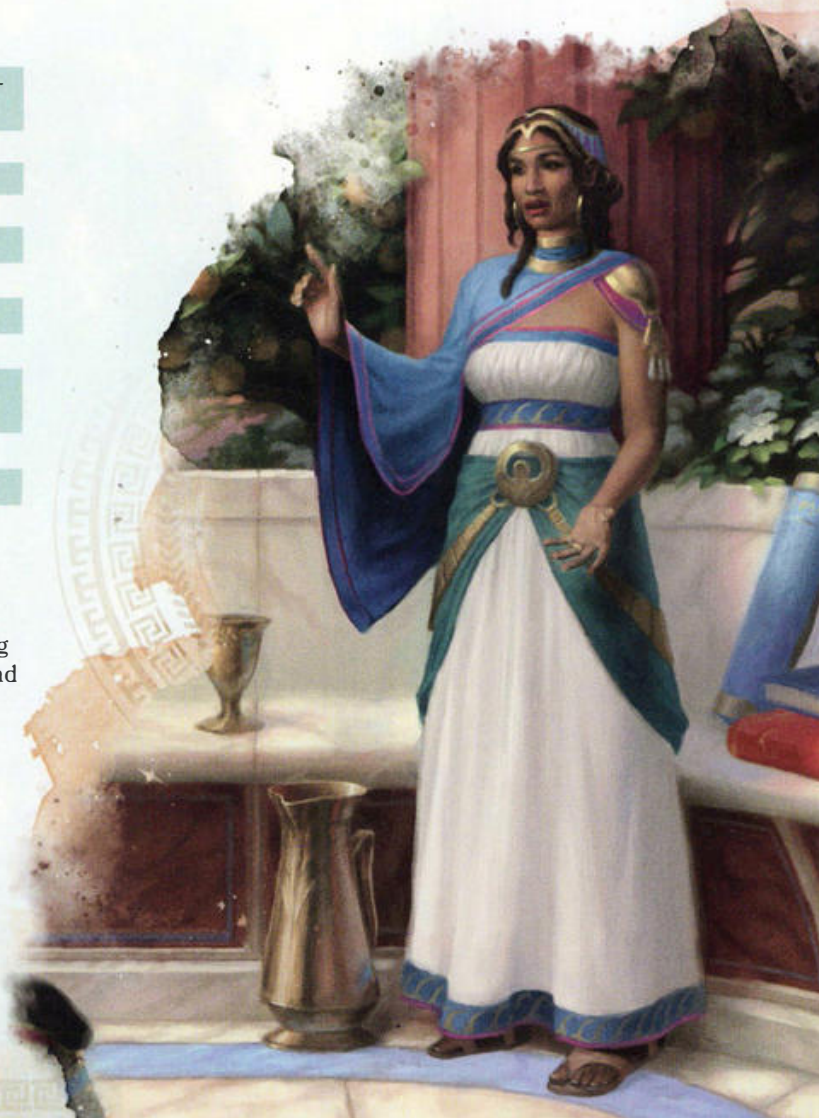
### AGORA VILLAINS

An agora villain could be almost any humanoid, from a corrupt politician to a common criminal thug. Some of these folks use monsters to do their dirty work. Examples of such villains appear on the Agora Villains table.

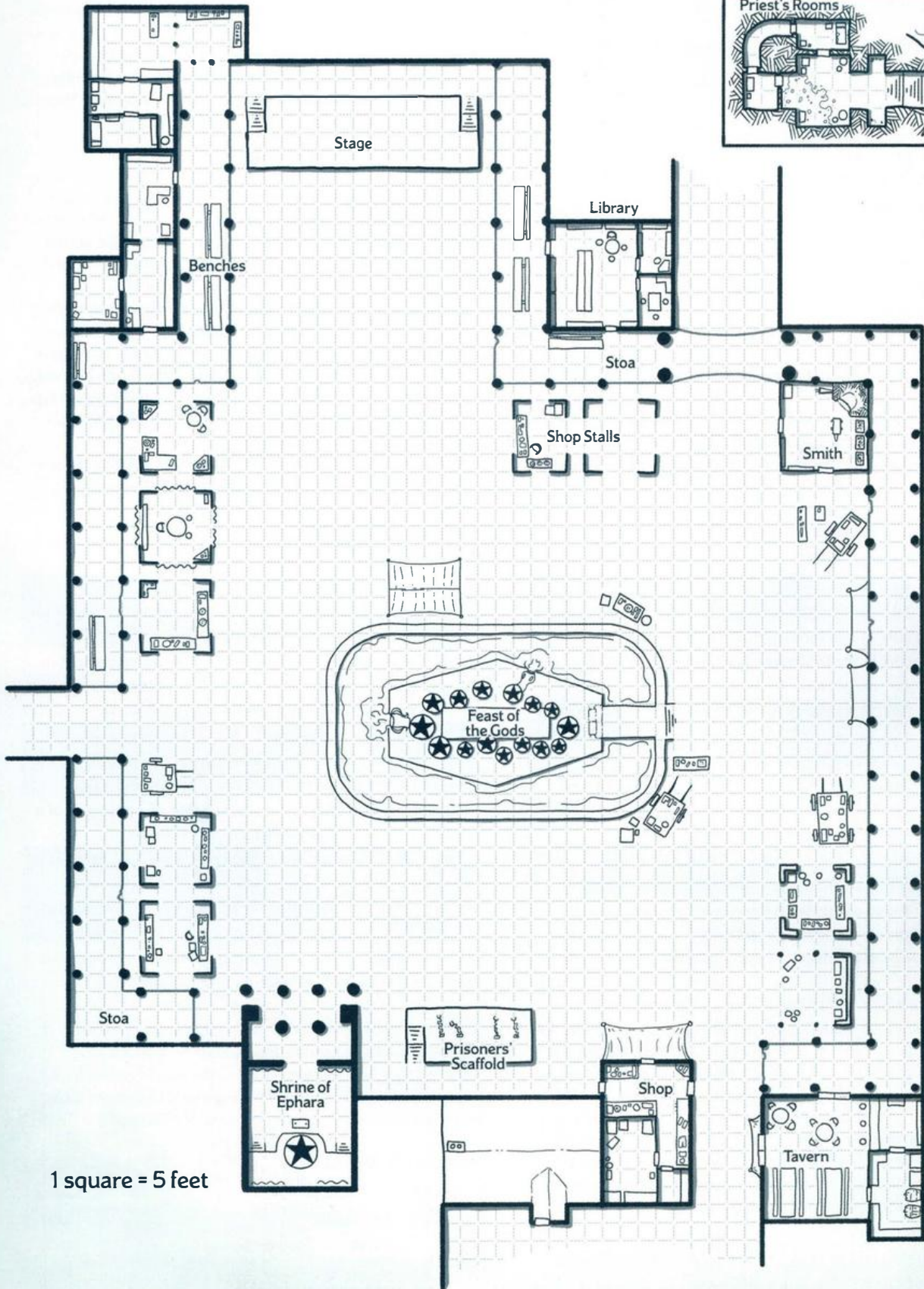
#### AGORA VILLAINS

##### d6 Villain

- 1 An **assassin** murders a politician's rivals then poses the victims in grisly, public tableaux.
- 2 A group of **thugs** vandalizes market stalls whose owners don't pay a weekly protection fee.
- 3 **Cultists** of Pharika plot to spike the wine at a party in the agora with an experimental poison.
- 4 A snake charmer overreaches when he unsuccessfully attempts to control an **amphisbaena** (see chapter 6) during a performance.
- 5 A disgraced priest of Ephara releases a horde of anvilwrought creatures (see chapter 6) on a crowd gathered at the agora.
- 6 A **mage** politician uses enchantment magic to spread rumors about rivals.



## Beneath the Fountain



1 square = 5 feet



# EREBOS

Jealous but patient, Erebos is a demanding master. His champions know that service to him lasts not just until their deaths, but beyond that.

## EREBOS'S CHAMPIONS

Erebos spends most of his time and attention on the Underworld, leaving his champions to safeguard his interests in the realm of the living. He might call upon his followers to punish those who escape the Underworld, spread despair, or thwart the schemes of other gods, particularly Heliod and Phenax. The Erebos's Quests table suggests a few adventures the god's champions might involve themselves in.

### EREBOS'S QUESTS

d6	Adventure Goal
1	Capture a hero who came back to Theros as a Returned and send them back to the Underworld.
2	Find out why those who die in a coastal village never arrive in the Underworld, and why the village is haunted by eidolons.
3	Protect those who attend the funeral of a village elder in the hills near Akros, where minotaurs have disrupted recent burials.
4	Investigate an alchemist who claims to have transmuted lead into gold—but who might somehow be stealing it from the Underworld.
5	Refute the claim of a priest of Heliod who is said to be immortal because of the sun god's blessing.
6	Take an aging champion of Iroas who has pledged their soul to Erebos in exchange for a glorious death on one last foray into the wild lands.

### AN EREBOS CAMPAIGN

A campaign structured around the player characters as champions of Erebos often invites a certain amount of moral complexity. Perhaps heroes are brought together to oppose an overreach by a champion of Heliod. Or maybe they're united by some common plight such as plague or war, as Erebos grants his blessings to those who determinedly face fate. From there, they might be drawn into helping Erebos maintain the line between life and death by fighting against Returned raiders.

Champions of Erebos who want to maintain a moral code separate from that of their god have a difficult path to walk. They might find themselves forced to choose between what they believe is right and what their god tells them to do. If this leads them to violate one of Erebos's most sacred rules—by allowing a lost soul to escape, for example—Erebos could transform into a campaign villain. The characters might then try to atone for their behavior or seek the protection of another god.

## EREBOS'S VILLAINS

Erebos's sphere of influence is every bit as essential to life on Theros as Heliod's, but it is easy to see why many take a dim view of him and his champions. The status quo that Erebos seeks to uphold is a brutal one, based on the tragic fact that every life ends in death.

Followers of Erebos might become villains when they follow their god's orders, sowing despair among the populace. Some become death-crazed killers or dispassionate murderers, unable to see the difference between dying now and dying later. Others abuse their blessings to cheat death for themselves or their loved ones, and still others simply want to get rich.

The Erebos's Villains table suggests a variety of foes that might arise from among the god's followers.

### EREBOS'S VILLAINS

d6	Villain
1	A <b>veteran</b> bargains with Erebos to allow him to remain in the living world as a Returned in exchange for a steady stream of mortal sacrifices.
2	A prominent <b>knight</b> of another god loses their entire family, then publicly turns to Erebos in hopes of being reunited with loved ones in the Underworld.
3	An <b>acolyte</b> convinces Erebos to bring her murdered daughter back to life, but the daughter is restored as a potent Returned who now terrorizes the polis.
4	A wealthy <b>noble</b> drives tenants out of a poor part of a polis so he can build a temple to Erebos.
5	The queen of a remote settlement prays to Erebos for endless treasure, and Erebos "blesses" her by turning the nearby river to liquid silver. The tyrant is delighted, but everyone else in her domain suffers.
6	A <b>priest</b> of Erebos terrorizes a village, convinced that a particular Returned has taken refuge there.

### EREBOS'S MONSTERS

Erebos has legions of fallen monsters, heroes, and villains that he can send back to the world of the living temporarily as Nyxborn. The Erebos's Monsters table presents just a few foes likely to serve the god's will.

### EREBOS'S MONSTERS

Challenge	Creature	Source
1/2	Shadow	MM
2	Two-headed cerberus	MOT
3	Lampad	MOT
3	Nightmare	MM

Challenge	Creature	Source
5	Night hag*	MM
9	Aberrant overlord	MOT
11	Doomwake giant	MOT
11	Nightmare shepherd	MOT

\* See chapter 6 for details about these creatures in Theros.

## EREBOS AS CAMPAIGN VILLAIN

The god of death is a natural villain, whether from the beginning of the campaign or after he takes a villainous turn against his former champions.

As a campaign villain, Erebus will try to carry out the worst of his schemes: sowing despair, ending lives before their time, or supplanting Helioid. The campaign might begin with cultists of Erebus committing random murders, then escalate when a prominent priest or champion of Helioid is assassinated. Adventurers who have no love for the sun god might still find cause to put a stop to Erebus's terrors—particularly if he starts lashing out against followers of other gods.

## EREBOS'S DIVINE SCHEMES

When the god of death chooses to move against the other gods, the effects can be catastrophic. The Erebus's Divine Schemes table suggests a few ways Erebus might move against both gods and mortals.

## EREBOS'S DIVINE SCHEMES

### d4 Scheme

- 1 Erebus has captured Phenax's eidolon, the identity severed from Phenax's body when he became the first Returned, and uses it to force Phenax to serve his whims.
- 2 Erebus unleashes a deadly plague. The cure grows only in the peaceful Underworld realm of Ilysia. Mortal champions flock to Ilysia, threatening to breach the ward's sanctity and allow Erebus's influence to creep in.
- 3 Servants of Helioid find a stone that can raise the dead in both body and soul. Enraged, Erebus sends his followers to claim the stone, which Helioid's worshipers have claimed as a holy relic.
- 4 With the aid of Pharika, Erebus creates a poison capable of killing a god. Learning of this, the other gods try to force Erebus to relinquish the poison, but the god of the dead has already deployed it in the form of a sapient being. Now, champions of the gods scour the world, searching for the living weapon.

EREBOS'S MINIONS HUNT THE RETURNED AND WARN THOSE WHO CONSIDER THE SAME FOLLY.





## GRAVEYARD TEMPLE

Any place where the remains of the dead are interred is considered a place of worship for Erebus. A graveyard can consist of mass graves, individual burial plots, family tombs containing interment niches or urns, or a combination of all such sites honoring the dead. These places often include a shrine to the god of death, which is home to the graveyard's priests.

During the day, the priests lead funeral rites, care for the graveyard, and offer counsel to those praying for acceptance of their fates. Larger graveyard complexes might also have a vault for storing gold or other valuables, and the priests could act as financial advisors and executors of estates, since wealth and death go hand in hand in Theros.

At night, the restless dead might walk through the graveyard's temple. Sometimes these dead are restless ghosts that can't pass into the Underworld until they finish a piece of business. Others might be Returned, lingering near their place of burial because they can't remember where else to go, or evil undead—such as specters and wraiths—waiting to harm any living creatures they come across.

### GRAVEYARD TEMPLE ADVENTURES

Graveyard temple adventures are centered on death and wealth. The characters could be asked to deal with undead, protect or steal a grave's remains or treasure, or attend a funeral in the graveyard. Many graveyards have tunnels connecting the tombs that the priests use in their caretaking duties, so exploring such a complex can be a daunting task. The Graveyard Temple Adventures table offers ideas for adventures that could occur in such a place.

## GRAVEYARD TEMPLE ADVENTURES

### d10 Adventure Goal

- 1 Rob a grave or the temple's vault.
- 2 Protect a grave or the temple's vault from robbery.
- 3 Destroy a seemingly endless wave of undead pouring forth from a graveyard.
- 4 Prevent the funeral of a loathed individual from being disrupted.
- 5 Find an entrance to the Underworld in the graveyard.
- 6 Reunite a **Returned sentry** (see chapter 6) and their **ghostblade eidolon** (see chapter 6).
- 7 Destroy **giant spiders** infesting a tomb.
- 8 Acquire death records for a family from a temple full of angry spirits.
- 9 Escape the graveyard when undead suddenly rise and overtake the complex.
- 10 Use a person's remains to raise them from the dead.

## GRAVEYARD TEMPLE MAP

The temple shown in map 4.3 sits at the center of a graveyard, which consists of underground tombs that hold urns of ashes, individual burial plots, and a mass grave for those who couldn't afford better. The ground level of the temple contains a chapel with benches and a raised dais, which holds an altar and a viewing table for bodies of the deceased. The other chambers of the temple's first floor contain the priests' quarters, offices, embalming chambers, as well as a vault.

The temple's cellar holds burial and financial records, as well as tools used in the caretaking of the graveyard. Tunnels that can be sealed with iron doors connect the cellar to all of the graveyard's tombs.

One of the graveyard's individual plots is marked with a nameless marker. This grave plot doesn't contain a body. The most valuable treasures entrusted to the temple's care are buried in this spot.

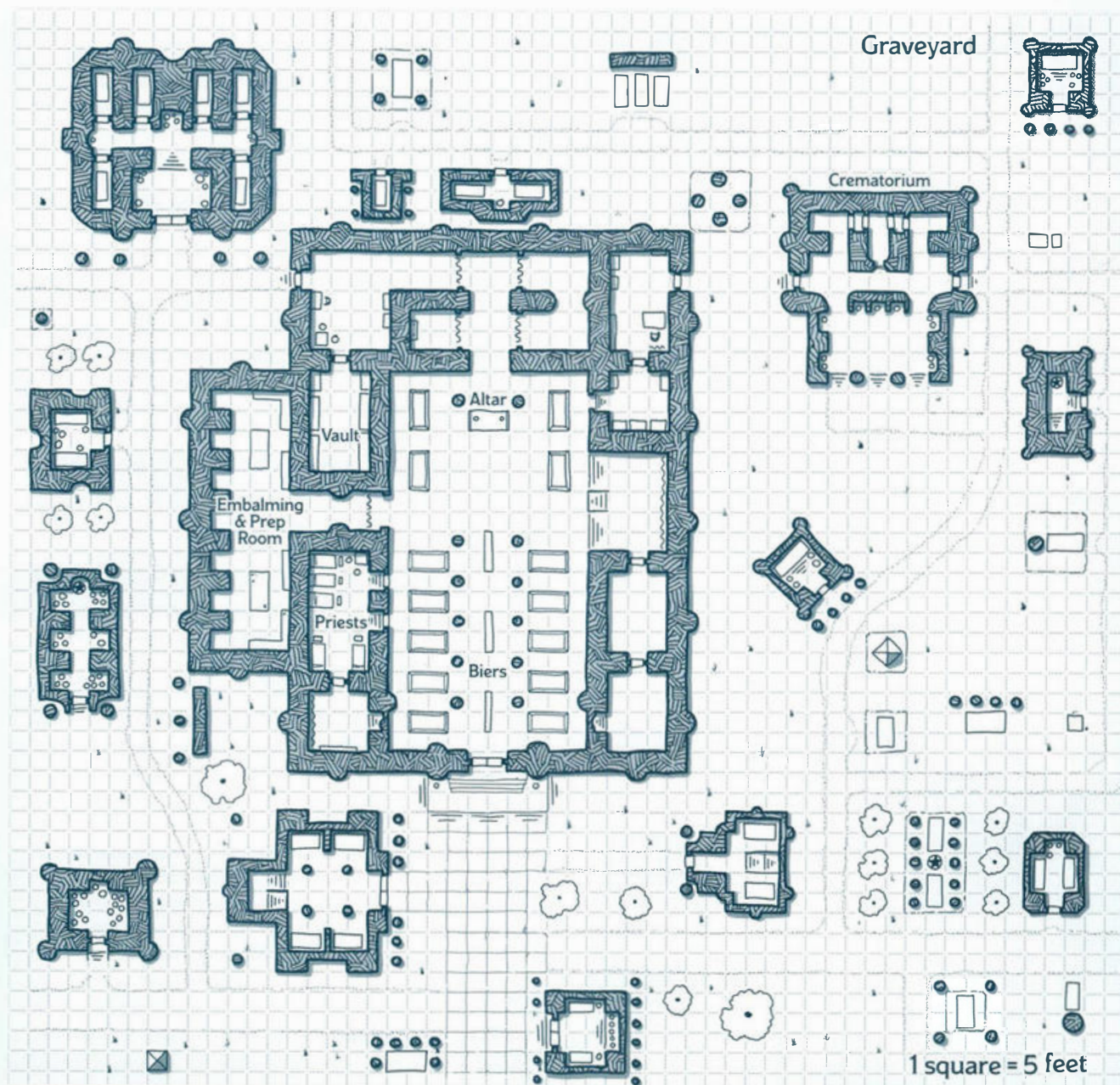
### GRAVEYARD TEMPLE VILLAINS

Graveyard temple villains include those seeking to control death and wealth. Examples of such figures appear on the Graveyard Temple Villains table.

## GRAVEYARD TEMPLE VILLAINS

### d6 Villain

- 1 A terrified **Returned palamnite** (see chapter 6) runs amok in the graveyard, having lost all sense of itself after finding its way back to the world.
- 2 A **cyclops** with a taste for rotting flesh digs up plots in the graveyard each night.
- 3 A priest removes limbs from corpses to build an congregation of **flesh golems** he can't control.
- 4 A gate to the Underworld releases a bloodthirsty **Underworld cerberus** (see chapter 6) into the graveyard.
- 5 An **archmage** works to raise a vengeful army from the remains of her war-ravaged village.
- 6 A mob of paranoid, inexperienced **commoners** hunt for Returned but end up tormenting all strangers.



Graveyard

Crematorium

Vault

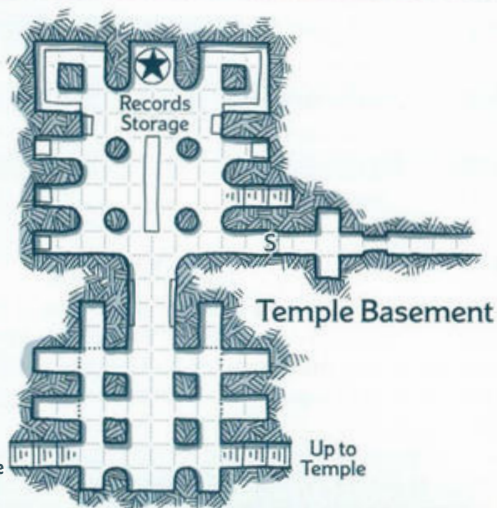
Embalming  
& Prep  
Room

Priests

Biers

Altar

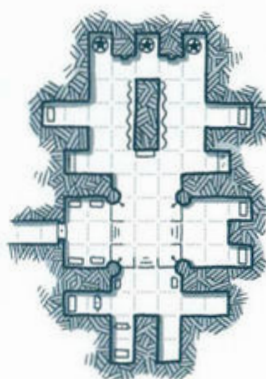
1 square = 5 feet



Temple Basement

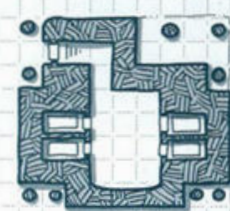
Up to  
Temple

Up to  
Temple

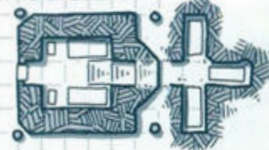


False Mausoleum  
& Treasure Vault

Mausoleum



Mausoleum





# HELIOD

As powerful as he is arrogant, Heliod believes in his vision of a bright, orderly future and demands that his champions help bring it into being.

## HELIOD'S CHAMPIONS

Heliod's champions are a means to accomplish his goals. In the world, Heliod is concerned with law and order, justice and fidelity. On a larger scale, he seeks to establish his superiority over the other gods, and his mortal champions might get caught up in those schemes in ways both large and small.

The Heliod's Quests table suggests a few adventures the god's champions might involve themselves in.

### HELIOD'S QUESTS

#### d6 Adventure Goal

- 1 Bring a shard of sunlight to a place of unending darkness.
- 2 Establish law and order in a place of anarchy and lawlessness.
- 3 Keep people safe from a natural disaster caused by the anger of another god (such as a volcano spawned by Purphoros or a tidal wave caused by Thassa).
- 4 Hunt down a notorious lawbreaker who has fled from a polis into the wilderness.
- 5 Triumph in a contest of strength or charisma to prove Heliod's superiority over the other gods.
- 6 Defeat a champion of another god (most likely Erebos, Purphoros, Phenax, or Mogis).

## A HELIOD CAMPAIGN

A campaign structured around champions of Heliod might cast adventurers as valiant protectors of civilization. Rampaging monsters, lawless agitators, hardened criminals, oath breakers, and the champions of Heliod's divine enemies pose constant threats, and the characters are charged with combating them all.

At the beginning of the campaign, the characters might stand alongside other defenders of a polis against attacking monsters and receive Heliod's blessing at a crucial moment to turn the tide of battle. Hailed as heroes by the polis, they continue to enjoy Heliod's favor as they vanquish one threat after another.

Losing their patron's favor is the greatest danger to champions of Heliod. If the god views them as disobedient or comes to see them as a threat, he might turn against them. At that point, characters might either try to regain his favor or seek protection with another god.

## HELIOD'S VILLAINS

It's easy for servants of Heliod—and even the god himself—to take on a villainous role in the world. Heliod's followers easily become obsessed with upholding justice at the price of mercy, or with advancing order at the price of freedom, turning them into vicious tyrants or overzealous enforcers. On a smaller scale, someone who has suffered a grievous wrong might swear an oath of vengeance in Heliod's name and become a deadly vigilante. When a follower of Heliod's righteous zeal for justice turns to oppressive tyranny, Heliod himself might send champions to stop the would-be tyrant.

The Heliod's Villains table suggests a variety of foes that might arise from among the god's followers.

### HELIOD'S VILLAINS

#### d6 Villain

- 1 A local **noble** imposes overwhelming punishments for even minor infractions of law.
- 2 A leader persecutes an entire population of people because of a crime committed by a single member.
- 3 An **assassin** starts killing everyone connected to a trial after which the perpetrator was exonerated.
- 4 A fanatical **priest** tries to undermine the priests of other gods by outlawing their holidays.
- 5 A tyrant suppresses free expression, punishes protesters, and quashes any form of dissent.
- 6 A nervous **oracle** (see chapter 6) identifies the characters as a threat to the stability of the polis.

## HELIOD'S MONSTERS

Heliod is rarely associated with deadly monsters, more often with celestial messengers and noble creatures. Even so, adventures that bring characters into conflict with Heliod's agents might pit them against creatures such as those on the Heliod's Monsters table.

### HELIOD'S MONSTERS

Challenge	Creature	Source
1/8	Noble	MM
2	Centaur	MM
2	Griffon	MM
2	Pegasus	MM
3	Fleecemane lion	MOT
9	Cloud giant	MM
11	Roc	MM
23	Empyrean	MM

## HELIOD AS CAMPAIGN VILLAIN

Whether Heliod is a villain from the beginning of the campaign or takes a villainous turn against his former champions, a campaign centered on Heliod's arrogance and peevishness brings the worst of the sun god's qualities into focus.

As a campaign villain, Heliod is most likely driven by his desire to assert his rulership over the other gods of the pantheon and his kingship over everything: Nyx,

the mortal world, and the Underworld. He might begin, through his agents, by enacting laws that make participation in Heliod's rites mandatory for the citizens of a polis. From there, it's a small step to suppressing the open worship of other gods, then trying to spread both policies to other cities. If the characters are champions of other gods, they might find themselves the targets of Heliod's agents, marked as a threat to order and stability in the poleis.

Such a campaign might end with the characters appeasing Heliod in some way, convincing the other gods (especially Kruphix or Klothys) to intervene and rein in Heliod's hubris, or even confronting Heliod with the support of other gods.

### HELIOD'S DIVINE SCHEMES

Heliod's activities among the other gods can have a wide-ranging impact on the pantheon and the mortal world. The Heliod's Divine Schemes table offers examples of how the god might have a mythic impact on the mortal world, embroiling the characters in the middle of divine squabbles.

### HELIOD'S DIVINE SCHEMES

#### d4 Scheme

- 1 Heliod decides to confront Erebos in the Underworld. He gathers fallen heroes around him as he marches on Erebos's palace in Tizerus. Meanwhile, the sun has vanished from the sky in the mortal world, and the dead can't enter the Underworld.
- 2 Heliod grows tired of the battles between Iroas and Mogis, and he decides to end their conflict by banishing Mogis. To his surprise, both gods turn against him. The resulting conflict causes the sun to rain divine blood, producing bizarre effects.
- 3 Angry at the hubris of nobles who boast of having the best hounds, Heliod turns all dogs into wolves and monsters that kill and run wild.
- 4 Heliod arms a champion with his weapon, *Khrusor*, but the hero goes wild with power and tries to slay Purphoros. The repercussions border on the cataclysmic, with the champion slain, Mount Velus erupting, and the spear shattered. Only Purphoros can repair the spear, and he's hardly in the mood to do so.

HELIOD'S SPEAR DOLES OUT HIS BLESSINGS  
AS WELL AS HIS WRATH.





## SUN TEMPLE

These multistory towers of worship rise atop mountains, hills, and the highest ground in a settlement, bringing congregants as close as possible to the sun. Huge windows, light-reflecting stone, and art depicting legendary heroes make every sun temple a bright, inspiring space.

The rites conducted in sun temples include marriages, ceremonies to honor heroes, dawn worship services, breakfast banquets, and occasionally funerals, which typically involve a pyre for the deceased. These events are held on the temple's roof, where worshipers are closest to the sun and can feel its warmth.

### SUN TEMPLE ADVENTURES

Sun temples honor heroes and record their deeds. An adventure in which the characters need to meet, research, protect, or confront a legendary figure might happen in one of these houses of worship. Additionally, large groups gather in these temples, potentially leading to adventures involving crowds that need to be protected, quelled, or investigated. The Sun Temple Adventures table offers plots that could occur in such a place.

### SUN TEMPLE ADVENTURES

#### d12 Adventure Goal

- 1 Acquire an artifact used by a legendary hero.
- 2 Defend a hero being honored in a ceremony from an assassination attempt.
- 3 Acquire the remains of a legendary hero from the temple's crypts so the person can be resurrected.
- 4 Prevent a wedding from taking place, so the couple's union doesn't fulfill an ominous prophecy.
- 5 Expose a celebrated hero as a fraud.
- 6 Learn the sins of a person seeking religious counsel.

#### d12 Adventure Goal

- 7 Find out who among a crowd of people gathered at the temple murdered a priest.
- 8 Disperse a mob of people who blame Helioid and his clergy for a long drought.
- 9 Defend the temple's worshipers from followers of Mogis assaulting the building.
- 10 Offer Helioid a burnt sacrifice to gain his blessing.
- 11 Offer Helioid a mass sacrifice to prevent him from smiting a nearby settlement.
- 12 Find a hero's firsthand account of a battle with a unique monster among the temple's records before a rival group of adventurers does.

### SUN TEMPLE MAP

The sun temple shown in map 4.4 presents a common design for Helioid's holy sites. Most ceremonies take place on the rooftop, which is surrounded by statues of heroic figures and magnificent gardens that bloom in the dawn light. Worshipers reach the top by climbing stairs on the outside of the tower.

Floor-to-ceiling windows on the temple's fourth level reveal a crypt with hundreds of funeral urns placed in niches on the wall and in decorative columns. Lower levels hold the personal chambers of priests, as well as quiet chambers where people can worship at small altars or seek counsel from clergy who specialize in matters of morality. The temple's ground floor contains a museum displaying heroic artifacts and accounts of epic deeds, all of which are guarded by the ghosts of heroes interred in the crypt.

### SUN TEMPLE VILLAINS

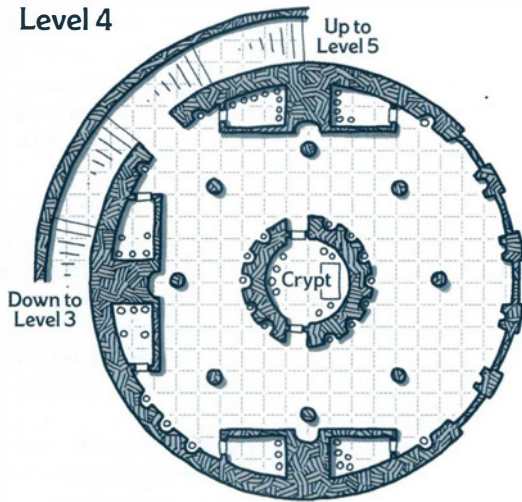
Although sun temples are places that glorify heroic deeds, they do attract villains eager to please Helioid, defy him, or twist his tenets. Examples of such villains appear on the Sun Temple Villains table.

### SUN TEMPLE VILLAINS

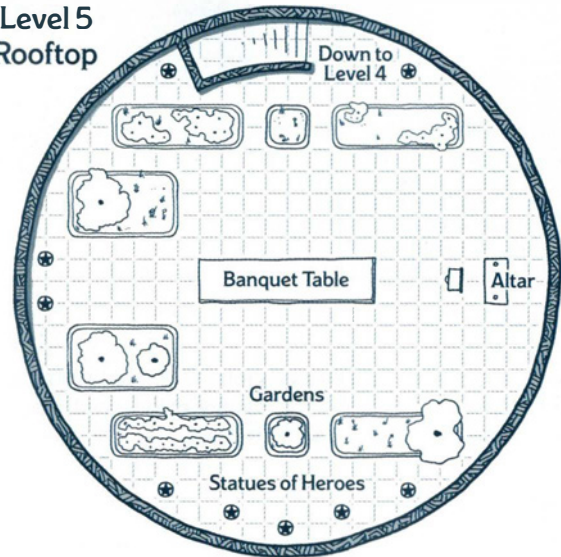
#### d6 Villain

- 1 A once-heroic **veteran** seeking to regain his youthful strength tries to burn attendees at a dawn banquet as a sacrifice to Helioid.
- 2 A secret cabal of Phenax **cult fanatics** infiltrates the temple and uses details learned in private counseling sessions to blackmail worshipers.
- 3 An **adult blue dragon**, scarred by a champion of Helioid, seeks to destroy all sun temples in the hopes of bringing about everlasting night.
- 4 A corrupt **oracle** (see chapter 6) of Helioid sells counterfeit heroic artifacts to those he can't see as being destined for greatness.
- 5 A lazy **priest** of Helioid risks bringing the god's wrath down upon the entire temple.
- 6 An **archmage** devoted to Helioid has created a second sun, one which endlessly illuminates the land and burns those she considers wicked.

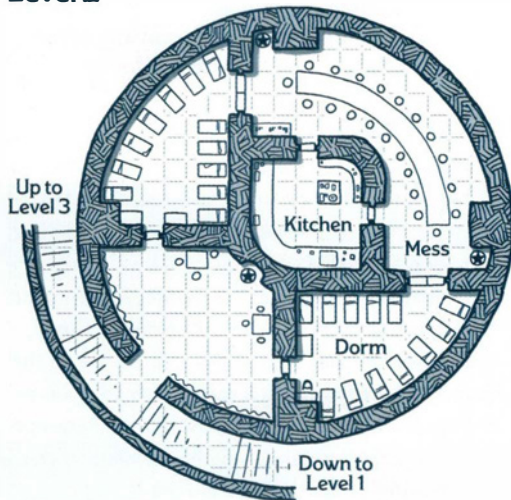
## Level 4



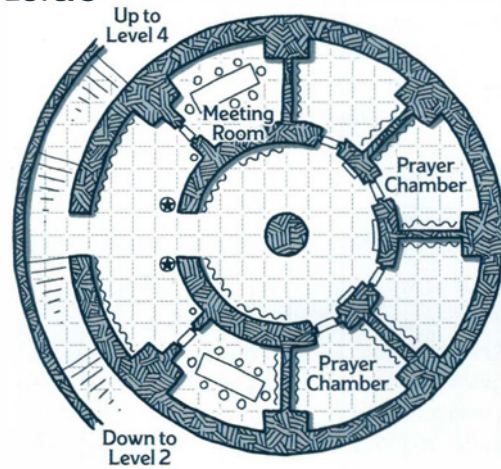
## Level 5 Rooftop



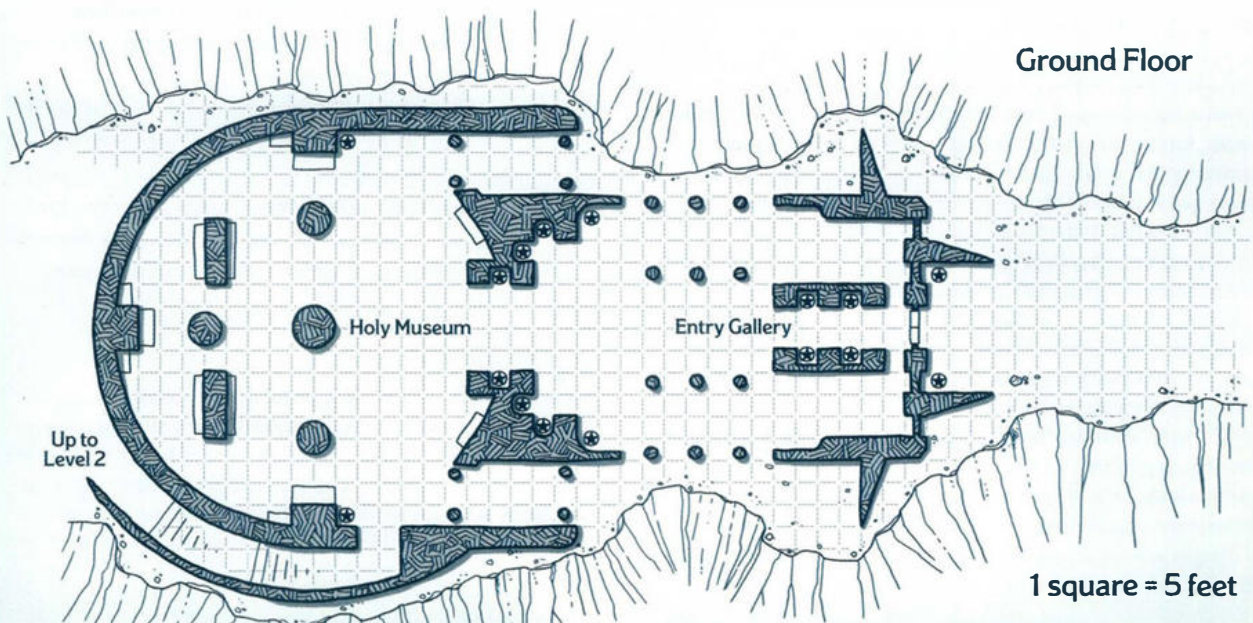
## Level 2



## Level 3



## Ground Floor



1 square = 5 feet

# IROAS

Iroas expects much of his champions. Constant training and testing oneself against the strongest foes available are the hallmarks of Iroas's champions.

## IROAS'S CHAMPIONS

Iroas's champions are his generals, through whom he can deliver death blows to his enemies. On a daily basis, Iroas serves the causes of justice and honor. The weak are to be protected, just laws are to be upheld, and evil-doers must be struck down in righteous anger. Iroas's champions also serve as his vanguard in the eternal war against his brother, Mogis.

The Iroas's Quests table suggests a few adventures the god's champions might involve themselves in.

## IROAS'S QUESTS

### d6 Adventure Goal

- 1 Defeat Returned bandits who are terrorizing the polis.
- 2 Defend a polis against a champion of Mogis.
- 3 Sail to a remote island to reclaim a lost weapon of great power.
- 4 Establish law and order in a place of anarchy and lawlessness.
- 5 Triumph in a contest of strength or dexterity to prove Iroas's superiority over the other gods.
- 6 Defeat a champion of another god (most likely Mogis, Phenax, or Pharika).

## AN IROAS CAMPAIGN

A campaign focused on champions of Iroas is filled with battle, stunning acts of heroism, and valorous stands against great odds. Iroas is a god of action, and his champions are the tip of his spear, expected to hurl themselves at danger when it presents itself. Iroas holds a bitter grudge against his brother Mogis, and Iroas's champions often counter the agents of the god of carnage.

As the campaign begins, the characters could find themselves on a field of battle, either as mercenaries or sworn soldiers for a polis. Their courage at arms and the honor they demonstrate in battle impress Iroas, and he proudly bestows his blessing on them. Every subsequent engagement only enhances the characters' reputation as skilled, steadfast warriors without peer. Their actions inevitably lead to a challenge from a champion of Mogis who is intent on destroying the characters and anyone they hold dear.

Iroas exalts winners, but even a narrow defeat is still a defeat. An opponent who has no qualms about cheating and using subterfuge holds an advantage over champions of Iroas. If the characters sink to using dishonorable tactics, they can expect swift retribution and loss of favor in return for their weakness.

## IROAS'S VILLAINS

Iroas, for all his love of justice and honor, is still a god of war. Anyone on the opposing side of Iroas's forces can expect to face motivated, dedicated warriors. He is also quite stubborn and takes losing a challenge personally, sometimes declaring a vendetta if he believes the challenge was won dishonorably.

Iroas's followers sometimes forsake mercy and compassion, as matters of honor and victory are uppermost, making them pitiless foes. Writ small, this behavior could show up in an overzealous young commander who would sacrifice his unit in a hopeless battle rather than retreat. If a great champion of Iroas loses their moral compass amid the horrors of war and commits atrocities in the name of victory, Iroas himself will send heroes to stop the fallen champion.

The Iroas's Villains table suggests a variety of foes that might arise from among the god's followers.

## IROAS'S VILLAINS

### d6 Villain

- 1 A knight in the polis guard regularly subjects his soldiers to extreme disciplinary techniques, leading them to start a revolt.
- 2 A general (**Akroan hoplite**; see chapter 6) commands a town be put to the torch for its soldiers' crimes. Followers of Phenax are actually responsible for the crimes and are framing the community so it will be destroyed and turned into a haven for the Returned.
- 3 An aging athlete (**gladiator**) pursues sinister magic to aid his performance at the cost of innocent lives.
- 4 The government of a polis fearful of impending war forces farmers to join a militia, precipitating a famine as crops are left untended.
- 5 A priest tries to undermine the servants of other gods by forcing them into duels and shaming them if they lose.
- 6 A gifted orator (**noble**) offers honest but scathing criticism of a champion of Iroas. The champion demands recompense, and the orator needs support against this threat.

## IROAS'S MONSTERS

Iroas is associated with warriors of all backgrounds. Most of the creatures in his retinue lack subtlety and excel in physical combat. Adventures that bring characters into conflict with Iroas's agents might pit them against monsters such as these. The Iroas's Monsters table presents just a few foes likely to serve the god's will.

### MYTH OF KELEPHNE THE VICTOR

It started with a rumor. Athletes gathering in Akros for the Iroan Games whispered of a hermit in the wilderness, a master wrestler who'd brought down giants with her bare hands. As the games commenced, the rumors continued, and athletic victories seemed hollow so long as the so-called best was not there to compete.

When Kelephne did arrive, she was barefoot and had a fire in her eyes. The rumors of her skill were not exaggerated, and for three days, she battled a continuous stream of competitors. When no others would challenge her, she left without ceremony. She was never seen again, and some speculated she was Iroas in human form.

Athletes tried for years to mimic Kelephne's techniques. Years later, wanderers discovered a cave covered in writing. These instructions became known as Kelephne's manual, and her technique was called pankration—now a widely studied style of weaponless fighting.

### IROAS'S MONSTERS

Challenge	Creature	Source
1/8	Guard	MM
1	Nyx-fleece ram	MOT
2	Griffon	MM
3	Akroan hoplite	MOT
3	Fleecemane lion	MOT
5	Gladiator	MM
7	Stone giant	MM
11	Roc	MM

### IROAS AS CAMPAIGN VILLAIN

Characters are likely to raise the ire of Iroas because they oppose his followers in battle or defy his ideals. His anger is direct and unsubtle, much like Iroas himself.

Iroas might be titled the god of victory in all respects, but he cares less about victory in competitions than he does about victory in war. In war, both mortals and gods could be blinded by the rush to victory or by cleaving to stubbornly held ideas. Although a campaign against Iroas might be straightforward in how the action plays out, the underlying causes of conflict could be quite complex, involving attacks on people who may seem unrelated to the initial conflict. As a campaign villain, Iroas is most likely driven by his desire to win in battle, to confront Mogis, or to avenge an insult to his honor.

The campaign might end with the adventurers winning Iroas's respect in some way, convincing the other gods (including Helioid if the party is interested in honor and justice, or Mogis if not) to blunt Iroas's anger, or even battle Iroas with the support of other gods.

### IROAS'S DIVINE SCHEMES

Iroas isn't much of a schemer. His view of the world is through the crystal-clear lens of battle—strategic and tactical plans are unambiguous and executed with precision. This isn't to say he is unaware of treachery or unprepared for it, only that he prefers to act forthrightly and decisively. The Iroas's Divine Schemes table suggests a few plots the god might involve himself in.



### IROAS'S DIVINE SCHEMES

#### d4 Scheme

- 1 Iroas inspires a brave Akroan general to travel forth with a handpicked army and confront the forces of a powerful and supposedly vulnerable minotaur warlord. The general loses despite Iroas's favor, and Akros is left exposed and poorly defended before a wave of Mogis-worshipping minotaurs.
- 2 Helioid, weary of the constant strife between Iroas and Mogis, swears an oath to destroy Mogis with a godly coalition behind him. Erebos, disgusted with Helioid's hubris, forms a group in support of Mogis. Iroas, rather than accepting Helioid's aid, launches a grand campaign of his own against his brother.
- 3 Mogis arms one of his champions with an axe capable of sundering the souls of mortal creatures. Iroas wants his champions to procure the weapon so he can lock it away in his armory and thwart his brother. Agents of Erebos also seek to recover the weapon on their master's behalf.
- 4 Iroas achieves the victory he has always pursued: he kills his brother, and the world falls into chaos.

## ARENA

Across Theros, contest grounds host athletic competitions and often serve as places to worship the god Iroas. The grandest hippodrome in Akros holds thousands of spectators, but more modest stadiums can be found throughout the land, serving as proving grounds for athletes and entertainment for the rich and poor. Foot and chariot races, hurling competitions, and combat sports (wrestling, boxing, and pankration) are all common events in arenas, especially during the Iroan Games, an annual series of athletic competitions held in Akros.

### ARENA ADVENTURES

Adventures in an arena often feature the characters as contestants in an athletic competition. The reward for winning could be treasure, a favor, or an audience with a person of importance—even Iroas himself, in the case of the Iroan Games. The Arena Adventures table offers ideas for adventures that could occur in such a place.

#### ARENA ADVENTURES

d8	Adventure Goal
1	Help an unfit participant survive an athletic competition.
2	Convincingly lose an athletic competition so a gambler can win big.
3	Sabotage a star athlete's chances of winning.
4	Attend tryouts to become members of a chariot racing team.
5	Assassinate a person watching a competition before the final match ends.
6	Save a wrestler from a planned murder in the arena.
7	Capture a beast that has escaped from the stadium.
8	Recover a blessed trophy and award it to a contest's rightful victor.

### ARENA MAP

The arena shown in map 4.5 has a ring of raised benches and private boxes around its sandy floor. The map of the arena's upper levels depicts the exterior seating and the interior halls below (both of which are largely mirrored on the map's opposite site). Tunnels and trapdoors allow competitors to enter the arena from almost any angle. A large tarpaulin attached to the roof can be unfurled to shade the arena's audience. An awards platform serves as a shrine to Iroas. Winners of athletic competitions stand here to receive medals, wreaths, rewards, the blessings of priests, and the praise of the crowd.

Outside the arena and beneath the seats are open areas and alcoves where vendors sell concessions and trinkets, along with booths for making bets.

The space under the arena holds gymnasiums, an equipment hall, and several staging areas and specialty rooms used as locker rooms, animal pens, and separate training areas for various creatures.

## ARENA VILLAINS

All sorts of unsavory elements can be found in an arena—backstabbing competitors, desperate gamblers, cruel trainers, savage animals, and worse. The Arena Villains table presents just a few ne'er-do-wells who might frequent physical contests.

### ARENA VILLAINS

d8	Villain
1	A champion pankratiast ( <b>Akroan hoplite</b> ; see chapter 6) has her cronies lock everyone in the arena. She allows none to leave until a challenger defeats her.
2	A <b>minotaur</b> frees all the beasts in the amphitheater during a well-attended event.
3	A chariot racer ( <b>gladiator</b> ) poisons members of a rival team, causing them to fall asleep during competition.
4	A <b>mage</b> uses magic to spy on athletes' conversations and then blackmails them with the information.
5	A <b>stone giant</b> interrupts a session of games and demands a chance to compete.
6	A promoter forces athletes to overexert themselves, causing dangerous accidents during competitions.
7	An <b>archmage</b> enchants or polymorphs innocents, forcing them to participate in brutal contests.
8	A <b>druid</b> uses the <i>awaken</i> spell on beasts in the arena to make them more capable competitors.







# KARAMETRA

All life—plant and animal—needs fertility to continue to exist, making Karametra's constancy vital to sustaining a habitable world for mortals.

## KARAMETRA'S CHAMPIONS

Karametra's champions build community, advance civilization, and bestow bounty wherever they go in the name of their god. Karametra seeks to provide for all, end famine and desperation, and ensure that everyone is supported by family and community. She isn't a demanding god, but her champions diligently court her favor by trying to further her goals.

The Karametra's Quests table suggests a few adventures the god's champions might involve themselves in.

### KARAMETRA'S QUESTS

d6	Adventure Goal
1	Plant a fruit-bearing tree where one has never grown.
2	Save a village whose crops are failing.
3	Defend or found an orphanage.
4	Teach a settlement to defend itself from wild beasts.
5	Reunite an orphan with living relatives.
6	Convince raiders to give up their ways, settle down, found a village, and devote their lives to farming.

## A KARAMETRA CAMPAIGN

At first glance, a campaign in which the player characters are champions of Karametra might seem counter-intuitive, since Karametra's goals seem to promote the antithesis of an adventuring life. But her ideals might be attractive to some adventurers, such as exiles for whom the idea of settling down in a safe, prosperous community can be a profoundly seductive prospect.

Karametra lavishes her favor on those who protect established communities, but her most cherished champions are those who strike out to found a new settlement or bring aid to a struggling or endangered community. She loves most keenly those followers who embody her values of putting community before self by leaving their peaceful lives behind and looking for others to bring into the fold. And her pride in them is all the greater when they manage to build chosen families who journey with them to pursue the same goals.

At the beginning of the campaign, the characters might discover a community in desperate straits and receive Karametra's blessing as they restore it to a state of safety and prosperity. Or they might find their home destroyed, only to receive a vision from Karametra that she's placing the community's refugees in their care.

The greatest danger to champions of Karametra is walking the line between cultivating bounty and protecting the vulnerable versus becoming greed-driven and paternalistic. Karametra values humility, and often seeks to teach those who grow too big for their britches sharp lessons against hubris.

## KARAMETRA'S VILLAINS

Karametra's followers can embody the best or worst of civilization. Just as society can protect the vulnerable it can also reinforce injustice and give it the power of law. Too much material wealth and security can make people less inclined to empathize with those who have less, or even make them believe that wealth is a sign of virtue. Ignoring these truths can lead Karametra's followers down wicked paths.

At its worst, the worship of Karametra can be twisted into compulsory conformity. It can value nature and people only for what they can provide. It can care for orphans while doing nothing to remedy the circumstances that made them orphans. It can turn defense of one's community into xenophobia. It can come to treat the wealthy as moral exemplars and the poor as moral failures. Karametra's followers can easily tip from valuing bounty to indulging in greed. Those who provide for others might come to believe it gives them a right to control them. When followers of Karametra cease to balance bounty with care, they might come to align with the foes presented on the Karametra's Villains table.

### KARAMETRA'S VILLAINS

d6	Villain
1	The head of an orphanage ( <b>commoner</b> ) believes she can care for the city's children better than their parents and works to have the other adults arrested.
2	A <b>priest</b> begins imposing restrictive lifestyle rules on a nearby population in order to "civilize" them.
3	A local leader ( <b>Setessan hoplite</b> ; see chapter 6) imposes harsh penalties on the poor, claiming their poverty is a sign they have invited the gods' wrath.
4	The head of a prominent family ( <b>noble</b> ) continues to exert abusive control over their adult children, citing their role as matriarch or patriarch to justify it.
5	A local leader ( <b>druid</b> ) forces marriages between widows and widowers to increase the population.
6	A polis leader ( <b>soldier</b> ) begins doing sweeps of the surrounding countryside to round up non-citizens and put them to work supporting the community.

## KARAMETRA'S MONSTERS

Karametra's followers usually protect innocents from monsters, but in certain circumstances, they might oppose characters. The Karametra's Monsters table presents a few foes likely to serve the god's will.

## KARAMETRA'S MONSTERS

Challenge	Creature	Source
0	Awakened shrub	MM
1	Alseid	MOT
1	Dryad	MM
2	Awakened tree	MOT
2	Druid	MM
4	Setessan hoplite	MOT
5	Earth elemental	MM
5	Unicorn*	MM
9	Treant	MM
12	Archdruid	VGM

\* See chapter 6 for details about these creatures in Theros.

## KARAMETRA AS CAMPAIGN VILLAIN

The intrinsic wildness of nature is part of Karametra's being. A campaign that paints Karametra as a villain might explore the ferocity that seethes inside her, a wild aspect held in check by the power of mortal belief, which paints her as a gentle, mothering source of bounty. She no longer demands blood sacrifices from her worshipers because they no longer believe such supplication is necessary—not because she decided to stop. In the pantheon, she personifies a truth that most gods don't fully appreciate but do fear: for all the influence they might have over mortal lives, the collective force of mortal belief can reshape the gods' very nature.

As a campaign villain, Karametra might seek to return to her blood-soaked origins, sending her champions to convince communities they must again make

blood sacrifices to please her. Karametra may send monsters to the poleis to remind them of the dangers of displeasing her, causing even more bloodshed. The campaign might end with heroes confronting Karametra or finding some other way to appease her.

## KARAMETRA'S DIVINE SCHEMES

The Karametra's Divine Schemes tables explores ways in which the god's whims might impact the mortal world and snare adventurers in divine affairs.

### KARAMETRA'S DIVINE SCHEMES

#### d4 Scheme

- 1 Karametra's statues have covered their faces as if in despair, and nothing will grow. No one seems to know what has caused the god of fertility to withdraw her blessings from the world, but the problem must be solved if life is to endure.
- 2 Karametra judges that mortals have over produced and moves to cull populations. She creates new plant species that feed on mortals, while her followers act oddly, running off to join bloody revels or sacrificing each other in the fields. How many must die before balance is restored?
- 3 Karametra's civilizing influence infringes on the territory and freedom of other nature gods, and so Nylea and Pharika band together to reduce her power.
- 4 Karametra bestows her gifts on a wild cultist or minotaur champion trying to encourage her older, more bloodthirsty worship. The faith takes hold, causing the god to make vicious demands of her followers.

KARAMETRA'S ACOLYTES GATHER THE BOUNTY OF THE WILDS FOR THE GOD'S FEASTS IN SETESSA.



## ARBOR WATCHTOWER

Sites that are sacred to Karametra, from her grand temple in the heart of Setessa to outposts in the wilderness, combine careful construction with natural growth. The god favors towers and hanging gardens that lift the verdant natural world up toward Nyx in her honor. In the Nessian Wood, Setessans build watchtowers that serve the dual purpose of military defense and worship.

### WATCHTOWER ADVENTURES

A watchtower adventure usually hinges on challenging the characters to find a way into or out of the fortress. As a military structure, a watchtower might hold secrets, weapons, soldiers, and prisoners, any of which the characters could liberate or defend. If the characters take over a watchtower, they could try to keep it for themselves. The Watchtower Adventures table offers ideas for adventures in such a place.

### WATCHTOWER ADVENTURES

#### d10 Adventure Goal

- 1 Guard a watchtower from assault.
- 2 Assault a watchtower, defeating the guards defending it and claiming it for a different god.
- 3 Steal military plans kept within a watchtower without alerting any of the guards inside.
- 4 Free a prisoner from a cell.
- 5 Infiltrate the watchtower as spies.
- 6 Clear out monsters than have taken over the place.
- 7 Steal a legendary weapon.
- 8 Steal griffon mounts.
- 9 Find a spy among the soldiers stationed at a watchtower.
- 10 Train soldiers at a watchtower to face an approaching mythic monster.

### WATCHTOWER MAP

The watchtower shown in map 4.6 is a roughly hexagonal stone tower, sculpted to help it blend in with the natural landscape. Ancient trees grow into and around the structure, causing branches and ivy to sprout from every level's open balconies.

The first floor houses the main entrance, guard posts, and alcove shrines devoted to the seasons. Most of it is taken up by gardens of flowers and fruiting trees. A spiral stairway ascends through all the higher levels.

The second floor has an enclosed portion with space for storage, food supplies, and kitchens. A broad balcony features gardens of trees, vines, and food-bearing plants.

The third floor looks much like the second, but has barracks for guards and a mess hall. Some of the balcony space is given over to archery targets, but most of it is still gardens.

The fourth floor is similar to the last two, with rooms for priests and a library. There are also gardens on the balcony, perhaps featuring rarer or stranger plants.

The top floor is open to the sky and is the main sanctuary of Karametra. A statue of the god and an altar are here. Several ancient trees form a canopy, and their trunks are sculpted to look like great heroes.

### WATCHTOWER VILLAINS

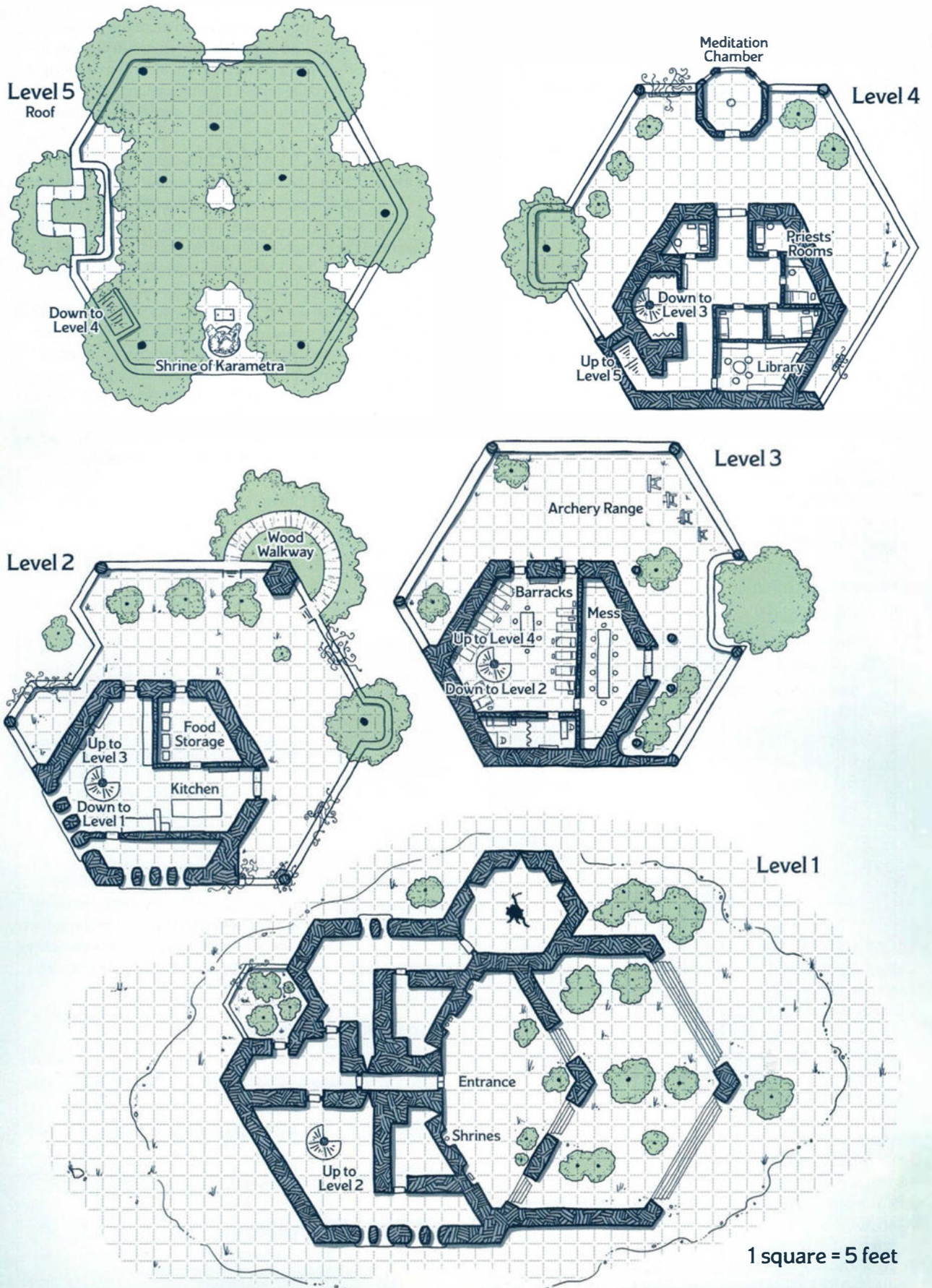
Villains at a watchtower usually want to take over, destroy, steal from, or infiltrate the place, or they already occupy it and use the defensible position to crush their enemies. Examples of such villains appear on the Watchtower Villains table.

### WATCHTOWER VILLAINS

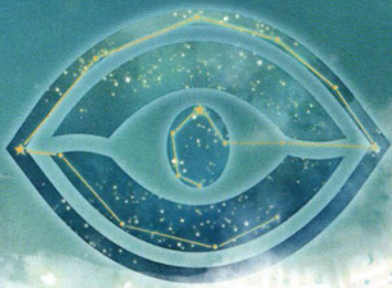
#### d8 Villain

- 1 A disguised **abhorrent overlord** (see chapter 6) convinces the soldiers in a watchtower to rise up against the officers.
- 2 A **medusa** takes over a watchtower and conducts experiments on the soldiers she captures.
- 3 Sirens (see the harpies entry in chapter 6) call soldiers to the top of the watchtower, then entice them over the edge so they can feast on the corpses.
- 4 A flight of **griffons** attacks a watchtower after soldiers steal the creatures' eggs to train the hatchlings to serve as mounts.
- 5 A **cyclops** attacks a watchtower, eager to devour the animals within.
- 6 A **druid** of Nylea, angered by the construction of a watchtower in the forest, attracts a mythic beast to the area to destroy the structure.
- 7 **Blood-toll harpies** (see chapter 6) take over a watchtower and light its beacon to bring more victims to the place.
- 8 A **spy** in a watchtower poisons the tower's food supply in advance of an upcoming attack.





MAP 4.6: ARBOR WATCHTOWER



# KERANOS

Mercurial and temperamental, Keranos personifies storms. Adventuring in the service of the god of storms is often challenging but never dull.

## KERANOS'S CHAMPIONS

Keranos sees his champions as tools to bring insight and change to the world. He doesn't contemplate the moral or ethical consequences of his insights, believing that such concerns are beneath a god's notice. This outlook might put his champions in a difficult ideological situation, stuck between the demands of a wrathful deity and uncomfortable moral choices.

The Keranos's Quests table suggests a few adventures the god's champions might involve themselves in.

### KERANOS'S QUESTS

#### d6 Adventure Goal

- 1 Help a genius artist who had their inspiration physically stolen.
- 2 Break down a ruling structure that stifles ingenuity and creativity.
- 3 Bring together lost icons of power to create an incredible storm with the might to halt a greater threat.
- 4 Find a long-lost artifact that bestows oracular visions upon the user.
- 5 Defeat the champion of another god in a battle of wits (perhaps Phenax, Mogis, or Klothys).
- 6 Find and restore a lost art form, arcane technique, or crafting method for the glory of Keranos.

## A KERANOS CAMPAIGN

A campaign focused on champions of Keranos might involve acquiring oracular visions, unraveling a prophecy, or bringing vengeance down on the storm god's enemies. He uses his champions as agents of change to bring about a great epiphany, as instruments of vengeance against those he feels have wronged him, or as divine agents sent to aid his faithful.

As the campaign begins, the characters might be summoned by an oracle and told of a dire prophecy threatening the polis. Next, they manage to avert the worst consequences for the polis through their wits and skill at arms. Now, having demonstrated their potential to the polis and Keranos, they become embroiled in ever grander, more dangerous prophecies, potentially drawing in secrets of the other gods or of reality itself.

It is relatively easy for a mortal to lose Keranos's favor because the god is quick to anger and doesn't suffer

failure or foolishness well. Should the characters disappoint the god, they might have to assuage Keranos's wrath. They could accomplish this through a great feat of wit, by laying low a powerful foe, by embarrassing a rival god, or by discovering a great insight or secret. Until this is done, Keranos would be a potent adversary.

## KERANOS'S VILLAINS

Inspiration, unguided by morals and ethics, is a dangerous force, but Keranos isn't usually concerned with matters of good or evil. As such, a charismatic leader, acting on Keranos's divinely inspired intuition, could find themselves succumbing to megalomania and hubris, with disastrous consequences for a polis.

Keranos's followers can become too narrowly focused on fulfilling dangerous prophecies without regard for loss of life. If you want to pit the characters against a morally gray antagonist who might have some traits or qualities that they admire, Keranos and his followers would work admirably.

The Keranos's Villains table suggests a variety of foes that might arise from among the god's followers.

### KERANOS'S VILLAINS

#### d6 Villain

- 1 An **oracle** (see chapter 6) foretells disaster for a polis unless a number of innocent citizens are sacrificed.
- 2 An **mage** servant of Keranos enhances storms as they form, threatening the countryside.
- 3 An artist (**commoner**) creates incredible works of art whose subjects come to life and wreak havoc.
- 4 An **archmage** who controls lightning rises to power, blasting those who oppose her to smithereens.
- 5 A wild-eyed **oracle** (see chapter 6) points to the characters as harbingers of a coming disaster.
- 6 A living storm deluges an area, taking what it believes is righteous revenge on a community.

## KERANOS'S MONSTERS

Keranos is associated with creatures that act as extensions of his volatile temper or his sudden, blinding insights. Adventures that bring characters into conflict with Keranos's agents might pit them against monsters such as these. The Keranos's Monsters table presents just a few foes likely to serve the god's will.

### KERANOS'S MONSTERS

Challenge	Creature	Source
2	Centaur	MM
3	Akroan hoplite	MOT
3	Blue dragon wyrmling*	MM
5	Air elemental	MM
7	Theran chimera	MOT
9	Young blue dragon*	MM
13	Storm giant	MM
16	Adult blue dragon*	MM
23	Ancient blue dragon*	MM

\* See chapter 6 for details about these creatures in Theros.

## KERANOS AS CAMPAIGN VILLAIN

Because Keranos doesn't readily concern himself with quandaries of good versus evil, it is easy to use him as a villain. The god might be driven by frustration at mortals over their lack of vision, or by a consuming need to trigger unrestrained creative impulses that have far-reaching effects, by anger at a real or perceived slight. His will might be expressed through an oracle who foretells a great tragedy that involves the characters or someone they care about. As the campaign progresses, Keranos becomes increasingly upset at the actions the characters take to thwart his insights or their defense of the status quo and sends his agents to enlighten them.

The campaign might end with the adventurers unraveling a troublesome prophecy, proving themselves of sufficient wisdom to merit respect, or when they convince the other gods (especially Klothys) to intervene and check Keranos's wrath.

## KERANOS'S DIVINE SCHEMES

Keranos doesn't interact much with the rest of the pantheon, preferring to brood and dispense epiphanies in solitude. He is, however, easily roused to anger and goes to extremes to satisfy real or perceived slights. The Keranos's Divine Schemes table explores the sorts of plots the god might pursue.

## KERANOS'S DIVINE SCHEMES

### d4 Scheme

- 1 Bored with the temporary beauty of violent weather, Keranos creates a massive, self-perpetuating storm. Over time, the storm grows out of control. Keranos is delighted by his creation.
- 2 Dared by Phenax to prove that he can, Keranos inspires eight mortals with eight ingenious ways to destroy the world. As a result, a genius actor, alchemist, inventor, diver, miner, sculptor, thief, and a duplicitous goat all set forth to enact their terrible brilliance.
- 3 Keranos finds the spread of mortal knowledge inconsistent and slow. He empowers a champion to grant vast knowledge to any person or beast she touches. The advent of sagacious cattle, wolves, and children greatly disrupts (and unnerves) those who live in the areas through which Keranos's champion travels.
- 4 Keranos creates a realm of his own design amid the Dakra Isles, a place where the land and its creatures obey unique physical laws and strange truths. Some of the inhabitants escape the isle and begin infecting the rest of Theros with their alternate reality.

THE MOUNTAIN TEMPLES OF KERANOS ARE CONSTANTLY WRAPPED IN STORM CLOUDS.



## ORACULAR CONFLUX

A few of Keranos's most isolated temples serve a purpose beyond worship, being sites for the reading of worldly signs and recording of knowledge. These oracular confluxes provide followers of Keranos the tools to glean great truths, be they natural occurrences or omens of the gods. Because of Keranos's connection to storms and the heavens, such temples often have weather vanes, telescopes, and other tools used to predict the weather and chart the course of celestial bodies.

Each shrine has multiple methods of predicting the future that it might offer visitors—with reading the stars, the clouds, or the entrails of sacrificed animals being particularly common. The most popular readings are those conducted during thunderstorms. Crowds gather in the shrines to watch oracles make predictions based on rainfall, wind, thunder, and other weather measurements. In some communities, oracles actively strive to be struck by lightning, risking their lives to receive mighty messages from their god.

### ORACULAR CONFLUX ADVENTURES

The player characters could come to an oracular shrine for the same reason that most other people do: to receive a prediction about the future. They also might be hired as bodyguards for the oracles, who often deliver distressing (and perhaps incorrect) predictions to violent individuals. The Oracular Conflux Adventures table offers ideas for adventures in such a place.

#### ORACULAR CONFLUX ADVENTURES

##### d12 Adventure Goal

- 1 Race an air elemental to an oracular conflux in order to receive a prediction of the future before the elemental's whirlwind obliterates all evidence of the reading.
- 2 Defend the shrine from a worshiper who is angry with an oracle for an incorrect prediction.
- 3 Convince an oracle to give a worshiper a particular false prediction.
- 4 Help the addled victim of a lightning strike recover.
- 5 Recover sacrificial animals from a cyclops raider.
- 6 Rig tools used to predict the future so that they produce a specific outcome.
- 7 Manipulate a situation so prophesied events transpire within sight of a half-blind oracle.
- 8 Evacuate a crowded shrine during a storm when lightning strike sets the temple ablaze.
- 9 Infiltrate the shrine to determine the accuracy of a particular oracle or prediction method.
- 10 Steal a book of recorded predictions from the shrine.
- 11 Collect the materials necessary to create a revolutionary oracular device.
- 12 Protect an oracle who must deliver bad news to a worshiper who is both influential and unpredictable.

## ORACULAR CONFLUX MAP

The oracular conflux shown in map 4.7 has a glass-domed roof, atop which is mounted a massive, ornate weather vane. During stormy services, oracles watch the sky for lightning patterns that they use in predictions.

The center of the shrine contains a massive orrery. Connected to the orrery room is a divination chamber, and situated within this chamber is the sacrifice chamber. These areas are used for various forms of soothsaying and predictions, including animal sacrifice and the reading of entrails.

Off the divination chamber is the observatory, which houses a telescope, an astrolabe, and star charts. Past that is the Shrine of Keranos, where a massive statue of the god is connected to a lightning rod which extends through the roof and 100 feet into the sky. When lightning strikes the rod, magical iron plates in the floor temporarily glow in the colors of the rainbow. Oracles use this display to predict the future.

Another section contains living areas for priests and oracles, and the library which connects the living areas to the orrery room contains books that can help oracles interpret visions.

### ORACULAR CONFLUX VILLAINS

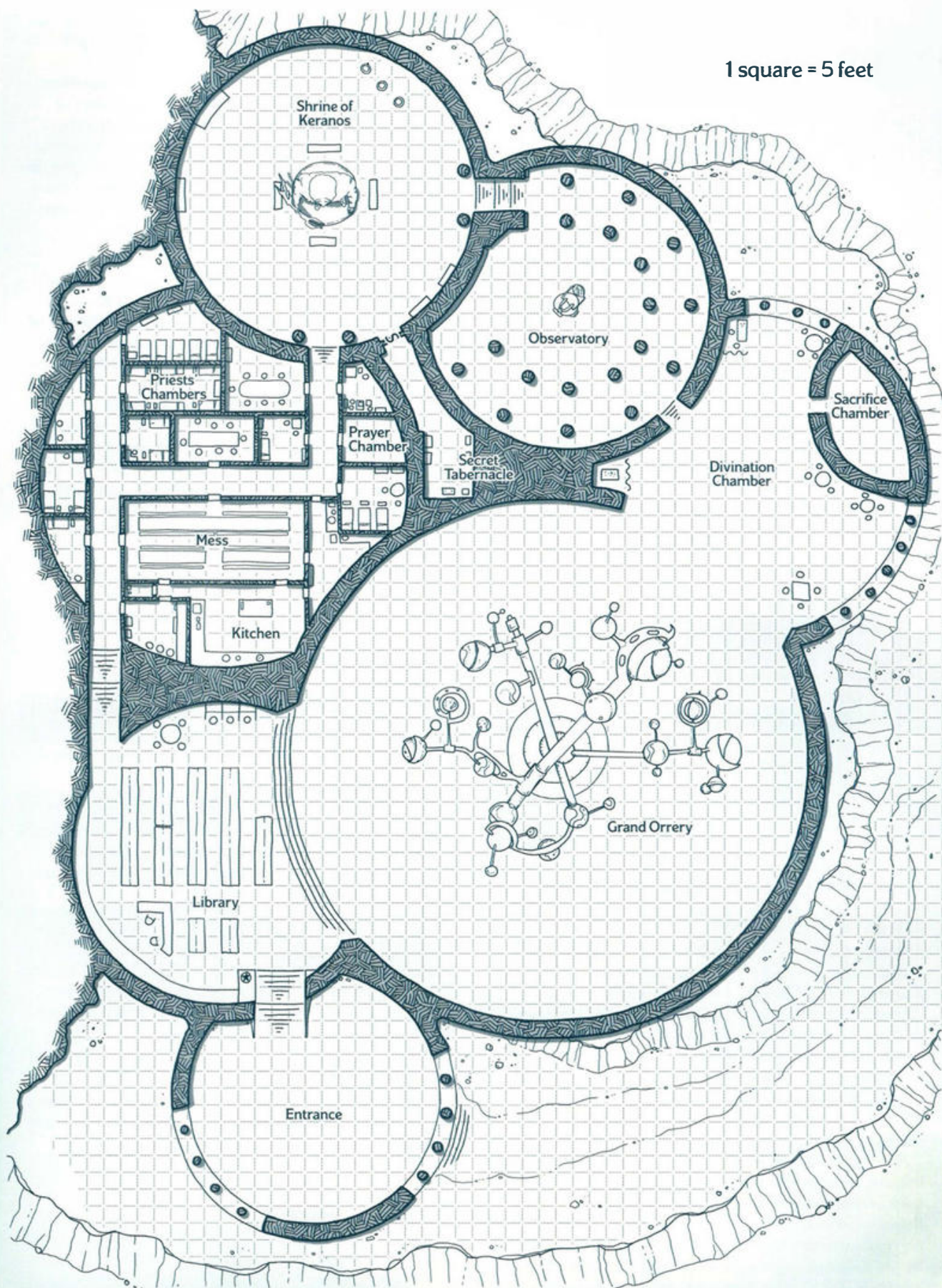
A villain in an oracular shrine is likely taking advantage of or fighting against the predictions of the future. Examples of such villains appear on the Oracular Conflux Villains table.

#### ORACULAR CONFLUX VILLAINS

##### d6 Villain

- 1 A bitter **oracle** (see chapter 6) who has foreseen her imminent death gives false predictions to worshipers so they will share her misery.
- 2 A **storm giant** pretends to be an avatar of Keranos and takes over the shrine, making its worshipers his subjects.
- 3 A **revenant** who died due to a misinterpreted prophecy comes back for revenge against the oracle who issued it.
- 4 A **cult fanatic** from a rival shrine gets the temple's animals drunk on fermented fruit, throwing off their predictions.
- 5 An angry athlete (**gladiator**) takes the conflux's oracles hostage, demanding they alter the future after predicting his defeat in an upcoming match.
- 6 An **oracle** (see chapter 6) makes false predictions to convince nobles to give him money and lavish gifts.

1 square = 5 feet





# KLOTHYS

Secretive yet vindictive in enforcing her vision of destiny in Theros, Klothys not only takes umbrage at perceived slights but has also awakened a horde of terrors during her ascent from the Underworld.

## KLOTHYS'S CHAMPIONS

The world has suffered terrible wounds from the hubris of mortals and divine entities alike. Klothys directs her champions to thwart the overly ambitious, undo their damage, and reinforce the natural order that sustains Theros.

The Klothys's Quests table suggests a few adventures the god's champions might involve themselves in.

### KLOTHYS'S QUESTS

d6	Adventure Goal
1	Defeat a titan-spawned monster that has escaped the Underworld.
2	Destroy an undead creature terrorizing a small community.
3	Punish a powerful mortal for their hubris.
4	Reestablish the balance between nature and civilization in a particular location.
5	Repair the fabric of reality in a place where the mortal world was overlaid by Nyx during Xenagos's pretensions to godhood.
6	Defeat a champion of another god (most likely Ephara, Heliod, or Iroas).

### A KLOTHYS CAMPAIGN

Although followers of Klothys tend to be solitary, fate might conspire to bring them together to execute a grand plan or be prepared for an imminent event. A campaign structured around the player characters as champions of Klothys might cast them as anarchists, prophets, or vigilantes committed to primal justice. The excessive pride of gods and mortals threatens a world already weakened by Xenagos's gambit, and Klothys chooses champions who can restore and restabilize Theros—even if doing so requires extreme measures.

Klothys rarely reveals her plans. The characters might begin the campaign by following a prophecy to a far-off land or interpreting infrequent omens to learn of nearby threats. Such a campaign can be flexible, allowing the player characters freedom to explore other opportunities before the next augury draws them back into the main storyline. As they overcome greater challenges, topple mighty demagogues, and mold the world in accordance

with its destiny, the characters might attract followers, incite rebellions, and clash with rivals who interpret Klothys's will in different ways.

Champions of Klothys are at risk of misinterpreting their god's intentions to serve their own purposes or selfishly demanding a greater destiny than what they are due. This behavior could lead to Klothys retracting her blessings or even dispatching loyal champions to destroy her wayward servants. Her most successful champions stand to reorder errant civilizations or rebalance disrupted natural orders.

## KLOTHYS'S VILLAINS

Klothys emerged from the Underworld in order to restore the natural order on Theros, creating a number of Nyxborn agents to aid her. Virtually anyone could end up a target of the god or her agents if they stand in opposition to destiny.

Various monsters rose from the Underworld when Klothys entered the mortal realm, and her most zealous followers often see them as manifestations of her will. Some might goad these terrors into attacking communities, or foster them to further spread the god's will. Klothys's most callous followers might also believe that society must crumble for the world to heal. If Klothys didn't intend this, they reason, then surely she wouldn't have brought so many monsters along in her wake.

The Klothys's Villains table suggests just a few foes that might arise from among the god's followers.

### KLOTHYS'S VILLAINS

d6	Villain
1	A single-minded Nyxborn <b>assassin</b> of Klothys hunts a hero who was raised from the dead.
2	Believing in the holiness of a terrible beast, Klothys's <b>acolytes</b> murder heroes sent to deal with it.
3	Certain that civilization offends fate, a <b>priest</b> raises a herd of <b>typhons</b> to release on a city.
4	Insulted <b>satyr revelers</b> (see chapter 6) channel Klothys's magic to drive a polis's priests into embarrassing debauchery.
5	An <b>oracle</b> (see chapter 6) knows it is a character's destiny to serve Klothys. The seer manufactures tragedy for the individual to provoke this revelation.
6	A <b>cult fanatic</b> of Klothys believes that the characters' deeds mark them as servants of the titans, destined to free one of those ancient terrors.

### KLOTHYS'S MONSTERS

A variety of monstrous creatures might arise in an area as a result of Klothys's influence, particularly those presented on the Klothys's Monsters table.

### KLOTHYS'S MONSTERS

Challenge	Creature	Source
1	Satyr reveler	MOT
2	Satyr thornbearer	MOT
3	Green hag	MM
4	Oracle	MOT

Challenge	Creature	Source
6	Annis hag	VGM
6	Cyclops*	MM
6	Underworld cerberus	MOT
7	Woe strider	MOT
9	Phylaskia	MOT
15	Typhon	MOT

\* See chapter 6 for details about these creatures in Theros.

## KLOTHYS AS CAMPAIGN VILLAIN

As a foe, Klothys might endeavor to reestablish the order of the cosmos that existed before the meddling of Xenagos and Heliod. These corrections start small, manifesting as fires, monster infestations, or a spate of accidental deaths. The more the characters intervene, the more dire these events become as the god's servants overcorrect to account for the heroes' meddling. Alternatively, averting one disaster might naturally lead to a greater one, at which point characters must contend not only with the latest catastrophe but also with the accusations and assaults of Klothys's tireless followers.

Ultimately, Klothys holds grudges only rarely. The campaign might conclude when the characters identify the moment they strayed from their destined place and correct things in order to appease the god. Likewise, the heroes might invoke the other gods' support to deflect Klothys's wrath. Boldest of all, the characters might determine what device allowed the god to enter the mortal realm; its destruction could hurl Klothys back into the Underworld for untold ages to come.

## KLOTHYS'S DIVINE SCHEMES

Klothys has many designs for Theros and for the futures she has foretold that might never come to pass. The Klothys's Divine Schemes table provides several ways in which her foresight and fury might ensnare adventurers.

### KLOTHYS'S DIVINE SCHEMES

#### d4 Scheme

- 1 Convinced that Heliod's boundless ambition will destroy Theros, Klothys creates an artifact that will destroy the sun god once he claims it as his own. She needs mortal heroes who can demonstrate the artifact's power by vanquishing Erebos's servants, and in the process stoke Heliod's envy.
- 2 Concerned by the spread of Meletian influence, Klothys fills the dreams of the polis's people with treachery. Neighbors attack neighbors, and attempts by Ephara's followers to intervene only redirect the violence toward the polis's patron.
- 3 Klothys becomes convinced that mortals giving worship to the gods distorts their proper relationship to each other, and she sets out to abolish religion.
- 4 Now that she has left the Underworld, Klothys knows it's only a matter of time until the titans escape. To prepare the world for the horrors of that inevitable conflict, she unleashes Underworld beasts into the mortal realm, trusting that the mayhem will bring forth heroes who can ultimately defeat the titans.



### MYTH OF KLOTHYS AND THE TITANS

Most mortals know little of the titans, except the comforting fact that these ancient, gigantic terrors are bound far away in the Underworld—and are therefore nothing to worry about. The fact that Klothys, god of destiny, personally and actively holds them there is unknown to most. With her spindle, Klothys endlessly knots and unravels the strands of destiny, constantly tightening the trap that keeps the titans imprisoned. Were it not for her immortal vigilance, the titans might once again claim the mortal realm as their own.

## ABANDONED TEMPLE

Abandoned temples can be found across Theros. Some of these places were once houses of worship of Klothys, the nearly forgotten god of destiny, but abandoned temples of many other gods also exist as the result of war, monster attacks, natural disasters, mass migration, neglect, or the wrath of deities.

Every abandoned temple is distinctive, combining aspects of its patron god with the result or effect of what caused it to be abandoned. You can use the Abandoned Temple Condition table to determine an abandoned temple's present state.

### ABANDONED TEMPLE CONDITION

d8	Status
1	Sunken underground
2	Overgrown with plants
3	Underwater
4	Partially collapsed
5	Buried in dirt, mud, sand, or snow
6	Beneath a new temple
7	Cracked into more than one piece
8	Floating in an unstable parallel reality

### ABANDONED TEMPLE ADVENTURES

An abandoned temple might contain records, special items, and humanoid remains, any of which adventurers might be called upon to retrieve. Many of these temples hold dangerous phenomena (such as gates to the Underworld), which might have been their undoing. Monsters and brigands often inhabit these ruins, as do hermits and scholars hording secrets too dangerous to sequester elsewhere.

The Abandoned Temple Adventures table offers ideas for adventures that could occur in such a place.

### ABANDONED TEMPLE ADVENTURES

d12	Adventure Goal
1	Retrieve records or a magic item left in the temple.
2	Demolish what's left of the temple to prevent anyone from retrieving the ancient secrets hidden inside.

### d12 Adventure Goal

3	Retrieve the remains of a dead humanoid from the temple.
4	Kill monsters infesting the temple.
5	Find a replacement for the temple's current guardian.
6	Consult with a hermit who lives in the temple.
7	Stop cultists from performing a destructive ritual in the temple.
8	Restore the temple to receive the patron deity's blessing.
9	Find a gate to the Underworld or Nyx.
10	Consult a demon living in the temple.
11	Discover why the temple was abandoned.
12	Restore the temple to reveal the truth hidden in its architecture.

### ABANDONED TEMPLE MAP

The abandoned temple shown in map 4.8 is partially collapsed, with overturned pillars, and parts of the ceiling sunken in to prevent passage to some areas. The aboveground section is overgrown with vines and includes the ruins of the main sanctuary, which contains mostly rubble except for a cracked altar and a headless statue. A library of rotting books and priests' quarters containing skeletal remains complete this section.

The halls are streaked with burn marks. Many of the rooms in this place are rubble-strewn and ruined. A passage leads to an ancient room with scrying pools filled with blood that has barely a trace of dust. A sturdy iron door protects the temple's vault.

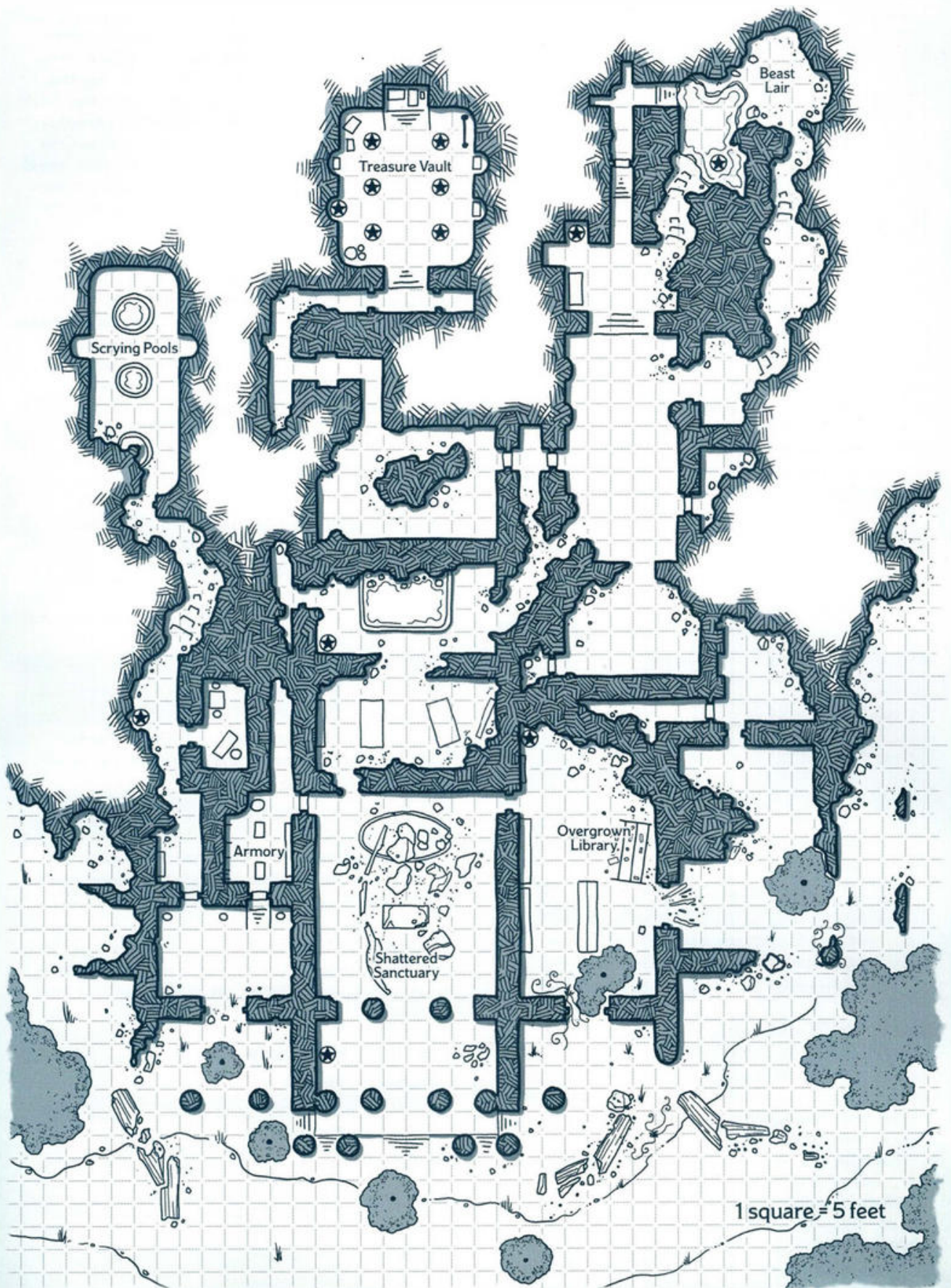
### ABANDONED TEMPLE VILLAINS

Monsters who plot alone and criminals on the run or who engage in taboo behavior are often found in abandoned temples. Examples of such villains appear on the Abandoned Temple Villains table.

### ABANDONED TEMPLE VILLAINS

d6	Villain
1	A depraved cult of Klothys captures victims on the road and brings them to the temple for ritual torture.
2	A <b>hydra</b> slumbers within an abandoned temple, having dug a lair out of one of the collapsed sections.
3	A <b>medusa</b> living in an abandoned temple grants curative aid to those who bring her a humanoid sacrifice.
4	A <b>bandit captain</b> hiding in a temple hopes to open its vault to find treasure, not knowing that a demon is trapped inside.
5	<b>Blood-toll harpies</b> make an abandoned temple their nest and devour any creatures that get too close.
6	A <b>gynosphinx</b> curious about human behavior creates a series of deadly traps in an abandoned temple and lures adventurers to the place to witness if and how they overcome its challenges.





MAP 4.8: ABANDONED TEMPLE



# KRUPHIX

Enigmatic and patient, Kruphix influences the lives of his champions in ways both subtle and profound.

## KRUPHIX'S CHAMPIONS

Kruphix seldom works directly in the mortal world, preferring to act through his champions—when he acts at all. He might call upon his followers to suppress a dangerous truth, reveal a vital secret, or end a destructive conflict. When the other gods send their champions to circumvent divine agreements, Kruphix often calls upon his champions to set things right.

The Kruphix's Quests table suggests a few adventures the god's champions might involve themselves in.

### KRUPHIX'S QUESTS

#### d6 Adventure Goal

- 1 Seize a powerful magic item from those who would misuse it, study it, and then destroy it.
- 2 Capture a former follower of Kruphix who used secret knowledge for personal gain and deliver them to Kruphix's temple for judgment.
- 3 Suppress all knowledge of a dangerous secret, such as the location of a fountain of immortality, by any means necessary.
- 4 Bring proof of a powerful conspiracy to the leaders of a human polis while evading or defeating the agents sent to stop you.
- 5 Investigate rumors of an unearthed divine relic and decide whether it's safe to be in the mortal realm.
- 6 End a conflict between the followers of two other gods, whether by mediating, forcing a truce, or siding with the weaker group to defeat the stronger one.

## A KRUPHIX CAMPAIGN

A campaign structured around champions of Kruphix can embrace moral complexity, with the adventurers sometimes making choices that cause short-term harm in the service of long-term good. They might be charged with destroying secret knowledge that could help people, revealing a secret that could kill someone but avert a larger conflict, or standing in judgment over whether knowledge is safe or unsafe.

At the beginning of the campaign, the characters might be united by their discovery of a powerful secret, earning Kruphix's patronage in order to keep that secret safe. Armed with knowledge that they alone possess, the adventurers set out to learn more about the secret they share and avert dangers that only they are aware of.

Champions of Kruphix approach their work with an impartiality that others don't always respect, and they could find themselves the targets of vendettas by the followers of other gods. Over the long term, they risk learning things about their world and its gods that could shake their faith. Some might even abandon Kruphix's principle of balance, either to enrich themselves or to serve what they see as the greater good. Kruphix would then become a villain, as he sends other agents to suppress the secrets the adventurers carry with them.

## KRUPHIX'S VILLAINS

Kruphix doesn't often act in the world, but when he does, his agenda is often morally ambiguous, and his servants' sacred quests can look like villainous schemes from other points of view. Kruphix often leaves his instructions open to interpretation, and not all of his agents use this considerable latitude responsibly.

The Kruphix's Villains table suggests a variety of foes that might arise from among the god's followers.

### KRUPHIX'S VILLAINS

#### d6 Villain

- 1 An **oracle** (see chapter 6) seeks to erase the memories of an entire community, reducing them to a simpler, happier, more natural state.
- 2 A **gynosphinx** possesses magic that can stop a rampaging monster, but refuses to share it for fear that it might be misused.
- 3 A former agent (**spy**) of Kruphix knows the location of an unguarded portal to the Underworld and plans to sell it to the highest bidder.
- 4 A **noble** sows discord among Heliod's followers, believing that the sun god is the greatest threat to harmony among the gods.
- 5 An **archmage** works to destroy the Temple of Mystery to further divide Nyx from the mortal world.
- 6 A **cult fanatic** of Kruphix learns that the characters have discovered knowledge mortals were not meant to know and works to silence them.

## KRUPHIX'S MONSTERS

Kruphix is rarely associated with monsters, but those most likely to serve him appear on the Kruphix's Monsters table.

### KRUPHIX'S MONSTERS

Challenge	Creature	Source
1/4	Blink dog	MM
1/2	Cockatrice	MM
2	Nothic	MM
3	Phase spider	MM
6	Invisible stalker	MM
7	Theran chimera	MOT
11	Gynosphinx*	MM
12	Archmage	MM
17	Androsphinx*	MM

\* See chapter 6 for details about these creatures in Theros.

## KRUPHIX AS CAMPAIGN VILLAIN

As a campaign villain, Kruphix is most likely trying to maintain or restore the balance of power among the gods. He doesn't know the future, and his actions sometimes have dire consequences that he can't predict and wouldn't willingly cause.

The campaign might begin with the misbehavior of another god or gods, then escalate when Kruphix delivers a punishment that seems out of proportion to the crime. Further attempts by the other gods to circumvent or reverse the punishment could be countered by more edicts from Kruphix, perhaps even culminating in another great Silence.

Just as Kruphix reins in the worst excesses of the other gods, the best chance of foiling Kruphix as a villain lies in the nature of Kruphix himself. A campaign in which Kruphix is a villain might end with the adventurers convincing him that his current actions don't serve the balance among the gods. Kruphix's mind isn't easily changed, though, and the adventurers might need to produce extraordinary testimony or evidence. Even just reaching Kruphix in order to communicate with him could easily require the patronage of other gods.

### KRUPHIX'S DIVINE SCHEMES

Kruphix wants to maintain the status quo rather than overturn it, so his schemes often begin as reactions to the activities of another god. The Kruphix's Divine Schemes table presents a few examples of how Kruphix's inflexible judgments might have a mythic impact on the mortal world and make divine conflicts more severe rather than less.

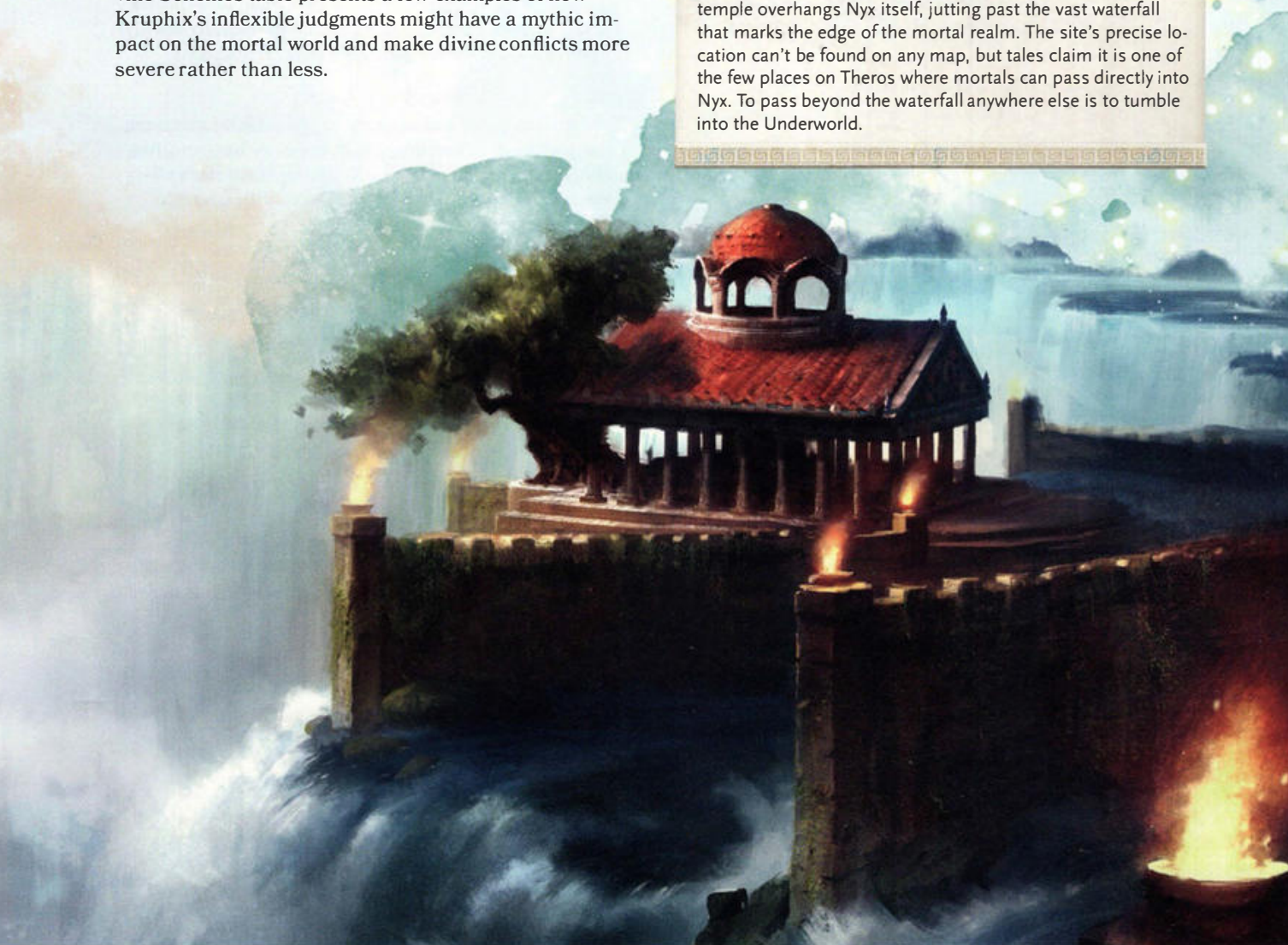
## KRUPHIX'S DIVINE SCHEMES

### d4 Scheme

- 1 Shadowy forces steal a holy artifact, thought to be a part of the sun, from Heliod's followers. The priesthood blames Phenax or Erebos, but Kruphix is behind the theft. The sun stone holds a terrible secret power, and Kruphix seeks to remove it from the mortal world before it does great harm.
- 2 Kruphix sends Nyxborn to torment a community. The locals are baffled, until it's revealed that miners have impeded on a cave that underpins the nature of time. Not only are mortals not welcome there, but someone has already entered, employed the passages there, and stolen something from the past.
- 3 A philosopher in Meletis argues that the gods rely on mortals for their existence, rather than the other way around. When this idea gains adherents, Kruphix curses the polis so that no one can speak or read.
- 4 After a minor altercation between the gods, Kruphix declares a new Silence. He refuses to lift it unless the other gods agree to aid him in forcing Klothys back into the Underworld.

### MYTH OF THE TEMPLE AT THE WORLD'S EDGE

Legends say that Kruphix's holiest temple of mystery stands at the edge of the world. Dominated by Kruphix's Tree, the temple overhangs Nyx itself, jutting past the vast waterfall that marks the edge of the mortal realm. The site's precise location can't be found on any map, but tales claim it is one of the few places on Theros where mortals can pass directly into Nyx. To pass beyond the waterfall anywhere else is to tumble into the Underworld.



## TEMPLE OF MYSTERY

A temple of mystery is an enigmatic location full of puzzles and traps, found in remote regions of Theroś. It is believed that surviving and solving the mysteries of such a shrine earns Kruphix's respect. Some scholars claim the temples aren't stationary and that finding a shrine's location is the first puzzle that explorers must solve.

The priests who care for temples of mystery tend to be as mystifying as the puzzles within the places. Each temple typically has one caretaker—a powerful oracle willing to answer questions for adventurers who can overcome the temple's challenges. The priests are particularly impressed with guests who can solve puzzles that the oracles themselves have yet to complete.

At most temples of mystery, the most valuable knowledge and treasures are protected by the most difficult and deadly challenges. For a few bold—or foolish—investigators, the rewards are worth the risk.

### TEMPLE OF MYSTERY ADVENTURES

Exploring a temple of mystery presents the opportunity for an adventure that features puzzles and traps, though you can also populate it with any other challenges you like. The Temple of Mystery Adventures table offers ideas for adventures that could occur in such a place.

#### TEMPLE OF MYSTERY ADVENTURES

##### d12 Adventure Goal

- 1 Find and repair one of the temple's challenges that has malfunctioned.
- 2 Seek the help of the temple's priest, who's become trapped in stasis due to a malfunctioning trap.
- 3 Solve the puzzles in a temple to claim a magic item hidden inside.
- 4 Rescue someone trapped in the temple.

##### d12 Adventure Goal

- 5 Learn how a particular trap or puzzle works so it can be recreated.
- 6 Solve more challenges than a rival party of adventurers who are also in the temple.
- 7 Enter the temple and contend with a complex trap that, over time, has developed consciousness.
- 8 Lead dangerous individuals into the temple and ensure they never leave.
- 9 Question the priest to find the location of another temple of mystery.
- 10 Lead dangerous creatures into the temple to trap them there.
- 11 Defeat a cabal of mages that has claimed the temple.
- 12 Defeat a temple's challenges to get the attention of the gods.

### TEMPLE OF MYSTERY MAP

The temple of mystery shown in map 4.9 presents a labyrinth Kruphix might use to test followers and to protect valuable secrets of existence. The four-armed sculpture at the maze's heart is said to hold a great secret, perhaps a mysterious treasure or a riddle that the statue alone can speak. Each other chamber in the complex also holds its own unique puzzle or trap. When solved, these hazards allow one to progress, but also often impart some lesson about history, the nature of the cosmos, or the explorer themselves. While this temple exemplifies one of Kruphix's more elaborate (and potentially deadly) holy sites, no two of the god's temples are alike.

### TEMPLE OF MYSTERY VILLAINS

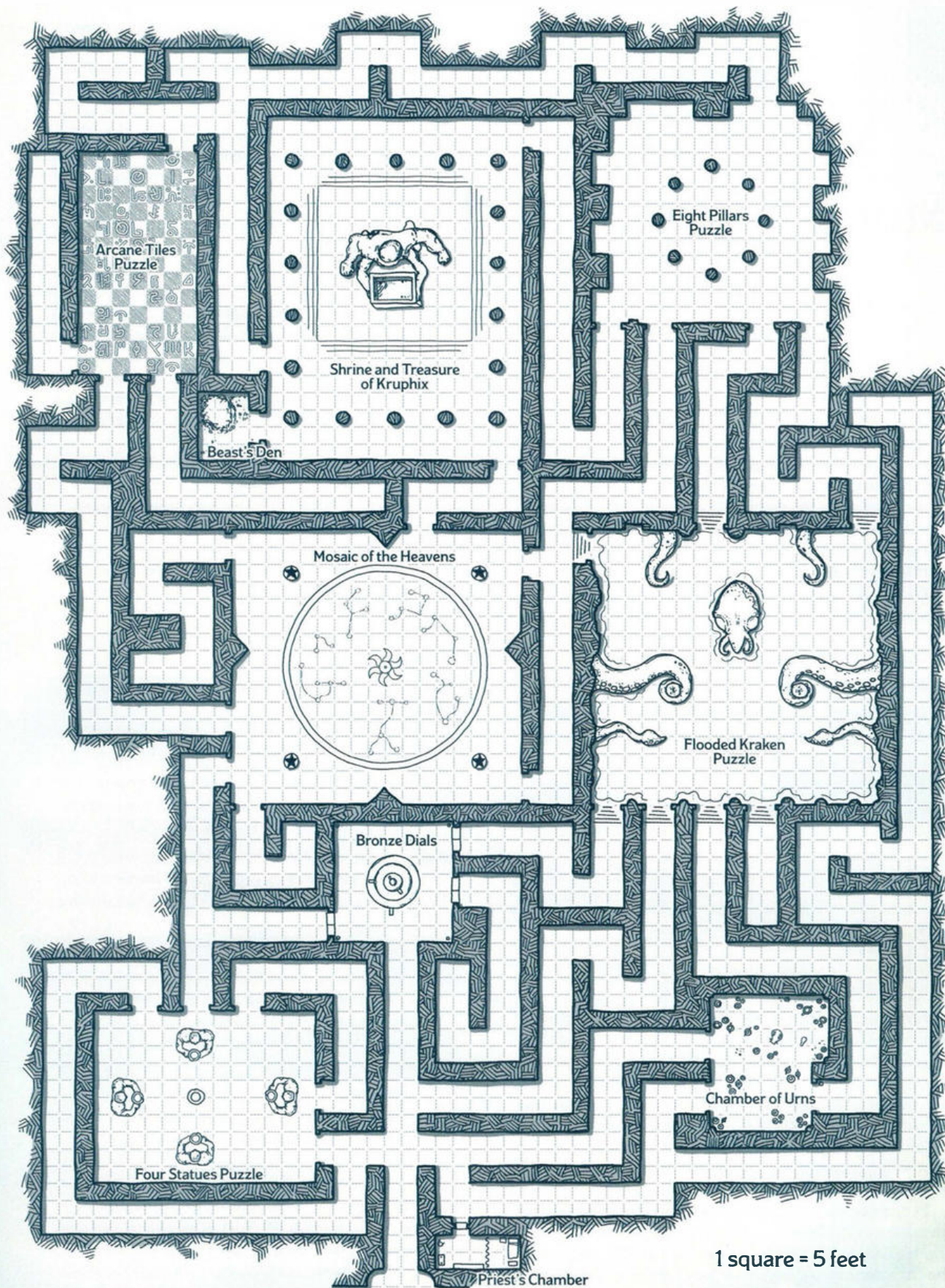
A villain in a temple of mystery might seek information, enjoy torturing adventurers with traps, or have motives as enigmatic as the place itself. Examples of such villains appear on the Temple of Mystery Villains table.

#### TEMPLE OF MYSTERY VILLAINS

##### d6 Villain

- 1 A bored **androsphinx** asks visitors riddles with no correct answer, then tears them apart for fun when they respond incorrectly.
- 2 A mad **archmage**, obsessed with a mystery she can't solve, wanders the halls of the temple and forces those she meets to confront the puzzle.
- 3 A dragon disguised as a humanoid waits in the temple's entrance and demands treasure from anyone leaving.
- 4 The **priest** caring for the temple gets jealous whenever adventurers solve a puzzle he couldn't and tries to kill them.
- 5 A hero challenges adventurers to solve the temple's mysteries faster than she can, but she has rigged each to ensure her victory.
- 6 A **cyclops** accidentally trapped in the temple goes on a rampage.





MAP 4.9: TEMPLE OF MYSTERY



# MOGIS

Mogis demands deeds, not just words, from his followers—and he is by far the most bloodthirsty god of the pantheon. As such, Mogis and his worshipers are ideal antagonists to pit heroes against. Tread carefully when using him as a patron, as his area of concern trends toward villainy rather than heroics.

## MOGIS'S CHAMPIONS

Mogis's champions are extensions of his ability to wreak havoc in the world. The god of slaughter cares only for causing strife, and he uses his agents to heighten the tension between the poleis, hoping to ignite an all-out war. In part, he wants to cause so much carnage that his brother eventually has no choice but to face him in a duel to the death.

The Mogis's Quests table suggests a few adventures the god's champions might involve themselves in.

### MOGIS'S QUESTS

d6	Adventure Goal
1	Foment a war between rival poleis.
2	Bring about anarchy and lawlessness in a formerly peaceful polis.
3	Organize disparate groups of bandits and criminals into a cohesive fighting force.
4	Hunt down a famous defender of the law who champions Iroas.
5	Triumph in a contest of strength or endurance to prove Mogis's superiority over other gods.
6	Defeat a champion of another god (most likely Iroas, Heliad, or Ephara).

### A MOGIS CAMPAIGN

A campaign structured around Mogis as the party's patron can be challenging, and all players must agree to play characters in service to the god of slaughter. You should work to create a narrative that eventually allows the characters to perform acts of heroism. Perhaps this means the group swears a vow to Mogis to pursue some collective revenge, or maybe the group understands that just as Mogis watches them, so does Iroas, and they'll be courted by both gods during the campaign.

In one possibility, perhaps the characters start out as the sole survivors of a mercenary company left to die. Embittered and resentful, the party swears vengeance on their former employer, thereby catching Mogis's attention. He offers the characters power to help them pursue their quest for revenge in exchange for their fealty.

As the characters become immersed in their plans for vengeance, Mogis, acting through his agents, pushes them farther down a dark path until, at last, they realize what they have become. The characters, now deeply indebted to the god of slaughter, realize that he will not release them willingly from his service. At this point, the characters might seek freedom from Mogis's service. Iroas or another god could take this opportunity to offer the party aid against their former patron. Mogis might then assume the role of campaign villain as the characters do what they must to atone.

## MOGIS'S VILLAINS

Unquestionably, Mogis makes an excellent villain. His lust for bloodshed and willingness to fight all comers makes him easy to build a campaign around if you want a straightforward, unambiguous foe.

Mogis's followers could be anything from a disgraced politician seeking revenge against their enemies to a roving band of minotaurs pillaging the countryside. Mogis's faithful tend to be at least partially blinded by dark emotions, a state that might make them easy to manipulate by the followers of clever deities. The servants of the god of slaughter aren't all mindless brutes, though, and many allow themselves to be underestimated as a ploy to bring ruin upon their foes.

The Mogis's Villains table suggests a variety of foes that might arise from among the god's followers.

### MOGIS'S VILLAINS

d8	Villain
1	A petty tyrant ( <b>gladiator</b> ) rules his populace through threats and intimidation. His favorite pastime is forcing unwilling subjects to fight in gladiatorial blood sports.
2	A band of <b>minotaurs</b> directed by a champion of Mogis forges a trail of devastation through the countryside.
3	A serial killer ( <b>assassin</b> ) stalks the streets of the polis, taking lives seemingly at random.
4	An <b>oracle</b> (see chapter 6) of Mogis marches into town and predicts doom on the populace within a fortnight.
5	Priests of Iroas and Heliad are being murdered by unknown assailants and their temples desecrated.
6	An <b>archmage</b> is corrupted by Mogis and begins summoning demons to savage the population.
7	A badly wounded caravan guard ( <b>bandit captain</b> ) accuses the characters of murder and banditry.
8	A cabal of Mogis's <b>cult fanatics</b> have almost succeeded in finding a way to summon Mogis's war-hound to their service.

### MOGIS'S MONSTERS

Mogis is associated with vicious monsters bent on wholesale destruction. He isn't at all concerned with subtlety, but rather with creating mayhem. Adventures that bring characters into conflict with agents of the god of slaughter might pit them against monsters from the Mogis's Monsters table.

## MOGIS'S MONSTERS

Challenge	Creature	Source
1	Death dog	MM
2	Berserker	MM
3	Fleecemane lion	MOT
3	Manticore	MM
3	Minotaur	MM
5	Catoblepas*	VGM
6	Cyclops*	MM
7	Theran chimera	MOT
8	Blackguard	VGM

\* See chapter 6 for details about these creatures in Theros.

## MOGIS AS CAMPAIGN VILLAIN

Left unchecked, Mogis and his followers would destroy all of creation. This situation leads to plenty of campaign hooks and opportunities for the characters to act heroically in the face of classically villainous foes.

Mogis is obsessed with defeating his brother Iroas, just as Iroas is obsessed with besting him. The characters could easily find themselves in the middle of the brothers' war. At first, they might be swept along by events, but as they grow in power, the characters will become the key to checking Mogis's influence, perhaps even helping Iroas triumph over his brother. Such an event could be fraught with unforeseen consequences for the fate of Theros!

## MOGIS'S DIVINE SCHEMES

Mogis takes a brutal hand in the affairs of gods and mortals. The Mogis's Divine Schemes tables presents some ways in which Mogis's unsubtle plots might have a mythic impact on the mortal world, catching adventurers up in the middle of divine vendettas.

### MOGIS'S DIVINE SCHEMES

#### d4 Scheme

- 1 A champion of Mogis unites the minotaur bands and cyclops tribes of Phoberos under her banner, creating a terrifying army. At Mogis's command, she leads the army in an all-out assault on Akros, hoping to draw Iroas into battle and defeat him once and for all.
- 2 Mogis bargains with Pharika, convincing her to create elixirs that will turn his followers into invincible monsters. He sends his champions to fetch the necessary ingredients for her.
- 3 A bitter noble makes a pact with Mogis for power in exchange for carrying out a plot to ignite a war between Meletis and Setessa. Thousands will die unless the scheme is put to rest.
- 4 Mogis agrees to ally with three other gods against their rivals if they help him defeat Iroas. Mogis's brother does the same. Soon the entire pantheon divides along faction lines and prepare for the final war.

TEMPLES TO MOGIS CAN BE FOUND SCATTERED ACROSS THE BADLANDS OF PHOBEROS.



## CANYON SHRINE

Aside from the other dangers of the twisting canyons of Phoberos, followers of Mogis openly worship and offer sacrifices to their dark god in these places. Twisting cave systems run through the canyon walls, offering shelter to both fugitives and monsters, and the darkness within the caverns provides a suitable environment for the bloodthirsty deeds of the god's most depraved servants.

### CANYON SHRINE ADVENTURES

A journey into a canyon where Mogis is worshiped can be an adventure full of unspeakable horrors. A group of characters could come to a canyon shrine as armed escorts, or would-be rescuers of captives, or to cleanse the place of its evil. The characters might also brave such a gorge to hunt one of the many dangerous creatures that haunt the area, such as a catoblepas or a chimera. The Canyon Shrine Adventures table offers ideas for adventures in such a place.

### CANYON SHRINE ADVENTURES

#### d10 Adventure Goal

- 1 Survive a journey through the canyon while escorting a caravan transporting offerings to another god.
- 2 Slay a massive, blood-drunk monster that rampages through the region.
- 3 Find a band of minotaurs residing in the canyon and convince them to attack a gang of undead about to pass through on their way to attack a village.
- 4 Consult a hermit who lives in a hidden part of the canyon.
- 5 Retrieve an item buried amid the shrine's sacrifices.
- 6 Destroy the shrine.
- 7 Negotiate with a group of Mogis's followers.
- 8 Convince a young aristocrat who was seduced into joining a cult of Mogis to return home.
- 9 Infiltrate a cult of Mogis to learn of any raids they have planned.
- 10 Steal an egg from a griffon nest in the canyon.

### CANYON SHRINE MAP

Map 4.10 shows a wild canyon that is holy to Mogis. Caves long used by bandits, minotaur raiders, and predatory beasts carve their ways through the craggy walls. Many of the caves are connected, but some are isolated. Ledges cling to the canyon's sides. Reaching some of these natural platforms requires a dangerous climb over jagged rocks.

The top of the canyon has a few scrubby plants, but is otherwise barren. Flying monsters, such as chimeras, griffons, harpies, and manticores, make nests on the sides of the canyon. At the bottom of the gorge, a river cuts through the stone.

A massive statue of Mogis is carved into an out-of-the-way canyon wall. Signs of a bloody battle and the stains of countless sacrifices lie before it.

## CANYON SHRINE VILLAINS

Most of the residents in a canyon shrine make excellent adversaries. The sapient beings are clever and cruel, and the monsters of animal intelligence are as savage as the god of slaughter himself. Examples of such villains appear on the Canyon Shrine Villains table.

### CANYON SHRINE VILLAINS

#### d8 Villain

- 1 A **minotaur** captures and devours other creatures limb by limb as part of a bizarre ritual honoring Mogis.
- 2 A tribe of **berserkers** ride **giant bats** and hunt humanoids that travel through the canyon.
- 3 An **adult blue dragon** enslaves the inhabitants of the caves, intent on building an army to conquer a neighboring settlement.
- 4 A **manticore** captures warriors and forces them to fight to the death for its amusement.
- 5 A group of **cyclopes** capture travelers and keep them as livestock in their caves.
- 6 A **lamia** lures young nobles into its cult with promises of hedonism and sells those who disappoint it to other canyon inhabitants.
- 7 A vicious **gynosphinx** captures groups of people, then forces one person to choose which of the others should be devoured first.
- 8 The victims of the canyon's inhabitants rise as **wraiths** determined to end all life in the area.







# NYLEA

Wild and unpredictable, Nylea can bring both blessings and hardships to the heroes whose lives she touches.

## NYLEA'S CHAMPIONS

Nylea is one of the more active of the gods in the mortal realm, but she can't be everywhere at once. Her heroes are her eyes, ears, and arrows on Theros, defending her interests anywhere and anytime she can't.

The Nylea's Quests table suggests a few adventures the god's champions might involve themselves in.

### NYLEA'S QUESTS

#### d6 Adventure Goal

- 1 Free a hydra that has been captured and imprisoned in a menagerie.
- 2 Investigate reports of unnatural horrors infesting the Nessian Wood.
- 3 Plant a golden acorn in a distant grove guarded by monsters.
- 4 Find and punish an unknown perpetrator who killed a unicorn, cut off its horn, and left its body to rot, and retrieve the horn.
- 5 Hunt a dangerous creature for a sacred feast.
- 6 Defeat a champion of another god (most likely Karameira, Heliad, or Ephara).

### A NYLEA CAMPAIGN

A campaign in which the player characters are champions of Nylea will feature great feats of heroism in defense of nature. Nylea might instruct the characters to defend a corner of the Nessian Wood, pitting them against poachers, sport hunters, unnatural abominations, and ordinary people who want to develop the wood for mortals' use. Nylea doesn't care if the characters are opposed by simple peasants, or by monsters beyond the characters' ability to cope with. They might need to get creative, calling upon Nylea's own servants—such as hydras—to beat back the more powerful threats.

At the beginning of the campaign, the heroes might help defend Setessa from an attack that also threatens all of the Nessian Wood, which is their main concern. Hailed as heroes even though their defense of the polis was a secondary goal, they continue to enjoy Nylea's favor as they confront greater threats. Perhaps they will align themselves with the leaders of the polis, or maybe Setessa will eventually find itself at odds with the wild ideals of Nylea.

Nylea's dictates are simple but inflexible, and her champions find that her favor turns to wrath if they neglect their duty to the forest. She might simply banish them from the Nessian Wood, or she might become a villain, with the characters either seeking to appease her or trying to find a new divine patron to protect them.

## NYLEA'S VILLAINS

From Nylea's perspective, her desires are benign, but her unwillingness to favor sapient beings over wild animals and plants sometimes makes her a figure of menace. Those who dwell in permanent settlements often do not understand or appreciate the boundaries Nylea sets, and can run afoul of her even with the best intentions.

Nylea's followers might obsess over the idea of wiping out civilization, turning them into agents of destruction. On a smaller scale, they might twist her patronage of the hunt into an excuse to enact vendettas against those who wrong them. Even natural creatures can become threats when the balance of nature is disrupted, and Nylea herself could send champions to intervene when her own creatures and followers turn toward evil.

The Nylea's Villains table suggests a variety of foes that might arise from among the god's followers.

### NYLEA'S VILLAINS

#### d6 Villain

- 1 A Setessan hunt-leader (**Setessan hoplite**; see chapter 6) swears vengeance on a poacher in the Nessian Wood who turns out to be an Akroan general.
- 2 A **hydra** goes on a rampage at the edge of the forest. It must be dealt with, but a **druid** follower of Nylea will take vengeance on anyone who kills it outright.
- 3 A **mage** who lives in a secluded grove has been using a magic item to transform interlopers into boars. She claims that Nylea gave her this item.
- 4 A **druid** uses magic on fields near the border of the forest, creating animated plants to drive off farmers.
- 5 A **scout** has taken to hunting and eating sapient beings. What could have caused this gruesome turn?
- 6 Those who follow a mysterious green **unicorn** inevitably turn up dead, their bodies entangled in strangling vines.

### MYTH OF HALMA, NYLEA'S EMISSARY

One day, Nylea came upon an enormous lynx lounging in the shade of an olive grove, blood on its maw, the carcass of a colossal boar beside him. The boar had been one of Nylea's favorites, and what followed was a legendary chase where the god pursued the lynx through the heart of the Nessian Wood. Whenever Nylea drew close, the great cat vanished into the forest's shadows. Seasons passed as the god loosed arrow after arrow at the lynx, but her efforts remained fruitless. Nylea eventually abandoned the hunt, only to find the feline waiting for her at the edge of a stream the next evening. The hunt resumed, but with the same outcome. It continued like that for some time, until Nylea began to grow fond of the beast. Soon, the pair started hunting together, and the lynx, which she called Halma, became one of Nylea's confidants.

## NYLEA'S MONSTERS

Nylea's forests are home to many dangerous creatures, both natural and supernatural. Adventures that take characters into the Nessian Wood might pit them against monsters such as those that appear on the Nylea's Monsters table. Additionally, Nylea might turn any natural creature—from the rarest of exotic creatures to suddenly-bloodthirsty livestock—against those who offend her.

### NYLEA'S MONSTERS

Challenge	Creature	Source
1/2	Scout	MM
1	Dryad	MM
1	Nyxborn brown bear*	MM
2	Nyxborn saber-toothed tiger*	MM
2	Satyr thornbearer	MOT
3	Archer	VGM
5	Shambling mound	MM
5	Unicorn*	MM
9	Treant	MM
12	Ironscale hydra	MOT
19	Polukranos	MOT

\* See chapter 6 for details about these creatures in Theros.

## NYLEA AS CAMPAIGN VILLAIN

As a villain, Nylea is most likely driven by transgressions against her realm, whether by mortals or by other gods. She might begin her retaliation by barring all sapient creatures from the Nessian Wood, or by visiting

punishment on an entire polis for the actions of a few citizens. From there, she could easily end up in an escalating conflict against mortals across Theros, drawing in multiple gods and threatening the idea of civilization itself. Player characters who are champions of other gods could find themselves marked for death by hunters who have a grudge against their patrons.

## NYLEA'S DIVINE SCHEMES

The Nylea's Divine Schemes table suggests a few ways in which Nylea's whims might impact the mortal world.

### NYLEA'S DIVINE SCHEMES

#### d4 Scheme

- 1 When the polis of Meletis expands, clearing new land for houses and crops, Nylea decides to punish the polis and destroy it if necessary. Animated trees topple the walls, and Nyxborn beasts invade the city.
- 2 Nylea refuses to turn winter into spring unless Karameetra agrees to abolish agriculture and yield all cropland back to the forest.
- 3 When tensions between Akros and Setessa peak, Nylea blames Iroas for stirring up the conflict and puts Setessa under her protection, expanding the borders of the Nessian Wood to encompass all of Setessa, creating a near-impenetrable fortress filled with dangerous creatures.
- 4 Nylea abruptly vanishes. Explorers deep in the Nessian Wood discover her sacred grove abandoned, and the giant chrysalis at its heart empty. What was in the chrysalis? Could it have harmed Nylea? Or did she leave with the creature—and if so, did she do that to protect the creature, or to protect Theros?

NYLEA'S SACRED LYNX GUARDS THOSE WHO HONOR THE NESSIAN WOOD AND HUNTS THOSE WHO DON'T.



## FOREST SHRINE

Forest shrines honoring Nylea are found in the woodlands of Theros. These places have few features made of stone or steel. Instead, the druids and nymphs who care for the shrines use magic to direct the growth of plants, producing beautiful natural altars, sculptures, and shelters. These creations, wondrous as they are, don't dominate the layout of a shrine, since Nylea and her worshipers prefer to let nature flourish untamed at her holy sites.

The druids that occupy a shrine sometimes leave for days at a time to go on a mission, but they never leave the place without guardians. Beasts, plants, and nymphs are always on the lookout for intruders.

### FOREST SHRINE ADVENTURES

A forest shrine is a remote place with inhabitants who are difficult to impress. Simply finding and getting permission to enter a shrine can be an adventure in itself, since the druids and nymphs that guard the place are wary of outsiders and ready to put down those who take needlessly from the forest.

Characters who are accepted into a forest shrine find it to be a guarded, peaceful place, an excellent shelter against enemies and weather. Sacred animals and hunting weapons are protected in the shrines. The druids might be willing to share knowledge and forest secrets with those who gain their trust. The Forest Shrine Adventures table offers ideas for adventures that could occur in or around such a place.

### FOREST SHRINE ADVENTURES

#### d10 Adventure Goal

- 1 Get permission from the shrine's druids to take part in a sacred hunt with them.
- 2 Prevent game hunters from killing a unicorn, and lead the unicorn to a shrine for shelter.
- 3 Find a scout from the shrine who has gone missing.
- 4 Escape a shrine after being captured and held there for crimes against the forest.
- 5 Rescue trophy hunters being tortured at a shrine.
- 6 Earn a druid's trust to learn a valuable secret about the forest.
- 7 Retrieve a sacred weapon held in the grove.
- 8 Recruit the help of the shrine's druids to defeat a group of poachers.
- 9 Acquire a beast companion from the shrine.
- 10 Defend the shrine from a group of harpies.

### FOREST SHRINE MAP

The forest shrine shown in map 4.11 is a clearing surrounded by a grove of wild olive trees. A pond at the center is fed by streams coming from the north and south. Arches of grapevines grow up from the ground, each creating a small, sheltered area for private conversations. Several bushes sculpted in the shape of Nylea and predatory forest animals, such as the bear and the wolf, are scattered throughout the shrine. These plants can come to life as guardians if the shrine's protectors call upon them.

An old, twisted lemon tree grows near the hunters' quarters. Bows, spears, and other hunting weapons hang from the tree's branches alongside a beehive. South of the tree is a firepit with a few boulders surrounding it for seats. Nearby, a dense, flowering bush shaped as an altar stands before a simple log table and wood rack used in dressing animals.

Several hunting blinds lie hidden in the forest surrounding the shrine. From these camouflaged posts archers keep watch for game and threats.

### FOREST SHRINE VILLAINS

Villains in a forest shrine are likely either trying to destroy nature or using the power of the natural world to harm others. Examples of such figures appear on the Forest Shrine Villains table.

### FOREST SHRINE VILLAINS

#### d6 Villain

- 1 A group of **dryads**, enraged by seeing a section of forest burned, plots to destroy the shrine in order to punish the druids for failing to protect the trees.
- 2 Poachers (**scouts**) kill the shrine's defenders and set their traps in the surrounding forest.
- 3 The shrine stands in the path of a **hydra** on a destructive rampage.
- 4 A **druid** who lost her spouse in a hunting accident attacks any hunters who come to the shrine.
- 5 A **giant boar** affected by the *awaken* spell convinces the shrine's druids to cast the spell on other boars to strike back at a contingent of hunting nobles.
- 6 A **cult fanatic** of Erebos infiltrates the shrine in disguise and plans to kill all its plant life.







# PHARIKA

The god of affliction cares little for mortals, seeing them as test subjects whose agony, resilience, and defiance all contribute to Pharika's efforts to reveal reality's secrets.

## PHARIKA'S CHAMPIONS

The champions of Pharika are custodians of her experiments, keepers of her secrets, and practitioners of her esoteric arts. They serve as doctors, herbalists, and advisors as often as they do assassins and poisoners.

The Pharika's Quests table suggests a few adventures the god's champions might involve themselves in.

### PHARIKA'S QUESTS

d6	Adventure Goal
1	Concoct the antidote for a powerful affliction that resists conventional treatments.
2	Seek out a powerful beast whose blood has unique alchemical value.
3	Infiltrate the Underworld to extract a secret someone carried with them to the grave.
4	Track down and eliminate someone who is trying to keep a radical discovery a secret.
5	Assassinate an important figure whose death would catalyze one of Pharika's experiments.
6	Perfect a perilous ritual to awaken the landscape and learn how to discover its forgotten lore.

## A PHARIKA CAMPAIGN

Pharika delights in testing the limits of mortality, vacillating between helping and harming innocent subjects. Characters working in Pharika's service might travel to sites of suffering and death in order to provide relief, such as by slaying the monstrous guardians of a place that holds the medicine needed to cure a plague. Then, before leaving the area, they or the god's other servants might sow the seeds of a new threat.

Despite any aid they provide, Pharika's servants are likely viewed with suspicion. In obtaining rare ingredients or defending researchers, the characters might come into conflict with those who can't see the bigger picture—often followers of Heliod or Ephara. Undermining these faiths might be the best means of preserving Pharika's favorite wildernesses and laboratories.

Ultimately, Pharika might call upon servants to abandon worldly scruples in favor of deciphering one of Theros's great secrets. To accomplish this, the god might send the characters into the Underworld or Nyx to answer a burning cosmic question.

## PHARIKA'S VILLAINS

Even the most well-intentioned of Pharika's healers can be hiding a venomous ulterior motive, and the same hand that stitches the characters' wounds one day might try to slit their throats the next. Pharika encourages her followers to seek balance in administering their "cures," spreading afflictions to counteract excessive prosperity at least as often as they provide life-saving help to those on the brink of death. All the while, Pharika watches with interest to see how mortals contend with both good fortune and misfortune, gleaned new knowledge through every cry of elation and every death rattle.

On occasion, Pharika's followers might seem to be beneficent when they ease others' suffering or cure a pandemic. Yet they do so indiscriminately, meaning that these cures could also save the lives of terrible beasts and unrepentant villains.

The Pharika's Villains table suggests a variety of foes that might arise from among the god's followers.

### PHARIKA'S VILLAINS

d6	Villain
1	A <b>druid</b> seeds deadly herbs into a village's fields, coaxing the plants to resemble farmers' crops.
2	The life of a tyrant ( <b>knight</b> ) is central to one of Pharika's experiments in mortal suffering, so the god resurrects the tyrant whenever enemies kill him.
3	Legend tells of a hydra with alchemical lore scribed upon its bones. When an alchemist ( <b>mage</b> ) begins poisoning the beasts, Nylea sends dozens of <b>hydras</b> to seek revenge, catching innocents in the fray.
4	A town suffering from a plague seeks a cure from a <b>cult fanatic</b> of Pharika engaged in warlike research. The researcher's blessing alleviates the pox but leaves the survivors delusional and violent.
5	After the characters witness a miracle, an apothecary ( <b>mage</b> ) seeks their blood as a medicinal ingredient.
6	An <b>archmage</b> devotee of Pharika manages to shrink monsters to a size so small that they effectively behave as viruses.

## PHARIKA'S MONSTERS

Serpents, rare magical beings, and poisonous creatures number among Pharika's favorite servants, and medusas and basilisks hold special places in her esteem. The Pharika's Monsters table presents just a few foes likely to serve the god's will.

### PHARIKA'S MONSTERS

Challenge	Creature	Source
1/4	Nyxborn giant poisonous snake*	MM
1/2	Amphisbaena	MOT
1/2	Cockatrice	MM
2	Swarm of poisonous snakes	MM
3	Basilisk*	MM
6	Medusa*	MM
8	Assassin	MM
8	Hydra	MM

Challenge	Creature	Source
8	Spirit naga	MM
17	Hythonia	MOT

\* See chapter 6 for details about these creatures in Theros.

## PHARIKA AS CAMPAIGN VILLAIN

As a campaign villain, Pharika might conduct experiments in mortal resilience and curiosity, tests that unfold over generations. The characters might spoil one of these experiments, making them the target of Pharika's ire. While tormenting mortals might seem petty, the perils she puts them through could also be a way of toughening up the characters to face greater threats. As the campaign progresses, Pharika could evolve from antagonist into an unlikely patron.

Pharika is also an excellent partner for a range of other divine antagonists, lending her support in exchange for future favors. However, with the right overtures and services, the characters might entreat her to betray a client, turning her against a new mutual enemy.

## PHARIKA'S DIVINE SCHEMES

Pharika has hundreds of ongoing schemes and experiments, any number of which might come to fruition in the near future. The Pharika's Divine Schemes table describes several ways her deadly plans might complicate adventurers' lives.

## PHARIKA'S DIVINE SCHEMES

### d4 Scheme

- 1 Pharika creates a mind-controlling incense to manipulate several of Kruphix's oracles, compelling them to reveal secrets of the cosmos. Unfortunately, her mutagenic mist causes them to transform into beings they've glimpsed from beyond Theros.
- 2 Seeking to understand more about the Returned, Pharika begins granting them elixirs meant to restore their lost memories. Although this works as intended for a rare few, most of the Returned instead experience traumatic visions that drive them to violence.
- 3 Medusas the world over find themselves infected with a strange disease. They believe Pharika is collecting their souls to harvest the secrets they hoard. The medusas seek advocates to end Pharika's plague.
- 4 After losing a bet to an ambitious physician, Pharika loans the doctor her sacred kylix for one week and invites him to cure as many patients as he pleases. In that time, he cures death itself in a small town. Not only has this emboldened some of the town's scalawags to commit crimes without fear of retribution, but the news has also infuriated disciples of Erebos, Mogis, and Klothys. Meanwhile, Pharika watches with delight as too much of a good medicine inspires distress and conflict that threaten to boil over into surrounding regions.

PHARIKA'S CLERICS BELIEVE THAT THEY ARE BETTER HEALERS BECAUSE THEY ARE SO WELL ACQUAINTED WITH DEATH.



## HEALING POOLS

Healing pools are naturally occurring springs and tidal pools said to have magical curative properties because Pharika has blessed them. Sick or injured people come to the pools and leave an offering for the god with her priests before bathing. If Pharika deems an offering worthy, the waters rapidly cure diseases, heal wounds, and sometimes even remove magical curses. If the god finds the offering unworthy, the waters poison the bather in some way, making their plight worse. If a person who wants to bathe has no offering for the god, that individual can offer themselves or a captured beast as a subject for the priest's medical experiments.

Many healing pools are in remote locations that are difficult to reach, such as hot springs at the top of a volcano or tidal pools on a monster-infested island. A priest of Pharika, often a medusa, usually watches over the pool. The priest's chambers are often in a building or a cave near the pools. Such places are part living quarters and part medical and alchemical laboratory, where the priest makes medicines and poisons and performs experiments on beasts and humanoid subjects.

### HEALING POOLS ADVENTURES

Sick or injured characters might have good reason to seek out healing pools when a malady is beyond their ability to treat. Medical tests that are being conducted near healing pools could also present opportunities for adventures involving rare cures, new poisons, and experiments gone awry. The Healing Pools Adventures table suggests ideas for adventures in such a place.

#### HEALING POOLS ADVENTURES

##### d10 Adventure Goal

- 1 Heal yourself or a diseased or injured party member in the pools.
- 2 Escort a sick or injured person to the pools.
- 3 Kill monsters taking up residence in the pools.
- 4 Capture people and creatures for the priests to use in their experiments.
- 5 Cure the pools of a contamination.
- 6 Create a poison based on notes provided to you by one of Pharika's priests and contaminate the pools.
- 7 Steal reagent-rich water from the pools.
- 8 Rescue a priest's test subject and help them undo or adapt to the transformations they underwent due to the priest's experiments.
- 9 Kill or capture an escaped beast monstrosously transformed by the priest's experiments.
- 10 Retrieve materials needed to create a cure for a disease and convince a priest to help you make it.

### HEALING POOLS MAP

The healing pools shown in map 4.12 are located in an underground cavern, accessible through a wide hole in the cavern's ceiling that leads to a shaft connected to the surface. The pools have varying shapes and depths, with a bronze statue of Pharika holding out a bowl for offerings overlooking many of them. One small but deep pool contains an

underwater tunnel, which leads outward and then upward to a dry cavern that serves as the priest's chambers.

In crude laboratory above the pools, a stone table with restraints is used for experiments on humanoid subjects. The cages lining the walls are meant for beasts used in experiments. Secret passages connected to these chambers connects to the pools and the surface.

### HEALING POOLS VILLAINS

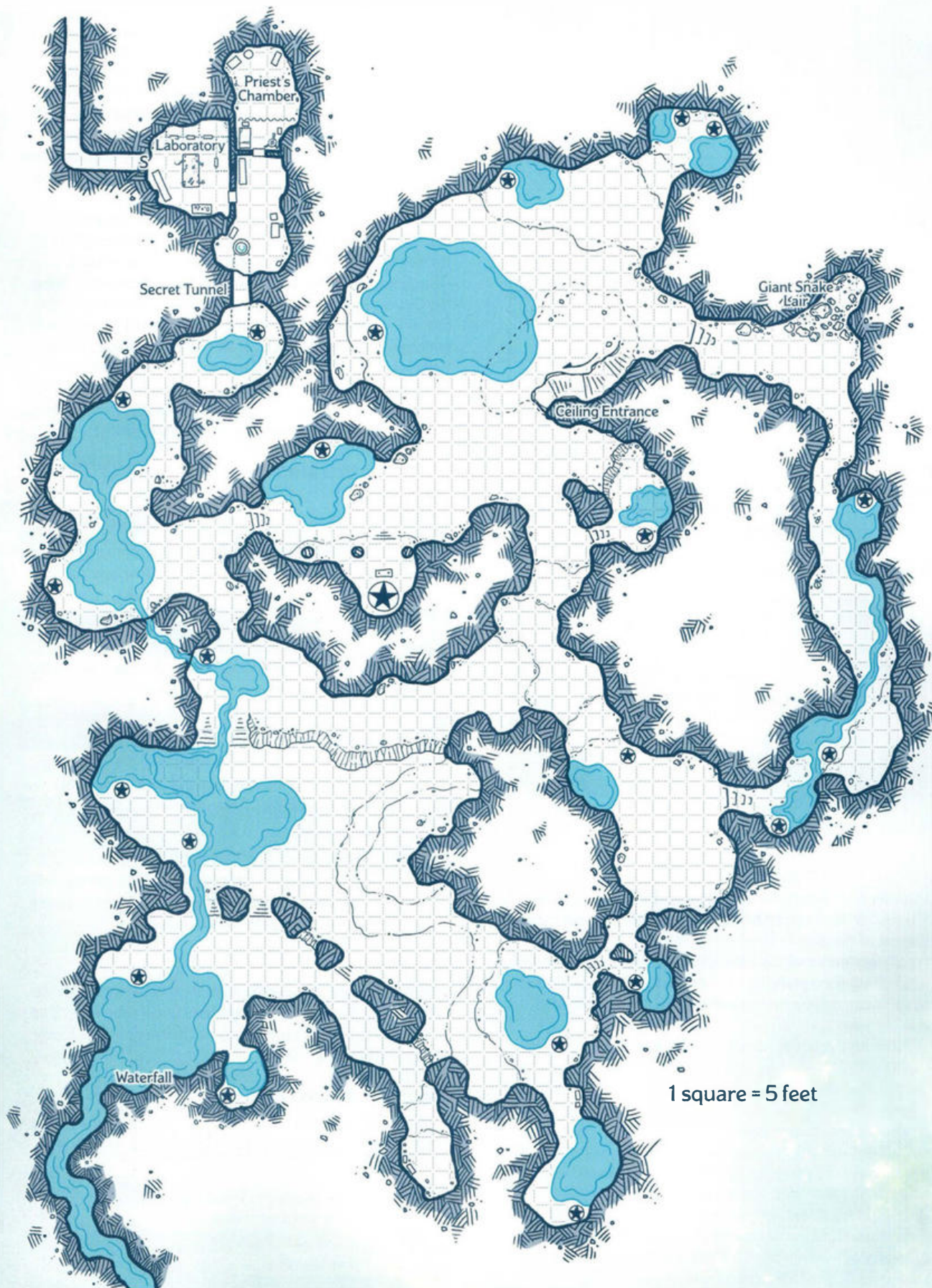
Villains at healing pools are usually interested in healing themselves, harming others, or controlling others' access to the pools. They might also take issue with the strange practices of the pools' clergy. Examples of such villains appear on the Healing Pools Villains table.

#### HEALING POOLS VILLAINS

##### d6 Villain

- 1 A group of **Returned palamnites** (see chapter 6) invade the pools, believing the waters' magic can restore their lost memories and mortal bodies.
- 2 **Nereids** (see chapter 6) guard the pools, making their own judgments about who is and isn't worthy of the pools' healing magic.
- 3 The magic waters of the pools wash out to sea and attract a dying **kraken** to the area.
- 4 An **assassin** barter captured humanoid test subjects for poison from the pools' **medusa** priest.
- 5 A dying **veteran** who was poisoned by the pools slaughters any person who is healed by the waters.
- 6 An **oracle** (see chapter 6) allows the pools' poisons to seep from the caves and contaminate a community.





MAP 4.12: HEALING POOLS



# PHENAX

Cunning and deceitful, Phenax spins innumerable plots across all of creation. He enjoys upsetting the natural order of things, either by thwarting the plans of his fellow gods or secreting away information for later use.

## PHENAX'S CHAMPIONS

Phenax's champions are pawns in his grand game of lying, cheating, and deception. He takes particular pleasure in tormenting Heliod and Iroas, whom he regards with special scorn. Phenax's servants have a tendency to show up at the most inconvenient times and places.

The Phenax's Quests table suggests a few adventures the god's champions might involve themselves in.

### PHENAX'S QUESTS

#### d6 Adventure Goal

- 1 Rob or defend a gambling parlor.
- 2 Destabilize or aid the government of the local polis.
- 3 Form or foil a heretical cult of Heliod to bring discord to the countryside.
- 4 Assassinate or protect the local magistrate who has been cracking down on Phenax worshippers.
- 5 Create a grand prank built around obfuscation and deceit to embarrass a local government or temple.
- 6 Defeat a champion of another god (most likely Heliod, Erebus, or Iroas).

### A PHENAX CAMPAIGN

Phenax fits easily into the role of primary campaign villain. He also might be an unconventional and exciting patron of the player characters. Phenax is the archetypal outsider, and his champions might be tasked with disrupting the established order of a polis or aiding one of the necropoleis in expanding or dealing with various threats.

Plots and schemes are Phenax's lifeblood, suggesting a complex, shifting campaign full of surprises and twists. For example, a simple heist could be the triggering event for a series of major conflicts between two rival temples that ends in a citywide conflagration.

Champions of Phenax could also serve as a bulwark against more aggressive gods who oppress or subjugate others. Alternatively, the party could be a band of freedom fighters resisting the tyrannical ruler of their polis. Even though Phenax traffics in lies and deceit, a morally gray campaign can be built around the use of illicit means to achieve righteous ends.

## PHENAX'S VILLAINS

Servants of Phenax dot the world, largely staying hidden until they are needed to help spin the web of lies that advances his plots. His servants prefer to confront foes using guile, cunning, and planning instead of brute force. Phenax and his champions move with purpose, don't draw attention to themselves, and use misdirection to keep foes guessing about when and where their next attack will come.

Phenax's followers could be involved in the political machinations of a polis or the crimes of the local thieves' guild. Investigating instances of gambling, smuggling, robbery, and fencing stolen loot might bring the characters into opposition against Phenax and his followers. Whenever possible, servants of Phenax try to stage their misdeeds in a way that implicates other faiths or groups, to stir up as much conflict and confusion as possible.

The Phenax's Villains table suggests a variety of foes that might arise from among the god's followers.

### PHENAX'S VILLAINS

#### d8 Villain

- 1 A charismatic crime boss (**bandit captain**) unites local gangs in a bid to seize control of the polis.
- 2 A **Returned palamnite** (see chapter 6) wreaks havoc across the countryside in Phenax's name.
- 3 The lies of a government functionary (**noble**) start a trade war between struggling settlements.
- 4 Phenax **cultists** establish a fake cult of Ephara in a bid to start a sectarian civil war in Meletis.
- 5 An information broker (**spy**) holds damaging secrets about important folk and is blackmailing them.
- 6 A group of vocal iconoclasts (**nobles**) are fomenting social upheaval that threatens to turn to violence.
- 7 A champion (**veteran**) of Heliod is threatening to torch a section of the polis in her hunt for a Phenax-worshipping oath breaker.
- 8 Folk go missing then turn up with no memory of their disappearance. Phenax **cult fanatics** are brainwashing these souls for use as sleeper agents.

### PHENAX'S MONSTERS

Phenax is often associated with monsters and individuals that use cleverness and guile to overcome foes. The Phenax's Monsters table presents just a few foes likely to serve the god's will.

### PHENAX'S MONSTERS

Challenge	Creature	Source
1	Returned sentry	MOT
3	Leucrotta	VGM
3	Slithering tracker	VGM
4	Returned palamnite	MOT
5	Ghostblade eidolon	MOT
5	Master thief	VGM
8	Assassin	MM
16	Phoenix	MTF

## PHENAX AS CAMPAIGN VILLAIN

Regardless of whether Phenax begins the campaign as a villain or turns against his champions during the course of play, he presents himself as a confounding, slippery foe.

As a campaign villain, Phenax might be driven by a desire to incite conflict against his fellow gods, usually to serve his own ends. Although Phenax doesn't desire rulership over Nyx, he does love to hoard damaging secrets and powerful magic. Acquiring these coveted items always involves duplicity and theft, and sometimes murder. To Phenax, the ends justify the means. Upsetting the order of things is a worthy goal, whether it's done as a means to a greater end or simply to enjoy the disruption caused by radical change.

The campaign's objective might involve determining what Phenax is up to and thwarting his scheme or, failing that, dealing with the fallout. Whatever the objective, it will require the player characters to confront a being who was clever enough to escape the Underworld.

### PHENAX'S DIVINE SCHEMES

Phenax's activities can have a wide-ranging impact on both the pantheon and the mortal world. The Phenax's Divine Schemes table offers examples of the ways in which Phenax's duplicity might have a mythic impact, catching adventurers in the middle of divine squabbles.

### PHENAX'S DIVINE SCHEMES

#### d4 Scheme

- 1 Phenax finds an artifact capable of imprisoning Athreos and engages in a shadow war with Erebus, causing pandemonium in the Underworld. As a result, droves of Returned flood the mortal world.
- 2 Phenax undertakes a plot to transform Erebus into one of the Returned. If he succeeds, the balance of life and death will be shattered.
- 3 Phenax vanishes. For a time, it's believed the god has been killed or grew bored and left Theros. In fact, though, Phenax managed to imprison another god and has since taken their place.
- 4 Phenax dispatches a powerful agent to find a lost relic called Deception's Edge, a dagger that enables the wielder to warp the minds of mortals. Once in possession of the artifact, the agent embarks on a campaign of assassination and espionage that threatens to lead to all-out war between Akros and Meletis.

FOLLOWERS OF PHENAX HAVE LITTLE RESPECT  
FOR THE REST OF THE PANTHEON.



## AMPHITHEATER

Music, dance, poetry, drama, comedy, and satire are all performed and celebrated in the amphitheaters of Theros. These public spaces are also the scene of secret hand offs, private meetings, and espionage. The amphitheater's costumes, makeup, props, and hidden halls and entrances make it a good place for those who operate in the shadows to do so without arousing suspicion. Many performers moonlight as assassins, spies, and thieves, given their talents and resources, and as such many amphitheaters contain hidden shrines to Phenax.

### AMPHITHEATER ADVENTURES

Adventures in an amphitheater often revolve around deception. Great performances get audiences immersed in what they're seeing, lowering their defenses and allowing pickpockets and spies to work. Backstage, the performers and staff hide stolen goods and even bodies in plain sight among legitimate props, and they craft disguises for use outside the theater.

Theaters make great settings for social adventures. In a place where the rich and poor relax together, the characters can impress, blackmail, bribe, or steal from people of all walks of life. The Amphitheater Adventures table presents ideas for adventures in such a place.

### AMPHITHEATER ADVENTURES

#### d10 Adventure Goal

- 1 Steal an item from an audience member.
- 2 Find evidence of a crime hidden backstage.
- 3 Defend a theater being run by a criminal cabal from a rival gang's assault.
- 4 Take the place of a group of performers on stage to impress an audience member.
- 5 Assassinate an audience member during a performance without being seen.
- 6 Serve as bodyguards for an audience member.
- 7 Learn which performers are criminals.
- 8 Find a spy among the audience members and deliver a message to that person.
- 9 Steal costumes from the theater to infiltrate a temple in disguise.
- 10 Intercept and decipher a coded message meant for someone else.

### AMPHITHEATER MAP

The amphitheater shown in map 4.13 is set in a natural depression that provides seating for the audience. The backstage area contains dressing rooms for the performers, a prop workshop, and a storage area filled with extra set pieces. Below, secret halls include space for the games and drinking one might expect from a typical den of iniquity, but it also disguises the barracks and training hall of a thieves' guild devoted to Phenax, a shrine, and an escape tunnel for making a quick getaway.

## AMPHITHEATER VILLAINS

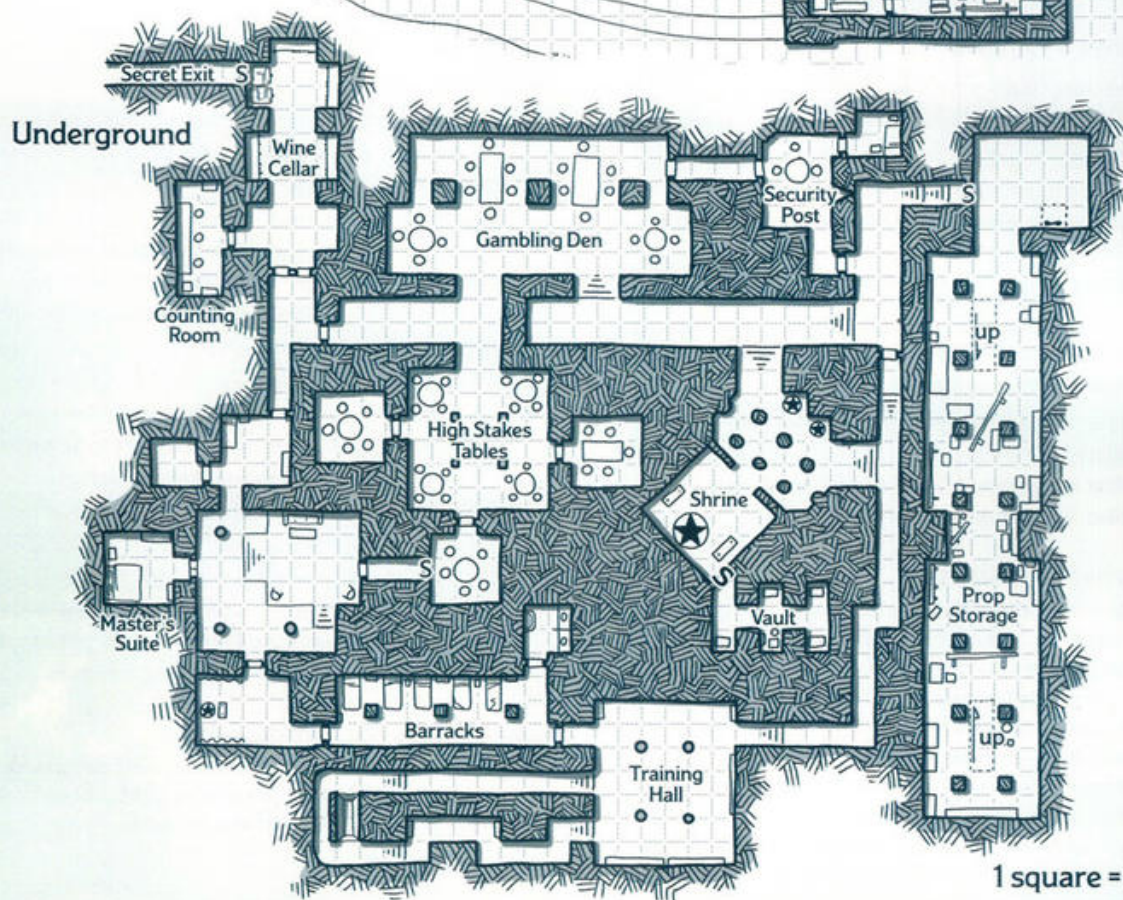
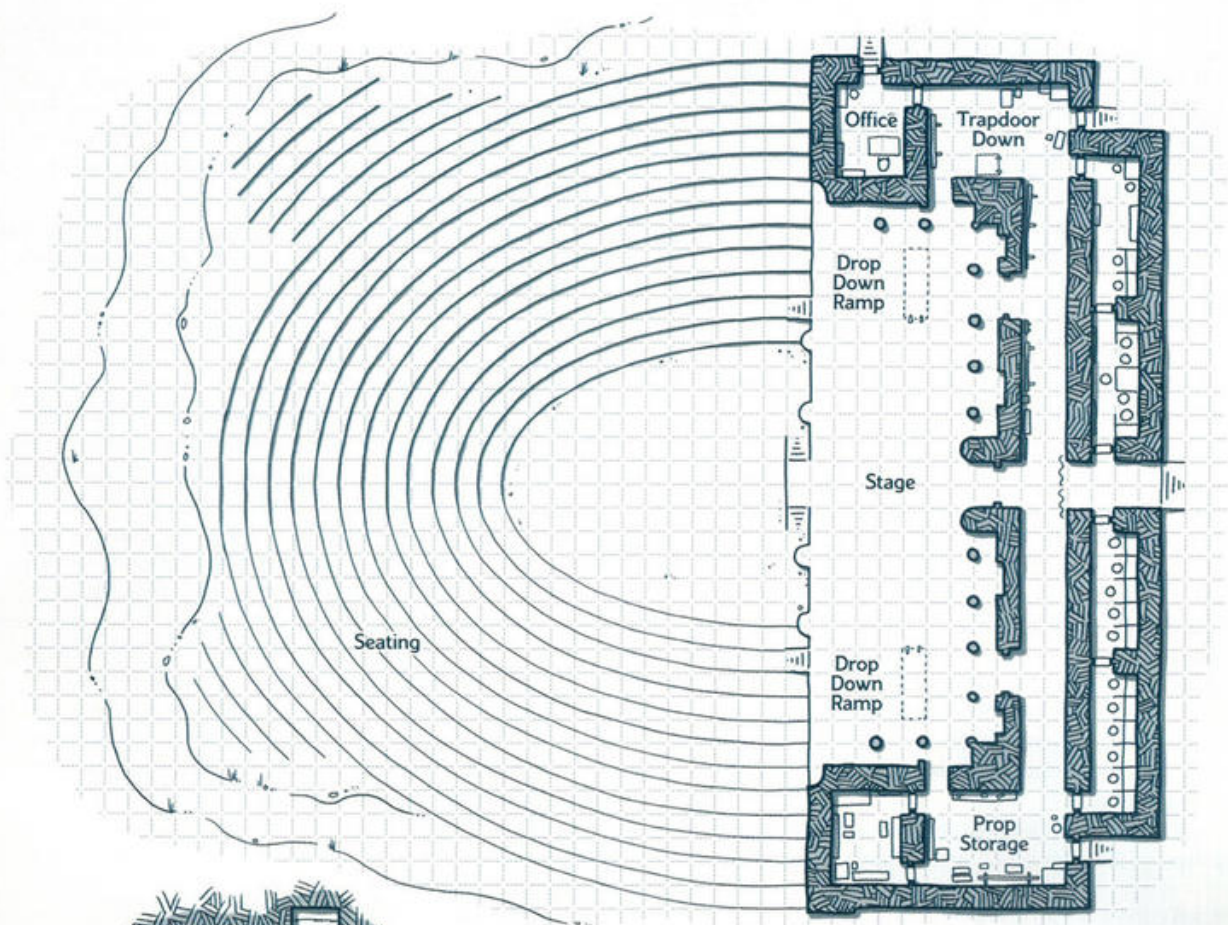
Liars, sneaks, and charmers often make their living as performers. Examples of such villains appear on the Amphitheater Villains table.

### AMPHITHEATER VILLAINS

#### d8 Villain

- 1 An actor charms nobles who see him perform into surrendering their fortunes.
- 2 The **wraith** of a murdered actress reenacts her death every night, playing the role of the murderer and targeting a new performer in her place.
- 3 An untalented dancer (**scout**) poisons those with more skill in order to get ahead.
- 4 A **mage** playwright invites political figures to see his satires, then uses magic to make them react dramatically, which encourages more people to see his plays.
- 5 A leading lady is also an **assassin** for hire, and she uses a secret room in the theater as her base.
- 6 Burglars (**veterans**) masquerading as acrobats identify marks during their performances, then rob them afterward.
- 7 A murderer (**spy**) who works as a prop maker hides his weapons and victims in among pieces of the set.
- 8 A theater-loving **mage** uses a **homunculus** to spy on audience members to gain blackmail material.







# PURPHOROS

Impulsive and unsubtle, Purphoros is an unpredictable force in the lives of his chosen champions.

## PURPHOROS'S CHAMPIONS

Purphoros's relationship to his champions is more that of a patron than a ruler. He chooses champions whose passions advance his interests in the world, and he grants them his blessings to use as they see fit in service to him. Purphoros is eccentric, however, and he could suddenly appear to hand down commands to his champions after months or years of silence. Priests, other followers of Purphoros, and regular people in need might also approach the champions requesting aid. Purphoros never rebuffs followers of other gods if their need is genuine.

The Purphoros's Quests table suggests a few adventures the god's champions might involve themselves in.

### PURPHOROS'S QUESTS

d6	Adventure Goal
1	Clear out a monster-infested mine and help procure precious iron ore for a master smith.
2	Protect a traveling theater troupe as they perform a new play that glorifies Purphoros and makes another god look foolish.
3	Retrieve a sacred weapon of Purphoros that has fallen into the hands of minotaurs.
4	Resist the corrupt authority of a powerful priest of Heliod or a cruel village elder.
5	Triumph in a contest of strength or crafting to bring glory to Purphoros.
6	Defeat a champion of another god (most likely Heliod, Kruphix, Phenax, or Mogis).

### A PURPHOROS CAMPAIGN

A campaign structured around champions of Purphoros can feature the themes of freedom, self-expression, and passion, casting the adventurers as brave rebels fighting against tyranny and convention. Purphoros's champions come from many walks of life, but they are united in their dedication to their god and his ideals.

A Purphoros campaign might begin with the adventurers being called together by a priest of Purphoros or a master smith to lend aid with an urgent matter. From there, the characters' victories on behalf of Purphoros might arouse the ire of Heliod's followers. Given Purphoros's impulsiveness, conflict with the followers of other gods can quickly escalate from petty to violent.

Although Purphoros is usually even-tempered, his champions occasionally run afoul of his violent impulses. They might find themselves inadvertently in the path of one of his destructive rages, or they might earn his wrath more directly by displaying weakness or cowardice. Wayward champions are usually able to atone for their deeds and regain his favor when he is in a better temperament, but in extreme cases, they could be forced to seek refuge with another god, thereafter contending with Purphoros as a villain.

## PURPHOROS'S VILLAINS

Though Purphoros's ideals are shared by many, the methods he uses to advance them can be brutal. His belief that creation necessitates destruction, combined with his cavalier attitude toward authority, make it easy for followers of the forge god to be seen as villains.

There are many paths to villainy in the name of Purphoros. The quest for ever finer works of craft can give rise to deadly rivalries. Resistance to lawful authority can become tyranny of another sort. And when passions become inflamed, giving in to them can lead to tragedy rather than triumph. Purphoros's general hands-off attitude toward his champions means that groups of his followers could easily find themselves on opposite sides in a conflict, and in extreme cases Purphoros himself sends heroes to strike down those who stray.

The Purphoros's Villains table suggests a variety of foes that might arise from among the god's followers.

### PURPHOROS'S VILLAINS

d6	Villain
1	A <b>cult fanatic</b> of Purphoros turns to Mogis to enhance his craft, engaging in bloody rituals to produce exquisite cursed weapons.
2	An aging <b>veteran</b> seeks to replace her body with living bronze and enlists a genius <b>archmage</b> of Purphoros to aid her. Then several of their test limbs escape.
3	A rebel ( <b>spy</b> ) plots to set fire to a temple of Heliod and dedicate the blaze to Purphoros, driving the gods toward a conflict he's certain Purphoros will win.
4	A <b>gladiator</b> of Purphoros partakes of the fumes at Mount Velus then goes on what seems to be a rampage that contributes to a mysterious design.
5	A <b>priest</b> of Purphoros condemns the party for treating their weapons and tools poorly, insisting they discard them until the heroes prove their worthiness.
6	A group of <b>oreads</b> (see chapter 6) seeks inspiration in flames. The oreads leave Purphoros's forge and conduct thorough studies of everything they burn.

### PURPHOROS'S MONSTERS

In addition to his followers, Purphoros is associated with a wide range of other creatures, such as those presented on the Purphoros's Monsters table.

## PURPHOROS'S MONSTERS

Challenge	Creature	Source
1/2	Anvilwrought raptor	MOT
1	Bronze sable	MOT
2	Burnished hart	MOT
4	Oread	MOT
5	Gold-forged sentinel	MOT
5	Fire elemental	MM
6	Cyclops*	MM
9	Fire giant	MM
16	Iron golem	MM
17	Adult red dragon*	MM
24	Ancient red dragon*	MM

\* See chapter 6 for details about these creatures in Theros.

## PURPHOROS AS CAMPAIGN VILLAIN

As a campaign villain, Purphoros is more likely to be driven by his impulses rather than by any coherent plan. He might begin by encouraging his champions to create works and spread tales that belittle the other gods. When other deities retaliate against his chosen, Purphoros reacts with rage, taking vengeance on other gods' temples and priests across Theros. Assuming the player characters are champions of other gods, they might well find themselves the targets of Purphoros's rage.

## PURPHOROS'S DIVINE SCHEMES

Purphoros's fits of passion can have a long-lasting impact on both gods and mortals. The Purphoros's Divine Schemes tables outlines a few ways the god's explosive temper might have dire consequences for the world.

### PURPHOROS'S DIVINE SCHEMES

#### d4 Scheme

- 1 Enraged at Heliod's latest insult, Purphoros causes Mount Velus to erupt. The volcano's rage doesn't cease, though, threatening the region.
- 2 Insulted that the other gods don't appreciate his creations, Purphoros breaks the Nyx-infused chains that bind the ancient red dragon Thraxes, allowing it to go on a far-ranging rampage.
- 3 Grippled by sudden inspiration, Purphoros begins building a massive Nyx-bronze bridge that will link Mount Velus in the mortal world with Nyx itself. Every god opposes him in this effort. Can the construction effort be sabotaged without bringing the bridge tumbling down on the mortal world?
- 4 Purphoros's double, Petros, reveals an army of metal Nyxborn creatures and unleashes them against temples and settlements dedicated to other gods. The gods blame Purphoros for the attack, but he is too proud, and too fond of Petros, to stop the attacks.

THE ORACLES OF PURPHOROS READ THE GOD'S WILL IN EARTH, FIRE, AND VOLCANIC FUMES.





## VOLCANO TEMPLE

The grandest temples of Purphoros burrow into the hearts of active volcanoes, being both places of worship and workshops. The volcanic vapors inspire artisans who worship at the top of the temple, then journey down to glowing forges where they craft armor, jewelry, weapons, and other works of art. The forges in a volcano temple get so hot they can work almost any material, mundane or extraordinary. The faithful of Purphoros often work on commission or sell their works, though some create strictly for themselves.

Just like the treasures forged inside them, volcanic temples are works of art. The priests who maintain the structures carve intricate designs with metal filigree in the stone walls and craft ornamental decorations that make each temple look more like an art museum than a cave inside a mountain. The priests know that one day the volcano will erupt, destroying their work but providing an opportunity to start afresh with newly inspired ideas when the cataclysm subsides.

### VOLCANO TEMPLE ADVENTURES

An adventure in a volcano temple incorporates the danger of fire, the power of divine magic, and the allure of art and treasure. It is easy to get lost in the temple's twisting, never-finished halls, minor eruptions pose a constant threat, and former temples ruined by eruptions now connect to dark places that monsters call home. Despite these hazards, the valuables most temples hold can be too tempting for some adventurers to pass up. The Volcano Temple Adventures table presents ideas for adventures that could occur in such a place.

## VOLCANO TEMPLE ADVENTURES

### d10 Adventure Goal

- 1 Acquire an item that wasn't up to Purphoros's standards before it's cast into the lava.
- 2 Defend the temple from fiery zombies emerging from tunnels connecting to a collapsed temple.
- 3 Steal a phoenix egg from the temple.
- 4 Become an apprentice to one of the priests and craft an item in the temple.
- 5 Explore a ruined temple after an eruption to make sure it is safe for others to enter.
- 6 Stop the temple priests from destroying well-crafted but substandard armor and weapons that are needed by a nearby settlement.
- 7 The volcano is erupting! Prevent it, or save the most fanatical priests who refuse to leave their forges.
- 8 Negotiate with fire giants who want to use the temple's forges.
- 9 Destroy a near-indestructible item in the volcano's forges.
- 10 Rescue an artisan lost in the temple's twisting halls.

### VOLCANO TEMPLE MAP

The volcano temple shown in map 4.14 is reached by a switchback stair carved into the side of the volcano, which leads to an ornate edifice sculpted into the face of the mountain. The temple's facade features massive pillars, two mighty statues, and a pair of towering, bronze-bound doors. The interior holds a complex of workshops, forges, barracks, and mines. The physical and spiritual heart of the place is a large cavern where a gigantic statue of Purphoros stands amid a pool of lava, with a raised altar facing a forge where smiths can complete their work in sight of their god.

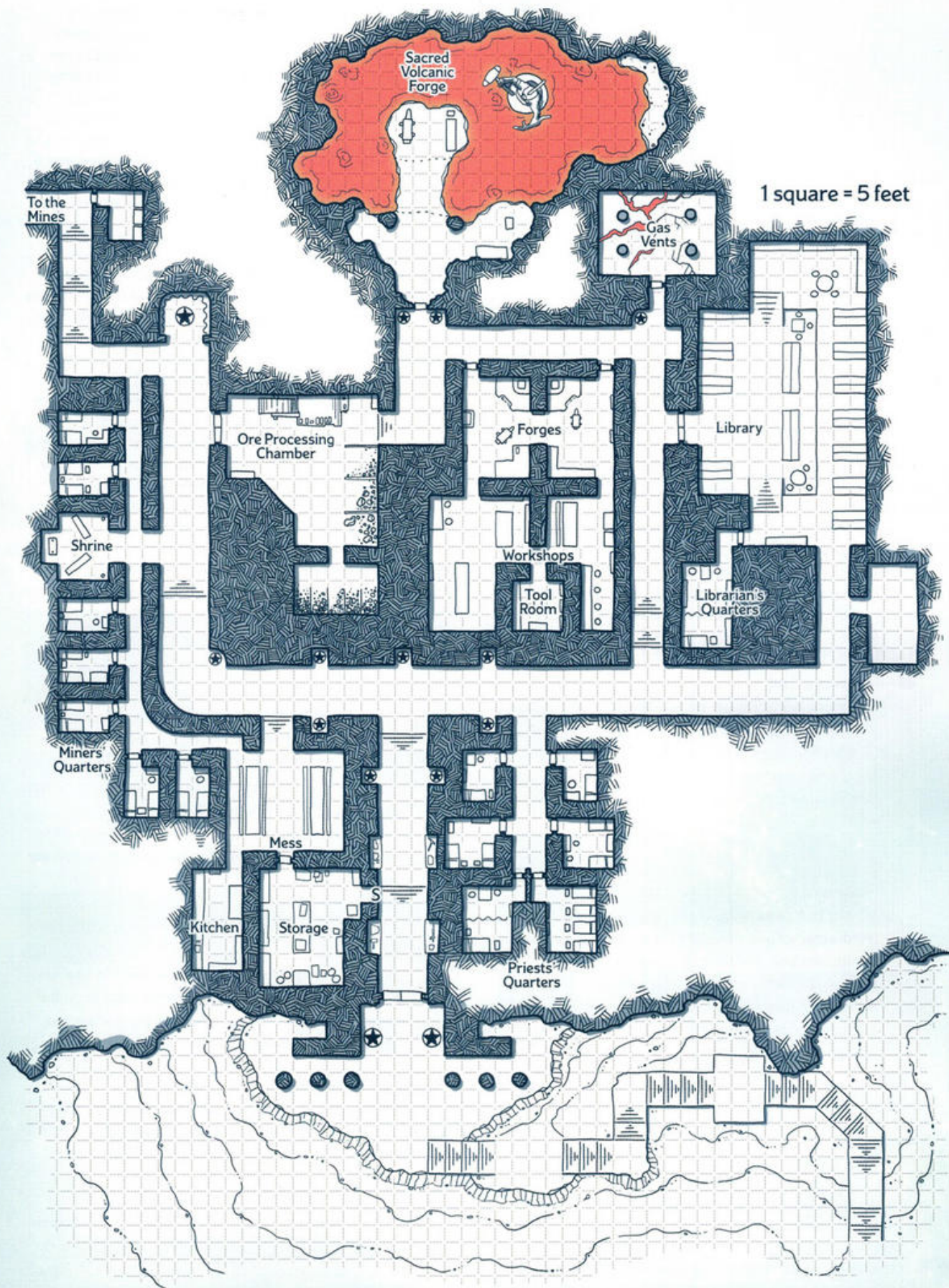
### VOLCANO TEMPLE VILLAINS

Villains in a volcano temple are out to claim the place's treasures or harness the mountain's destructive power. Examples of such villains appear on the Volcano Temple Villains table.

### VOLCANO TEMPLE VILLAINS

#### d6 Villain

- 1 An **adult red dragon** tries to make its nest inside the temple, attacking the artisans and priests within.
- 2 A **priest** of Mogis infiltrates the volcano and mars its ornate halls, hoping to draw Purphoros's ire and thus cause the volcano to erupt at an unexpected time, killing everyone in the temple.
- 3 A obsessed **cult fanatic** is never satisfied with her apprentices' creations and works them to death.
- 4 A unit of defeated and desperate **hoplites** (see chapter 6) raid the temple, steal magical weapons, and prepare to avenge their fallen companions.
- 5 An apprentice artisan summons **fire elementals** that he can't control to murder his cruel master.
- 6 An **iron golem** forged in the temple breaks free of its maker's control and goes on a killing spree.





# THASSA

Thassa's influence on the lives of her champions varies wildly, often influenced by her stormy whims. A champion of the god who serves dutifully might not attract her attention for years. Those who displease her, though, or who engage with those who have earned her ire, might find themselves the uncomfortable focus of her attention for an extended period.

## THASSA'S CHAMPIONS

Thassa's champions are more expressions of her desires than the means for enacting long-term agendas. She disdains the status quo but also has no interest in committing to lengthy campaigns to overturn it. Rather, her champions' work often serves her immediate interests or embodies her ire about some recent slight.

The Thassa's Quests table suggests a few adventures the god's champions might involve themselves in.

## THASSA'S QUESTS

### d6 Adventure Goal

- 1 Help a village of Thassa's faithful evacuate to the hills before Thassa sends a great wave to punish the village's willful coastal neighbors.
- 2 Phenax has learned the location of a sunken treasure in a flooded cave. Retrieve the treasure before his fortune-hunters can steal it from Thassa.
- 3 Smuggle a cargo of offerings for Thassa past harbor inspectors at Meletis, skirting new laws put into place at the behest of Helioid's priesthood that ban the import of items intended for sacrifice to other gods.
- 4 Find a magically stolen vessel sequestered high in the mountains and return it to the ocean.
- 5 Capture a great beast of the land and bring it to the shore as an offering for a kraken.
- 6 Humiliate a champion of another god (most likely Ephara, Karametra, Pharika, Iroas, or Mogis).

## A THASSA CAMPAIGN

Thassa's interests naturally pull the characters toward the sea, coasts, or lands affected by (or starved of) water. She makes a fantastic patron for sea-based campaigns, but also land-based journeys where the characters might spread Thassa's desire for change and discovering ancient knowledge.

The campaign might begin with Thassa warning the characters about an impending attack or disaster involving a seaside community, leaving them to convince others and organize a defense. Some citizens might

hail them as heroes, while others are suspicious of them—particularly when one of the disasters they foretell seems likely to be Thassa's doing. They might get caught up in the schemes of other gods' minions who resent their growing influence over the community.

Thassa knows nothing is permanent, including her champions' service. If they fail to uphold her wishes, she will abandon them. In such a case, she might become a villain, trying to thwart the characters unless they can appease her or gain the protection of a new patron.

## THASSA'S VILLAINS

Thassa can take on a villainous role as much through indifference as through malice. Thassa takes revenge on those who wrong her, and she doesn't particularly care who else is harmed.

Thassa's followers might become villains for a vast range of reasons. Some become obsessed with recovering or keeping hidden the secrets of the deep. Others come to worship the ocean itself, with its uncaring depths and half-glimpsed monsters. Still others preemptively strike at those who risk offending the god—white knights, overprotective of their own deity.

The Thassa's Villains table suggests a variety of foes that might arise from among the god's followers.

## THASSA'S VILLAINS

### d6 Villain

- 1 A **triton master of waves** (see chapter 6) demands ever greater sacrifices to Thassa from merchants moving along a crucial trade route, threatening to sink ships that don't comply.
- 2 A former **priest** of Thassa kidnaps indigents and plans to drown them as offerings to regain her favor.
- 3 A **druid** of Thassa, after being mistreated by a coastal community, uses magic to lure a plague of **giant crabs** out of the depths to take revenge.
- 4 A **water elemental** is trapped in a village well and has changed the drinking water to saltwater. It needs help returning to the sea.
- 5 Sirens (see the harpies entry in chapter 6) favored by Thassa take up residence in a lighthouse, preventing its use.
- 6 A ship carrying a massive pearl sacred to Thassa has been sunk. Thassa's **cultists** want the pearl back, but anyone trying to retrieve it find that the god's triton followers have claimed it.

## THASSA'S MONSTERS

Any sea creature might answer Thassa's call. In addition to any aquatic beast or being of elemental water, the Thassa's Monsters table presents a few of her servants.

## THASSA'S MONSTERS

Challenge	Creature	Source
1/2	Hippocamp	MOT
1	Siren (harp)*	MM
2	Naiad	MOT
2	Triton shorestalker	MOT

Challenge	Creature	Source
5	Water elemental	MM
8	Triton master of waves	MOT
13	Storm giant	MM
17	Dragon turtle	MM
23	Kraken*	MM
26	Tromokratis	MOT

\* See chapter 6 for details about these creatures in Theros.

## THASSA AS CAMPAIGN VILLAIN

Many of Thassa's schemes begin with some perceived slight, or even a genuine threat, perpetrated by one of the other gods. But Thassa's acts of intervention are seldom subtle, and her resistance to change sometimes causes her to let a situation worsen until she erupts in rage.

Thassa might begin by answering another god's offensive act with a display of power—which might be viewed as a threat by other gods. An arrogant dictate from Heliad or developments in a coastal community might prompt Thassa to send forth a kraken, requiring that heroes fight it off. When the kraken is defeated, Thassa sends her champions to collect the beast's heart so they might resurrect the creature. Characters might then face off against Thassa's champions while they attempt this resurrection, or fight several younger krakens her champions are training. Such a campaign might end with the adventurers convincing other gods to placate Thassa, or paying penance in the form of treasure, service, or sacrifice.

THE FLOOR OF THE SIREN SEA IS LITTERED WITH VESSELS THAT NAVIGATED THE WAVES UNWELCOMED.

## THASSA'S DIVINE SCHEMES

The Thassa's Divine Schemes tables offers examples of how the god's whims might have ruinous impact upon the world.

### THASSA'S DIVINE SCHEMES

#### d4 Scheme

- 1 After a kraken is sighted near an inhabited island, a fleet prepares to set sail from Meletis to face it. In retribution, Thassa pulls the ocean back from the entire coastline, stranding not only the fleet, but the fishing boats and merchant vessels that keep the polis fed and supplied. Thassa's oracles announce that "the forest of masts must be felled" before the waters will return, but Meletis refuses to give up its navy. How can Thassa be appeased?
- 2 During a divine conflict, one of the gods' weapons tumbles into the sea. Thassa refuses to return the godly weapon, claiming it as her own, much to the owner's ire.
- 3 Thassa turns a ship full of another god's champions into dolphins as punishment for setting foot on one of her holy isles. Can she be persuaded to change them back? How will the champions' patrons respond if she refuses?
- 4 When multiple gods turn against her in a dispute, Thassa is enraged. She releases the locks binding every kraken in the sea, along with that of an ancient and mysterious kraken brood mother.



## COASTAL TEMPLE

Thassa's temples are often located in coastal areas, to accommodate both her land-dwelling worshipers and her faithful who live beneath the waves, such as tritons. These houses of worship often make use of natural caves and coves that demonstrate the power of the sea over the passage of time. Wave-worn rocks, tidal pools, stalactites, stalagmites, coral reefs, and other marine features are all incorporated into the decor of a temple.

Most coastal temples include chambers that are underwater at high tide. Worshipers sit in these places at low tide and meditate on what the future might hold while the water rises around them. They leave offerings to Thassa in these places, which are carried out to sea as the water recedes.

A coastal temple is where people come to contemplate the sea, the passage of time, and the natural world while enjoying the sound of the waves, the sight of the sea's sculptures, and the refreshing feeling of cool water.

### COASTAL TEMPLE ADVENTURES

Fierce tides and sudden storms make coastal temples potentially hostile places for the land-dwelling faithful. No worshiper, aquatic or otherwise, is safe on the rare occasions when a shark or something worse comes up from the depths.

Adventurers could come to a temple to clash with a group of Thassa's faithful, which include pirates, cultists who worship krakens, and other unsavory types who sail the waves or swim beneath them. Characters might also come to such a place to meditate and listen to what the sea tells them. The Coastal Temple Adventures table offers ideas for adventures in such a place.

### COASTAL TEMPLE ADVENTURES

#### d12 Adventure Goal

- 1 Save land-dwelling worshipers who became trapped inside the temple during a flood.
- 2 Steal an offering before it washes away.
- 3 Confront pirates worshipping at the temple.
- 4 Defend the temple from kraken-worshipping cultists.
- 5 Kill or drive off a **hydra** that has claimed the temple as its home.
- 6 Help a **killer whale** beached in the temple.
- 7 Get information from a worshiper.
- 8 Kidnap a worshiper without making a scene.
- 9 Steal a magic **quipper** from a sacred tide pool.
- 10 Spy on a conversation between two worshipers.
- 11 Negotiate with a **blue dragon** that wants to claim the temple as its lair.
- 12 Escape the temple as it floods.

### COASTAL TEMPLE MAP

At high tide, the coastal temple shown in map 4.15 is covered in a few inches of water, some of which gets trapped in depressions when the tide goes out. These shallow pools sometimes contain colorful fish, crabs, shells, and flotsam, any of which Thassa's followers might consider to have divine meaning. The largest cavern

boasts a massive coral altar where the sea god is worshiped. Tunnels lead to priests' quarters, private meditation areas, docks, and other areas well suited to the use of both land-dwelling and aquatic worshipers.

### COASTAL TEMPLE VILLAINS

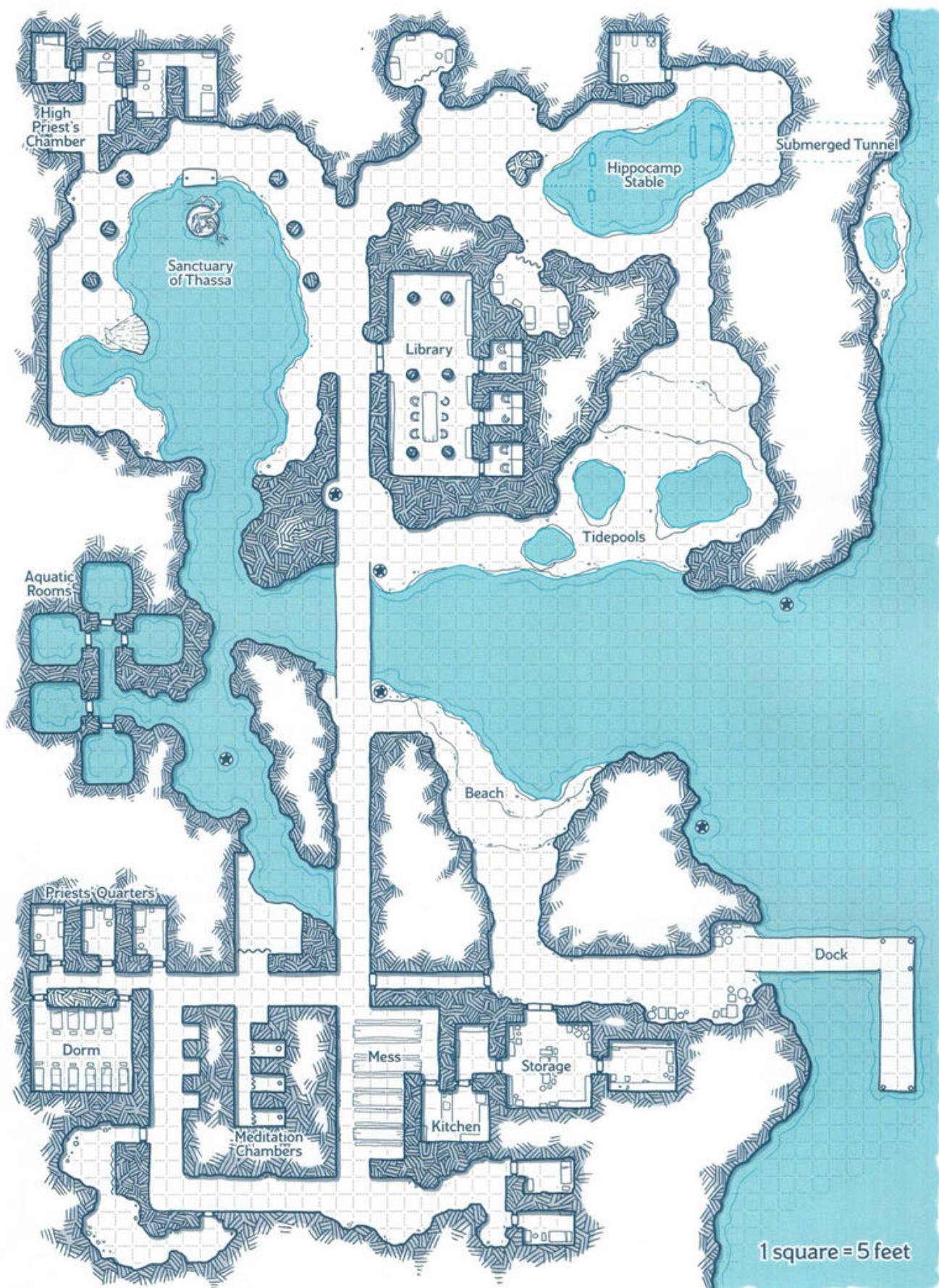
Villains in seaside temples often seek to harness the might of the sea or are almost alien beings that have crawled from the depths. Examples of such villains appear on the Coastal Temple Villains table.

### COASTAL TEMPLE VILLAINS

#### d6 Villain

- 1 A **kraken** threatens to destroy the temple if worshipers don't pay tribute to the creature.
- 2 A  **nereid** (see chapter 6) hides inside the temple and murders fishers who worship here for their crimes against the sea.
- 3 A group of **sirens** (see the harpies entry in chapter 6) take over the temple and lure new victims inside to drown themselves during high tide.
- 4 A **priest** of Thassa falsely convinces elderly worshipers that giving more wealth to the temple increases the length of time they live.
- 5 A **giant octopus** under the effects of the *awaken* spell hunts in the temple at high tide.
- 6 A **rageful triton master of waves** (see chapter 6) believes everyone in a temple is secretly serving a kraken and begins murdering them.





MAP 4.15: COASTAL TEMPLE

# NAUTICAL ADVENTURES

*The Callapheia* chronicles the legendary story of Cal-laphe, captain of *The Monsoon*, whose wild adventures pitted her against all manner of pirates and sea mon-sters. Sailors also tell tales of the bold explorer Captain Siona and her ship, the *Pyleas*, recounting her epic voy-ages to mystical islands. Both captains and their crews still sail the waves of Theros, their stories far from com-plete. Yet word of their deeds has inspired generations of sailors, merely hinting at the endless treasures and adventures to be found at sea. This section provides an overview of the wonders and dangers heroes might en-counter when they venture out to sea.

## SAILING THE SEA

Just as on land, everything in the waters of Theros exists on a mythic scale. While map 3.1 in chapter 3 suggests that travel across the Siren Sea should take only a few days, its hazards and countless uncharted islands can make what should be a journey of a month a year-long odyssey. Even a routine journey can become an epic adventure if the characters anger a god, such as Thassa, who can make sure the waves are never in their favor.

### EMBARKING ON ADVENTURE

To begin any nautical adventure, heroes must take that first, often daunting, step away from dry land. The Adventures at Sea table provides a variety of story ideas that might help compel heroes to set forth upon the waves.

#### ADVENTURES AT SEA

d10	Adventure Goal
-----	----------------

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 1  | Slay a monster or pirates terrorizing ships at sea.     |
| 2  | Follow an omen that leads out to sea.                   |
| 3  | Seek an artifact hidden underwater or on an island.     |
| 4  | Find your way home after getting lost.                  |
| 5  | Find a lost temple of a god.                            |
| 6  | Relocate settlers trying to colonize an inhabited isle. |
| 7  | Discover a safe route through deadly waters.            |
| 8  | Retrace the path of a hero lost at sea.                 |
| 9  | Find a whirlpool that is a passage to the Underworld.   |
| 10 | Sail from the edge of the world into Nyx.               |

## RUNNING NAUTICAL ADVENTURES

Running adventures involving ships and the sea doesn't need to be daunting, especially not in a world as steeped in magic as Theros. Knowing the difference between port (left) and starboard (right), or a ship's bow (front) and stern (rear) isn't necessarily important to legendary he-roes, particularly when brave crews sail along with them. Feel free to think of the ship your heroes travel upon less in the terms of a pirate story (full of commonplace duties and dangers) and more like a vessel in a space-faring, sci-fi adventure (where mundane operations often fade into the background). How much a story engages with course setting, provisioning, periods of inactivity, and other as-pects of long ocean journeys is ultimately up to you and the players to decide, but consider cleaving to what the group thinks is fun rather than stretching for unnecessary accuracy (whatever that might mean for a world as magical as Theros).

That said, if you'd like to add nuance to your nautical ad-ventures in Theros, the book *Ghosts of Saltmarsh* provides more information on ships, hazards, and environments at sea as well as tables for use with nautical encounters, mysterious islands, and other marine features. The galley presented in that book might also make a fine vessel for your adventures—once your players give it a name worthy of their legend, that is.

### GETTING LOST

Many adventures at sea start with a simple premise: get home. Whether the tale starts with characters getting marooned or in the aftermath of some calamity, the characters might share the goal of getting back to where they belong. Perhaps the characters find themselves on an island of legend, one not found on any map, making their travels a journey through the unknown. Even if the characters are shipwrecked on a well-known island, the influence of the gods, pursuit of deadly sea beasts, will of a living vessel, or countless other challenges could stand in the way of them reaching home.

### MAINTAINING RELATIONSHIPS

In a campaign that often changes location, it can be diffi-cult to have recurring NPCs. If you introduce characters you'd like the party to stay in touch with, consider the following options:

- Aquatic or flying characters can visit the characters as they travel, appearing unexpectedly.
- Magic items such as *sending stones* and spells such as *animal messenger* allow characters to stay in touch over long distances.
- Powerful creatures might teleport to the characters' location—particularly those unable (or disinclined) to share their teleportation powers.
- When the characters dream, they might meet other creatures in Nyx.
- Some of Theros's mystical islands move around on the sea, allowing the characters to run into them and their inhabitants multiple times.



THE KRAKEN ARIXMETHEES CARRIES THE RUINS OF A  
LOST CITY AFFIXED TO THE LENGTH OF ITS SPINE.

## MYSTICAL ISLANDS

The Siren Sea is dotted with mysterious islands that are home to strange creatures, mysterious hermits, odd phenomena, and ancient ruins. These islands make fantastic adventure locations for characters exploring uncharted oceans or those simply trying to get home. While any island might present the opportunity to rest, weather storms, restock, and explore, the islands of Theros might also be worlds unto themselves, where unlikely beings hold dominion or the gods have crafted a realm to their specific whims. Such mystical islands aren't just stops on an ocean journey; they're unique lands touched by the magic of the gods.

A mystical island could be the ultimate destination of a nautical adventure, or a magical interlude amid a larger seafaring campaign. When creating a mystical island, consider how its environment and inhabitants contribute to making it feel like a world unto itself. Also, consider how the laws of nature and the gods might operate differently on the island, giving rise to all manner of magical properties.

### ISLAND ENVIRONMENTS

While a mystical island could be a simple spur of rock and sand jutting from the ocean depths, there's the potential to make it much more. When considering the very foundations of an island, consider what the gods might have set adrift, what might have fallen from Nyx, or what might have floated upon the seas for centuries. The Mystical Island Environments table suggests some possibilities for the sorts of unusual islands that might be floating in the Siren Sea.

### ISLAND ENVIRONMENTS

- | d10 | Environment  |
|-----|--|
| 1   | <b>Frozen.</b> The island is magically frozen or is a floating iceberg. Perhaps something lies locked within.  |
| 2   | <b>Sargassum.</b> The island is a dense layer of seaweed that has developed its own ecosystem of strange beasts and trapped sailors.                               |
| 3   | <b>Living.</b> The island is actually a gigantic slumbering creature—potentially unbeknown to its residents.   |
| 4   | <b>Mirage.</b> Magical phenomena surround a mundane island with tempting or treacherous illusions.   |
| 5   | <b>Nyx Shard.</b> The island is a manifestation of Nyx, a recreation of a land from the distant past or completely from fiction.                                   |
| 6   | <b>Idyllic.</b> The island has beautiful weather and abundant fruit—so much so that some might consider never leaving.   |
| 7   | <b>Lost Ruin.</b> The island is all that survived a calamity that destroyed a legendary city.  |
| 8   | <b>Gateway.</b> The island is inherently magical, perhaps being an intrusion from a bizarre demiplane or the dream of a sleeping demigod.                          |
| 9   | <b>Promised Land.</b> The island is a gift from a god to a favored individual or population, specially tailored to suit their whims.                               |
| 10  | <b>Divine Refuge.</b> A god created this island to be a personal getaway, making it a reflection of the world as it would appear if they were in complete control. |



UPON ONE OF THE DAKRA ISLES, TRESPASSERS LEARN THE TRUTH BEHIND THE STORIED CURSE OF THE SWINE.

## ISLAND INHABITANTS

Any sort of people, from isolated societies to desperate castaways, from monstrous predators to the last beings of their kind, might make their home in a hidden island sanctuary. The Island Inhabitants table offers just a few suggestions for what sort of people might make their home on a mystical island.

### ISLAND INHABITANTS

#### d10 Inhabitants

- 1 **The Last.** Creatures that think they're the last of their kind—perhaps Returned, leonin, or humans—make their home on the island.
- 2 **First Contact.** A prosperous civilization, unconnected to the great poleis, thrives on the island.
- 3 **Strangers.** A species not usually connected to Theros dwells here—such as thri-kreen, yuan-ti, or another creature from the *Monster Manual*.
- 4 **Rivals.** Two settlements have turned the island into a war zone.
- 5 **Prisoner.** A powerful monster or dangerous figure from legend is imprisoned on this island.
- 6 **Tyrant.** A powerful individual built a fortress on the island, and all other residents revere them.
- 7 **Fanatics.** The island's residents know only one god and don't appreciate visits from heretics.
- 8 **The Dead.** A settlement of the Returned is located near an obscure passage to the Underworld.
- 9 **Memories.** Everyone on the island is Nyxborn, being the reincarnation of a lost people.
- 10 **Oracle.** An oracle with a reputation for accurate knowledge and prediction lives on the island.

## ISLAND MAGICAL PROPERTIES

Beyond unusual physical compositions and strange inhabitants, mystical islands might have magical properties. Effects include persistent weather, a unique law of physics, a curse that affects visitors, or something stranger. When determining what magical properties affect a mystical island, consider using any of the magical effects here, either as presented or as inspiration for magical properties of your own design.

**Bliss Island.** Those who visit the island risk being enchanted so they never want to leave. At the end of each long rest it takes on this island, a visitor must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or be unwilling to leave the island before finishing another long rest. After failing this saving throw three times, the creature never willingly leaves the island and, if forcibly removed, does everything in its power to return. A *dispel evil and good* spell removes this effect from the creature.

**Swine Island.** Visitors to this island risk being afflicted by the Curse of the Swine. At the end of each long rest it takes on this island, a visitor must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or be affected by the *polymorph* spell and transformed into a pig (use the **boar** stat block). The curse lasts until the visitor leaves the isle or until it is broken by a spell like *remove curse*.

**Timeless Island.** When characters leave the island after spending at least 1 day there, they might find that time has passed differently for the outside world. Use the Feywild Time Warp table in chapter 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to determine how much time has passed.

**Wild Magic Island.** Whenever a spell is cast on the island, the caster must roll on the Wild Magic Surge table from chapter 3 of the *Player's Handbook*.

## UNDERWATER ADVENTURES

With vast triton realms hidden beneath the waves and legendary ruins drowned in the deep, endless potential for adventure lies under the sea. Characters interested in exploring the ocean's depths might seek the means of surviving underwater—whether such takes the form of magic items or devices crafted by ingenious inventors. Alternatively, drowning might only be a concern of those who aren't favored by the gods, and heroes might find themselves welcomed into the deep by Thassa herself. The riches of the deep are also vast, with the peoples of the sea hoarding strange treasures and more ships resting on the ocean floor than sailing its surface. However characters contend with the depths and whatever they might seek, consider using the possibilities on the Underwater Adventures table to launch a party's explorations into the deep.

### MYTH OF THE SINKING OF OLANTIN

In ancient days, Olantin was a wealthy coastal polis along the Siren Sea. Because it was the westernmost of the great poleis of old, it became associated with sunset, and therefore, with Heliod. A magnificent shrine to the sun god rose within the polis, and its priests, a group known as the Triarchy, grew wealthy and powerful.

Details about what came next are unclear, but records tell of a veil of darkness that engulfed the coast. People believed that Heliod had abandoned them, and many fled the polis. In a panic, the Triarchy raised an enormous ball of light into the sky as a replacement sun. When the darkness cleared, Heliod saw the fake sun and grew furious. With his spear, he struck Olantin, shattering the city and casting its ruins into the depths of the sea.

## UNDERWATER ADVENTURES

### d12 Plot

- 1 Seek aid or advice from the eldest member of an aquatic species—such as the first dolphin.
- 2 Recover the treasure of a hero long ago devoured by a sea beast.
- 3 Carry a coastal city's gifts and diplomatic messages to an underwater community.
- 4 Calm a kraken attempting to break out of its sea lock (see chapter 6).
- 5 Make a sacrifice at a triton temple devoted to Thassa or another god.
- 6 Transform into a sea creature and infiltrate an underwater community.
- 7 Convince a hero who's fallen in love with a sea dweller to return home.
- 8 Raise a sunken city back above the waves while avoiding whatever now makes the place its home.
- 9 Seek information from an oracle who lives on a sunken island inside a giant bubble.
- 10 Seal a hole in the sea that's allowing denizens of the Underworld ward of Nerono to escape.
- 11 Return a juvenile sea monster caught in a fisher's net to its home.
- 12 Protect a priest of Thassa intent on journeying to the bottom of the sea.

AS THE PEOPLE OF OLANTIN DISCOVERED, AGES OF PROSPERITY AND CULTURE MEAN NOTHING IN THE FACE OF A WRATHFUL SEA.



# UNDERWORLD ADVENTURES

All things eventually reach their end and pass into the Underworld. That doesn't mean the heroes of Theros need to accept that fate and embrace eternity quietly, though. This section examines fates and features of the Underworld, including how the living and the dead might interact with this grim land and its inhabitants. Methods of escaping this supposedly final resting place of all mortal souls are also explored here, along with what adventures the Underworld holds for Theros's bravest heroes.

## LIVING DESCENT

Sometimes the answer to a riddle is lost beyond the inky waters of the Tartyx River. When spells and sages fail to recover some crucial bit of information, how far might heroes go to recover it? One answer is to dare an expedition into the Underworld to find what was lost. Entering the Underworld is arguably one of the easiest feats imaginable—everyone ends up there when they die. Entering while still alive, and in such a way as to be able to walk out again, is another matter entirely.

Legends tell of places where the boundary between the mortal world and the Underworld is weak. These paths lie beyond lands controlled by the poleis and other civilized beings. Dark caves with tunnels leading down into darkness and rivers quietly lapping at fog-shrouded gravel shores give way to the Underworld's borders. Though Athreos ferries the dead across the Tartyx, he's not above accepting a one-way fare from those who still breathe. Even the other fearsome Underworld guardians that keep watch over the dead often allow the living to enter. Leaving the Underworld isn't so simple, and once beyond the Tartyx River the living find themselves in the same predicament as the dead. Within the Underworld, characters who entered bodily are still fully alive. They age, suffer damage, heal naturally, and require air, food, drink, and sleep as normal. The Underworld isn't conducive to mortal life, though, and between deadly creatures and dangerous otherworldly environments, the living might soon find themselves numbering among the dead.

Characters can pursue all manner of goals to the Underworld. Many center on finding something that was lost with no other means available to recover it. Perhaps this means rescuing a dead soul when resurrection magic isn't an option or retrieving a vital piece of information from someone who wasn't supposed to die. This might even mean pursuing the soul of a player character, particularly if they're somehow barred from being returned to life through usual magical means. In such a case, consider allowing the player to run a temporary character who assists the party in the rescue or to play their own character as a soul and let them rejoin the party to help effect their own escape.

Regardless of why living characters might enter the Underworld, those who attempt the undertaking might seek to learn more about the realm of the dead, its various wards (see chapter 3), and where the object of their quest ended up. Oracles of any of the gods might aid in divining these details, but those likely to be the most

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU DIE?

When a soul arrives in the Underworld, it has all the memories and skills it enjoyed in life. In all respects, it is identical to its living self, including its game statistics. Though souls can enjoy the acts of eating, drinking, and sleeping, they don't require them. They feel hunger and thirst and might be tormented by deprivation, but they don't suffer the effects of exhaustion because of it.

Every time a soul dies in the Underworld, it reanimates at the start of its next turn with 1 hit point per Hit Die it possesses, and it gains one level of exhaustion that can't be removed unless the soul returns to life, at which point all exhaustion gained in this way vanishes. With each level of permanent exhaustion, the soul becomes faded and dull, its eyes glazing over more and more until they are blank, staring pools.

A soul that suffers level 6 exhaustion from the continued application of this effect petrifies into a statue called a *misera*, and it doesn't rise again.

precise—followers of Erebos—are also the least likely to be interested in aiding an Underworld escape. How characters turn such an oracle to their side and determine the accuracy of the information they receive are all part of such a momentous quest.

Once characters enter the Underworld and attain their goal, they still face their most daunting challenge: escape. Consult the following “Paths of Escape” section for ideas on how the living might ultimately make their way back out of the Underworld.

## DEATHLY INTERLUDES

When a character dies, their adventures don't need to end. The Underworld presents an opportunity to provide a sense of closure for deceased characters—as adventurers' ends tend to be quite sudden—or to give them a way to continue engaging in the quest while their companions attempt to bring them back to life.

These interludes can be played as brief scenes where the player of the dead character is in the spotlight and the rest of the group observes. Alternatively, the rest of the group could participate as NPCs or even monsters the dead character meets and interacts with.

## HERO'S EPILOGUE

Most adventurers hope their lives come to an end with some worthy conclusion. Sometimes in the heat of battle, though, that end can be abrupt and without real resolution. An epilogue featuring a hero's soul descending into the Underworld, crossing the Tartyx River, and being guided—or dragged—to the ward which awaits them might create that satisfying conclusion.

Consider memorable moments from the character's story and how they can be reflected in the events of their final descent. Maybe they see the souls of friends, allies, or loved ones who perished, whether their fates are good or ill. Perhaps a villain the hero slew now exists as a broken *misera*, giving mute testament to the hero's success. Characters who overcame their personal flaws might even be confronted with symbolic or direct examples of their past failings and rebuke their old vices in a final, crystallizing act of growth.



FUNERARY MASKS HELP THE NEWLY DEAD RESIST THE EROSION OF MEMORY AND IDENTITY IN THE UNDERWORLD.

### THE SOUL ABIDES

When adventurers in higher tiers of play die, they can often expect to be resurrected. In these cases, an interlude where the hero gets a glimpse of the afterlife awaiting them can be powerful. From a personal standpoint, this sort of interlude can serve to reinforce a character's choices and actions or offer a warning of what's to come if their priorities don't change.

For characters who embrace heroic virtues and live as a beneficial force in the world, they might spend a few hours or days in the idyllic embrace of Ilysia. On the other hand, those who have stained their soul with dark acts might return to life after suffering what feels like years of torture in Tizerus's Mire of Punishment.

In either case, the character might even gain some helpful insight into their current predicament or a portent of events to come. Maybe the soul of a long dead sage offers guidance or a legend the hero long idolized provides advice on how they defeated a similar threat. Silent contemplation while sailing on the Nerono oceans could give the character time to decipher part of a mystery. An Underworld demon might even say something that only one of the character's dead rivals could have known. Whatever a character learns during their temporary death, they can carry with them back into the mortal world. Such might make dying one of the most helpful things to happen in a character's greater heroic career.

### JOURNEY INTO DEATH

Those who are prepared for death, or who receive funeral rites, typically have or are given a coin (or similar token of value) interred with their corpse. When these individuals' souls reach the banks of the Tartyx River, they have with them the fare necessary to board Athreos's skiff and pass on to the Underworld.

Those who don't have a coin with them when they die and aren't given funeral rites have no means to pay Athreos's toll and thus have no way of reaching their place of rest. These lost souls primarily collect along the Tartyx's shores where they languish or beg for coins to pay for their passage. Some wander away from the shore, though, becoming ghosts or other undead. Only if their body is granted funeral rites or if the living give them payment for Athreos can such souls find rest.

## DENIZENS OF THE UNDERWORLD

When a spirit reaches the Underworld, they find that they're far from alone. The nature of the Underworld under Erebos's rule takes its toll on even the heartiest souls. As time wears on, most of the dead feel the weight of ages and misery. Souls suffer injury and pain just as living creatures do, and even the dead can perish over time or after enduring multiple deaths. The result of these forms of spiritual weathering divides the dead into the following groups:

**Neoli** are newcomers to the Underworld—vibrant spirits who remember their lives and, in many cases, are coming to terms with death.

**Glazers** are vacant, misery-worn souls who have endured decades of existence in the Underworld. Most have spent far more time dead than they did alive and remember life as little more than a faded dream.

**Misera** are souls permanently turned to stone after enduring numerous deaths in the Underworld. These corpses of the dead linger where they petrified until they crumble to dust.

## PATHS OF ESCAPE

Despite the inexorable pull of Erebos's lash, even death itself can end—or at least be forestalled. Simply walking out the way one entered isn't an option—Athreos refuses to ferry souls back across the Tartyx. Other pathways that connect the Underworld and the living world are guarded by vicious creatures. Still, there are a few means by which a dead soul can return to life.

### RESURRECTION MAGIC

By far the simplest means of return for a dead soul is for someone who yet lives to cast a *raise dead*, *resurrection*, or *true resurrection* spell. If a mortal is a frequent recipient of resurrection magic, Erebos might take a special interest in that soul. A soul in the clutches of Erebos himself isn't free, so it can't be returned to life by mortal magic.

### DEMON FLIGHT

Creatures that fly across the Tartyx without Erebos's permission find themselves attacked by flocks of vicious monsters. The demons of the Underworld make this flight with better success than most, though. By bargaining or force, a demon might be convinced to carry a soul on this lengthy, dangerous flight. Should a soul manage to survive the harrowing journey, it finds itself restored to life in the mortal world.

**Escaping Characters.** To attempt this means of escape, a party must bargain with a demon or acquire another means of flight in the Underworld. Then they'd better be ready for the fight of their lives as demons, harpies, and other deadly foes pursue them.

### WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A SOUL ESCAPES?

If a soul meets all the challenges set before it and slips from Erebos's clutches, several things likely happen:

- The soul becomes a true, physical being. It is in a new version of its body, a physical manifestation of the soul's perception of itself (which may or may not be identical to its former body).
- The soul's former body has no further connection to the soul; it is an inert, empty shell. Casting spells on the body that restore it to life simply have no effect.
- Any object carried out of the Underworld becomes a real, physical thing in the mortal world, with all the properties and features common to objects of its type.

### LATHOS

Hidden in the bowels of Erebos's palace is the portal Lathos, which leads to the mortal world. Moreover, tales say that Lathos can restore a soul to life without any cost or loss of one's identity and sense of self. This isn't to say that Lathos is an easy path to walk, however. Erebos's most fearsome servants guard the portal. So far, no one has succeeded in escaping through Lathos, and the location of the portal's exit in the mortal world is unknown.

**Escaping Characters.** Escaping through Lathos is likely an appealing option as the portal exacts no price. The trick is reaching it. Perhaps the characters know some secret that Erebos covets and so might bargain for access. Alternatively, they might conduct an elaborate infiltration of Erebos's palace. Such would be a challenging endeavor but also a feat worthy of legend.

### PATH OF PHENAX

The god Phenax, once a mortal who died and passed into the Underworld, was the first to discover a way to escape, forever known as the Path of Phenax. As part of his escape, he swam across the Tartyx, whose waters stripped away his identity. Without that vital part of his being, Phenax couldn't be detected by Athreos, and Erebos couldn't snare him with his great whip.

Since Phenax's escape, other souls have repeated his dangerous journey. When mortal souls travel the Path of Phenax, the Tartyx washes away their identities, symbolized by their faces, which become nothing more than blank flesh. Souls that successfully emerge on the mortal side of the Tartyx River become Returned, with no knowledge of their former name or past life. As this is a known consequence, most souls forge a gold mask to carry with them. This mask becomes the proxy identity worn by all Returned. Souls' lost identities continue to exist, though, becoming eidolons, which scatter throughout the mortal realm, having no connection to their Returned bodies. (See chapter 6 for more information about eidolons and the Returned.)

**Escaping Characters.** Traveling the Path of Phenax can present an exciting but challenging option for most parties, as it results in affected characters becoming a monster of some type—either an eidolon or a Returned. If you're comfortable with characters playing as monsters or retiring their characters at the end of the quest, this can be a rewarding arc to play through. You might also introduce some means to reunite a character's

eidolon with its Returned body and restore the character to at least some semblance of their former self. This should be a monumental undertaking, as it shakes the foundation of Theros's division of life and death.

The exact details of Phenax's route are unclear, and aside from forging masks and a final swim, any number of challenges among islands in the Tartyx might comprise the path.

## BEYOND DEATH

When a character dies, the Underworld serves as an opportunity to allow a dead character to experience their own story while their companions (hopefully) try to get the body resurrected. Consider the possibilities on the Underworld Adventures table should a character find themselves trying to escape the realm of the dead.

### UNDERWORLD ADVENTURES

#### d20 Plot

- 1 In Phylas, find and bargain for information with your least favorite dead acquaintance or family member.
- 2 Smuggle the puppy of an **Underworld cerberus** (see chapter 6) into the mortal world.
- 3 Find and free a lost hero from the Labyrinth of Memories on Nerono.
- 4 Free a legendary lost ship and the souls aboard from the endless Nerono whirlpool they're trapped within.

#### d20 Plot

- 5 Meet with your family's most legendary member in Ilysia and prove yourself worthy of their name.
- 6 Steal a legendary, long-shattered treasure from its resting place in Ilysia's Citadel of Destiny.
- 7 Seek out a long-dead foe and learn how they're keeping you from being magically resurrected.
- 8 Discover a secret from an infamous member of your family who became a **typhon** (see chapter 6).
- 9 Save a god's favored worshiper from a cruel punishment in the Underworld—even though they've been dead for hundreds of years.
- 10 Sever one of the massive chains of Tizerus, releasing the ancient being it binds.
- 11 Lead an immortal anvilwrought to Erebos's palace and convince the god to let the construct die.
- 12 Discover why Erebos is no longer allowing certain individuals to die.
- 13 Coerce a **night hag** into granting a morbid prophecy by stealing its eye.
- 14 Learn a secret way to escape the Underworld from one of the titans.
- 15 Find the lost secret of a long-dead warlord that now rests with the villain's misera.
- 16 Discover from a **woe strider** (see chapter 6) how to escape the bonds of destiny.
- 17 Defeat a host of legendary villains in Agonas's Stadium of Dishonor.
- 18 Prevent one of your ancestors from transforming into an **eater of hope** (see chapter 6).
- 19 Travel to Erebos's palace and recover a secret from one who failed to bargain for their release.
- 20 Seek out Klothys's domain and learn from her oracles how you're destined to escape the Underworld.



THOSE WHO FOLLOW THE PATH OF PHENAX MIGHT RETURN TO THE MORTAL WORLD, BUT THEY NEVER REGAIN THE LIVES THEY LOST.



## No Silent Secret

"No Silent Secret" is a short adventure for a party of four to six 1st-level characters, who will advance to at least 2nd level by the adventure's conclusion.

At the outset, choose which of Theros's three major polis—Akros, Meletis, or Setessa—you want to start near. Alternatively, you might allow the players to choose the polis based on their character backgrounds. While choosing a polis allows the group to get a glimpse of their potential "hometown," this setting serves as a backdrop only briefly, with much of the adventure taking place far from the safety of civilization.

## STORY OVERVIEW

When Phenax sent Varyas the Knowing a vision of the oracle's impending death, the seer didn't fear—he knew his work was just beginning.

Like all the Returned who followed him, Phenax abandoned his past identity during his flight from the Underworld. Through ages, the god managed to recover parts of his history, but much remained a mystery to him. Recently, though, he discovered a hint of a truth he'd never considered. He had to know more, but the secrets he sought lay only in the Underworld. Phenax wouldn't risk alerting Erebus to his interest, so he sent an agent—a soul willing to forsake life, discover his secret, and return with the knowledge that even the god couldn't escape with.

Varyas met his end and dutifully sought Phenax's mystery in the Underworld. Though it took him years, the oracle discovered what he sought. Keeping the information secret and smuggling it out of the Underworld proved challenging, though. To guard what he'd learned, Varyas inscribed it in code upon a mask and, after multiple attempts, successfully followed the Path of Phenax.

When he emerged back into the mortal world, Varyas the Returned remembered nothing of his past life, his escape from death, or the strange symbols etched on his mask. All he recognized of the writing scrawled on his mask was the name "Khea."

With that, a mystery beyond life and death slipped from a lost past into the living realm of Theros.

## RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure requires the fifth edition D&D rulebooks (*Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Monster Manual*). You should read the entire adventure before attempting to run it. If you'd prefer to play, you shouldn't read any farther.

Text that appears in a box like this is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased for the players when their characters first arrive at a location or under a specific circumstance, as described in the text.

The *Monster Manual* contains statistics for many of the creatures found in this adventure. When a creature's name appears in **bold** type, that's a visual cue pointing you to the creature's stat block in the *Monster Manual*. If the stat block appears elsewhere, the adventure's text tells you so.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The adventure begins with the characters discovering the recently murdered Returned, Varyas, and confronting his killers. Varyas's gold mask bears a code on it, one that points toward the sage Khea who lives in the nearby polis. When the characters investigate, they learn from Khea that the writing is undecipherable except for the first line, which refers to the legendary Court of Orestes, a site sacred to the god Phenax. She also notes that a recent earthquake has uncovered a

cave along the Khystonos River that could be the secret site's location. If so, then perhaps within lies the key to deciphering the mask, along with its own treasures.

With the information provided by Khea, the adventurers set forth into the wilds, where they'll face multiple storied dangers before reaching the Court of Orestes. Once at the lost holy site, the characters discover ancient guardians, as well as an unliving entity with the potential to reveal Phenax's lost secret.

## STARTING THE ADVENTURE

Once the players are ready to begin, explain to them that their characters are among a group of travelers on the road headed into one of Theros's great poleis. They don't need to know each other before this scene, but it's fine if they do. Once the players are ready, read or paraphrase the following text:

The sun sinks low in the west, stretching shadows across the well-traveled road only a mile or so from the polis's edge. At your current rate, you—along with a loose crowd of other travelers—should reach the polis outskirts just before dark.

Not everyone's moving at a leisurely pace, though.

Behind you, a horse rounds a bend in the road, galloping at top speed. The beast looks frantic, terrified and frothing with exertion. Upon it sways a figure wearing a gold mask. The rider barely manages to stay in the saddle, his body bristling with cruel black arrows.

Blind with panic, the horse plows on, threatening to trample travelers in its path. Before it can, though, the beast's legs give way. Both mount and rider topple, crashing into the dust with a piercing whinny and a sound like snapping branches.

Give the characters a moment to react, encouraging the players to leap into action—in the first moments after an accident, time is of the essence!

Anyone who rushes to the **horse** and succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom (Animal Handling or Medicine) check can tell that the animal is exhausted and suffering from a multitude of minor abrasions. If it is given water, food, and rest, though, the horse—a red roan mare—will recover fully in a day. Simple tooling on the horse's bridle reveals the horse's name: Photina.

Characters more interested in the rider find that he's dead. In fact, he's been dead for some time. The figure's skin is gray, and his wounds weep black blood. His mask is clearly a funerary mask, though it's cast of gold rather than clay. Characters who succeed on a DC 10 Intelligence check recognize the strange individual as one of the Returned, someone who has died and come back from the Underworld. A character who removes the victim's mask finds no face beneath it—only blank gray flesh over a black-lipped mouth—and dozens of lines of finely etched symbols covering its interior. Most are written in a strange cipher, but among the unreadable glyphs, the word "Khea" stands out prominently.

Before the characters can investigate further, read the following text:

The sound of racing hooves rises like rolling thunder from the direction the fallen rider emerged. Two more riders round the bend, both wearing dark tunics. The fading light glints upon the snarling gold masks both wear.

The riders are both **Returned sentries** (see chapter 6) from the necropolis of Odunos. One wields a shortbow rather than a sling:

**Shortbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

These assassins have dogged Varyas across the countryside. They've been sent by an influential figure in Odunos who caught wind of Varyas's agenda and who seeks to silence any who know Phenax's secret. The oracle managed to get away from them at a ferry crossing some distance back, but not before catching several arrows in the back. He remained astride his mount despite his wounds, but Varyas expired moments before his horse crashed in front of the characters. His pursuers don't know that, though.

These Returned resent all living people but especially those aiding their target. They assume anyone investigating Varyas's body is assisting him and move to cut them down. Even if no one goes to Varyas's aid, the riders attack the mortals closest to the body, trying to ensure that no witnesses escape. "Get away from the heretic, bleeder," one Returned snarls as she strides into battle. Both ignore any mortals' explanations and fight to the death. Their horses bolt if their riders are slain.

If the battle turns against the characters, a patrol of three **guards** from the polis stumbles upon the scene. The Returned attack them as well. In the aftermath, the guards are quick to rush the characters along, but they don't interfere if anyone searches the bodies.

## TREASURE

The Returned carry little beyond the gold funerary masks they wear (see chapter 6) and their equipment. In addition, one has a pouch containing 20 sp and a broken piece of pottery. Any character who succeeds on a DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check recognizes the shard as an ostraka, a shard from a clay funerary mask, which is used as currency in the Underworld. On it is scratched a brief order from the assassins' commander: "Silence the heretic Varyas. His secrets must remain dead." This leader's identity and agenda speak toward a larger threat beyond this adventure (see "Myths to Be Told" at the end of this adventure for a few possibilities).



MASK OF VARYAS  
(FRONT AND BACK)

## WHAT THE DEAD SEE

In the wake of the battle with the Returned, the characters have an opportunity to continue along their way. Before they can, though, all of them witness an incredible sight: an omen from the god Phenax.

For a moment, all sounds turn to whispers, and color drains from the world, turning everything shades of gray—everything except for the gleaming golden mask. Seconds later, things return to normal. Any character who succeeds on a DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check recognizes it as a sign from Phenax, but its exact meaning is unclear. If anyone else is nearby and the characters ask them about the omen, it's clear no bystanders witnessed the vision.

A character who scrutinizes the mask finds nothing supernatural about it, but it is plainly marked with the word “Khea” followed by line after line of cramped glyphs. If a character seeks out a library in the polis and spends a day trying to decrypt the text, they can make a DC 16 Intelligence check. On a successful check, the character deciphers the simplest part of the cipher: “Hid from eyes of mortals and gods/Lies wither in Orestes’s rot.” On a failure, they learn nothing.

Beyond this, the text remains undecipherable, and the word “Khea” is also a mystery. If a character spends an hour inquiring in the polis about “Khea,” or succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence (History) check (characters native to the nearby polis have advantage on this check), they determine that Khea is the name of a local sage of some renown. Once this fact is ascertained, the way to Khea’s ivy-covered home is easy to learn or recall.

## KHEA THE SAGE

Khea (N female human **oracle**; see chapter 6) dwells in a nondescript cottage near the edge of the polis. Her home is small and cramped, crowded with drying lavender and histories written in dozens of languages. Khea’s a busy woman, and regardless of when the characters arrive, she initially refuses to see them until the next morning. If a character succeeds on a DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) check, though, Khea admits them immediately. A character has advantage on this check if they mention that the sage’s name is inscribed on the mask of a Returned. Khea’s usual consultation fee is 3 gp, but she waives it once she becomes aware that she is somehow involved in this situation.

Khea is a sharp-witted, hearty woman who never says what a brow furrow or eyebrow arch could convey. After admitting the characters, judging their manners, and pointedly telling rude individuals to wait outside, she asks to examine the mask.

### MEANING IN THE MASK

After studying the mask for some time and consulting scrolls from her collection, Khea confirms that, other than her name, the text is an unusual code. Even if the characters have already deciphered the first lines of the cipher, Khea spends some time verifying it for herself. In short order, she translates the first stanza as: “Hid from eyes of mortals and gods/Lies wither in Orestes’s rot.” She says that this text is purposefully direct, being a line from a paean to Phenax. As for the rest, Khea reveals that not only is it a cipher, but an incomplete one; letters have been removed from the message in some indiscernible pattern. Without knowing what the other letters are, the writing is impossible to decode—even with magic—since it isn’t a meaningful message in its partial form.

### BURIED IN THE COURT OF ORESTES

Although Khea can’t tell the characters much more about the cipher, she recognizes the name Orestes. The line of verse, she says, could refer to the Court of Orestes, the legendary tomb of one of Phenax’s earliest followers. Orestes was said to be a master thief and an oracle who foresaw who would become Returned. According to myth, the site also holds “Phenax’s Silence,” though none know if the name is that of an actual object or merely a poetic flourish. The fact that this readable line begins the inscription leads Khea to surmise that the key to translating the full message lies in the tomb.

The exact location of the Court of Orestes is lost to history, but ancient tales hint that it lies along the Khystonos River. This narrow river is about three days’ travel away from any of the poleis. Normally such information would mean little, except that Khea has heard of an earthquake that dammed the headwaters of the Khystonos deep in the Katachton Mountains. As a result, the river’s flow has been reduced to a trickle for nearly a month, parching the region downstream. Although this event has deeply concerned farmers, the discovery of ancient etchings and ruined structures hidden beneath the waterline has roused many scholars’ interest.

## SAGE ADVICE

Beyond her suggestion about the Court of Orestes, Khea is a font of insights. If any of the characters mention the shared vision they experienced, Khea is certain that they witnessed a sign from Phenax, verification of the god's ominous interest in this enigma.

Khea can also identify the name Varyas as belonging to a dangerous, rabble-rousing oracle who was devoted to Phenax and who died mysteriously years ago. She has no idea if the Returned was actually him, but Varyas has caused trouble for her more than once—ever since she critically savaged his supposedly satirical comedy, *The Satyr's Half-Horn*. She wouldn't put it past the petty priest to harass her even in death.

Khea can also answer most questions about the polis she lives in, the lands of Theros, the gods, the Underworld, and the Returned. If any characters balk at the idea of seeking out the Court of Orestes, Khea explains that the gods don't look kindly upon those who ignore their omens, and that Phenax is a particularly dangerous enemy to make. If the threat of divine vengeance isn't enough to encourage them to continue, Khea offers the party 200 gp per character to collect rubbings and historic artifacts from the Court of Orestes.

Once the party commits to undertaking the quest, Khea provides the characters with a map and directions to where ruins were discovered along the Khystonos.

## INTO THE WILDS

After meeting with Khea, the characters have an opportunity to explore the polis they're visiting and prepare however they please. During this time, they might learn much about the place. Relate to the players any information appropriate to the polis and its culture from chapter 3. Additionally, while they make preparations, the characters hear one of the tales from the Polis Rumors table. Each rumor is followed by a note on its accuracy. Those who actively seek information might hear an additional rumor.

### POLIS RUMORS

d6	Rumor
1	Purphoros's wrath shook the mountains and dammed the Khystonos River. Now villagers downstream suffer as their fields and herds lack the water they need to survive. (Partially true)
2	The Akroans have invented a new device of war that can tear down the walls of the mightiest fortress. They tested it in the Katachthon Mountains and plan to use it against any who don't pay tribute. (False)
3	A minotaur calling himself King Antigonos wanders the wilderness seeking a suitable heir. Anyone who can pass his test will become his successor. (True)
4	If you drink from the legendary Pool of Lyth, the gods will grant your greatest wish. (False)
5	Groups of gold-masked Returned from Odunos have been harassing travelers, demanding to know if anyone's seen a Returned wandering alone. (True)
6	An immense hydra, Ocyroako, is drinking up the springs that feed the Khystonos River. (False)



Khea's directions take roughly three days to follow from any of the three poleis, a journey of approximately 50 miles—though, owing to Theros's changeable landscape, you may adjust this distance and place the Khystonos River in the Katachthons wherever you please (see "Exploring Theros" in chapter 3). Khea's route avoids obvious dangers, but necessarily runs through untamed lands. If you want to highlight features of Theros, feel free to include any additional encounters you please. In any event, the two following encounters occur along the way—probably on the first and second days of the trip.

The journey should also provide the characters with ample time to get to know one another. Encourage each player to share why their character is remarkable or is destined for greatness. If the group comes to believe that fate has brought a band of extraordinary individuals together, feel free to encourage that thinking with signs or omens like those from earlier in the chapter.

## THE WATERS OF LYTH

Eventually, the party crosses a vale not noted on Khea's map. Read or paraphrase the following description:

A shallow valley lies amid the rise and fall of the Katachthon foothills. At the dell's far edge stands a great rock outcropping that looks vaguely like a satyr's face. The stones weep a steady flow of water, which spreads into a serene, sky-blue pond. Willows grow along the waters' shore, gently swaying in a light breeze.

Upon seeing this tranquil scene, each character should make a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check. Those who succeed recognize this as the storied Pool of Lyth. Tales tell that the pool's sweet blue waters grant visions of the drinker's deepest desires and sometimes even fulfill those desires.

### POOL OF LYTH

There's truth to the tales of the pool's remarkable qualities. Those properties don't extend from some oracular magic, though, but from one of the god Pharika's poisons, which seep from the surrounding rocks and taint the pool. Any creature that drinks from the pool must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or gain two levels of exhaustion for 1d4 hours as it is overcome with drowsiness and mild hallucinations.

The pool is no more than 10 feet deep at its center and only 1 or 2 feet deep near the edges. Anyone who succeeds on a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check or tries to look beneath the pool's surface notices animal and humanoid bones barely covered by the water.

### OUTCROPPING CAVES

Three natural caves open near the top of the 30-foot-high rock formation at the far end of the pool. These crevices might be noticed by anyone who succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check and can be reached by climbing with a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check. These caves serve as the lairs of the harpies that use the pool as their killing ground.

## DUBIOUS ORACLES

Three **blood-toll harpies** (see chapter 6), sisters named Ahkno, Hakno, and Jhamp, lurk in the caves near the pool. The mangy, dull-witted sisters think they're seers, but they're actually just addicted to the pool's tainted waters. They use the poisoned pool to attract and weaken creatures before setting upon their prey.

The harpies notice anyone who approaches the pool. Under the pretense of being dream interpreters, the harpies call out and flap close to visitors, encouraging them to drink from the supposedly magical pool so the sisters can interpret their visions. One of the harpies, Jhamp, is a particularly bad liar, snickering and casting obvious glances while her sisters attempt to dupe strangers.

If someone drinks from the pool, they are affected as previously described but might still ask the harpies to interpret their meaningless hallucinations. If they do, one of the sisters relates her own deepest desires, describing in detail the flavor profile and mouthfeel of eating one of the drinker's favorite organs.

The harpies attack after most of the visitors have drunk from the pool—or earlier if these fraudulent seers grow frustrated.

## TREASURE

Over their years of minding the pool, the harpies have accumulated treasures in their caves. After the harpies are defeated, any character who climbs up to the caves and investigates finds a considerable amount of feather-encrusted filth, along with the following items:

- A total of 39 sp
- Seven turquoise stones carved with the symbols of random deities (25 gp each)
- A *potion of climbing*
- A *spell scroll of sleep*

## BROKEN KING ANTIGONOS

While the characters cross the wilderness of the Katachthon foothills, the following encounter takes place. Read or paraphrase this description:

A scree-choked gully runs between rugged hills, a dry streambed that offers a route through the rising rocks. A bend in the steep bluffs hides what lies ahead, but the sound of hacking coughs comes from around this corner.

Just around the corner, some 30 feet from the lead party member, rests the **minotaur** known as Broken King Antigonos. He is old and decrepit, garbed in ancient finery worn to tatters. A dented crown rests on his brow, and one of his horns ends in a jagged stump. He drags a rusty greataxe in the dirt, and tied to his back is a 30-pound, clay amphora painted with images of warring hoplites—all of whom have had horns crudely painted on them to make them look like minotaurs. The broad-mouthed amphora is large enough to hold roughly 55 gallons of wine.

When Antigonos spies the characters, he hails them, introduces himself, and explains his quest to find an heir to his kingdom—a land he says is a week's travel

to the east of the Oraniad Mountains. He claims that he was a great king who was cursed by Mogis after he defied his war advisors by making his sickly but beloved child his heir. He was cast out and has since become tragically obsessed with finding a worthy heir.

Whether Antigonos's tale is true, or if he is simply a victim of his own fantasies, is unclear. The threat the wanderer poses, though, certainly isn't. After telling his story, he asks the strongest-looking Medium character to submit to his test, believing the gods placed the group in his path for a purpose.

## TEST OF THE AMPHORA

Antigonos believes that the true heir of his kingdom will fit perfectly in the enormous amphora he carries, an ancient relic he found deep in the Oraniad Mountains. The container is of sufficient size to hold a Medium creature, but only one that fits perfectly is acceptable for the purpose of the test. Antigonos judges what defines a perfect fit, holding test-takers to inscrutable standards. The minotaur also doesn't reveal that anyone who doesn't fit the amphora must be punished, being trimmed to size if they're too large or having their extra space filled in if they're too small. Only someone who fits perfectly might be deemed the king's rightful heir.

Antigonos allows any Medium creature to attempt the test. Doing so requires the creature to climb into the amphora while Antigonos holds it upright. After someone has entered the amphora, roll a d20 and consult the Test of the Amphora table to determine the results.



## TEST OF THE AMPHORA

### d20 Result

- 1–9 The character is too small. Antigonos tries to solve this problem by scooping several pounds of dirt into the amphora, requiring the creature to make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is blinded, restrained, and begins to suffocate (see chapter 8 of the *Player's Handbook*). On a success, it is affected as if it had been hit by Antigonos's Amphora attack.
- 10–19 The creature is too large. Antigonos tries to trim them down to size by attacking the creature with his greataxe.
- 20 The creature fits! Antigonos declares it his heir. He bestows his crown, robes, and belt pouch on the creature, then bows before wandering off.

If no one participates in Antigonos's test, the minotaur respects their decision and wanders off dejectedly.

## CONTENDING WITH ANTIGONOS

Broken King Antigonos is a **minotaur** with 38 hit points remaining and who has disadvantage on attack rolls due to his decrepit state. He has the following additional action:

**Amphora.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one Medium or smaller creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If there is not already a creature inside the amphora, the target is restrained inside. As an action, the restrained creature can make a DC 14 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check, escaping from the amphora on a success. The effect also ends if the amphora is destroyed. The amphora has AC 8, 20 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

In addition to taking action against those who don't fit inside his amphora, Antigonos attacks any characters who insult him or try to rob him. Despite his age, he can still muster a flash of his past prowess. He gets distracted easily, though, using his greataxe and amphora (if it is empty) on random targets. If the party attacks him for attempting to harm a character, he curses them for trying to impede the will of the gods and retaliates.

If the party doesn't attack the minotaur, he calms down after a few rounds. The minotaur is clearly a victim of Mogis's cruelty. Any character who proposes Antigonos follow their deity instead of remaining in Mogis's shadow, or suggests a similar course, can make a DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check. If they succeed, Antigonos abandons his amphora, then goes off to learn more about his potential new god. Even if the character fails this check, the minotaur turns thoughtful and departs.

However the party contends with Antigonos, grant them experience for having overcome the minotaur.

## TREASURE

In addition to his battered pewter and silver crown (worth 85 gp), amphora (worth 25 gp to the right buyer, such as a vintner), and tattered robes (worthless), Antigonos carries a backpack worn at his belt like a pouch. It holds 16 cp, a large carnelian (worth 75 gp), and an etching of a bookish-looking minotaur youth.

## THE COURT OF ORESTES

On the third day of following Khea's directions, the party reaches the Khystonos. Its riverbed is nearly dry, the river reduced to a muddy trickle. After following the lethargic flow for the better part of a day, the adventurers reach a bend where several prominent rocks jut from the mud. These stones mark the entrance to the Court of Orestes.

## COURT OF ORESTES FEATURES

Beyond the entrance along the Khystonos River, the Court of Orestes is a crumbling, centuries-old tomb. Inside, its walls are made of thick stone blocks, and the ceiling is about 10 feet high. Unless otherwise noted, the crypt's doors have no hinges; each is a rectangular slab that requires a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check to shimmy out of place.

When the Khystonos is at its full height, the Court of Orestes is underwater. Since the river's damming, though, much of the water has emptied through various cracks in the stonework. Some of the tomb is still partially flooded, though, holding roughly 2 feet of river water. Flooded areas are marked on map 4.16 and count as difficult terrain.

## COURT OF ORESTES LOCATIONS

The area around the Court of Orestes and its interior locations are identified on map 4.16.

### 1. KHYSTONOS RIVERBANK

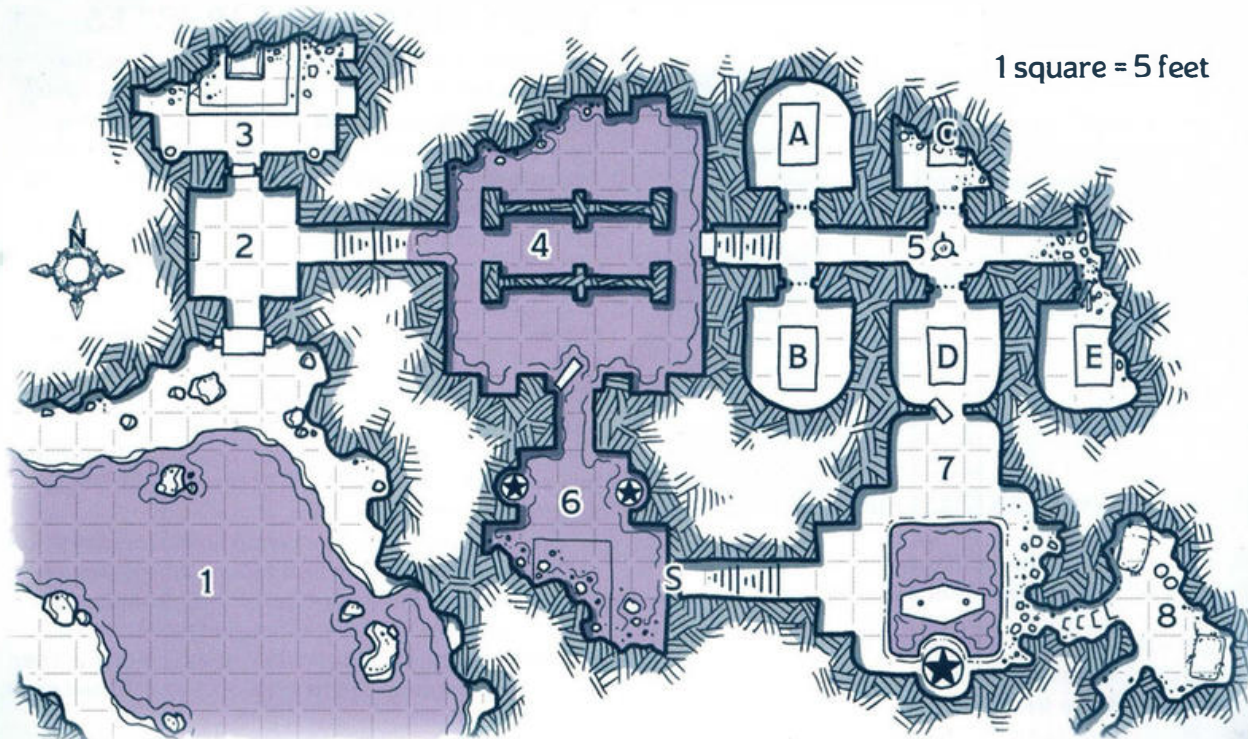
When the party approaches this area from the south for the first time, assuming sufficient illumination, they can see the tomb entrance from at least 60 feet away. When the structure comes within sight, read the following text:

A shallow stream fills only a fraction of the riverbed. At a bend, an unnatural arrangement of mud-caked stones juts from the exposed riverbank. It appears to be a crude stone lintel and posts supporting a rectangular slab roughly four feet wide and six feet high.

The water here is roughly 30 feet wide and 2 feet deep. Though the river can be easily forded, the shallow waters count as difficult terrain.

Amid the muck and gravel on the northern bank hides a deadly predator, an **amphisbaena** (see chapter 6). The serpent has concealed itself as it watches for prey, the mud covering its body granting it advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide. The amphisbaena targets the first creature to approach the stone slab.

Once the serpent is dealt with, anyone who examines the rock formation quickly realizes it's a door. Opening or otherwise investigating the door knocks free the dirt encrusting it, revealing an ancient etching of a phoenix wearing a mask rising from a pile of bones.



MAP 4.16: COURT OF ORESTES

## 2. ANTECHAMBER

The scent of warm, humid rot smothers this dismal chamber. Mosaics cover the walls, their colors faded and images scrambled by lost tiles. A thick layer of mud covers the floor, as well as stairs that descend to the east. A stone slab blocks the way to the north.

The mosaics here once depicted the feats of Orestes, a scoundrel-hero who devoted his life to Phenax. Among the images, Orestes is portrayed stealing the sun from above the polis of Setessa, tricking a cerberus into devouring itself, stealing a kraken's heart, and racing a skiff ahead of the River Guide, Athreos. All the mosaics are ruined now, but they can be repaired enough to reveal the gist of what they depicted if a creature spends an hour searching through the mud to find the missing pieces. Doing so provides no special insight but reveals a few details of the life of the legendary character who lies interred within these halls.

If a worshiper of Phenax enters the room, though, that creature sees the mosaics in their complete, original forms—resplendent in gold and shades of royal purple. If that creature touches any of the images, it hears the name “Orestes” whispered in its mind. Then the illusion vanishes, revealing the mosaics’ actual state.

## 3. VIEWING ROOM

Grave niches and alcoves holding funerary urns line the walls of this chamber. The ceiling in the northern part of the room has collapsed, burying much of the area. At its center, a broken marble bier stands atop a short dais.

This room once served as a place to view the remains of those who died in Phenax’s service and offer final prayers. The bodies this room once held have rotted away in their burial niches, and the urns hold only gray muck. Any character who sifts through the goo must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw for each niche or urn they search or contract sewer plague (see chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*).

**Treasure.** Amid the rotted remains on each of the six stacked burial niches lie small bits of jewelry, gold teeth, or ancient coins, with each haul worth 2d4 gp.

## 4. FLOODED CATACOMB

The stairs descend into a burial chamber partially flooded with muddy water. Ancient stone walls divide these catacombs, many lined with grave niches holding roughly humanoid shapes wrapped in tattered linen. More than one of these grim parcels floats freely in the stagnant water.

These catacombs serve as the burial place of lesser Phenax worshipers who earned the honor of being interred near Orestes. Two feet of water fill the room, making the entire area difficult terrain.

Most of the bodies interred here have rotted away, only their wood-and-linen burial dressings holding their shapes. If the characters move through the water, their effort causes a few floating bodies to drift through the muck, bumping into walls and passersby. They are harmless but unsettling nonetheless.

In addition to the bodies, three **Returned sentries** (see chapter 6) lurk here. These Returned are tritons and, in addition to the statistics of a normal Returned sentry, each can breathe water and has a swim speed of 30 feet. Decades ago, anticipating Varyas's mission, Phenax sent these Returned a vision instructing them to locate the tomb and guard it. The sentries infiltrated the crypt while it was submerged and waited here, drifting in a torpor. Expecting Varyas, the sentries attempt to ambush any non-Returned who enter the catacombs. These Returned are fanatics and fight to the death.

The stone slab on the east wall can be moved aside to allow access to area 5, but any check to do so is made with disadvantage because of the room's standing water.

Age and water compromised the slab door leading to area 6, which now stands askew.

**Treasure.** Each of the Returned sentries wears a piscine, gold funerary mask (see chapter 6). The bodies here bear no grave goods and deteriorate if disturbed.

## 5. CRYPTS OF THE DEATHLESS

Stairs ascend to a hall lined with door frames barred by rusted grates. An iron brazier, its sides sculpted with furious-looking faces, stands in the middle of the hall, midway along its length. Not far beyond, the ceiling has collapsed, burying whatever lies there.

These crypts hold the bodies of Phenax worshipers who were expected to return from the afterlife. None did.

**Brazier.** The brazier that once lit this hall is sculpted with faces reminiscent of the masks the Returned wear. Any character who examines the brazier and succeeds on a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices that one of the faces is smiling, and that it's looking south toward crypt D.

**Crypts.** There are five largely intact crypts here, four of which are sealed by rusty metal grates. The grate of each crypt can be wrenched free or otherwise bypassed with a successful DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check. Beyond, each crypt holds a stone sarcophagus engraved with a name and depictions of the occupant's most infamous feats. The lid of a sarcophagus can be opened with a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check—though the partially buried sarcophagi in crypts C and E need to be dug out before they can be opened, taking 10 minutes for each one.

The crypts contain the remains of the following ne'er-do-wells:

**Crypt A** holds Yerda Ever-Coin, who paid her debts with stolen stars.

**Crypt B** holds "Cyclops" Phelnidus, beloved by numerals and friend of dice.

**Crypt C** holds Solt, who was born Returned.

**Crypt D** holds Gathus Gadus, who could whisper anyone and anything to sleep.

**Crypt E** is empty. The name on the sarcophagus is violently scratched out, and the engraved images are of robbed figures lamenting the loss of their eyes.

**Secret Door.** In the back wall of crypt D is a slightly askew secret door. Any character who looks into crypt D and succeeds on a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the secret door. Those who enter the crypt immediately notice what looks like a crooked wall. The secret door opens easily.

**Treasure.** Aside from the drenched skeletons within, crypts A and D each hold only a mundane clay burial mask. The skeleton in crypt B wears an eyepatch that is actually a *two-birds sling* (see chapter 5). Crypt C contains a small body wearing a sorrowful silver burial mask worth 50 gp.



## 6. SHRINE OF PHENAX

Much of the ceiling in the southwestern part of this chamber has collapsed into the rot-tinted water partially filling this room. In alcoves flanking the door to the north stand twin life-sized statues of a figure wearing a burial mask. Both reach out, as if to accept or offer a gift.

Much of this shrine has been destroyed, its altar and most of its trappings ruined by earth and time. The two statues depict the god Phenax; the depictions are slightly disturbing but harmless. The 2-foot-deep standing water here makes the entire room difficult terrain.

Obscured by water and debris, a mosaic covers the floor between the statues. Only a great effort would reveal the ancient artwork. Any Phenax worshiper who enters the room, however, sees the mosaic clearly, its tiles depicting coins falling from a crumbling skull.

**Secret Door.** The east wall bears a secret door. Any character who succeeds on a DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check notices a movable wall panel.

## 7. TOMB OF ORESTES

This chamber's ancient masonry rises to form a corbelled dome. At the room's center lies a pool of sludge. A broad sarcophagus rises from the pool, its lid caked in crumbling candle wax and rotted offerings. Whatever rites were performed here were overseen by a larger-than-life statue in the alcove to the south, a sculpture depicting the upper body of a grim, masked man. The statue reaches out, as if to accept what it has been offered.

To the east, a portion of the tomb's wall has collapsed, exposing a deep crevasse in the rock.

This chamber serves as the resting place of the oracle-thief Orestes. According to legend, Orestes could divine how long someone would live by reading a pool of the person's blood. Those who, in his vision, bled black were destined to one day follow the Path of Phenax, coming back from death as Returned. After Orestes's death, his tomb was consecrated as a holy site by Phenax's followers, in part due to Orestes's sarcophagus taking on the oracle's powers of prophecy.

The room's domed ceiling rises 20 feet. The area around Orestes's sarcophagus is difficult terrain, not because of the shallow, murky water there, but because of the hundreds of stray bones that lie beneath the water—the remains of animals sacrificed to Phenax.

More than the dead dwell in Orestes's tomb, though.

**Lampads.** Two unsettlingly attractive **lampads** (see chapter 6) named Antiophes and Callisos recently happened upon Orestes's tomb, gaining access through the collapsed eastern wall. They discovered the magical sarcophagus here and hoped to use it in service to the god Athreos, helping to predict which souls would eventually try to escape the Underworld and reenter

the living realm as Returned. Soon after they arrived, though, Varyas's eidolon entered the tomb. Antiophes and Callisos hope to capture the errant soul and deliver it to Athreos, but the spirit has avoided them so far.

When the characters arrive, only Antiophes is in the room. The whisper-voiced lampad tries to enlist them in opening Orestes's sarcophagus, where the eidolon is hiding. Those who refuse, or who want to use the eidolon for their own ends, earn Antiophes's wrath. The lampad attacks, using his Corpse Stride ability to teleport between locations in the tomb—particularly areas 4, 5, 7, and 8. If seriously wounded, Antiophes teleports to area 8 and tells his overprotective partner, Callisos, what has happened. Both of the lampads then return to try to drive the characters off.

**Eidolon.** Varyas's **flitterstep eidolon** (see chapter 6) dwells in this room. It doesn't know why, but it was attracted to the tomb after returning from death. It doesn't know how much time has passed since then, but eventually it encountered the menacing lampad Antiophes, who threatened to deliver the eidolon to Athreos. To escape the lampad, the eidolon hid inside Orestes's sarcophagus, where it has lurked ever since.

**Sarcophagus.** The sarcophagus holds the skeleton of Orestes, a few grave goods, and Varyas's cowering eidolon. Additionally, it possesses two magical properties.

First, the sarcophagus is blessed by Phenax with a ward against defilement. The lid is supernaturally heavy, requiring a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check to dislodge. Any creature who worships Phenax, though, or who wears a funerary mask, finds the lid to be far lighter, gaining a +10 bonus on this check.

Additionally, reliefs on the sarcophagus depict Phenax worshipers and Returned, as well as a prominent image of blood dripping onto scales bearing a Returned mask. Images of pale drops hover over a skeleton, while black drops loom over a Returned. Any character who succeeds at a DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check learns that the sarcophagus itself bears a measure of Orestes's oracular gifts. If blood is spilled on the lid, it turns black if the blood's owner is destined to become a Returned. Most of the time, spilled blood doesn't change color. If a character drips their blood upon the sarcophagus lid, though, you can decide if their blood turns black or not—choosing if you want the character's story to go in that direction (and you think the character's player will accept it), or rolling a d10 and having it turn black on a 1. The ramifications of this revelation are up to you.

**Development.** If the characters open Orestes's sarcophagus, they find Varyas's eidolon inside. The eidolon is a cowardly creature that tries to flee if attacked. Even through its flickering form, though, its general shape suggests the form and mask of Varyas the Returned. Any character who succeeds on a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check recognizes the spirit as Varyas's eidolon, and realizes it might be Phenax's Silence. If the characters protect the eidolon or use it for their own ends, Antiophes treats this as an affront and attacks.

After any resulting battle with the lampads, the party can converse with Varyas's eidolon, who lethargically agrees to leave with them and help decipher the message on Varyas's mask (see "Deciphering the Mask").

**Treasure.** Aside from Orestes's ancient bones, the sarcophagus holds gold burial jewelry: an amulet (worth 65 gp), a cloak clasp (worth 35 gp), and a broad arm-band bearing green tourmalines etched to look like serpentine eyes (worth 150 gp). Additionally, Orestes's clay burial mask is sculpted with a look of wide-eyed shock. The mask functions as *slippers of spider climbing*.

## 8. CAVE AND TUNNEL

On the crumbling eastern wall of the tomb is a rough-edged hole that leads to an uneven cavity in the earth. Two ancient urns and beds of crushed bones lie inside. To the south, a narrow tunnel stretches into darkness.

Antiophes and Callisos use this cave as their dwelling, heaping bones here to suit their tastes. Callisos spends much time here, etching grimly poetic prayers to Athreos on the walls with ink and bone chisels. If called to battle by Antiophes, or if audible conflict continues in area 7 for more than 3 rounds, Callisos enters the fray.

The tunnel here leads to a cave system that, after days of travel, eventually winds through the lair of the wolf-toothed night hag, Stolsluko, then to the shores of the Tartyx River. Details of these endless chambers are beyond the scope of this adventure.

**Treasure.** There are two 2-foot-tall lekythoi (jugs used in some burial rites) in this room. One holds muddy ashes that Callisos employs as ink. The other contains a quantity of amber liquid amounting to three *potions of healing*—sacrifices to Phenax pilfered from the nearby tomb. The potions can be collected in empty containers the characters might have with them, or the full urn (weighing 15 pounds) can be taken.

## DECIPHERING THE MASK

Characters curious about the nature of Phenax's Silence find no grand prize in the Court of Orestes. Rather than great wealth, the seer Orestes vaguely predicted the events that would transpire here. As a result, his prophecy and the resulting legend of Phenax's Silence foreshadowed the memories the god lost when returning from the Underworld and the first step to giving those memories voice once more: Varyas's eidolon.

With the aid of both the eidolon and Varyas's mask, a character can start the process of revealing the message written on the mask. While Varyas's eidolon doesn't remember the message's contents, it retains the ability to interpret the cipher—though, possibly in piecemeal or half-accurate terms. Deciphering the mask is an elaborate process, and keeping the eidolon on task is a time-consuming endeavor, requiring that a character spend an hour and succeed on a DC 14 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check. On a failed check, the eidolon rambles, sharing disjointed half-memories and dreamy opinions about its surroundings. On a success, the eidolon reveals a snippet of the cipher's meaning.

What the eidolon reveals is a worthy secret ... and one left to you to choose, depending on the story you want to

tell. Consult the Secrets of Phenax table, which presents several options for what divine secret Varyas's eidolon might relate. The veracity of this secret is up to you to decide, and learning more about it might color future adventures of your own design.

## SECRETS OF PHENAX

### d6 Result

- 1 As a mortal, Phenax was destined to free the Titans from the Underworld. Mortals killed him to save themselves. The gods let him escape the Underworld to save themselves. What will Phenax do if he learns of his true destiny?
- 2 A secret deity languishes on an island just beyond where the Tartyx cascades off the world's edge. There stands a dilapidated palace where Phenax hid for a time during his escape from the Underworld. The palace's ruler is nothing less than Phenax's eidolon.
- 3 Phenax has triplet offspring, three souls that the god of deception abandoned in the Underworld. Erebos hides these souls, valuing them as hostages—if Phenax ever remembers that they exist.
- 4 Phenax's bloodline continues. The god's many-times-over grandchildren live as master thieves and number among the few souls who might be able to steal Phenax's place among the gods for their own.
- 5 The secret to Phenax's immortality lies in the Underworld and is accessible only by those who have died, come back, and journeyed to the Underworld once more. By discovering this secret, any Returned could become a god.
- 6 Phenax is dying, his immortality flawed. Over the ages, he has manipulated destiny and his own bloodline to bring about the existence of a being that has the potential to reinvigorate him for another epoch: one of the characters.

More of the eidolon's secrets might be coaxed forth, but doing that requires patient conversations, greater insights into Varyas's schemes, or intervention from Phenax's other servants (or even the god himself), all of which might be the goals of future adventures.

## MYTHS TO BE TOLD

If the party has uncovered the secret of Varyas's mask and the mysteries being smuggled out of the Underworld, consider whether each character has earned an increase to their piety score (see chapter 2). Where the story goes next is up to you. To guide the characters to their next adventure, consider the following questions:

- If Varyas was enlisted by Phenax to discover his secrets, what else might the god have told the sage?
- What other secrets might Varyas's eidolon know? Perhaps an oracle, like Khea, could coax forth more?
- Someone in league with the Returned had Varyas killed. Who could it be—agents of Odunos, followers of Erebos, or perhaps Tymaret the Murder King himself? And what might their intentions toward the party be?



WITHIN HIS WORKSHOP, THE TRITON GENIUS DALAKOS EQUIPS A SATYR AND LEONIN WITH THE TOOLS THEY NEED TO BECOME LEGENDS.



## TREASURES

**T**HE SUN GOD REACHED OUT AND PUT HIS hand upon Kytheon's shoulder. "You proved your worth as a warrior in the attack on your polis, but it is time to prove yourself worthy to be my champion." He reached up to the sunlit sky, and the light coalesced around his fist. It elongated and took the shape of a spear that resembled the god's own weapon.

"With this spear, destroy the titan. This is what I task you with. This is your ordeal."

Kytheon gaped, both at the spear and at the task the god had set before him.

—Ari Levitch, "Gideon: Kytheon Iora of Akros"

On Theros, magic items carry reputations as rich and storied as those who wield them. They might take form in the god-realm of Nyx, spring from Purphoros's forge in Mount Velus, or come from legendary mortal smiths. Some crafters create great works to put an end to a specific peril, while others create to honor the gods. The most renowned works are the weapons of the gods themselves, treasures synonymous with divine power that forge legends with their every use.

### MAGIC ITEMS

The following sections explore some of the magic items that heroes might encounter during their adventures across Theros. These treasures might serve as rewards for heroic deeds, or they could spur the gods' champions toward great acts. All the gods have access to mighty troves of storied items, which they have few qualms about granting to their favored servants—or reclaiming when their usefulness is over.

### GIFTS OF THE GODS

Just as the heroes of Theros carry great destinies, so too do many of the magic items they encounter. The common folk don't typically possess magic items, yet adventurers come across them with some regularity—further evidencing the divine favor most enjoy. Nearly every magic item was created with a purpose and often carries with it a role in some greater story, whether an epic long ended or one yet untold.

As DM, feel free to make ordinary magic items feel like they have significant history and purpose. Even

a *+1 spear* might have been carried by a company of hoplite veterans that went missing during their quest to reach the edge of the world. Wands might be crafted from legendary sources, while potions might bear the seals of famed alchemists or include signature reagents—like a pegasus feather in a *potion of flying*. The Remarkable Origins table offers just a few ways to suggest a magic item's remarkable pedigree without altering its magical properties.

Certain treasures might also be the objects of heroic quests. For example, one might not be considered a true hero until one follows in the footsteps of past legends and either makes or claims one's own magical garment from the wool of a Nyx-fleece ram (see chapter 6). You can also use the tables in chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to help further inspire the story you create for a magic item.

### REMARKABLE ORIGINS

d12	Origin
1	The item bears the name or emblem of a lost troop of Akroan stratiars (described in chapter 3).
2	The item is etched with a name or prayer written in Celestial (the language of the gods).
3	The item looks like it's been at the bottom of the sea for a hundred years but functions perfectly.
4	The item is wrapped in handwritten scrolls, suggesting it was once possessed by a founder of one of Meletis's philosophical schools (described in chapter 3).
5	The item bears a design or sculpted feature suggestive of a Returned mask.
6	A knotted cover or grip depicts colorful birds or stylized herd animals from the plains of Oreskos.
7	The item is at least partially made from the heartwood of a Setessian caryatid (described in chapter 3). The wood regularly sprouts fresh leaves, or its whorls suggest humanoid features.
8	The item rests among the remains of its former owner, who thanks (or curses) those who take it.
9	The item is at least partially made of iron.
10	Whoever first touches the item receives an omen from the god who watches over it (see chapter 4 for details on omens).
11	The item lies in a crater, as if it fell from the heavens.
12	The item glimmers with the stars of Nyx and is a perfect facsimile of an item used by a legendary hero.



FLYING CHARIOT

## MAGIC ITEM DESCRIPTIONS

This section presents an assortment of magic items in alphabetical order. See the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for the rules on magic items.

### FLYING CHARIOT

*Wondrous item, rare*

The chariot's riders and creatures pulling the chariot gain a +1 bonus to their AC.

If this magic chariot is pulled by one or more flying creatures, it too can fly.

#### CHARIOTS

Chariots and the creatures pulling them work like controlled mounts, as described in the mounted combat rules in the *Player's Handbook*, but with the following differences:

- Mounting or dismounting a chariot costs you 5 feet of movement, rather than a number of feet equal to half your speed.
- Being mounted on a chariot grants you half cover.
- A chariot's speed is equal to the speed of the slowest creature pulling it.
- If multiple creatures are pulling the chariot, they all act on the same initiative, and they must take the same action on their turn.

### HELM OF THE GODS

*Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)*

While wearing this helm, you know whether there is a celestial or fiend within 30 feet of you, as well as where the creature is located, provided the creature isn't behind total cover.

Whenever you finish a long rest while wearing the helm, you can pray to one of the gods listed on the Helm of the Gods table and store the listed spell in the helm, replacing any spell that is already stored there. The save DC for the spell is 13.

The helm has 3 charges. To cast a spell from the helm, you must expend 1 charge, and the helm regains 1d3 charges daily at dawn.

#### HELM OF THE GODS

God	Spell
Athreos	<i>protection from evil and good</i>
Ephara	<i>sanctuary</i>
Erebos	<i>inflict wounds</i>
Helioid	<i>guiding bolt</i>
Iroas	<i>heroism</i>
Karametra	<i>goodberry</i>
Keranos	<i>thunderous smite</i>
Klothys	<i>entangle</i>
Kruphix	<i>dissonant whispers</i>
Mogis	<i>hellish rebuke</i>

God	Spell
Nylea	<i>faerie fire</i>
Pharika	<i>lesser restoration</i>
Phenax	<i>charm person</i>
Purphoros	<i>searing smite</i>
Thassa	<i>identify</i>

### MOLTEN BRONZE SKIN

*Armor (breastplate, half plate, or plate), rare (requires attunement)*

This magical armor appears as a jug of molten bronze. When you attune to it, the bronze adheres and contours to your skin. The armor can be worn under normal clothes, but it doesn't impede bodily functions. Once you put it on, it can't be removed unless you choose to do so.

While wearing the armor, you have resistance to fire damage. The armor also doesn't impose disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

### POTION OF AQUEOUS FORM

*Potion, rare*

When you drink this potion, you transform into a pool of water. You return to your true form after 10 minutes or if you are incapacitated or die.

You're under the following effects while in this form:

**Liquid Movement.** You have a swimming speed of 30 feet. You can move over or through other liquids. You can enter and occupy the space of another creature. You can rise up to your normal height, and you can pass through even Tiny openings. You extinguish nonmagical flames in any space you enter.

**Watery Resilience.** You have resistance to nonmagical damage. You also have advantage on Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution saving throws.

**Limitations.** You can't talk, attack, cast spells, or activate magic items. Any objects you were carrying or wearing meld into your new form and are inaccessible, though you continue to be affected by anything you're wearing, such as armor.

### PYXIS OF PANDEMONIUM

*Wondrous item, legendary*

A creature that touches this ornate wooden vessel for 1 minute gains the benefits of a short rest. That creature also gains the effects of the *bless* spell until the creature finishes a short or long rest. The creature can't gain these benefits again until it finishes a long rest.

If the vessel is opened, roll on the Pyxis of Pandemonium table to determine what happens. Any spells cast by the vessel have a spell save DC of 17. One minute after the vessel is opened, it disappears. It reappears, sealed, in a random location on the same plane of existence 24 hours later.

**Curse.** Any creature that gains the benefit of a short rest from the vessel hears cloying telepathic whispers emanating it. That creature must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is charmed by the vessel for 1 hour. The charmed creature does everything it can to open the vessel as soon as possible. On a successful save, the creature is immune to the vessel's whispers for 24 hours.

### PYXIS OF PANDEMONIUM

#### d8 Calamity

- 1 **Androphagia.** Each creature within 60 feet of the vessel must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or go berserk for 1 minute. The berserk creature must begin its turn using the Attack action to make one melee or ranged attack (its choice) against the creature nearest to it. The berserk creature can repeat the save at the end of its turn, ending the effect on itself on a success.
- 2 **Bile Blight.** The vessel casts the *harm* spell on each creature within 30 feet of it.
- 3 **Flood.** The vessel casts the *tsunami* spell at a point of the DM's choice within 120 feet of it.
- 4 **Medusa's Gaze.** The vessel casts the *flesh to stone* spell on each creature within 30 feet of it.

PYXIS OF  
PANDEMONIUM



#### d8 Calamity

- 5 **Labyrinth.** The vessel casts the *maze* spell on each creature within 30 feet of it.
- 6 **Nightmare.** Tendrils of shadow seep from the vessel and form into 1d4 **shadow demons** (see the *Monster Manual* for their stat block), which appear in unoccupied spaces within 30 feet of it and are hostile.
- 7 **Swarming Insects.** The vessel casts the *insect plague* spell, centered on itself and with a radius of 30 feet.
- 8 **Unbridled Revel.** The vessel casts the *Otto's irresistible dance* spell on each creature within 30 feet of it.

### SIREN SONG LYRE

*Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)*

You can use an action to play this lyre and cast one of the following spells from it: *animal friendship*, *charm person*, *enthrall*, *suggestion*. If the spell requires a saving throw, the spell save DC is 13.

Once the instrument has been used to cast a spell, it can't be used to cast that spell again until the next dawn.

### SLING BULLETS OF ALTHEMONE

*Weapon (sling bullet), very rare*

The sling bullets come in a pouch, which contains 1d4 + 4 bullets. Roll on the Magic Sling Bullets table for each bullet to determine its magical property.

You have a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with each of these bullets. If a bullet misses its target, the bullet teleports back into the pouch. Once a bullet hits a target, the bullet loses its magic.

#### MAGIC SLING BULLETS

##### d4 Bullet

- 1 **Banishment.** A creature that takes damage from this bullet must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or be banished as though affected by the *banishment* spell.
- 2 **Fulguration.** On a hit, this bullet deals an extra 2d8 lightning damage to its target. All other creatures within 10 feet of the target must each succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 1d8 thunder damage.
- 3 **Stunning.** On a hit, this bullet deals an extra 1d10 force damage, and the target is stunned until the end of your next turn.
- 4 **Tracking.** A creature that takes damage from this bullet is marked with a glowing rune where the bullet hit. The mark lasts 24 hours. While the creature is marked, you always know the direction to it.

### TWO-BIRDS SLING

*Weapon (sling), rare*

You have a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this weapon.

When you make a ranged attack with this sling and hit a target, you can cause the ammunition to ricochet toward a second target within 10 feet of the first, and then make a ranged attack against the second target.

## ARTIFACTS

Miraculous relics fill the tales of Theros. Among these legendary items, none are more renowned than the weapons of the gods themselves. These artifacts embody divine will and the power of Nyx. Where they appear, these weapons change the tide of wars and the course of history.

Typically a deity bestows their weapon only on a favored champion or devotee. Depending on the champion's piety score, the mortal can tap into hidden properties of the weapon (see chapter 2 for details on piety). Alternatively, those who don't worship the weapon's divine owner often find themselves cursed for their lack of proper devotion.

Occasionally a god's weapon might fall into the wrong hands or go missing entirely, sparking fantastic quests. Consult the Weapons of the Gods Adventures table for suggestions of the sort of quests these artifacts might inspire.

#### WEAPONS OF THE GODS ADVENTURES

##### d6 Plot

- 1 Steal a god's weapon to lay low one of that god's servants—a creature that can only be harmed by its creator's wrath.
- 2 Recover a god's weapon that has been stolen by another god's champion in an attempt to frame the weapon's owner for cruel acts.
- 3 Wrest back a god's weapon from a divine champion who needed it but refuses to return it.
- 4 Destroy a god's weapon and channel the energy released to create a new magic item or work a miracle.
- 5 Reforge a god's weapon after an incredible feat caused it to shatter.
- 6 A god's weapon has gained sentience (see "Sentient Magic Items" in chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). Determine whether to use it, return it to its creator, or help it grow into its own being.

## ARTIFACT DESCRIPTIONS

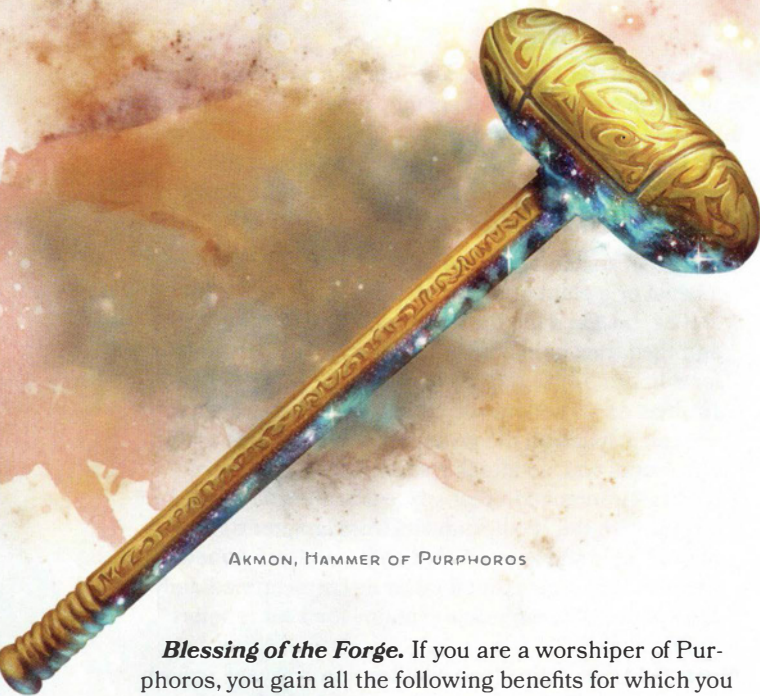
This section presents an assortment of artifacts in alphabetical order. See the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for the rules on artifacts.

### AKMON, HAMMER OF PURPHOROS

*Weapon (warhammer), artifact (requires attunement)*

Purphoros's hammer works wonders and disasters, the god of the forge using it to craft ground-breaking marvels and dangerous inventions in equal measure. Purphoros rarely bestows *Akmon* on mortals but occasionally leaves it unattended at his forge in Mount Velus. When Purphoros does permit a mortal to use the hammer, it's usually so they might bring an important work into being, wreck a force of destruction, or forge something remarkable somewhere the god isn't welcome.

**Hammer of the Forge.** This magic warhammer grants a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it. When you hit with an attack using it, the target takes an extra 3d10 fire damage.



AKMON, HAMMER OF PURPHOROS

**Blessing of the Forge.** If you are a worshiper of Purphoros, you gain all the following benefits for which you have the required piety:

**Piety 10+.** The hammer has 1 randomly determined minor beneficial property.

**Piety 25+.** The hammer has 1 randomly determined major beneficial property.

**Piety 50+.** The hammer has 1 additional randomly determined major beneficial property.

If you aren't a worshiper of Purphoros, the hammer has 2 randomly determined minor detrimental properties.

See "Artifacts" in chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details on randomly determined properties.

**Reforged.** While holding the hammer, you have resistance to fire damage and are immune to exhaustion. Additionally, you have proficiency with smith's tools and have advantage on all ability checks made using them.

**Spells.** While the hammer is on your person, you can use an action to cast one of the following spells (save DC 18): *animate objects*, *heat metal*, *fabricate*, *magic weapon*, *mending*, *shatter*. Once you use the hammer to cast a spell, the spell can't be cast again from it until the next dusk.

**Destroying the Hammer.** To destroy the hammer, it must be taken to the realm of Tizerus, in the Underworld. There it must be coated in clay from the Mire of Punishment. The heat of the hammer hardens the clay, which fuses to it after one month. Once fully hardened, the clay-covered hammer must be swallowed and digested by a kraken.

## DEKELLA, BIDENT OF THASSA

*Weapon (trident), artifact (requires attunement)*

Thassa wields *Dekella*, a two-pronged weapon gifted to her by Purphoros. When the god of the sea bestows her weapon on a mortal, it's often so they might work her will far from the ocean, right some wrong affecting those she'd prefer not to harm, or give a mortal a glimpse of her terrible responsibilities.

**Bident of the Deep.** Thassa's signature weapon thrums with the icy currents of the deep ocean. This weapon functions as a trident that grants a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it. When you hit with an attack using the bident, the target takes an extra 2d10 cold damage.

**Blessing of the Deep.** If you are a worshiper of Thassa, you gain all the following benefits for which you have the required piety:

**Piety 10+.** You can breathe underwater, and you gain a swimming speed of 60 feet.

**Piety 25+.** The bident has 1 randomly determined minor beneficial property.

**Piety 50+.** The bident has 1 randomly determined major beneficial property.

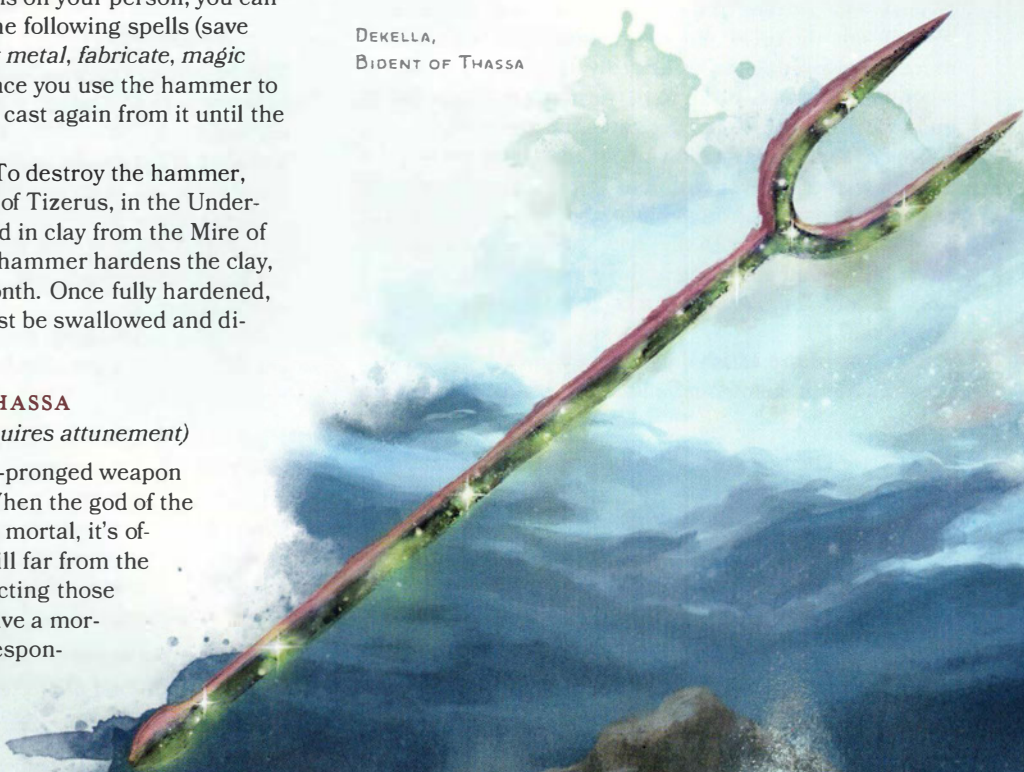
If you aren't a worshiper of Thassa, the bident has 1 minor detrimental property and 1 major detrimental property, both randomly determined.

See "Artifacts" in chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details on randomly determined properties.

**Command the Deep.** The bident holds the power to command the waves and its creatures. As an action, you can change the condition of the sea within 1 mile of you, creating strong winds and heavy rain that cause violent waves (see "Weather at Sea" in chapter 5 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*) or calming a storm. In either case, the unnatural weather lasts for 1 hour before returning to normal. Once used, this property of the bident can't be used again until the next dusk.

Additionally, you can cast the *dominate monster* spell (save DC 18) from the bident, but only on beasts and monstrosities that have an innate swimming speed. Once used, this property of the bident can't be used again until the next dusk.

DEKELLA,  
BIDENT OF THASSA





EPHIXIS,  
BOW OF NYLEA

**Aquatic Metamorphosis.** You can cast the *true polymorph* spell (save DC 18) from the bident, but you must cast it on a creature to turn it into a kind of creature that has an innate swimming speed. Once used, this property of the bident can't be used again until the next dusk.

**Destroying the Bident.** To destroy the bident, it must be heated by the breath of an ancient red dragon and then, while still hot, immersed in the Tartyx River.

### EPHIXIS, BOW OF NYLEA

*Weapon (shortbow), artifact (requires attunement)*

Nylea wields the shortbow *Ephixis*, the bow whose arrows herald the turning of the seasons. Nylea is quick to let her favored followers borrow her bow, particularly when they intend to use it to perform great deeds, put an end to foul creatures, or cast down the arrogant.

**Bow of the Wild.** This divine weapon includes a shortbow and a quiver with four arrows, each tied to one of the four seasons. You gain a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this bow, and you suffer no disadvantage when attacking at the weapon's long range. Additionally, *Ephixis* scores a critical hit on a d20 roll of 19 or 20.

**Blessing of the Wild.** If you are a worshiper of Nylea, you gain all the following benefits for which you have the required piety:

**Piety 10+.** The bow has 1 randomly determined minor beneficial property.

**Piety 25+.** The bow has 1 randomly determined major beneficial property.

If you aren't a worshiper of Nylea, the bow has 1 randomly determined major detrimental property.

See "Artifacts" in chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details on randomly determined properties.

**Arrows of the Seasons.** The four arrows—each associated with a season—that accompany this bow can be fired only from it. Each arrow disappears immediately after it's used, and it reappears in the quiver at the next dusk. The save DC against spells cast with the arrows is 18. Each arrow has a unique property:

**Spring.** As an action, you can fire this arrow, targeting a beast or a plant creature you can see within 320 feet of you. On a hit, the arrow deals no damage, and the target gains the benefits of the *awaken* spell for 8 hours.

**Summer.** As an action, you can fire this arrow at an unoccupied space on the ground that you can see within 320 feet of you, no attack roll required. A Nyxborn lynx is summoned in that space (use the stat block for a **tiger** with the Nyxborn traits from chapter 6). The lynx understands your verbal commands and obeys them as best it can, and it takes its turns immediately after yours. The emissary remains for 1 hour before fading away.

**Autumn.** As an action, you can fire this arrow at a space on the ground that you can see within 320 feet of you, no attack roll required, casting the *wall of thorns* spell there.

**Winter.** As an action, you can fire this arrow at a space that you can see within 320 feet of you, no attack roll required, casting the *ice storm* spell there.

**Destroying the Bow.** The bow can't be destroyed without first destroying all its arrows. The winter arrow must be fed to a cerberus on the winter solstice. The spring arrow must be planted at the base of a Black Oak of Asphodel on the spring equinox. The summer arrow must be broken by a sea giant on the summer solstice. Then the autumn arrow must be shot into the carcass of a hydra on the autumnal equinox. When all four arrows are destroyed, the bow and quiver dissolve into dust.

### KHRUSOR, SPEAR OF HELIOD

*Weapon (spear), artifact (requires attunement)*

Heliod wields *Khrusor*, a spear blessed with the power of the sun. In his hands, it can be pitched from Nyx to any point on Theros. When Heliod lends his weapon to a mortal, it's typically so they can perform some great work in his name or as a test of their worthiness.

**Spear of the Sun.** This spear grants a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it. When you hit with an attack using this spear, the target takes an extra 2d8 radiant damage.

**Blessing of the Sun.** If you are a worshiper of Heliod, you gain all the following benefits for which you have the required piety:

**Piety 3+.** You gain 15 temporary hit points each dawn.

**Piety 10+.** The spear has 1 randomly determined minor beneficial property.

**Piety 25+.** The spear has 1 additional randomly determined minor beneficial property.

**Piety 50+.** The spear has 1 randomly determined major beneficial property.

If you aren't a worshiper of Heliod, the spear has 2 randomly determined major detrimental properties.

See “Artifacts” in chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details on randomly determined properties.

**Luminous.** The spear sheds bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light for an additional 30 feet. The light is sunlight.

**Sun's Retaliation.** When you take damage from a creature within 5 feet of you, you can use your reaction to make a melee attack with the spear against that creature. On a hit, the spear deals damage as normal, and the creature is blinded until the start of its next turn. This property of the spear can't be used again until the next dawn.

**Spells.** The spear has 10 charges. While holding it, you can use an action to expend 1 or more of its charges to cast one of the following spells (save DC 18) from it: *guiding bolt* (1 charge), *daylight* (3 charges, targeting the tip of the spear only), *sunbeam* (6 charges). The spear regains 1d6+4 expended charges daily at dawn.

**Destroying the Spear.** If taken to Erebos's palace in Tizerus, and used to sacrifice a champion of Heliod to Erebos, *Khrusor* is either destroyed or fundamentally twisted to Erebos's service.

### MASTIX, WHIP OF EREBOS

*Weapon (whip), artifact (requires attunement)*

Erebos wields *Mastix*, a whip capable of extending like an impossibly long shadow. In the hands of the god of the dead, the whip snares the reluctant dead and drags them into his realm. When Erebos grants his weapon to a mortal follower, it's typically to reclaim a powerful soul or to humiliate Heliod.

**Whip of the Dead.** Erebos's whip seethes with the enervating energy of the Underworld. This magic whip grants a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it. When you hit with an attack using this whip, the target takes an extra 2d8 necrotic damage and you



MASTIX,  
WHIP OF EREBOS

regain hit points equal to half the amount of necrotic damage dealt.

Additionally, when you make an attack with the whip on your turn, you can increase the range of the attack to 300 feet. This property of the weapon can't be used again until the next dusk.

**Blessing of the Dead.** If you are a worshiper of Erebos, you gain all the following benefits for which you have the required piety:

**Piety 1+.** The whip has 1 randomly determined minor detrimental property—a burden Erebos imposes to test his faithful.

**Piety 25+.** The whip has 1 randomly determined major beneficial property.

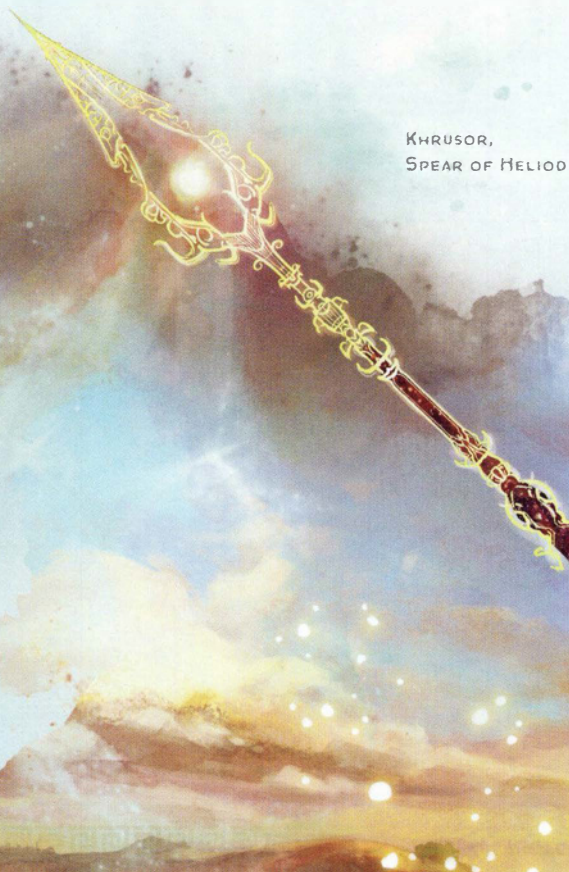
**Piety 50+.** The whip has 1 additional randomly determined major beneficial property.

If you aren't a worshiper of Erebos, the whip has 2 randomly determined major detrimental properties.

See “Artifacts” in chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details on randomly determined properties.

**Erebos's Claim.** While carrying the whip, you can use an action to cast either *circle of death* or *dominate monster* (targeting only undead) from the whip. The save DC for these spells is 18. Once you use the whip to cast a spell, that spell can't be cast from it again until the next dusk.

**Destroying the Whip.** To destroy the whip, it must be taken to the heights of Mount Hiasos in Nyx, unraveled by a Returned, and left to bask in continual daylight for one month.



KHRUSOR,  
SPEAR OF HELIOD



ARASTA OF THE ENDLESS WEB EXACTS HER UNDYING REVENGE UPON TWO MORE CHAMPIONS OF THE GODS.

## FRIENDS AND FOES

AS THEY SO OFTEN DO, DESTRUCTION AND creation intermingled. As Purphoros cut into Nyx, he rattled the celestial creatures that populated the night sky. He accidentally dislodged Polukranos, the World Eater, from its heavenly perch. The fifty-headed monster plunged toward the mortal realm, leaving a trail of Nyx blazing in the sky.

Heliod joined with Nylea, God of the Hunt, who cast vines beneath the hydra's body to ease its harsh entrance into the world. The hydra materialized in the valley and was momentarily stunned into stillness. Though much diminished in size, the hydra could still destroy every human city unless it was immediately contained. Together the gods trapped the hydra inside a cavern deep under the Nessian Forest.

—Jenna Helland, *Godsend*

This chapter provides stat blocks for a variety of creatures unique to Theros, including mythic monsters—legendary beings intended to serve as peerless threats. It also includes lore relevant to monsters from the *Monster Manual* that appear on Theros.

### NYXBORN CREATURES

Just as the gods are born of Nyx, so are many creatures. Nyxborn creatures are beings of legend, some the subjects of hopeful dreams and others the product of nightmares. They come into existence as the result of divine action, as the expression of abstract ideals, or as manifestations of the strength of shared belief. As mortals continue to tell their tales of creatures that never were and repeat legends that glorify historic individuals, Nyxborn creatures of those stories might arise.

Whether monsters, manifestations of long-dead mortals, or other beings, Nyxborn creatures share certain characteristics: they resemble ordinary mortal creatures, but any part of their body that isn't lit by direct light shows the starry gleam of Nyx. Nyxborn creatures typically act as the direct servants of one of the gods, but occasionally they escape from the realm of Nyx and pursue their own goals—which might be as simple as violent rampage, or as complex as a far-reaching plan to break the power of the gods.

You can use the Nyxborn Monster Origin table to help you decide what brought a Nyxborn creature into existence.

#### NYXBORN MONSTER ORIGIN

- | d6 | Origin  |
|----|---|
| 1  | A god created the creature to serve as an emissary.                 |
| 2  | The creature formed as the side effect of some other divine action. |
| 3  | The creature escaped from the Underworld.                           |
| 4  | The creature took shape from the tales told about it.               |
| 5  | A god made the creature to serve as a pet or mount.                 |
| 6  | The creature took shape from dreams or nightmares.                  |

#### NYXBORN STATISTICS

Any type of creature might be Nyxborn. A Nyxborn creature has the normal statistics for its kind, but usually has a special characteristic, a magical quality that sets it apart. When creating Nyxborn creatures, you can summarize their Nyxborn traits as Magic Resistance, as in the Nyxborn Traits table. Alternatively, if you'd like more variety, roll on that table to randomly determine the distinctive characteristic of a Nyxborn creature, or choose one of these or similar traits.

#### NYXBORN TRAITS

- | d6 | Trait  |
|----|--|
| 1  | <b>Magic Resistance.</b> The creature's Nyxborn nature gives it advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.   |
| 2  | <b>Light Sensitivity.</b> A creature of the night sky, the Nyxborn has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight, while it is in bright light. |
| 3  | <b>Immutable Form.</b> The Nyxborn creature is the philosophical ideal of its kind. It is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.   |
| 4  | <b>Magic Weapons.</b> The Nyxborn creature's weapon attacks are magical.   |
| 5  | <b>Nyx Step.</b> The Nyxborn can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.              |
| 6  | <b>Starlight Form.</b> The Nyxborn glows with the soft light of the night sky, shedding dim light in a 15-foot radius.   |



CYCLOPES WOULD RATHER STEAL THE BOUNTY OF SMALLER BEINGS THAN TOIL THEMSELVES.

## CLASSIC MONSTERS

Numerous creatures hold special places in the lives and myths of Theros's people. Some are beings said to have been created by the gods—often for special purposes or as divine punishments. Others roam particular territories—lands that have become synonymous with a monstrous population. And still other monsters are in some way unique to Theros, exhibiting appearances, behaviors, and abilities seen few other places in existence.

This section explores Theros's most noteworthy monstrous myths and curiosities unique to this world. If a monster appears differently on Theros than elsewhere in the multiverse, those differences are noted here. Should those differences be significant enough to alter a creature's statistics, those changes are detailed here, as well. If a monster is from a collection other than the *Monster Manual*, its source is listed in its description.

### BASILISK

Legends told among the worshipers of Pharika describe how the god hid a treasure trove of secrets in basilisk blood, inspiring her followers to seek ways to reveal the truths hidden among organs and scales. Healers dilute the blood to use in potions, and oracles employ it in divination rituals.

Basilisks on Theros have only four legs but are statistically identical to the monster described in the *Monster Manual*.

### CATOBLEPAS

Legends tell of a human herder who bragged that his cattle were the finest in all of Theros. When the gods heard this, Heliod, Nylea, and Mogis became involved in laying a curse that afflicted the mortal and his cattle, giving rise to the first catoblepas. How the gods were involved, though, and for what honorable or petty reasons, the gods' faithful—particularly those of Heliod and Nylea—greatly debate (see chapter 2). Regardless, catoblepas are widely viewed as cursed creatures, which only Mogis's faithful hold in wicked esteem.

The catoblepas appears in *Volo's Guide to Monsters*.

### CYCLOPS

The human polis of Akros maintains an outpost in the Katachthon Mountains to keep an eye on the cyclops population around One-Eyed Pass (see chapter 3). From the cyclopes' perspective, the Akroan soldiers provide a reliable source of food, for the soldiers herd approaching enemies into cyclops territory rather than fighting these foes themselves. Thus, the cyclopes attack the Akroans just enough to keep the humans afraid of them, but not so much that they eliminate them or drive them off.

Similarly, cyclopes who prey on sheep learn never to eat the shepherd. Like the pit of a fruit, a discarded shepherd will eventually "grow" a new flock to feed the cyclopes.

## DRAGON

The dragons of Theros are barely capable of speech and sow destruction either individually or by forcing minions to carry out their will. Only red and blue dragons exist on Theros, and both are brutish tyrants that leave devastation in their wake.

### BLUE DRAGONS

Blue dragons live along the ocean shore in cliffside caves, from where they scan the waves for prey that swims or flies into their territory. Many experienced sea captains know the blue dragon lairs along the coastlines they ply and chart routes to avoid draconic scrutiny.

### RED DRAGONS

Red dragons soar over mountain slopes and lowland valleys, feasting on cattle and those who tend herds. They often lair in dangerous mountain caves or volcanoes. Akroans revere red dragons and employ their images in the design of their armor, believing that the creatures embody the drive for power and dominion. Akroans sometimes settle near a red dragon's lair, forging tenuous alliances by making sacrifices of cattle or prisoners to gain its favor and protection.

### IMMORTAL PERSPECTIVE

Despite their arrogance and viciousness, dragons are long-lived and perceptive. Their age and patience allows them to divine signs amid violent weather and the rotation of constellations. For worthy sacrifices of food,

wealth, or flattery, a dragon might share its interpretations of omens—either those it has witnessed or sights mortals relate to them. Roll on the omens tables in chapter 4 to determine what the dragon has seen. How the dragon interprets these visions is up to you.

## KRAKEN

Krakens number among the most terrifying denizens of the sea, their wrath capable of ruining entire poleis. Under normal circumstances, each kraken is bound by a sea lock, a magical effect that restricts its travel. The area encompassed by the lock is large enough to enable the kraken to feed but prevents these near-immortal beings from raiding densely populated regions. Some stories claim that a seaquake or other natural disaster might break a sea lock and free the kraken to rage as it pleases. Other tales, though, suggest that sea locks emanate from ancient coral weapons buried in the ocean depths and that keep a kraken tied within a few hundred miles.

### NADIR KRAKENS

The largest and most devastating krakens, nadir krakens, dwell in the deepest ocean trenches. These krakens are unique beings, of which the terrifying Tromokratis (described in the “Mythic Monsters” section of this chapter) numbers among the most feared. When a nadir kraken breaks free of its sea lock and rises to the surface, continents are redrawn, civilizations collapse, and eras end.

UNLEASHED FROM THE DARKEST OCEAN DEPTHS, EACH  
NADIR KRAKEN IS A UNIQUE AQUATIC NIGHTMARE.



## LAMIA

When rage and despair at the gods' misdeeds consume a mortal mind, a lamia comes into being. Most lamias in Theros are Nyxborn (described earlier in this chapter), owing their existence to their own twisted imagination, which has changed their physical nature to reflect their internal self. Lamias have wildly varying physical forms, ranging from a feline shape similar to the lamia in the *Monster Manual* to a more serpentine form similar to a yuan-ti. In each case, the lamia's body reflects the creature's corrupted instincts and predatory nature.

## MEDUSA

Medusas (often called gorgons on Theros) are closely associated with Pharika, the god of poison and medicine. Pharika has charged her favored servants with guarding secrets of life, health, and immortality that are too powerful to be known by those who lack the wisdom to use them properly. Those who approach a medusa with humility and worthy offerings might receive the creature's favor. The medusa might propose a dangerous quest to fetch some rare ingredient or legendary relic, promising to reward success with a bit of Pharika's knowledge. This information might lead to a cure for a plague, an alchemical breakthrough, or a secret of the cosmos.

The medusas of Theros differ from those in the *Monster Manual* in that they have long, serpentine bodies in place of legs. A medusa uses the stat block from the *Monster Manual* with the following altered and additional actions:

**Constrict.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 11) if it is a Large or smaller creature. Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the medusa can't constrict another target.

**Multiattack.** The medusa makes either three melee attacks—one with its snake hair, one to constrict, and one with its shortsword—or two ranged attacks with its longbow.

## NIGHT HAG

Night hags on Theros appear as leathery-faced crones that hold their single eye within their withered lips as they stare with eyeless sockets. They usually build their huts in the Underworld, particularly around the towering pillars of basalt and granite within the Mire of Punishment (see chapter 3). There, amid the lamentations of those who have offended the gods, night hags inhale the smoke of toxic balefires. They follow the visions the smoke invokes to the dreams of vulnerable mortals where they sow the seeds of folly.

A night hag senses the world around her with sensitive fingers, keen hearing, and the single eye she typically holds in her mouth. When a night hag uses her powers to transform, her eye often becomes a bauble or piece of jewelry she keeps close at all times.

FROM THE FOULEST REACHES OF THE UNDERWORLD,  
NIGHT HAGS INVADE THE DREAMS OF MORTALS.





ALTHOUGH THEY POSSESS GREAT WISDOM, SPHINXES WON'T SHARE THEIR SECRETS WITH JUST ANYONE.

## SPHINX

Sphinxes typically dwell in island sanctums, especially in the far reaches of the Dakra Isles. Many develop schools of philosophy or academic methods that they share with students they deem worthy, their ideas remarkable enough to seem akin to magic. Their age and wisdom also often allows them to predict what's to come as effectively as any oracle.

### RIDDLES OF THE SPHINX

A sphinx might ask riddles to explore the cleverness, thought processes, and humility of those who seek to learn from them. These inquiries help the sphinx gauge a would-be student's mettle before allowing them access to its secrets. The following are just a few riddles (along with their answers) that a sphinx might use to test a visitor's wit:

- The more of these you take, the more you leave behind. (Steps)
- What has six faces, but no mouth, has twenty-one eyes, but cannot see? (A die)
- What turns everything but does not move? (A mirror)
- The more there is, the less you see. (Darkness)
- What is stronger than the gods, more terrifying than the demons, the poor have it, the rich need it, and if you eat it, you die? (Nothing)

## THE WANDERING ORACLE

Throughout history, the wise and ancient androsphinx Medomai has appeared in Meletis during moments of historical import, such as religious ceremonies, coronations, and the onset of wars. For decades, he has brought his cryptic knowledge of future events to the people, but since his predictions tend to be dire, his arrival is generally viewed as a bad omen.

## UNICORN

Unicorns on Theros are closely tied to the mysteries of Nyx. They often appear in the dreams of those doing the work of goodly gods. In such dreams, they might guide the weary to solace, the forlorn to joy, and the heroic to their destiny. In the waking world, they often provide the same aid, sometimes appearing to step from dreams into reality. Those who follow unicorns might find the treasures of lost heroes, hallowed ruins, or grand omens from the gods.

# BESTIARY

The following pages include descriptions and stat blocks for inhabitants of Theros. The majority are presented in alphabetical order. At the end of this section, you'll find a selection of mythic monsters, foes designed to pose challenges worthy of legend.

## STAT BLOCKS BY CREATURE TYPE

The following list categorizes the creatures in this chapter by creature type. Creatures marked with an asterisk appear in the "Mythic Monsters" section later in this chapter.

### ABERRATION

Woe strider

### CELESTIAL

Archon of fallen stars  
Ashen rider  
Winged bull  
Winged lion

### CONSTRUCT

Anvilwrought raptor  
Bronze sable  
Burnished heart  
Colossus of Akros  
Gold-forged sentinel

### FIEND

Abhorrent overlord  
Eater of hope  
Nightmare shepherd

### FEY

Alseid  
Lampad  
Naiad  
Oread  
Satyr reveler  
Satyr thornbearer

### GIANT

Doomwake giant  
Hundred-handed one

### HUMANOID

Akroan hoplite  
Leonin iconoclast  
Meletian hoplite  
Oracle  
Setessan hoplite  
Triton master of waves  
Triton shorestalker

### MONSTROSITY

Amphisbaena  
Aphemia  
Arasta\*  
Blood-toll harpy  
Fleecemane lion  
Hippocamp  
Hythonia\*  
Ironscale hydra  
Nyx-fleece ram  
Polukranos  
Theran chimera  
Tromokratis\*  
Two-headed cerberus  
Typhon  
Underworld cerberus

### UNDEAD

Flitterstep eidolon  
Ghostblade eidolon  
Phylaskia  
Returned drifter  
Returned palamnite  
Returned sentry



## AMPHISBAENA

The amphisbaena has a head at either end of its serpentine body, and each head sports venomous fangs. To move, an amphisbaena uses one mouth to grip the neck of its other head, forming a hoop that rolls over the ground.

### AMPHISBAENA

*Medium monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 14

**Hit Points** 11 (2d8 + 2)

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

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

**Skills** Perception +4

**Senses** blindsight 10 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** —

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

**Two Heads.** The amphisbaena has advantage on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, and knocked unconscious.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The amphisbaena makes two bite attacks.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage and 4 (1d6 + 1) poison damage.



## ANVILWROUGHTS

The first anvilwroughts were created by the god of the forge, Purphoros. He gave the secret of breathing life into these metal creatures to his most devoted followers so they could mimic his works and invent new forms at their own forges.

Some anvilwroughts are vigilant guardians at holy shrines, others serve as familiars and messengers, and a few were created to emulate beauty found among the animals of the mortal world. Each exhibits abilities suited to its role, with some behaving like companionable creatures or stoic guardians.

A few extremely rare and valuable anvilwroughts were crafted by the hand of Purphoros himself. A number of these magnificent creations are now heirlooms of monarchs; others are lost to the sands of time or are guarded by ancient monsters.

**Constructed Nature.** An anvilwrought doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

### ANVILWROUGHT RAPTOR

Prized among Meletis's thaumaturges, anvilwrought raptors are often crafted in the form of a hawk or an owl. Most serve as messengers and spies, flying over the busy streets or high over the land while carrying or seeking vital information for their masters.

#### VARIANT: ANVILWROUGHT RAPTOR FAMILIAR

Some anvilwrought raptors are created expressly to be familiars. Such creatures have the following trait.

**Familiar.** The anvilwrought can serve another creature as a familiar, forming a magical, telepathic bond with its willing master. While the two are bonded, the master can sense what the anvilwrought senses, as long as they are within 1 mile of each other.

### ANVILWROUGHT RAPTOR

*Tiny construct, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 18 (4d4 + 8)

**Speed** 10 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	14 (+2)	1 (-5)

**Skills** Perception +4

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

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

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** understands one language of its creator but can't speak

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

**Keen Sight.** The raptor has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**Recorded Mimicry.** The raptor can mimic any sound, including voices, it has heard in the last 24 hours. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The raptor makes two attacks with its beak.

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

BRONZE SABLE

## BRONZE SABLE

The first bronze sables were presented to Karametra as a gift by Purphoros to serve primarily as guardians in Karametra's temples. But as others have been created, some have been used as nimble scouts, always on alert for danger.

## BURNISHED HART

Among the first anvilwroughts to be forged by Purphoros, elegant burnished harts wander the mortal realm in search of new sights to bring back to the god of the forge. On every trip from Mount Velus, where Purphoros has his forge, they seek out the far reaches of the world so they can witness beauty in all its forms, then later reunite with their creator, their minds filled with tales of how life's splendor continues to develop.

## GOLD-FORGED SENTINEL

The original purpose of gold-forged sentinels is a mystery, and of all Purphoros's original anvilwroughts, this construct is the most difficult to control. A sentinel often operates without a master, stalking the high places of the mortal world or waiting, still as a statue, for what could be decades before reanimating to carry out their mysterious purpose.

## BRONZE SABLE

*Medium construct, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 32 (5d8 + 10)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	3 (−4)	14 (+2)	1 (−5)

**Skills** Stealth +5

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

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

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** understands one language of its creator but can't speak

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**False Appearance.** While the sable remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal statue.

**Pack Tactics.** The sable has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the sable's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Surprise Attack.** If the sable surprises a creature and hits it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes an extra 10 (3d6) damage from the attack.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The sable makes two bite attacks.

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



GOLD-FORGED SENTINEL

## BURNISHED HART

Medium construct, unaligned

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 45 (6d8 + 18)

**Speed** 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	15 (+2)	1 (-5)

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

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

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** understands one language of its creator but can't speak

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Charge.** If the hart moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with an antlers attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) fire damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

**Heated Body.** A creature that touches the hart or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 5 (1d10) fire damage.

**Sure-Footed.** The hart has advantage on Strength and Dexterity saving throws made against effects that would knock it prone.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The hart makes two attacks: one with its antlers and one with its hooves.

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

**Hooves.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 2 (1d4) fire damage.

## GOLD-FORGED SENTINEL

Large construct, unaligned

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 76 (8d10 + 32)

**Speed** 40 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+2)	19 (+4)	3 (-4)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Perception +6

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

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

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

**Languages** understands one language of its creator but can't speak

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Charge.** If the sentinel moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a ram attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

**Spell Turning.** The sentinel has advantage on saving throws against any spell that targets only the sentinel (not an area). If the sentinel's saving throw succeeds and the spell is of 4th level or lower, the spell has no effect on the sentinel and instead targets the caster.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The sentinel makes two ram attacks.

**Ram.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

**Fire Breath (Recharge 5–6).** The sentinel exhales fire in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 27 (6d8) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

# ARCHONS

The mysterious conquerors known as archons once ruled vast empires. These armored warlords saw themselves as champions of merciless justice, and they ruled with iron fists. But their dominance ultimately came to an end. As the archon overlords toppled, they scattered to the fringes of the world, and their holdings developed into the poleis of today.

Even though the age of archons is long past, many wonder if the few surviving archons might someday attempt to reestablish their empire or if they are truly resigned to their lesser role in the world.

## ARCHON OF FALLING STARS

The epic accounting of the world's earliest histories called *The Cosmogony* recounts the battle between a group of the gods' champions and a mighty archon, which took place at the mysterious eastern edge of the world. Defeated, the falling archon is said to have met the rising sun. But Heliod showed mercy to the penitent archon, who swore to uphold justice and righteousness in the world's wildest places. As a sign of his mercy, Heliod gave the archon a spear that rivaled his own in its brilliance. This was the first archon of falling stars.

### ARCHON OF FALLING STARS

Medium celestial, lawful good

**Armor Class** 18 (plate)

**Hit Points** 144 (17d8 + 68)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	19 (+4)	15 (+2)	21 (+5)	19 (+4)

**Saving Throws** Str +9, Con +8, Wis +9, Cha +8

**Skills** Arcana +6, History +6, Insight +9, Perception +9

**Damage Immunities** radiant

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened

**Senses** truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 19

**Languages** all

**Challenge** 12 (8,400 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting.** The archon's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). The archon can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *command*, *guiding bolt*, *spare the dying*  
1/day each: *crusader's mantle*, *spirit guardians*

**Magic Resistance.** The archon has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Mount.** If the archon isn't mounted, it can use a bonus action to magically teleport onto the creature serving as its mount, provided the archon and its mount are on the same plane of existence. When it teleports, the archon appears astride the mount, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying.

While mounted and not incapacitated, the archon can't be surprised, and both it and its mount have advantage on

Dexterity saving throws. If the archon is reduced to 0 hit points while riding its mount, the mount is reduced to 0 hit points as well.

**Radiant Rebirth (Recharges after a Long Rest).** If the archon is reduced to 0 hit points, it regains 30 hit points and springs back to its feet with a burst of radiance. Each creature of the archon's choice within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, or the creature takes 13 (3d8) radiant damage and is blinded until the start of the archon's turn.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The archon makes two attacks with its radiant spear.

**Radiant Spear. Melee Weapon Attack:** +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. **Hit:** 12 (2d6 + 5) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) radiant damage.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The archon can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The archon regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Attack.** The archon makes a radiant spear attack or casts *guiding bolt*.

**Coordinated Assault (Costs 2 Actions).** The archon makes a radiant spear attack, and then its mount can use its reaction to make a melee weapon attack.

**Return to Nyx (Costs 3 Actions).** The archon causes a corpse it can see within 30 feet of it to burst into a shower of radiant stars leaving no trace of it behind. Everything it is wearing or carrying remains. Each creature within 10 feet of the corpse when it bursts must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or take 22 (4d10) radiant damage.





## ASHEN RIDER

The fall of the ancient archon empires left some archons bitter and resentful. Seeking to avoid the spread of human civilization, these archons made their way to the Underworld. The horrors of the place broke their minds, bodies, and spirits and twisted them into the terrifying archons known as ashen riders. When they ride forth upon the mortal world, terrified mortals make offerings in a desperate attempt to appease them, but the ashen riders aren't merciful, and they delight in reducing the paragons of the mortal world to ash.

### ASHEN RIDER

*Medium celestial, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 18 (plate)

**Hit Points** 178 (21d8 + 84)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	15 (+2)	21 (+5)	18 (+4)

**Saving Throws** Str +10, Con +9, Wis +10, Cha +9

**Skills** History +7, Insight +10, Perception +10

**Damage Immunities** thunder

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened

**Senses** truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 20

**Languages** all

**Challenge** 16 (15,000 XP)

**Aura of Silence.** When a creature starts its turn within 30 feet of the ashen rider, the rider can force that creature to make a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw if the rider can see it. On a successful save, the creature is immune to this aura for the next 24 hours. On a failed save, the creature can't speak and is deafened until the start of its next turn.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The ashen rider's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 18). The rider can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *command*, *compelled duel*

1/day each: *banishment*, *blade barrier*

**Mount.** If the ashen rider isn't mounted, it can use a bonus action to magically teleport onto the creature serving as its mount, provided the ashen rider and its mount are on the same plane of existence. When it teleports, the ashen rider appears astride the mount along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying.

While mounted and not incapacitated, the ashen rider can't be surprised, and both it and its mount have advantage on

Dexterity saving throws. If the ashen rider is reduced to 0 hit points while riding its mount, the mount is reduced to 0 hit points as well.

### ACTIONS

**Multiaction.** The ashen rider makes three attacks with its ashen blade or two attacks with its bolt of ash.

**Ashen Blade.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage plus 13 (2d12) radiant damage.

**Bolt of Ash.** *Ranged Spell Attack:* +10 to hit, range 120 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 22 (4d10) necrotic damage, and the target can't regain hit points until the start of the ashen rider's next turn.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The ashen rider can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The rider regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Attack.** The ashen rider makes an attack using its ashen blade or bolt of ash.

**Coordinated Assault (Costs 2 Actions).** The ashen rider makes an attack using its ashen blade or bolt of ash, and then its mount can use its reaction to make a melee weapon attack.

**Reduce to Ash (Costs 3 Actions).** The ashen rider targets a creature it can see within 60 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, or it takes 27 (5d10) necrotic damage and its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. If the target's hit point maximum is reduced to 0, its body and everything it is wearing and carrying, except for magic items, are reduced to ash. A creature reduced to ash can't be revived by any means short of a *wish* spell.

## ARCHON MOUNTS

Archons always ride into battle on fearsome winged mounts. Some legends suggest that the mount is actually a physical manifestation of the archon's will, allowing the pair to act with a single mind. The two most common archon mounts are winged bulls and winged lions.

### WINGED BULL

*Large celestial, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 95 (10d10 + 40)

**Speed** 60 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** understands Celestial but can't speak

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Charge.** If the bull moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a gore attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 19 (3d12) piercing damage.

#### ACTIONS

**Gore.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

**Hit:** 18 (2d12 + 5) piercing damage.

### WINGED LION

*Large celestial, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 114 (12d10 + 48)

**Speed** 60 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	14 (+2)	5 (-3)

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** understands Celestial but can't speak

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Pounce.** If the lion moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the lion can make one bite attack against it as a bonus action.

#### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 16 (2d10 + 5) piercing damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage.



TWO-HEADED CERBERUS

## CERBERI

Feared by the living and the dead, cerberi patrol both banks of the Tartyx River. These multiheaded hounds of the Underworld breathe gouts of molten rock that sear and imprison those who trespass upon the borders of life and death. Most cerberi have a boundless hunger for fresh meat, especially the flesh of humanoids. Villains have been known to exploit that hunger by luring cerberi away from the river and setting them loose on mortal settlements.

### TWO-HEADED CERBERUS

Thought to be a lesser breed of cerberi that have interbred with mortal wolves, two-headed cerberi typically roam the mortal side of the Tartyx River. There they generally ignore—or only modestly menace—the souls of the dead. Such isn't the case for mortals, though, and they eagerly set upon those who tread too close to the Underworld's borders.

### UNDERWORLD CERBERUS

Three-headed cerberi dwell deep in the Underworld. Terrifying and cunning, they guard portals between the wards of the Underworld, Erebos's greatest treasures, and noteworthy souls who might attempt to escape the realm of the dead. Three-headed cerberi commonly serve demons, but if left to their own devices, they often herd wily souls into labyrinthine Underworld wildernesses, then hunt them for sport.



UNDERWORLD CERBERUS

## TWO-HEADED CERBERUS

Medium monstrosity, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 39 (6d8 + 12)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)

**Skills** Perception +5, Stealth +4

**Damage Immunities** fire, necrotic

**Condition Immunities** blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, stunned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Aggressive.** As a bonus action, the cerberus can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

**Multiheaded.** The cerberus can't be surprised, and it has advantage on saving throws against being knocked unconscious.

**Pack Tactics.** The cerberus has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the cerberus's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The cerberus makes two bite attacks.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage plus 2 (1d4) fire damage.

**Breath Weapon (Recharge 5–6).** The cerberus exhales a 15-foot cone of molten rock. Each creature in the cone must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. On a failed save, a creature is also restrained by the hardening rock. A creature can make a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check as an action, freeing itself or a creature within reach from the rock on a success. The rock has AC 17 and 10 hit points, and it is immune to fire, poison, and psychic damage.

## UNDERWORLD CERBERUS

Large monstrosity, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 104 (11d10 + 44)

**Speed** 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)

**Skills** Athletics +7, Perception +9, Stealth +4

**Damage Immunities** fire, necrotic

**Condition Immunities** blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, stunned

**Senses** truesight 30 ft., passive Perception 19

**Languages** understands all languages but can't speak

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

**Aggressive.** As a bonus action, the cerberus can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

**Multiheaded.** The cerberus can't be surprised, and it has advantage on saving throws against being knocked unconscious.

**Pack Tactics.** The cerberus has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the cerberus's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The cerberus makes three bite attacks.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

**Breath Weapon (Recharge 5–6).** The cerberus exhales a 30-foot cone of molten rock. Each creature in the cone must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. On a failed save, a creature is also restrained by the hardening rock. A creature can make a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check as an action, freeing itself or a creature within reach from the rock on a success. The rock has AC 17 and 20 hit points, and it is immune to fire, poison, and psychic damage.

# CHIMERA

The term *chimera* applies to a wide variety of disparate monsters that combine the features of multiple beasts. While many artistic depictions represent chimeras as an amalgam of lion, ram, and dragon, these beasts appear with nearly endless variations.

The Akroans tell a tale of the first chimera's origin, wherein the god Keranos sought to test Nylea's favorite champion, Renata of Setessa, by creating a beast so deadly that even she would balk at trying to hunt it. When Renata slayed this lion-ram-dragon creation effortlessly, Keranos created another combination of deadlier beasts to challenge her. She slayed that beast, too. Despite countless attempts, Keranos was unable to create a beast that Renata couldn't best.

Chimeras typically roam the deep wilds of the world, constantly seeking a lair that would perfectly suit one of its heads, but then finding it unsatisfying to two-thirds of its being. As a result, a hungry chimera might appear out of a clear sky to pick off prey nearly anywhere. This threat grows even more significant in regions where magic runs rampant or where portals to the realm of

## THERAN CHIMERA

*Large monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 95 (10d10 + 40)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	19 (+4)	3 (-4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

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

**Skills** Perception +5

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** understands Draconic but can't speak

**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)

**Spell Turning.** The chimera has advantage on a saving throw against any spell that targets only the chimera (not an area). If the chimera's saving throw is successful and the spell is of 4th level or lower, the spell has no effect on the chimera and instead targets the caster.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The chimera makes three attacks: one with its claws, one with its head, and one with its tail. When its breath weapon is available, it can use the breath in place of its head or its claws.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.  
*Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

**Head.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.  
*Hit:* 10 (1d12 + 4) piercing damage.

**Tail.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target.  
*Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

**Breath Weapon (Recharge 5–6).** The chimera exhales fire in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 32 (5d12) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Nyx exist, as unrestrained magical energy often causes more chimeras to appear in a region. As such chaotic magic is inherent to a chimera's being, these monsters often manage to shrug off spells cast against them.

## CUSTOMIZING A CHIMERA

The Theran chimera stat block presents one possible chimera configuration. You may customize these statistics to design your own unique chimera. To do so, simply roll once on one or all of the following tables. Results from the Body Composition table adjust the Theran chimera as described, while results on the Breath Weapons, Head Attacks, and Tail Attacks tables replace those respective actions in the stat block. Theran chimeras always have the Claws action. If the results of multiple tables conflict, choose your preferred result.

### BODY COMPOSITION

#### d4 Attack

- 1 **Plains Creature.** The chimera's body is that of a large lowland creature, such as a bull or a bear, and it lacks wings and a flying speed. The chimera is especially resilient, gaining resistance to cold and fire damage.
- 2 **Coast Creature.** The chimera's body is that of a coastal or aquatic creature, such as a heron or a shark. The chimera gains a swimming speed equal to its walking speed and can breathe air and water.
- 3 **Mountain Creature.** The chimera's body is that of a mountain-dwelling creature, such as a ram or a dragon. The chimera doesn't provoke an opportunity attack when it flies out of an enemy's reach.
- 4 **Swamp Creature.** The chimera's body is that of a swamp creature or a cavern-dweller, such as a giant lizard or spider. The chimera gains a climbing speed equal to its walking speed and it can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

### HEAD ATTACKS

#### d4 Attack

- 1 **Bull Horns.** If the chimera moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a head attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.
- 2 **Shark Bite.** The chimera has advantage on a head attack roll against any creature that doesn't have all its hit points.
- 3 **Unicorn Horn.** The chimera's head attack is magical and deals an extra 4 (1d8) radiant damage.
- 4 **Cockatrice Beak.** A creature hit by the chimera's head attack must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be restrained as it begins to turn to stone. The restrained creature must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn. On a success, the effect ends. On a failure, the creature is petrified for 24 hours.



## BREATH WEAPONS

### d4 Attack

- 1 **Lightning Breath (Recharge 5–6).** The chimera exhales lightning in a 60-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.
- 2 **Tidal Wave Breath (Recharge 5–6).** The chimera has an aquatic creature's head that exhales a torrent of acidic water in a 60-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in the line must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On failed save, a creature takes 27 (5d10) acid damage and is knocked prone. On a successful save, it takes half as much damage and isn't knocked prone.
- 3 **Venom Spray (Recharge 5–6).** The chimera has a venomous creature's head that exhales a spray of poison in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. While poisoned in this way, a target takes 35 (10d6) poison damage at the start of each of its turns. A target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.
- 4 **Necrotic Breath (Recharge 5–6).** The chimera exhales necrotic energy in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, or it takes 31 (7d8) necrotic damage and is unable to regain hit points until the end of its next turn.

## TAIL ATTACKS

### d4 Attack

- 1 **Venomous Tail.** The chimera's tail ends in a snake's head or a stinger, which deals piercing damage instead of bludgeoning damage. In addition, when the chimera hits a creature with its tail, the creature must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. A poisoned target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.
- 2 **Perplexing Tail.** The chimera has an additional head where its tail should be. The chimera loses its tail attack and makes two head attacks when it takes the Multiattack action. Use the Head Attacks table to determine the nature of the new head.
- 3 **Shark Tail.** The chimera's tail is a large fin. When the chimera hits a creature with its tail, the creature is also pushed up to 10 feet away.
- 4 **Constricting Tail.** The chimera's tail can constrict prey. If the chimera hits a creature with its tail, the target is grappled (escape DC 15) if it is Large or smaller. Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the chimera can't use its tail on another target.



## COLOSSUS OF AKROS

An enormous golem of bronze and iron overlooks the path leading to the polis of Akros. Though it is rarely called on to defend the polis, the sight of its towering form is enough to ease the minds of the populace. In truly desperate times, priests of Purphoros work their magic to call the colossus to life, whereupon the earth rumbles as it steps down from its twin plinths to place itself before the threat.

**Constructed Nature.** The colossus of Akros doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

## COLOSSUS OF AKROS

*Gargantuan construct, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 21 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 350 (20d20 + 140)

**Speed** 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
28 (+9)	10 (+0)	25 (+7)	3 (-4)	11 (+0)	1 (-5)

**Saving Throws** Str +16, Con +14

**Skills** Athletics +16, Perception +7

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, stunned, unconscious

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17

**Languages** understands Common and Celestial but can't speak

**Challenge** 23 (50,000 XP)

**Crumbling Destruction.** When the colossus drops to 0 hit points, it crumbles and is destroyed. Any creature on the ground within 30 feet of the crumbling statue must make a DC 22 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage and 22 (4d10) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

**Fire Absorption.** Whenever the colossus is subjected to fire damage, it takes no damage and instead regains a number of hit points equal to the fire damage dealt.

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

**Magic Weapons.** The colossus's weapon attacks are magical.

**Siege Monster.** The colossus deals double damage to objects and structures.

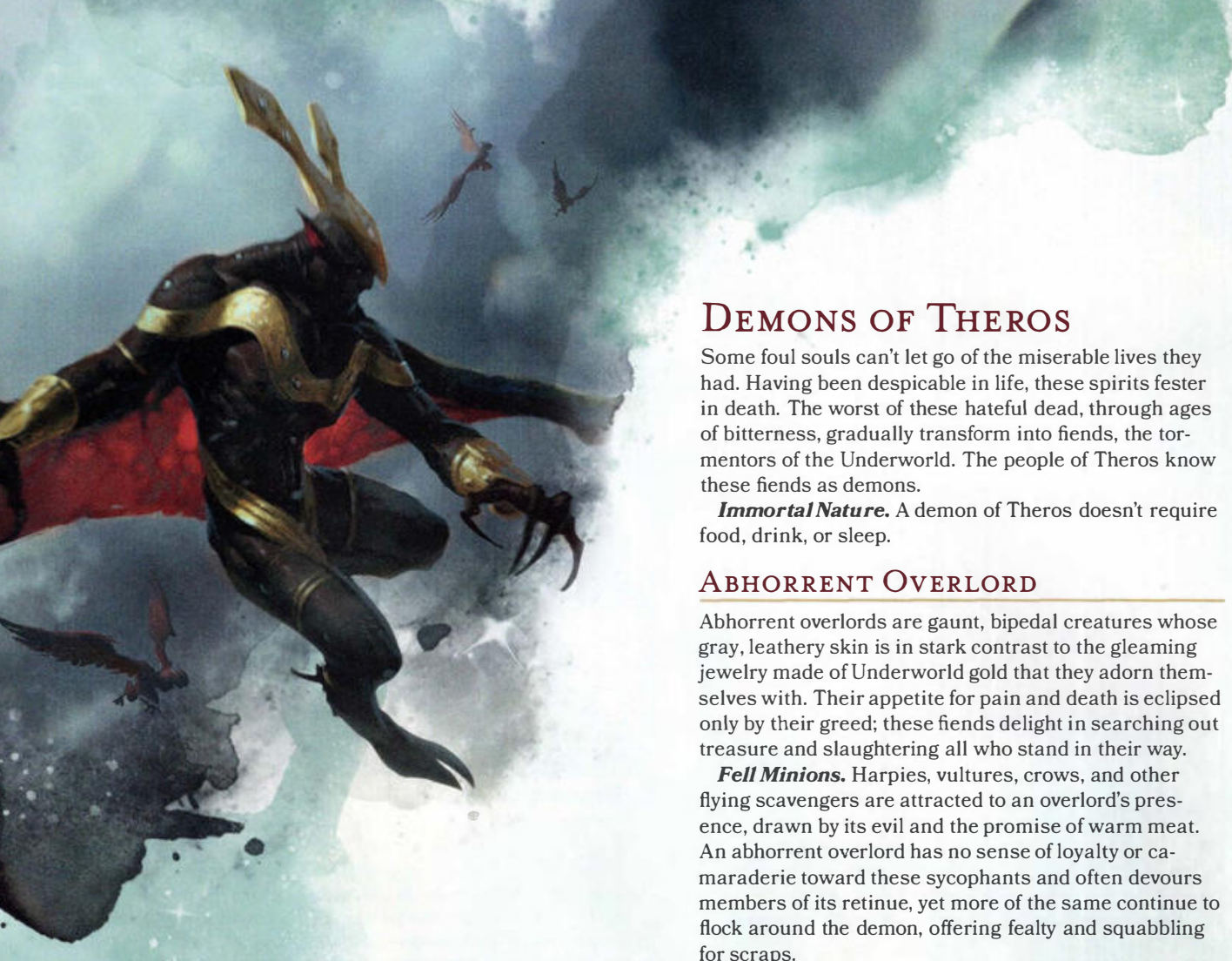
### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The colossus of Akros makes two melee attacks.

**Spear.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 15 ft., or range 200/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 23 (4d6 + 9) piercing damage, or 27 (4d8 + 9) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack. If the colossus makes a ranged attack with this spear, the spear magically returns to its hand after the attack.

**Sword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 36 (6d8 + 9) slashing damage.

**Flames of Akros (Recharge 6).** Magical flames issue from the colossus toward up to three creatures the colossus can see within 90 feet of it. Each target must make a DC 24 Dexterity saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. On a failed save, a target also magically catches fire for 1 minute. At the end of each of its turns thereafter, the burning target repeats the saving throw. It takes 18 (4d8) fire damage on a failed save, and the effect ends on a successful one.



## DEMONS OF THEROS

Some foul souls can't let go of the miserable lives they had. Having been despicable in life, these spirits fester in death. The worst of these hateful dead, through ages of bitterness, gradually transform into fiends, the tormentors of the Underworld. The people of Theros know these fiends as demons.

**Immortal Nature.** A demon of Theros doesn't require food, drink, or sleep.

### ABHORRENT OVERLORD

Abhorrent overlords are gaunt, bipedal creatures whose gray, leathery skin is in stark contrast to the gleaming jewelry made of Underworld gold that they adorn themselves with. Their appetite for pain and death is eclipsed only by their greed; these fiends delight in searching out treasure and slaughtering all who stand in their way.

**Fell Minions.** Harpies, vultures, crows, and other flying scavengers are attracted to an overlord's presence, drawn by its evil and the promise of warm meat. An abhorrent overlord has no sense of loyalty or camaraderie toward these sycophants and often devours members of its retinue, yet more of the same continue to flock around the demon, offering fealty and squabbling for scraps.

### ABHORRENT OVERLORD

Large fiend, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 136 (16d10 + 48)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Con +7, Cha +7

**Skills** Deception +7, Intimidation +7, Persuasion +7

**Damage Resistances** cold, necrotic

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** Abyssal, Common, Infernal

**Challenge** 9 (5,000 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting.** The abhorrent overlord's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

1/day each: *confusion*, *crown of madness*, *suggestion*

**Insatiable Greed.** The abhorrent overlord can sense the presence of gold within 1,000 feet of itself. It can determine which location has the greatest amount of gold and can sense the

direction to that site. If the gold is being moved, it knows the direction of the movement. It can't locate gold if any thickness of clay or lead, even a thin sheet, blocks a direct path between it and the gold.

**Magic Resistance.** The abhorrent overlord has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The abhorrent overlord makes two attacks with its claws.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage plus 14 (4d6) necrotic damage. The abhorrent overlord regains hit points equal to half the amount of necrotic damage dealt if the target is a creature.

**Storm of Crows (Recharge 6).** The abhorrent overlord conjures a swarm of spectral crows and harpies in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on a point the overlord can see within 120 feet of it. The sphere remains for 1 minute or until the overlord loses concentration (as if concentrating on a spell), and its area is lightly obscured and difficult terrain.

Any creature that moves into the area for the first time on a turn or starts its turn there must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. A creature takes 16 (3d10) slashing damage plus 16 (3d10) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.



## EATER OF HOPE

An eater of hope is bitter to the core, resentful of all forms of life and joy. Although these demons can strike down most foes, they prefer to let terror and despair overtake their victims first, letting their victims marinate in fear before the fiend devours them.

**Twister of Wills.** Being obsessed with wealth and dominating lesser beings, eaters of hope hoard treasure for the sole purpose of tempting and manipulating mortals. They revel in using creatures' greed to turn them against one another and their own best interests.

## EATER OF HOPE

*Large fiend, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 90 (12d10 + 24)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Con +5, Cha +6

**Skills** Deception +6, Intimidation +6, Persuasion +6

**Damage Resistances** cold, necrotic

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** Abyssal, Common, Infernal

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

**Insatiable Greed.** The eater of hope can sense the presence of gold within 1,000 feet of itself. It can determine which location has the greatest amount of gold and can sense the direction

## FIENDS OF THEROS

On Theros, the term “demon” encompasses all fiends. The people of Theros might refer to “demons” or “devils” interchangeably, having no understanding of the difference between fiendish species or distant nightmarish planes. A pit fiend might be interpreted by Theros's mortals as one of the Underworld's countless demonic denizens, while a balor meeting a Theros demon on some other plane might consider it a rarity from some undiscovered Abyssal layer. In general, feel free to use whatever fiends you wish when telling stories in Theros—the Underworld's a big place with room for all the incarnate wickedness you desire.

to that site. If the gold is being moved, it knows the direction of the movement. It can't locate gold if any thickness of clay or lead, even a thin sheet, blocks a direct path between it and the gold.

**Magic Resistance.** The eater of hope has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The eater of hope makes two attacks with its claws.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

**Breath of Hopelessness (Recharge 5–6).** The eater of hope exhales a miasma of Underworld winds in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 14 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 26 (4d12) necrotic damage and is cursed for 1 minute. While cursed in this way, the target takes an extra 6 (1d12) necrotic damage whenever the eater of hope hits it with an attack. On a successful save, the target takes half as much damage and isn't cursed.



## NIGHTMARE SHEPHERD

A nightmare shepherd is a gaunt, ashen fiend with leathery wings. It carries a shepherd's crook, which it uses to direct a flock of wandering dead that it torments and occasionally feeds upon.

**Overseers of the Underworld.** Nightmare shepherds are Nyxborn, drawn from the god-energy of Erebus to be guides of the dead, shepherding them to one of the five wards of the Underworld where they will spend their dismal eternity. They prey upon souls who wander from their rightful places in the Underworld.

## NIGHTMARE SHEPHERD

*Large fiend, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 133 (14d10 + 56)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	20 (+5)

**Saving Throws** Con +8, Wis +7

**Skills** Arcana +6, Deception +9, Perception +7, Persuasion +9

**Damage Resistances** cold, necrotic

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17

**Languages** Abyssal, Common, Infernal

**Challenge** 11 (7,200 XP)

**Aura of Nightmares.** Undead creatures within 30 feet of the shepherd gain a +5 bonus to attack and damage rolls. When any other creature that isn't undead or a construct starts its turn within 30 feet of the shepherd, that creature must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or take 11 (2d10) psychic damage.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The shepherd's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

1/day each: *confusion*, *dispel magic*, *hold person*, *suggestion*

**Magic Resistance.** The shepherd has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The shepherd makes two attacks: one with its claws and one with its staff.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage plus 16 (3d10) necrotic damage.

**Staff.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage, or 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands, plus 26 (4d12) psychic damage.

**Herd the Underworld (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).**

The shepherd pulls twisted souls from the Underworld; 1d6 shadows (without Sunlight Weakness; see the *Monster Manual*) arise in unoccupied spaces within 20 feet of the shepherd. The shadows act right after the shepherd on the same initiative count and fight until they're destroyed. They disappear when the shepherd dies.

## EIDOLONS

When a mortal soul traumatically sacrifices its identity in order to escape the Underworld as a Returned, its identity manifests as a spirit-like eidolon. While eidolons possess many of the skills and details related to their past lives, they're disconnected from those experiences, choosing to wander the world or brood in haunts they're drawn to in death. They care nothing for morbid reunions with their lost bodies or Returned remnants.

Of the various types of eidolons, flutterstep eidolons are the most common and wander without purpose. Ghostblade eidolons typically arise from fallen warriors and believe they're endlessly embroiled in great battles.

**Undead Nature.** An eidolon doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

### FLITTERSTEP EIDOLON

*Medium undead, any alignment*

**Armor Class** 14

**Hit Points** 44 (8d8 + 8)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +8

**Damage Resistances** necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, restrained

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Blurred Form.** Attack rolls against the eidolon are made with disadvantage unless the eidolon is incapacitated.

**Evasion.** If the eidolon is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the eidolon instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails. It can't use this trait if it's incapacitated.

**Incorporeal Movement.** The eidolon can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

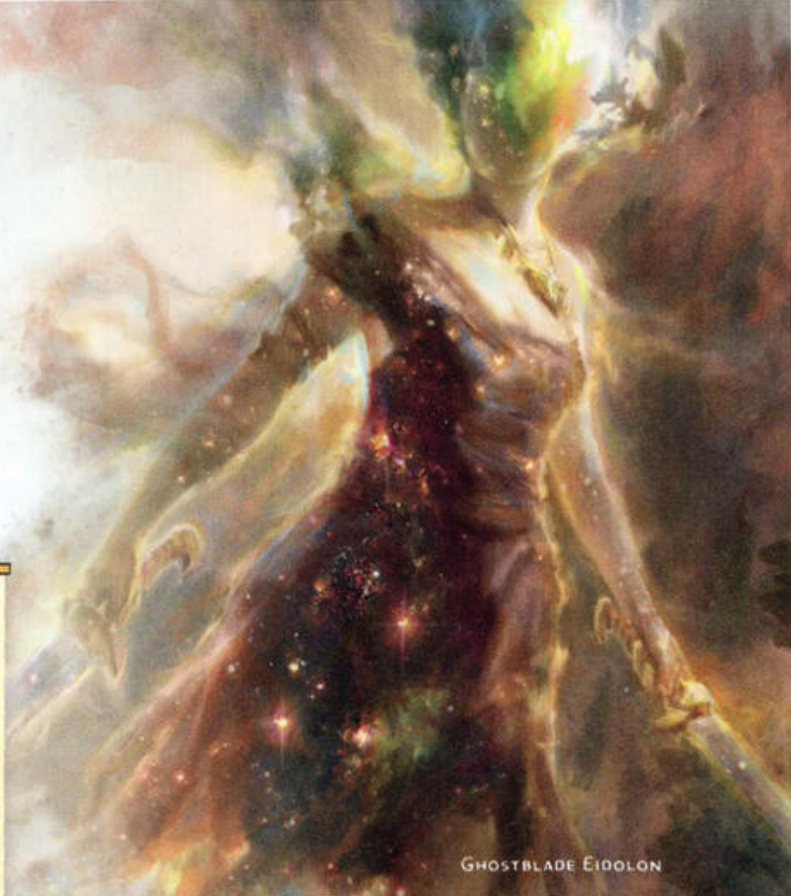
**Turn Resistance.** The eidolon has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The eidolon makes two melee attacks. Immediately before or after one of its attacks, it can use Flutterstep if it is available.

**Flickering Dagger.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) psychic damage.

**Flutterstep (Recharge 5–6).** The eidolon magically teleports to an unoccupied space it can see within 30 feet of it. If it makes an attack immediately after teleporting, it has advantage on the attack roll.



GHOSTBLADE EIDOLON

### GHOSTBLADE EIDOLON

*Medium undead, any alignment*

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 55 (10d8 + 10)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Skills** Acrobatics +5, Athletics +6, Perception +4

**Damage Resistances** necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, restrained

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Blurred Form.** Attack rolls against the eidolon are made with disadvantage unless the eidolon is incapacitated.

**Incorporeal Movement.** The eidolon can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

**Turn Resistance.** The eidolon has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The eidolon makes two ghostblade attacks.

**Ghostblade.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage plus 11 (2d10) force damage.



## FLEECEMANE LION

Twice the size of normal lions and with resplendent manes of silvery or golden hair, fleecemane lions prowl and protect sites imbued with the power of Nyx. While the specifics of these massive lions' connection to Nyx is unclear, many myths tell of the deadly predators stalking mortals and spreading fear until they're ultimately defeated by a brave hunter. As a result, overcoming a fleecemane lion is widely considered an early step on the road to becoming a true hero.

### FLEECEMANE LION

*Large monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 45 (6d10 + 12)

**Speed** 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

**Saving Throws** Str +6, Con +4

**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +5

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Keen Smell.** The lion has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Pounce.** If the lion moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the lion can make one bite attack against it as a bonus action.

**Running Leap.** With a 10-foot running start, the lion can long jump up to 25 feet.

**Spell Turning.** The lion has advantage on saving throws against any spell that targets only the lion (not an area). If the lion's saving throw succeeds and the spell is of 4th level or lower, the spell has no effect on the lion and instead targets the caster.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The lion makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claw.

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

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.  
*Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

**Claw.** The lion makes one claw attack.

**Roar (Costs 2 Actions).** The lion emits a magical roar. Each creature within 60 feet of the lion that can hear the roar must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened of the lion until the end of the lion's next turn.



## GIANTS

A spectrum of giants claims territory across Theros, drawing strength from aspects of the world itself—from ancient stone and roiling flames to the depths of the seas and skies. Unlike many creatures of legend, most giants owe their existence not to Nyx and the dreams of mortals, but to natural forces in the land. As a result, Theran giants are typically infused with the elements they embody, which might manifest as flaming beards, frozen skin, hair crackling with lightning, or other primal incarnations.

Beyond these primal giants, though, other giants fill the tales of Theros.

### DOOMWAKE GIANT

Belief is a powerful force in Theros, capable of bringing about wonders and changing the world—but not always for the better. Doomwake giants arise from pernicious fears that infect a whole city or region. If enough mortals dread destruction for long enough, their terror can manifest as one of these massive Nyxborn beings. Once unleashed, a doomwake giant goes on a rampage, fulfilling the prophecy mortals believed into being. After doing so, these terrors typically roam to the edges of the world, where they either fade away over time or become legends that take on their own terrible life.

### DOOMWAKE GIANT

*Huge giant, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 162 (13d12 + 78)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	12 (+1)	22 (+6)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Con +10, Wis +6

**Skills** Intimidation +7, Perception +6

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison

**Condition Immunities** frightened, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

**Languages** Giant

**Challenge** 11 (7,200 XP)

**Aura of Erebos.** Any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of the giant must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, or it takes 10 (3d6) necrotic damage and can't regain hit points until the start of its next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the giant's Aura of Erebos for 24 hours.

**Magic Resistance.** The giant has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The giant makes two slam attacks.

**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage.

**Noxious Gust (Recharge 5–6).** The giant exhales a mighty gust that creates a blast of deadly mist in a 60-foot line that is 10 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 36 (8d8) necrotic damage and is knocked prone. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't knocked prone.



## HUNDRED-HANDED ONE

Extra pairs of arms magically orbit the bodies of the titanic, nearly forgotten artisans known as hundred-handed ones. These giants often dwell in remote mountains and seaside cliffs, where they carve their memories into the ancient stone, covering their territories with intricate reliefs and massive statues of bygone ages. Some linger near ancient temples and palaces, ruins they once raised to the gods or archons of old.

**Artisans of the Archons.** Legend has it that the hundred-handed ones were once a tribe of giant artisans, prized by archon tyrants for their ability as stone cutters and smiths. The archons became greedy for more splendid monuments to their greatness. Some believed the grandest testaments to their glory were being denied them by their servants' unremarkable forms. So the archons performed dark rituals, robbing the power of ancient, slumbering giants and using it to transform their servants. This primal energy granted the archons' agents numerous limbs—the better to raise the archons' monuments and fortresses.

Yet many of the transformed giants refused to be part of the archons' war machine. Seeking to escape their masters, they fled into the wilderness. The furious archons' magic pursued them, cursing them with an endless will to create, but no one to create for and none who would ever appreciate or use the art and architecture they created.

## HUNDRED-HANDED ONE

*Huge giant, lawful neutral*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 243 (18d12 + 126)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
26 (+8)	15 (+2)	25 (+7)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Con +12, Wis +8

**Skills** Intimidation +8, Perception +8

**Condition Immunities** frightened

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18

**Languages** Giant

**Challenge** 15 (13,000 XP)

**Reactive.** The giant can take one reaction on every turn in a combat.

**Vigilant.** The giant can't be surprised.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The giant makes four longsword attacks or two rock attacks.

**Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (3d8 + 8) slashing damage.

**Rock.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 30 (4d10 + 8) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 21 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

### REACTIONS

**Deflect Attack.** The giant adds 5 to its AC against one weapon attack that would hit it. To do so, the giant must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

## HARPIES

Cruel, corpse-eating creatures, harpies endlessly seek their next meal, careless of whether it comes from the living or the dead. With equal zeal, these vicious scavengers set upon travelers or claw open fresh graves, stripping bodies of riches and flesh. Then they carry back any treasures or appealing bones they find to reeking nests situated in cramped caves or rotten trees.

### APHEMIA THE DISSONANT SONG

The notorious Nyxborn harpy Aphemia prowls the marshy wastes around the necropolis of Asphodel. Her shrill songs enthrall the necropolis's undead inhabitants, which she leads on raids to waylay unsuspecting travelers and settlements.

### BLOOD-TOLL HARPY

Murderous gangs of harpies collect in grim places across Theros, preying on any who pass by. Many merchants face regular losses at the harpies' claws, common casualties often referred to as a "blood toll."

#### SIRENS

Sirens are a kind of beautiful harpy with humanlike bodies, bird wings and legs, and bright plumage in shades of blue, purple, and green. They use the stat block of the harpy in the *Monster Manual*, using their luring song to mesmerize their prey and draw it near. Siren songs prove exceptionally dangerous to sailors, who risk steering their ships onto reefs in an attempt to reach the source of the melody.



### APHEMIA

Medium monstrosity, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 52 (8d8 + 16)

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 50 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Dex +6, Cha +6

**Skills** Arcana +4, Intimidation +6, Perception +5

**Damage Resistances** necrotic

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Legendary Resistance (2/Day).** If Aphemia fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

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

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Aphemia makes two attacks: one with her bite and one with her claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) piercing damage plus 13 (3d8) necrotic damage.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

**Discordant Song.** Aphemia shrieks a cacophony of magical sounds. Each humanoid within 120 feet of her must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened of her until the song ends. A frightened creature takes 7 (2d6) psychic damage at the start of its turn while Aphemia is singing. A frightened creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to Aphemia's Discordant Song for the next 24 hours. Aphemia must take a bonus action on her subsequent turns to continue singing. She can stop singing at any time. The song ends if Aphemia is incapacitated or dies.

**Grave Calling Song.** Aphemia intones a low, growling magical melody. Every undead within 300 feet of her must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or fall under her control until the song ends. Aphemia must take a bonus action on her subsequent turns to continue singing, and she can mentally command the undead under her control as part of the same bonus action. She can stop singing at any time. The song ends if Aphemia is incapacitated or dies.



HIPPOCAMP

## HIPPOCAMP

Noble steeds of the sea, hippocamps feature in countless tales as guides and mounts to tritons and other ocean-faring heroes. While these curious but cautious aquatic equines naturally travel in herds, many hold valued places in triton society. Considered to be servants of Thassa, hippocamps are often unpredictable, but their great speed and strength can prove awe-inspiring when harnessed by the god's will.

### BLOOD-TOLL HARPY

*Medium monstrosity, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 11

**Hit Points** 9 (2d8)

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)

**Skills** Intimidation +3

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

**Blood Frenzy.** The harpy has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all its hit points.

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

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The harpy makes two melee attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

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

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

### HIPPOCAMP

*Large monstrosity, chaotic good*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 22 (4d10)

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

**Damage Resistances** cold

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** —

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

**Amphibious.** The hippocamp can breathe air and water.

**Charge.** If the hippocamp moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a ram attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

#### ACTIONS

**Hooves.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.  
*Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

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

# HOPLITES

Hoplites are highly trained warriors, versed not only in strategy and tactics but in the glorification of the warrior's spirit, the basis of an ethos that forges an unbreakable bond between members of a military unit. In combat, hoplites typically work in groups and use coordinated tactics to win victories.

The three Hoplite Unit Names tables present the sorts of titles used by hoplite contingents hailing from Theros's great poleis. Consider using these names for military forces characters encounter during their adventures or that they were once a part of.

## AKROAN HOPLITE

Akroan hoplites, also called stratians, number among the fiercest soldiers on Theros. They train relentlessly and possess unflinching resolve. In the annals of Akros, tales abound of squads of stratians that defended a key location against a much larger force or crept behind enemy lines and wreaked havoc in the opposing army.

## MELETIAN HOPLITE

Meletian hoplites use a combination of cunning, faith, and magic to defend their coastal home. Most of these skilled soldiers serve in the Reverent Army, the defenders of Meletis, which uses an array of proven strategies and flexible troop formations to gain the advantage over foes. Bolstered by trained griffon and pegasus steeds, they strike foes where they least expect.

## SETESSAN HOPLITE

Most Setessan hoplites begin their training as hunters, making them skilled in traversing the woods and adept at both guerrilla tactics and archery. Their strategies often emulate the favored servants of Nylea—especially wild beasts like wolves and lynxes. Typically a few soldiers harry an enemy while the rest capitalize on their foe's distraction.

### AKROAN HOPLITE UNIT NAMES

d8	Name
1	Spears of Iroas
2	Iron Fangs
3	Arrows of Anax
4	The Unbroken
5	Anvil of Purphoros
6	Skewering Squad
7	Shield of Akros
8	Cymede's Heart

### MELETIAN HOPLITE UNIT NAMES

d8	Name
1	Kraken's Claw
2	Hands of Justice
3	Thassa's Spear
4	Ephara's Shield
5	Kindred of the Deep
6	Riders of Heliod
7	Keepers of Pyrgnos
8	The Skysworn

### SETESSAN HOPLITE UNIT NAMES

d8	Name
1	Nylea's Arrows
2	The Watchers
3	Fangs of Ophis
4	The Swiftswords
5	Karametra's Wolves
6	Defenders of the Grove
7	Bronze Blades
8	The Jackals

## AKROAN HOPLITE

Medium humanoid (any), any alignment

**Armor Class** 18 (breastplate, shield)  
**Hit Points** 52 (8d8 + 16)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Str +5, Dex +5  
**Senses** passive Perception 12  
**Languages** Common  
**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Hold the Line.** While the hoplite is holding a spear, other creatures provoke an opportunity attack from the hoplite when they

move within 5 feet of it. When the hoplite hits a creature with an opportunity attack using its spear, the creature takes an extra 4 (1d8) piercing damage, and the creature's speed becomes 0 for the rest of the turn.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The hoplite makes three melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

**Spear.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, or 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

**Shield Bash.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.



## MELETIAN HOPLITE

Medium humanoid (any), any alignment

**Armor Class** 18 (breastplate, shield)

**Hit Points** 49 (9d8 + 9)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)

**Saving Throws** Dex +4, Int +5

**Skills** Arcana +5, History +5, Perception +3

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Spellcasting.** The hoplite is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand*, *minor illusion*, *ray of frost* (see "Actions" below)

1st level (4 slots): *color spray*, *expeditious retreat*, *sleep*

2nd level (2 slots): *blur*, *cloud of daggers*, *invisibility*

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The hoplite makes three weapon attacks. It can replace one weapon attack with *ray of frost*.

**Spear.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, or 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

**Shield Bash.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

**Ray of Frost (Cantrip).** *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d8) cold damage, and the target's speed is reduced by 10 feet until the start of the hoplite's next turn.

## SETESSAN HOPLITE

Medium humanoid (any), any alignment

**Armor Class** 16 (leather, shield)

**Hit Points** 58 (9d8 + 18)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Dex +5, Wis +5

**Skills** Acrobatics +5, Perception +5, Survival +5

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Pack Tactics.** The hoplite has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the hoplite's allies is within 5 feet of the hoplite and the ally isn't incapacitated.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The hoplite makes two scimitar attacks or two longbow attacks.

**Scimitar.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

**Longbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.



IRONSCALE HYDRA

## HYDRAS

What krakens are to the sea and dragons are to the sky, hydras are to the lands of Theros. Various hydras dwell at the fringes of civilization, from the bog-dwelling hydras known across the multiverse to massive ironscale hydras that lurk in deep wildernesses. Beyond even these exist serpentine horrors born of the whims of foul gods, like the legendary hydra Polukranos.

**Territorial Terrors.** During their early years, hydras feed their rapid growth by terrorizing the land. When they grow large enough, they look for a territory to claim as their own. Often, they steal lairs from other monsters in prolonged, devastating battles.

**Vicious Growth.** Soon after a hydra claims a territory, it typically buries itself, entering a period of hibernation during which it continues to grow. When it awakens, it goes on a feeding rampage, so beginning the cycle once again. These rhythms of destruction sometimes become so ingrained in the minds and lore of a people that, even after a hydra's defeat, the beast might reappear as a Nyxborn being and begin its legend anew.

## IRONSCALE HYDRA

Five-headed ironscale hydras lurk in the wild places of the world, being common foes for heroes seeking to test their mettle against terrors worthy of the gods' notice. Most ironscale hydras inhabit lakes and boggy caverns, from which they hunt unwary creatures that come for a drink or swim.

## POLUKRANOS

Polukranos, called the World Eater, is the mortal manifestation of the eternal ideal of a hydra. In its first incarnation, it fell from Nyx to the mortal world, and so great were its size and strength that the gods Nylea and Heliod combined their power to bind the monster deep within the Nessian Wood. That incarnation was slain, but the eternal ideal remains. A new incarnation of the World Eater is a fearsome omen, as the monster only appears when the pillars of the world tremble and terrible things are afoot in the realm of the gods. Its rampages often presage an age of menace for all civilization.

## IRONSCALE HYDRA

*Gargantuan monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 181 (11d20 + 66)

**Speed** 40 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	10 (+0)	22 (+6)	2 (–4)	10 (+0)	7 (–2)

**Skills** Perception +8

**Damage Immunities** acid

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 18

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 12 (8,400 XP)

**Acidic Blood.** When the hydra takes piercing or slashing damage, each creature within 5 feet of the hydra takes 9 (2d8) acid damage.

**Hold Breath.** The hydra can hold its breath for 1 hour.

**Multiple Heads.** The hydra has five heads. While it has more than one head, the hydra has advantage on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, or knocked unconscious.

Whenever the hydra takes 35 or more damage in a single turn, one of its heads dies. If all its heads die, the hydra dies.

At the end of its turn, it grows two heads for each of its heads that died since its last turn, unless it has taken fire damage since its last turn. The hydra regains 10 hit points for each head regrown in this way.

**Reactive Heads.** For each head the hydra has beyond one, it gets an extra reaction that can be used only for opportunity attacks.

**Wakeful.** While the hydra sleeps, at least one of its heads is awake.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The hydra makes as many bite attacks as it has heads.

**Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. Hit: 17 (2d10 + 6) piercing damage.

## POLUKRANOS

*Gargantuan monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 232 (15d20 + 75)

**Speed** 50 ft., swim 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	15 (+2)	21 (+5)	4 (–3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Perception +14

**Damage Immunities** acid

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 24

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 19 (22,000 XP)

**Acidic Blood.** When Polukranos takes piercing or slashing damage, each creature within 5 feet of Polukranos takes 10 (3d6) acid damage.

**Hold Breath.** Polukranos can hold its breath for 1 hour.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If Polukranos fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Multiple Heads.** Polukranos has five heads. While it has more than one head, Polukranos has advantage on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, or knocked unconscious.

Whenever Polukranos takes 40 or more damage in a single turn, one of its heads dies. If all its heads die, Polukranos dies.

At the end of its turn, it grows two heads for each of its heads that died since its last turn, unless it has taken 40 or more fire damage since its last turn. Polukranos regains 20 hit points for each head regrown in this way.

**Reactive Heads.** For each head Polukranos has beyond one, it gets an extra reaction that can be used only to make opportunity attacks.

**Siege Monster.** Polukranos deals double damage to objects and structures.

**Wakeful.** While Polukranos sleeps, at least one of its heads is awake.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Polukranos makes as many bite attacks as it has heads.

**Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack: +13 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. Hit: 18 (2d10 + 7) piercing damage.

**Stomp.** Melee Weapon Attack: +13 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. Hit: 16 (2d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

**Tail.** Melee Weapon Attack: +13 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. Hit: 18 (2d10 + 7) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 21 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 20 feet away from Polukranos.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Polukranos can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Polukranos regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Detect.** Polukranos makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

**Tail Swipe.** Polukranos makes a tail attack.

**Trampling Charge (Costs 3 Actions).** Polukranos moves up to 50 feet in a straight line and can move through the space of any creature Huge or smaller. The first time it enters each creature's space during this move, it can make a stomp attack against that creature.



## LEONIN

Prides of leonin roam the plains of Oreskos, protecting the land and its creatures from interlopers, both mortal and immortal. As many leonin suffered at the hands of archon tyrants in ages past, today their prides largely avoid contact with other peoples and spurn the gods that ignored their plight. Since then, the leonin have flourished, finding strength in their bonds with one another and the land. Only in recent times have some leonin started guardedly looking beyond their homeland and wondering what role they might take in the wider world.

Most leonin hunters are **tribal warriors**, but those who hunt the servants of the gods rather than game are known as leonin iconoclasts.

### LEONIN ICONOCLAST

While leonin don't deny the existence of the gods, most denounce them, believing the deities are more likely to spread doom than peace and bounty. Some leonin, known as iconoclasts, devote themselves to thwarting the gods by hunting down their followers and all things born of Nyx that impede on Oreskos and the safety of the leonin prides.

### LEONIN ICONOCLAST

Medium humanoid (leonin), any alignment

**Armor Class** 17 (Unarmored Defense)

**Hit Points** 67 (9d8 + 27)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)

**Saving Throws** Dex +7, Wis +6

**Skills** Arcana +4, Insight +6, Intimidation +3, Stealth +7, Survival +6

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** Common, Leonin

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Evasion.** If the leonin is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, it instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails. It can't use this trait if it's incapacitated.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The leonin's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

1/day each: *banishment*, *detect evil and good*

**Unarmored Defense.** While the leonin is wearing no armor and wielding no shield, its AC includes its Wisdom modifier.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The leonin makes three weapon attacks.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

*Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) force damage.

**Dart.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target.

*Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.



## NYX-FLEECE RAM

Touched by the gods, Nyx-fleece rams grow remarkable magical wool. This makes the beasts valuable to heroes and scoundrels alike, who would use their wool for either protection or profit. Divine servants guard the few herds of Nyx-fleece rams dwelling among Theros's loftiest peaks, assuring they don't fall into unworthy hands.

**Magic Fleece.** If someone shears a Nyx-fleece ram without damaging the creature, the fleece can be made into a magic garment. A wearer who is attuned to the garment, as to a magic item, receives the favor of the gods in the form of a magical benefit. Use the Powers of the Fleece table to determine the property of a newly created garment.

### POWERS OF THE FLEECE

#### d6 Property

- 1 **Protection.** The wearer gains a +1 bonus to AC and saving throws.
- 2 **Power of Nyx.** The wearer has advantage on all Charisma (Persuasion) checks.
- 3 **Calming Presence.** The wearer can cast *calm emotions* once per day (save DC 13).
- 4 **Trail of Flowers.** Wherever the wearer of the fleece walks, flowers spring up magically behind them. The flowers wilt away after 1 hour.
- 5 **Animal Affinity.** Any non-evil wearer of the fleece can cast *animal friendship* once per day (save DC 13).
- 6 **Abundance of Food.** The wearer can cast *create food and water* once per day.

## NYX-FLEECE RAM

Medium monstrosity, unaligned

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 27 (5d8 + 5)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	3 (−4)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Charge.** If the ram moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a ram attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 5 (2d4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

**Magic Resistance.** The ram has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Sure-Footed.** The ram has advantage on Strength and Dexterity saving throws against effects that would knock it prone.

### ACTIONS

**Ram. Melee Weapon Attack:** +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 8 (2d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 3 (1d6) force damage.



## Nymphs

Divine servants that inhabit unspoiled corners of the world, nymphs protect places of natural power and infuse their surroundings with the magic of Nyx. Some are benevolent and aid those who live off the land, while others embody violent aspects of nature. In either case, nymphs generally avoid other sapient creatures, preferring to mind the cycles of nature, the daily interplay of wild animals, or other cosmic forces. Occasionally, though, groups of the same kind of nymphs congregate in a place of natural power or beauty. In times of special need, deities tied to facets of nature might employ nymphs as messengers, guardians, or scouts.

The nymphs of Theros include the following mysterious beings, as well as dryads (presented in the *Monster Manual*).

**Immortal Nature.** A nymph doesn't require food, drink, or sleep.

## ALSEID

Touched with the golden light of the sun, alseids inhabit meadows, plains, and lands of cultivated natural beauty. Many live in closer proximity to human civilization than other nymphs. Farmers are grateful for the presence of alseids on their lands and often leave them offerings of mead, honey, flowers, and dates in return for protecting their flocks and making their crops more abundant.

## LAMPAD

Lampads guard the shadowed paths of the world, depths typically trod by souls destined for the Underworld. These rarely seen nymphs assist Athreos in guiding the dead, moving among the spirits that collect along the Tartyx River and reclaiming wayward souls that try to slip back to the mortal world. This means lampads are most often spotted in graveyards, crumbling crypts, and tunnels that bore deep into the earth, and near portals to the Underworld.



## ALSEID

Medium fey, chaotic good

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 22 (4d8 + 4)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)

**Skills** Persuasion +6

**Damage Resistances** radiant

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, poisoned

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Common, Sylvan

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Hide in Plain Sight.** The alseid has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide while it is in grassland.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The alseid's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

3/day each: *cure wounds*, *charm person*, *sleep*

1/day each: *calm emotions*, *lesser restoration*, *plant growth*

**Magic Resistance.** The alseid has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The alseid makes two radiant touch attacks.

**Radiant Touch.** *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) radiant damage.

## LAMPAD

Medium fey, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 52 (8d8 + 16)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

**Skills** Deception +6, Intimidation +6

**Damage Resistances** necrotic

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, poisoned

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** Common, Sylvan

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Corpse Stride.** Once on its turn, the lampad can use 10 feet of its movement to step magically into one creature's corpse within its reach and emerge from a second creature's corpse within 60 feet of the first corpse, appearing in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the second corpse. Both corpses must be Medium or bigger.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The lampad's spellcasting ability is Charisma (+6 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *chill touch* (see "Actions" below), *gentle repose*

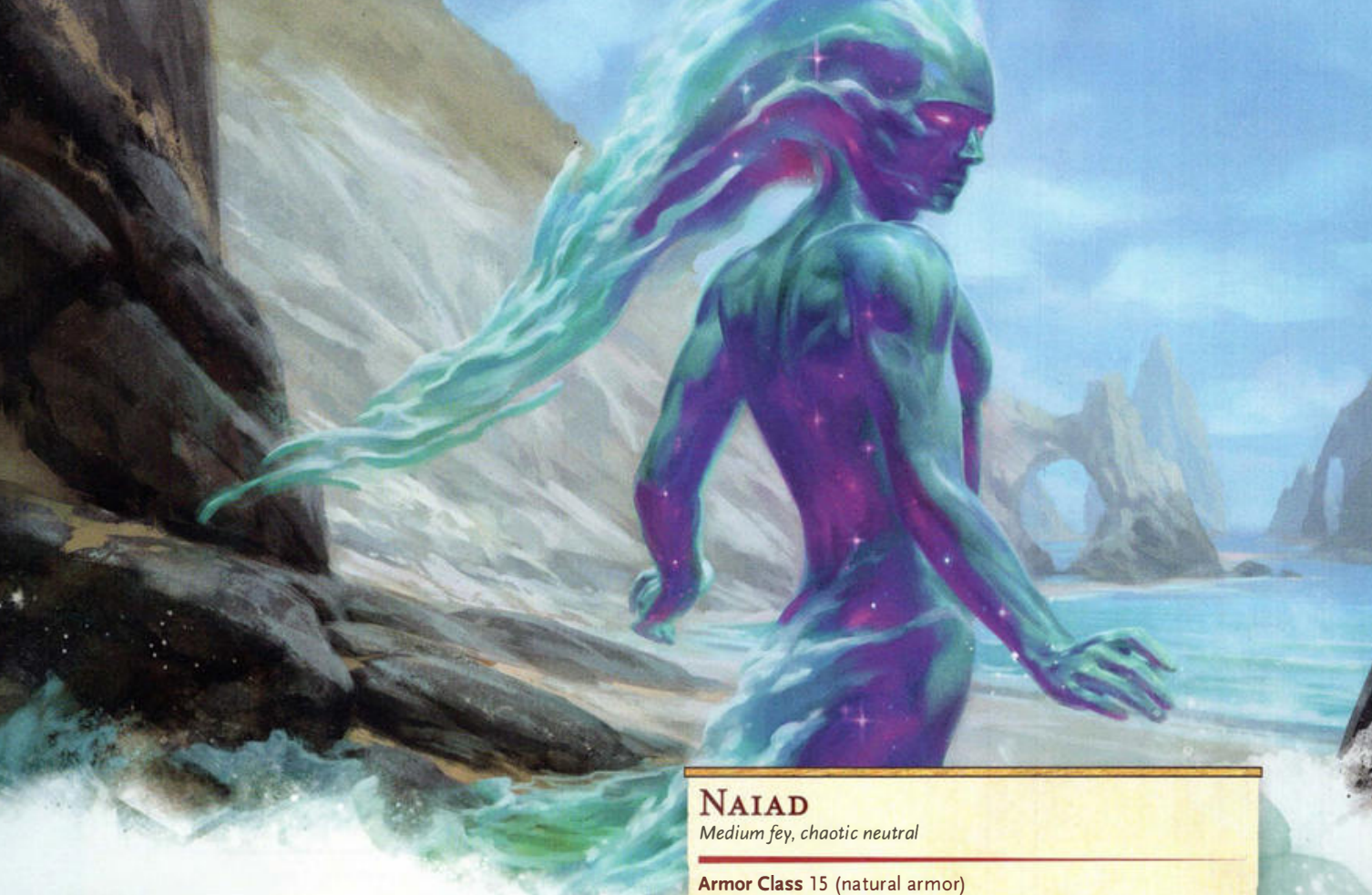
**Magic Resistance.** The lampad has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The lampad attacks twice with its necrotic touch or *chill touch*.

**Necrotic Touch.** *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) necrotic damage.

**Chill Touch (Cantrip).** *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 120 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d8) necrotic damage, and the target can't regain hit points until the start of the lampad's next turn. If the target is undead, it has disadvantage on attack rolls against the lampad until the end of the lampad's next turn.



## NAIAD

Naiads live in and near water. They might be spotted among rivers and lakes, on isolated shores, or amid coral labyrinths and deep sea fumaroles. Wherever rivers and seas show their variety and force, naiads gather to revel in nature's might. Individual naiads often grow fixated with a single type or body of water, potentially preferring a deep sea trench, coastline, or river system above all others. Over time, such a resident nymph often becomes connected with their aquatic home through sightings and stories, becoming a guardian of the place and, in effect, a manifestation of its personality.

**Aquatic Collectors.** Curious by nature, naiads often seek out what the seas and rivers claim. As a result, they might be found among sunken ruins and shipwrecks, sifting through the remains for whatever catches their eye. Living creatures aren't exempt from this curiosity, either. Naiads are known to befriend aquatic creatures, or even to keep modest menageries. The occasional star-crossed castaway has even been known to become part of such collections.

**Secret Routes of the Sea.** Sailors across the world claim that naiads know all the secret aquatic routes of Theros. Using this hidden system of currents and arteries, a ship might reach any destination in record time, be it across the sea or along a river a hundred miles inland. Naiads do nothing to dissuade sailors from this belief, and certainly numerous reports tell of charmed nymphs leading lost seafarers home. Yet, if tales of naiad-led galleys appearing amid the headwaters of mountain rivers are true, only the nymphs know for sure.

## NAIAD

*Medium fey, chaotic neutral*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 31 (7d8)

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)

**Skills** Persuasion +6, Sleight of Hand +5

**Damage Resistances** psychic

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, poisoned

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** Common, Sylvan

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Amphibious.** The naiad can breathe air and water.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The naiad's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *minor illusion*

3/day: *phantasmal force*

1/day each: *fly*, *hypnotic pattern*

**Invisible in Water.** The naiad is invisible while fully immersed in water.

**Magic Resistance.** The naiad has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The naiad makes two psychic touch attacks.

**Psychic Touch.** *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) psychic damage.



## OREAD

Aggressive oreads number among the most dangerous nymphs, as they embody the wild might of flames, volcanism, and the hidden forces of the earth. These creatures typically dwell in remote mountain crags and near volcanoes, where they caper among the forces of dissolution and rebirth. During avalanches and volcanic eruptions, groups of oreads might race ahead of the destruction, dancing, singing, and doing what they can to maximize the impending devastation.

**Honor Among Fey.** Harkening back to some ages-old conflict, oreads refuse to knowingly destroy any land inhabited by another nymph. While they won't work to alter the natural course of destruction, neither will they make another nymph's home part of any calamity they encourage. As a result, part of what makes an alseid's field or a dryad's grove seem so blessed is that oreads go out of their way to leave such sites alone.

**Tales of Fire.** The followers of Purphoros regard oreads with special reverence, as myths tell of cagey smiths befriending these nymphs and convincing them to aid in creating phenomenal works. In some tales, a smith finds an oread and allows it to relish in the destruction of a novel or remarkable item. In recompense, the oread provides the smith with materials drawn from the burning heart of the world, allowing the smith to create an even greater wonder. In more tales, though, a smith pursues an oread, then later the mortal's associates find familiar tools and a heap of ashes.

## OREAD

*Medium fey, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 49 (9d8 + 9)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)

**Skills** Athletics +4, Acrobatics +4, Performance +6

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, poisoned

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** Common, Sylvan

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting.** The oread's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *fire bolt* (see "Actions" below)

3/day: *burning hands*

1/day each: *hellish rebuke* (see "Reactions" below), *scorching ray*

**Invisible in Fire.** The oread is invisible while fully immersed in fire.

**Magic Resistance.** The oread has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The oread attacks twice with its fiery touch or *fire bolt*.

**Fiery Touch.** *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) fire damage.

**Fire Bolt (Cantrip).** *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) fire damage.

## REACTIONS

**Hellish Rebuke (2nd-Level Spell; 1/Day).** When the oread is damaged by a creature within 60 feet of the oread that it can see, the creature that damaged the oread must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 16 (3d10) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.



## ORACLE

Medium humanoid (any), any alignment

**Armor Class** 15 (Blessings of the Gods)

**Hit Points** 44 (8d8 + 8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)

**Saving Throws** Wis +5, Cha +4

**Skills** Insight +5, Persuasion +4, Religion +5

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** Celestial, Common

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Blessings of the Gods.** While the oracle is wearing no armor and wielding no shield, its AC includes its Wisdom modifier. In addition, a creature that hits the oracle with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 9 (2d8) force damage.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The oracle's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *guidance*, *light*, *thaumaturgy*

3/day each: *bless*, *guiding bolt*, *healing word*, *hold person*

1/day each: *augury*, *scrying*

### ACTIONS

**Eldritch Touch.** *Melee Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) force damage.

### REACTIONS

**Divine Insight (3/Day).** When the oracle or a creature it can see makes an attack roll, a saving throw, or an ability check, the oracle can cause the roll to be made with advantage or disadvantage.

## ORACLE

Oracles possess the ability to interpret the patterns and language of Nyx, divining from it the flow of fates and the will of the gods. Most of these gifted—or cursed—mortals communicate with a single god, interpreting their intentions for the wider world. Others aren't aligned with a god and observe the night sky, reading Nyx like a vast, cryptic scroll for insights.

**Divine Influence.** Just as oracles seek insights from interpreting the divine, so too do gods occasionally seek to manipulate the world through oracles. Sometimes a god might speak directly, be it with dramatic manifestations or direct possession of their servant. Although a deity's words might be steeped in metaphors, should a god wish to make their intentions clear, they often find dramatic ways to make their thoughts known.

**Interpreters of Signs.** Oracles possess unparalleled experience in divining godly whims from cryptic visions and mundane forces. Those who receive divine omens (such as those presented in chapter 4) might seek out an oracle to gain a clearer vision of the god's intentions. Finding an oracle, though, or one experienced in interpreting certain types of visions, might prove to be an adventure in its own right.



## PHYLASKIA

These armored skeletal spirits guard the borders of the Underworld and its various wards. Sleepless and merciless, they scrutinize all who would pass, and they slay those who defy them.

**Undead Nature.** A phylaskia doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

### PHYLASKIA

*Large undead, lawful neutral*

**Armor Class** 18 (plate)  
**Hit Points** 104 (11d10 + 44)  
**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)

**Saving Throws** Con +8, Wis +7

**Skills** Insight +7, Perception +7

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison

**Condition Immunities** blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

**Senses** truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 17

**Languages** all

**Challenge** 9 (5,000 XP)

**Gatekeeper's Aura.** Any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of the phylaskia must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a successful save, the creature is immune to this aura for the next 24 hours. On a failed save, the creature has

disadvantage on saving throws and its speed is halved until the start of its next turn.

**Undead Fortitude.** If damage reduces the phylaskia to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC equal to 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the phylaskia drops to 1 hit point instead.

**Vigilant.** The phylaskia can't be surprised.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The phylaskia makes two longsword attacks and uses its Strength Drain once.

**Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage, or 16 (2d10 + 5) slashing damage if used with two hands, plus 11 (2d10) necrotic damage.

**Strength Drain.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) necrotic damage. Unless the target is immune to necrotic damage, its Strength score is reduced by 1d4. The target dies if this reduces its Strength to 0. Otherwise, the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest.

## RETURNED

Returned have escaped the Underworld and dwell among the living once more, but their second lives are rarely what they expected—not that they remember what it was they expected. As a result of having followed the Path of Phenax (see chapter 4), the Returned lose their identities, which manifest as separate beings known as eidolons. The experience of escaping the Underworld also causes them to lose their faces, which become expressionless surfaces with empty eye sockets and gaping mouths. These blank surfaces they cover with distinctive golden masks.

Returned reenter the world blank and undead. No longer possessing the ability to form long-term memories, they generally can't build meaningful relationships or establish new lives. Instead, most experience fleeting emotions and follow hollow routines, their existences reduced to shadow plays without weight or substance.

**Returned Masks.** Adventurers who defeat Returned foes might marvel at their fortune in claiming such rich spoils after a battle. The mask of a Returned is worth approximately 100 gp, based on its composition and craftsmanship. However, selling a Returned mask isn't a simple matter of cashing it in for coin. Most people on Theros know the tales of the Returned and want nothing to do with such cursed relics or with those who try to traffic in them. Finding an unscrupulous merchant willing to trade for Returned masks is rare, as the items are effectively another sapient being's face. Convincing a merchant to buy a Returned mask, or dealing with the ramifications of such a sale, might prove to be an adventure in itself.

**Returned Nature.** The Returned are undead. They need water and air but not food or sleep. They think and speak and even feel emotions based on their new experiences, but given their circumstances, those emotions tend to be muted.

## RETURNED DRIFTER

Many Returned are pitiable souls who managed to escape from the Underworld only to find themselves stripped of the passions that motivated their flight. Lacking purpose and shunned by the living, these Returned typically seek places where they'll be left in peace, such as lonely tombs or the necropoleis of Asphodel and Odunos. There they go through half-hearted parodies

### VARIANT: RETURNED KAKOMANTIS

Although the dead typically recall little of their lives, some have an obsession with magic that survives both death and rebirth as a Returned. These Returned, called kakomanteis, use their magical prowess to control the energy that suffuses the Underworld. A Returned kakomantis has the statistics of a Returned palamnite and uses the following action option in place of Multiattack:

**Underworld Bolt.** *Ranged Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, range 120 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 2) necrotic damage, and the target can't regain hit points until the start of the Returned's next turn. If the target is missing any of its hit points, it instead takes 17 (2d12 + 2) necrotic damage.

of life, impeded by distraction and ennui. Despite this, even the most languorous Returned defend themselves if threatened and might be pressed into the service of their more willful brethren.

## RETURNED PALAMNITE

Even death and the loss of their identities can't erase the rage that inspires Returned palamnites. These Returned led violent lives, existences filled with such pain and hatred that violence now suffuses their deathless bodies. Such makes them exceptionally dangerous to the living, as these aimless killers know only suffering and seek to spread it whenever the opportunity arises. While palamnites might wander the world as dangerous, lone murderers, many gravitate to Odunos, where they serve the vicious will of Tymaret the Murder King (see chapter 3).

## RETURNED SENTRY

Most new or purposeless Returned are easily manipulated into serving their more forceful brethren. Having purpose forced upon them, these Returned perform simple, artless tasks with middling efficiency. Their one virtue is their tirelessness, which makes them exceptional guards. In the necropoleis, this sees many Returned employed as sentries, though they might also be messengers or laborers. If threatened, groups of these Returned work well together, sharing the unified goals of overcoming their foes and getting back to the task at hand.

## RETURNED DRIFTER

*Medium undead, lawful neutral*

**Armor Class** 13 (leather armor)

**Hit Points** 11 (2d8 + 2)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Damage Resistances** necrotic

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Turn Resistance.** The Returned has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

**Unreadable Face.** The Returned is immune to any effect that would sense its emotions or read its thoughts. Wisdom (Insight) checks to ascertain the Returned's intentions or sincerity are made with disadvantage.

### ACTIONS

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

**Sling.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.



## RETURNED PALAMNITE

Medium undead, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 65 (10d8 + 20)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

**Skills** Acrobatics +5, Athletics +2, Stealth +5

**Damage Resistances** necrotic

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Fleeting Anger.** If another creature deals damage to the Returned, the Returned makes attack rolls with advantage until the end of its next turn.

**Turn Resistance.** The Returned has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

**Unreadable Face.** The Returned is immune to any effect that would sense its emotions or read its thoughts. Wisdom (Insight) checks to ascertain the Returned's intentions or sincerity are made with disadvantage.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The Returned makes two shortsword attacks.

**Shortsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

## RETURNED SENTRY

Medium undead, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 15 (leather armor, shield)

**Hit Points** 22 (4d8 + 4)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Damage Resistances** necrotic

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Pack Tactics.** The Returned has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the Returned's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

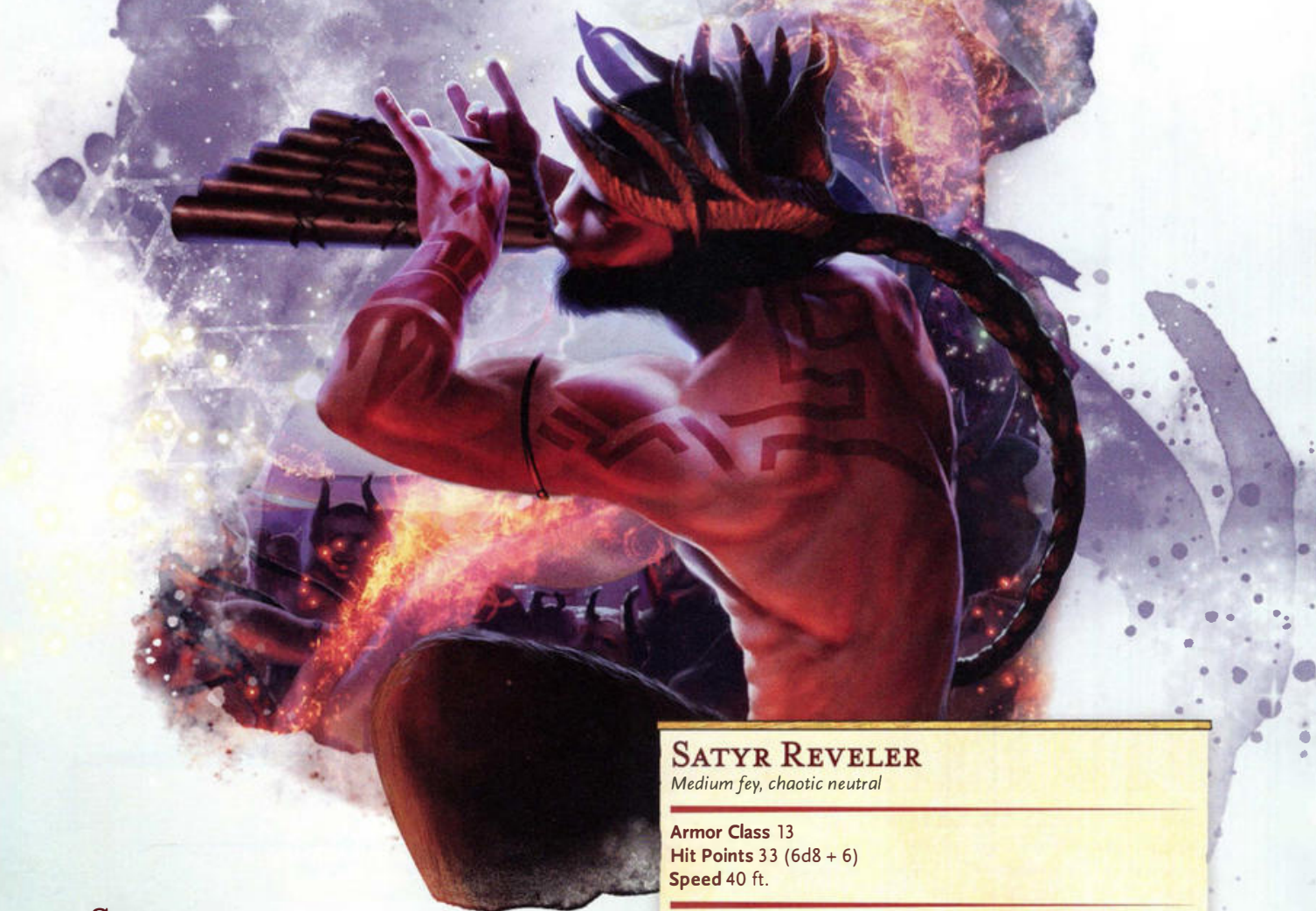
**Turn Resistance.** The Returned has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

**Unreadable Face.** The Returned is immune to any effect that would sense its emotions or read its thoughts. Wisdom (Insight) checks to ascertain the Returned's intentions or sincerity are made with disadvantage.

### ACTIONS

**Spear.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, or 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack, plus 7 (2d6) poison damage.

**Sling.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.



## SATYR

While most satyrs are known for their high spirits, love of revels, and gregarious personalities, these outgoing people are neither naive nor defenseless. Some satyrs delightfully torment stuffy individuals or pull pranks on the unwary, pastimes that can predictably lead to scuffles. If a satyr can't talk their way out of a conflict—or diffuse it with a good-natured distraction—they readily defend themselves, their friends, and their homes in the Skola Vale. With diversions aside, satyrs bend their cleverness toward tactics and methods of ending conflicts as swiftly as possible. This often means turning the same skills that make them famed celebrants toward battle, be it captivating performances or the aim developed through endless games of skill. Once a threat is overcome, though, satyrs are quick to engage in their favorite part of battle: the victory celebration.

### SATYR REVELER

Pursuing lives of endless reverie, satyr revelers eagerly participate in celebrations wherever they find them. Their boisterous natures go far toward tempting others to eat, drink, and carouse with them. Faced with stodgier individuals or outright rivals, satyr revelers don't balk at using the magic of their music, dance, or other performances to charm opponents into joining their festivities. In the aftermath, these satyrs' foes are more likely to suffer embarrassment and groggy mornings than any lasting harm.

### SATYR REVELER

*Medium fey, chaotic neutral*

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 33 (6d8 + 6)

**Speed** 40 ft.

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

**Skills** Acrobatics +5, Performance +7, Stealth +5

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** Common, Sylvan

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Enthralling Performance.** If the satyr performs for at least 1 minute, it chooses up to four humanoid within 60 feet of it who watched or listened to the entire performance. Each target must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed. While charmed in this way, the target idolizes the satyr and will take part in the satyr's revels. The charmed condition ends for the creature after 1 hour, if it takes any damage, if the satyr attacks the target, or if the target witnesses the satyr attacking or damaging any of the target's allies.

**Magic Resistance.** The satyr has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Sleepless Reveler.** Magic can't put the satyr to sleep.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The satyr makes two ram attacks or two shortbow attacks.

**Ram. Melee Weapon Attack:** +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 6 (2d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

**Shortbow. Ranged Weapon Attack:** +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. **Hit:** 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.



## SATYR THORNBEARER

Not all satyrs live lives of pure whimsy. When forced to defend their friends and homes, satyr thornbearers are quick to take up their bows and strike against danger. Particularly amid the dense trees of the Skola Vale, these satyr skirmishers cooperate in loose teams, using guerrilla tactics to harass foes then melt back into the forest. The blessings of Nylea aid the satyrs in protecting their home, and a single arrow from a thornbearer's bow might rain down like a volley from a whole army.

### SATYR THORNBEARER

*Medium fey, chaotic neutral*

**Armor Class** 15 (leather armor)

**Hit Points** 38 (7d8 + 7)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

**Skills** Perception +5, Performance +6, Stealth +6

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** Common, Sylvan

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Magic Resistance.** The satyr has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Sleepless Reveler.** Magic can't put the satyr to sleep.

#### ACTIONS

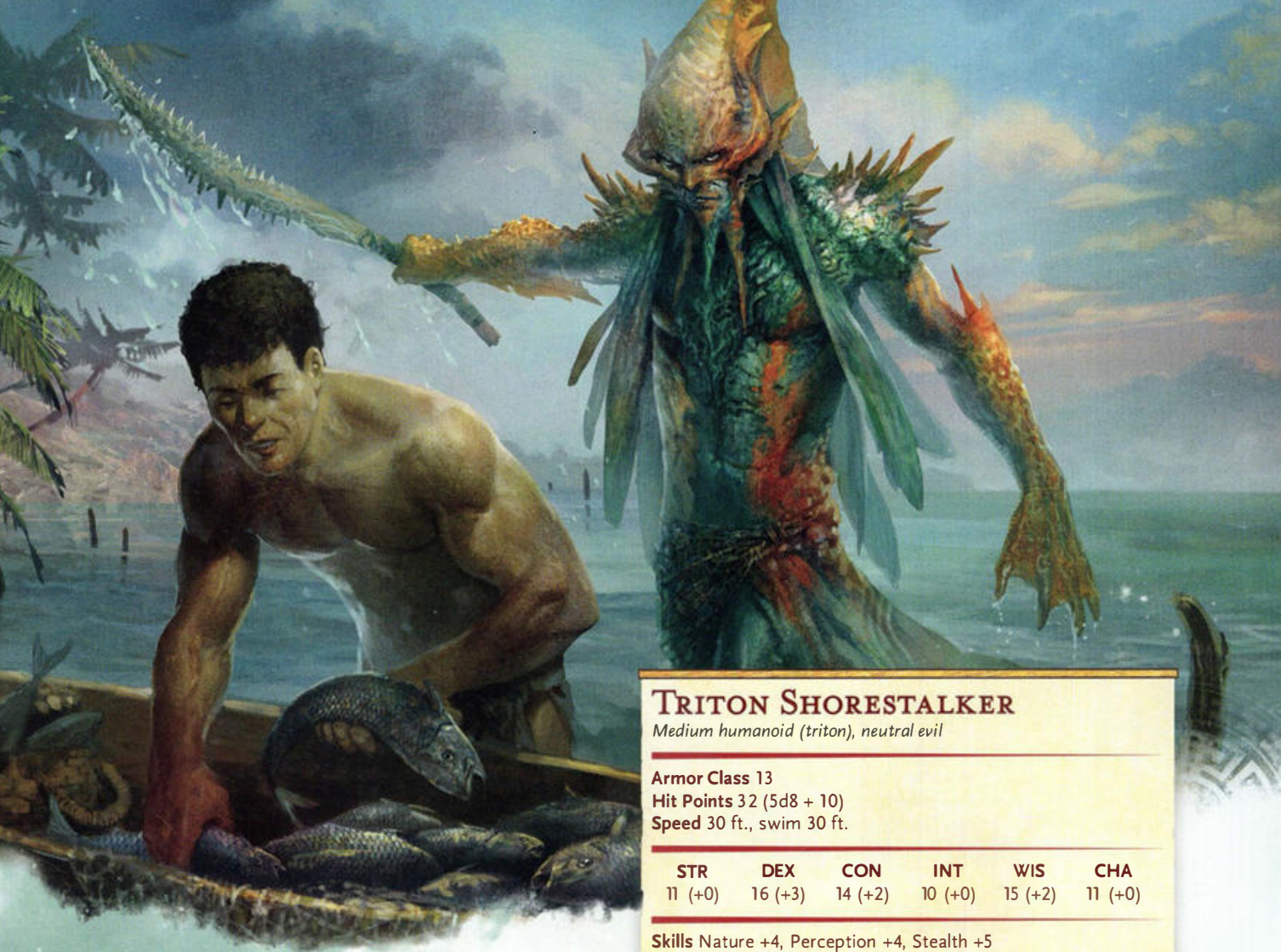
**Multiattack.** The satyr makes three ram attacks or three shortbow attacks.

**Ram.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

*Hit:* 6 (2d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

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

**Hail of Arrows (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).** The satyr fires an arrow that magically transforms into a flurry of missiles in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 17 (5d6) piercing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.



## TRITON

Clever, far-ranging people of the sea, tritons live rich lives unknown to most land-dwelling individuals. While the waves separate most tritons from land-dwellers, occasionally the inhabitants of the surface and the deep come into conflict. In such cases, tritons prove skilled at sabotaging ocean-going vessels, employing water-based magic, and otherwise whipping up the fury of the sea. Few dare insult tritons in their home environment, but those who do and survive often learn that the tritons' wrath doesn't end at the shore.

### TRITON SHORESTALKER

Some insults don't wash away with the tides. When surface dwellers threaten the safety of triton communities, impede upon Thassa's holiest depths, or steal the treasures of the deep, triton shorestalkers seek vengeance. Using speed and poison harvested from deadly sea beasts, these triton assassins slip into shallow waters and strike when least expected. Often, surface dwellers don't even realize they've been attacked by shorestalkers, chalking disappearances and deaths up to the innumerable dangers of the sea.

### TRITON SHORESTALKER

*Medium humanoid (triton), neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 32 (5d8 + 10)

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)

**Skills** Nature +4, Perception +4, Stealth +5

**Damage Resistances** cold

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** Common, Primordial

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Amphibious.** The triton can breathe air and water.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The triton's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

1/day each: *fog cloud*, *gust of wind*

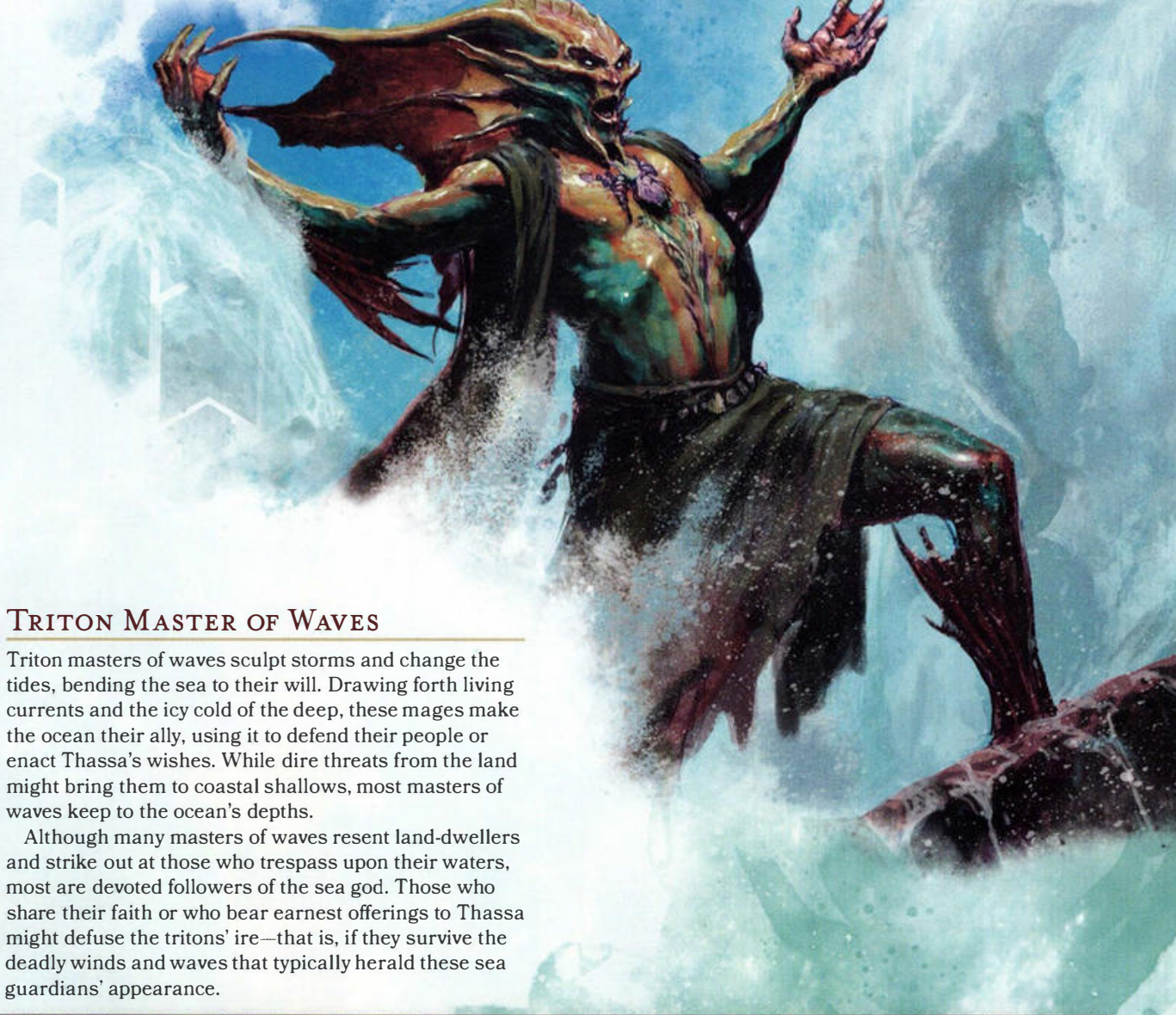
**Nimble Escape.** The triton can take the Disengage or Hide actions as a bonus action on each of its turns.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The triton makes two urchin-spine shortsword attacks.

**Urchin-Spine Shortsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage. If the damage reduces a creature to 0 hit points, that creature is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

**Poisoned Spine.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.



## TRITON MASTER OF WAVES

Triton masters of waves sculpt storms and change the tides, bending the sea to their will. Drawing forth living currents and the icy cold of the deep, these mages make the ocean their ally, using it to defend their people or enact Thassa's wishes. While dire threats from the land might bring them to coastal shallows, most masters of waves keep to the ocean's depths.

Although many masters of waves resent land-dwellers and strike out at those who trespass upon their waters, most are devoted followers of the sea god. Those who share their faith or who bear earnest offerings to Thassa might defuse the tritons' ire—that is, if they survive the deadly winds and waves that typically herald these sea guardians' appearance.

### TRITON MASTER OF WAVES

Medium humanoid (triton), neutral

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 105 (14d8 + 42)

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	19 (+4)

**Saves** Dex +3, Int +3, Cha +7

**Skills** Athletics +6, Nature +6, Survival +4

**Damage Resistances** cold, fire

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Common, Primordial

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

**Amphibious.** The triton can breathe air and water.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The triton's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *ray of frost* (see "Actions" below)

2/day: *cone of cold*

1/day each: *fog cloud*, *gust of wind*, *wind wall*

**Summon Water Weird (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).**

As a bonus action, the triton magically summons 1d4 water weards (see the *Monster Manual*). The summoned weards appear in unoccupied spaces in water within 60 feet of the triton. The water weards act immediately after the triton on the same initiative count and fight until they're destroyed. They disappear if the triton dies.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The triton makes two attacks using Wave Touch and casts *ray of frost*.

**Wave Touch.** *Melee Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (4d10) cold damage.

**Ray of Frost (Cantrip).** *Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, range 60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (3d8) cold damage, and the target's speed is reduced by 10 feet until the start of the triton's next turn.

### REACTIONS

**Frigid Shield.** When a creature the triton can see targets the triton with an attack, the triton gains 10 temporary hit points. If the attack hits and reduces the temporary hit points to 0, each creature within 5 feet of the triton takes 9 (2d8) cold damage.



## TYPHON

Titanic horrors of writhing flesh and gnashing maws, typhons slither through the Underworld seeking only to consume. Once the souls of mortal warlords and cruel tyrants, typhons come into being over ages of festering bitterness and rage. Over time, these souls twist into eternally ravenous monstrosities, which rampage through the realm of the dead, consuming souls by the thousands. The Underworld remains their prison, though, and most would relish nothing more than to escape and slaughter the living once more.

### TYPHON

*Huge monstrosity, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 195 (17d12 + 85)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	7 (–2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)

**Saving Throws** Con +10

**Damage Immunities** acid, necrotic

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 15 (13,000 XP)

**Keen Smell.** The typhon has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Regeneration.** The typhon regains 20 hit points at the start of its turn. If it takes radiant damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of its next turn. The typhon dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The typhon makes three attacks: one with its Flurry of Bites, one to constrict, and one with its maw.

**Flurry of Bites.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 35 (8d6 + 7) piercing damage.

**Constrict.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 15 ft., one Large or smaller creature. *Hit:* 17 (3d6 + 7) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 19). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and takes 17 (3d6 + 7) bludgeoning damage at the start of each of its turns. The typhon can have up to two creatures constricted.

**Maw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 26 (3d12 + 7) piercing damage plus 19 (3d12) acid damage.



## WOE STRIDER

Woe striders form from the souls of those who've broken the bonds of destiny. Over centuries, these cosmic blasphemers transform into hunched, long-limbed horrors. Sadistic things, woe striders seek ways to reweave themselves into the tapestry of destiny. This leads them to search for answers within the bowels of other beings, performing murderous haruspicy in pursuit of their discarded cosmic purpose. When they fail to find answers, their unnatural cries cause reality to shudder, undermining magic and sane minds alike.

### WOE STRIDER

*Large aberration, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 110 (13d10 + 39)

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	8 (–1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

**Skills** Intimidation +5, Perception +5

**Condition Immunities** frightened

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)

**Antimagic Cone.** The woe strider's open mouth creates an area of antimagic, as in the *antimagic field* spell, in a 60-foot cone.

At the start of each of its turns, the woe strider decides which way the cone faces and whether its mouth is open or closed.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The woe strider makes two claw attacks and one bite attack. If both claws hit the same creature, the target is grappled (escape DC 14).

**Claw. Melee Weapon Attack:** +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. **Hit:** 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) psychic damage.

**Bite. Melee Weapon Attack:** +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature that is grappled, incapacitated, or restrained. **Hit:** 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage plus 16 (3d10) psychic damage. In addition, each magic item the creature is carrying that isn't an artifact has its magical properties suppressed for 1 minute.

# MYTHIC MONSTERS

This section describes three of Theros's most infamous terrors, beings whose might and dreadful deeds set them apart as menaces of legendary proportions. While many of Theros's greatest myths arise from storied terrors—like the hydra Polukranos or the dreaded titans—the monsters in this section have a feature that sets them apart: mythic traits.

Mythic traits transform battles into truly legendary confrontations, well suited to the climactic battles at the ends of adventures or whole campaigns. Mythic traits are optional; they don't need to be used during combat with these monsters. If you so choose, you may simply ignore a monster's mythic trait and mythic actions. If you wish to increase a battle's stakes, though, using a monster's mythic trait results in some mid-battle twist that changes the way the monster behaves, restores its

resources, or provides it with new actions to use. As a result, the battle becomes deadlier and rages on for longer than most combat encounters. Each monster features an "As a Mythic Encounter" section that highlights its mythic trait, notes how using it changes the difficulty of the encounter and the rewards, and includes read-aloud text you can use mid-battle to signal a terrifying shift in the conflict.

## ARASTA OF THE ENDLESS WEB

A victim of the gods' petty rivalries, Arasta was once one of Nylea's most beloved dryad companions. Phe-nax's bitterness saw her transformed into an arachnid monstrosity and driven into the darkest depths of the Nessian Wood. Now she broods on her unjust fate and the fickleness of the gods who left her cursed with monstrous immortality.

### ARASTA

*Huge monstrosity, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 19 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 300 (24d12 + 144)

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	16 (+3)	23 (+6)	15 (+2)	22 (+6)	17 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Dex +10, Con +13, Wis +13

**Skills** Arcana +9, Deception +10, Intimidation +10, Nature +9, Perception +13, Stealth +10

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Damage Immunities** acid, poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 23

**Languages** Celestial, Common, Sylvan

**Challenge** 21 (33,000 XP)

**Armor of Spiders (Mythic Trait; Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).** If Arasta is reduced to 0 hit points, she doesn't die or fall unconscious. Instead, she regains 200 hit points. In addition, Arasta's children immediately swarm over her body to protect her, granting her 100 temporary hit points.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If Arasta fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

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

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

**Web Walker.** Arasta ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Arasta makes three attacks: one with her bite and two with her claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 20 (3d8 + 7) piercing damage, and the target must make

a DC 21 Constitution saving throw, taking 32 (5d12) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d6 + 7) slashing damage.

**Web of Hair (Recharge 4–6).** Arasta unleashes her hair in the form of webbing that fills a 30-foot cube next to her. The web is difficult terrain, its area is lightly obscured, and it lasts for 1 minute. Any creature that moves into the web or that starts its turn there must make a DC 21 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is restrained while in the web. A creature can use an action to make a DC 21 Strength check. On a success, it can free itself or a creature within 5 feet of it that is restrained by the web.

This webbing is immune to all damage except magical fire. A 5-foot cube of the web is destroyed if it takes at least 20 fire damage from a spell or other magical source on a single turn.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Arasta can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Arasta regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

**Claws.** Arasta makes one attack with her claws.

**Swarm (Costs 2 Actions).** Arasta causes two swarms of spiders (see the *Monster Manual*) to appear in unoccupied spaces within 5 feet of her.

**Toxic Web (Costs 3 Actions).** Each creature restrained by Arasta's Web of Hair takes 18 (4d8) poison damage.

### MYTHIC ACTIONS

If Arasta's mythic trait is active, she can use the options below as legendary actions, as long as she has temporary hit points from her Armor of Spiders.

**Swipe.** Arasta makes two attacks with her claws.

**Web of Hair (Costs 2 Actions).** Arasta recharges Web of Hair and uses it.

**Nyx Weave (Costs 2 Actions).** Each creature restrained by Arasta's Web of Hair must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw, or the creature takes 26 (4d12) force damage and any spell of 6th level or lower on it ends.



### ARASTA AS A MYTHIC ENCOUNTER

Arasta is a formidable enemy under normal circumstances, but to give characters a truly mythic challenge, you can have her call on her *Armor of Spiders*. Her use of this trait signals a drastic turn in the encounter, as Arasta summons her arachnid children to protect her. While she has temporary hit points from this trait, she can choose one of her mythic actions when she uses a legendary action.

Read or paraphrase the following text when Arasta uses her *Armor of Spiders* trait:

The nightmarish arachnid unleashes a shriek that sounds like a thousand spider carapaces scarring slate. In response, the ground ripples and bursts over the monster, revealing itself as a wave of countless spiders. The tiny arachnids swarm the larger horror, girding it in skittering bodies.

Fighting Arasta as a mythic encounter is equivalent to taking on two challenge rating 21 creatures in one encounter. Award a party 66,000 XP for defeating Arasta after she uses *Armor of Spiders*.



Arasta appears as a gigantic spiderlike creature, her few humanoid features made monstrous by cruel magic and ages of hatred. Webs fill her lair deep in the Nessian Wood, sticky strands made not of silk but of her own endless hair. In her darkened realm, Arasta broods on her hatred of the gods and their servants. She doesn't do so alone, though, as innumerable arachnids fawn over her, serving as her eyes throughout the wilderness, disposing of victims trapped within her hair, and sacrificing themselves in her defense if they must.

See "Myths of Nylea" in chapter 2 for more details on the tragedy of Arasta.

### ARASTA'S LAIR

Arasta lives in an enormous, gnarled olive tree called Enorasi, which was planted millennia ago by Klothys. It is said that those who eat of its fruit can see glimpses of the future. Eating the fruit brings with it a risk, though, for those who Klothys finds unworthy might be driven mad. There, within Enorasi's hollow trunk, Arasta awaits the next would-be prophet to make her meal. Her webs stretch beyond the branches of the tree and carpet the forest floor of her realm.

**Path to the Underworld.** Tales are told of forlorn souls who, because of grief or madness over the loss of a loved one, have sought out Arasta's lair, as it is rumored that some of the strands of her web are anchored near the edge of the Underworld and can enable a traveler to reach that realm's ashen shores.

But those who enter her domain unbidden almost never go unnoticed, for Arasta can sense the slightest vibration along her web hair, and her children act as spies on her behalf.

**Lair Actions.** On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Arasta can take a lair action to cause one of the following effects. She can't use the same effect two rounds in a row.

- Arasta learns about any creature touching her webs. Each creature restrained by a web or Arasta's Web of Hair must make a DC 21 Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, Arasta gains knowledge of a creature's name, race, where they consider home, and what brought them to her web.
- Arasta casts the *giant insect* spell (spiders only). It lasts until she uses this lair action again or until she dies.

**Regional Effects.** The region containing Arasta's lair is warped by her presence, which creates one or more of the following effects:

- Spiders and insects within 1 mile of Arasta's lair serve as her eyes and ears. Birds and other flying creatures are absent from the skies and occasionally found trapped in webs.
- Within 1 mile of Arasta's lair, webs fill all 10-foot cubes of open space, so long as the webs can be anchored between two solid masses (such as walls or trees). The webs are flammable. Any webs exposed to fire burn away in 1 round. Any destroyed webs are magically repaired at the next dawn.

If Arasta dies, the spiders and insects lose their supernatural link to her. The webs remain, but they dissolve within 1d10 days.

## HYTHONIA THE CRUEL

Theros's reclusive medusas often delight in collecting and expanding their galleries of petrified victims. Unlike other medusas, Hythonia isn't merely a collector; she's an artist.

When Hythonia came to the island of Skathos, the inhabitants worshiped her as an avatar of the god Pharika. The cultists eagerly offered themselves up to the medusa's petrifying gaze in hopes of gaining Pharika's favor. Seeing herself surrounded by willing devotees, Hythonia formulated a cruel plan. After encouraging them to engage in wild rituals, Hythonia began turning her followers to stone, weaving their forms to create a grisly throne made of their petrified bodies.

While the medusa's victims have dwindled, tales of the medusa queen and the divine secrets she hoards have not. Hythonia eagerly trades the mysteries she knows but demands a constant price: a beautiful individual to become part of her throne.

### HYTHONIA'S LAIR

Hythonia makes her lair on Skathos, an island where a secret sect of worshipers dedicated to Pharika previously hoarded secrets and engaged in dark rituals.

**Island of Potent Magic.** Although Skathos's location remains a mystery, stories tell of the island's magical plants and Hythonia's various treasures. Hythonia encourages such rumors by letting lone survivors escape her realm, letting the ravings of survivors tempt more playthings into her clutches.

**Lair Actions.** On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Hythonia can take a lair action to cause one of the following effects. She can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- Hythonia briefly animates creatures that have been petrified by her gaze. Each statue attacks one creature within 5 feet of it, with a +11 bonus to hit and dealing 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage on a hit. If a Medium or smaller creature takes this damage, it is also grappled (escape DC 15).
- Hythonia causes spectral snakes to erupt from a point she can see within 150 feet of her. Each creature within 20 feet of that point must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or take 5 (2d4) piercing damage and become poisoned until the end of its next turn. While poisoned in this way, the creature has disadvantage on Intelligence checks and Intelligence saving throws, and it behaves as if under the effect of the *confusion* spell.

**Regional Effects.** The region containing Hythonia's lair is warped by her presence, which creates one or more of the following effects:

- A large population of snakes dwells in the region.
- Trees within 1 mile of the lair are petrified wood. Plants that stay within 500 feet of the lair for 1 day turn to stone.
- Small bodies of water within 1 mile of the lair become poisonous. A creature that drinks the water must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 8 hours. An affected creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each hour.



## HYTHONIA

*Large monstrosity, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 199 (21d10 + 84)

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	17 (+3)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

**Saving Throws** Str +11, Con +10, Cha +10

**Skills** Deception +10, Insight +9, Perception +9, Stealth +9

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 19

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 17 (18,000 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting.** Hythonia's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18). She can innately cast *animate objects* once per day requiring no material components.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If Hythonia fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

**Petrifying Gaze.** When a creature that can see Hythonia's eyes starts its turn within 30 feet of her, Hythonia can force it to make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw if she isn't incapacitated and can see the creature. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the creature is instantly petrified. Otherwise, on a failed save the creature begins to turn to stone and is restrained. The restrained creature must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn, becoming petrified on a failure or ending the effect on a success. The petrification lasts until the creature is freed by the *greater restoration* spell or other magic.

Unless surprised, a creature can avert its eyes to avoid the saving throw at the start of its turn. If the creature does so, it can't see Hythonia until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If the creature looks at Hythonia in the meantime, it must immediately make the save.

If Hythonia sees herself reflected on a polished surface within 30 feet of her and in an area of bright light, she is affected by her own gaze.

**Shed Skin (Mythic Trait; Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).**

If Hythonia is reduced to 0 hit points, she doesn't die or fall unconscious. Instead, she sheds her skin, regains 199 hit points, and moves up to her speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Hythonia makes three attacks: one with her claws, one to constrict, and one with her snaky hair.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage plus 4 (1d8) poison damage.

**Constrict.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 15 ft., one Large or smaller creature. *Hit:* 16 (2d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 19). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and takes 15 (3d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage at the start of each of its turns, and Hythonia can't constrict another target.

**Snaky Hair.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 31 (4d12 + 5) bludgeoning damage, and Hythonia can pull the target up to 5 feet closer to her if it is a Large or smaller creature.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Hythonia can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. She can take only one legendary action at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Hythonia regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

**Move.** Hythonia moves up to her speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

**Snaky Hair.** Hythonia makes one attack with her snaky hair.

**Petrified Earth (Costs 2 Actions).** Hythonia causes stone spikes to erupt from the ground in a 30-foot radius centered on her. The area becomes difficult terrain until the start of her next turn. Any creature, other than Hythonia, takes 9 (2d8) piercing damage for every 5 feet it moves on those spikes.

## MYTHIC ACTIONS

If Hythonia's mythic trait is active, she can use the options below as legendary actions for 1 hour after using Shed Skin.

**Numbing Claws.** Hythonia makes two attacks with her claws.

If both attacks hit the same creature, it takes an extra 7 (2d6) poison damage and must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or become paralyzed until the start of her next turn.

**Look at Me (Costs 3 Actions).** Hythonia can force a sighted creature she has grappled to see her eyes and be affected by her gaze.



### HYTHONIA AS A MYTHIC ENCOUNTER

Hythonia serves as a potent threat against even high-level characters, but you can increase the challenge by using the Shed Skin trait. When this happens, Hythonia heals many of her wounds and slips away from danger, and then she can choose one of her mythic actions when she uses a legendary action.

You might foreshadow Hythonia using her mythic trait by describing her skin cracking and turning pale as she suffers wounds. Read or paraphrase the following text when Hythonia finally uses her Shed Skin trait:

The medusa's skin cracks, turns a lifeless gray, and shatters! The monster crumbles to dust—but what clatters to the ground isn't scale and bone, but hollow stone. The sound of rippling coils precedes the medusa rising up anew, the last of her shed skin dropping away, revealing glistening, unscarred scales.

Fighting Hythonia as a mythic encounter is equivalent to taking on two challenge rating 17 creatures in one encounter. Award a party 36,000 XP for defeating Hythonia after she uses Shed Skin.

## TROMOKRATIS

Most krakens roam the seas, shattering hulls and scattering fleets, but the kraken Tromokratis notoriously vents its wrath on coastal settlements. Whether it acts at the command of the god Thassa or to sate its own hunger, Tromokratis numbers among the most feared threats in the sea, having no fixed lair and wandering where it will. In recent memory, the massive menace rose from the waves to topple the Pyrgnos, Meletis's great repository of scholarly knowledge. Since that day, the polis keeps a watch specifically for Tromokratis.

## TROMOKRATIS

*Gargantuan monstrosity (titan), any alignment*

**Armor Class** 22 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 409 (21d20 + 189)

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
30 (+10)	11 (+0)	29 (+9)	22 (+6)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Saving Throws** Int +14, Wis +8

**Damage Resistances** cold, lightning, thunder

**Damage Immunities** fire; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, paralyzed, restrained

**Senses** blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 26 (90,000 XP)

**Amphibious.** Tromokratis can breathe air and water.

**Hearts of the Kraken (Mythic Trait; Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).** When Tromokratis is reduced to 0 hit points, it doesn't die or fall unconscious. Instead, the damage creates cracks in its carapace, revealing its hearts. Tromokratis has four hearts: two on its chest, one on its back, and one at the base of its tail. A heart has an AC of 22 and 100 hit points. It is immune to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks, and it is immune to all conditions. If it is forced to make a saving throw, treat its ability scores as 10 (+0). If it finishes a short or long rest, the carapace heals, any destroyed hearts regenerate, and the hearts are covered again. Tromokratis dies when all the hearts are destroyed.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If Tromokratis fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Magic Weapons.** Tromokratis's weapon attacks are magical.

**Siege Monster.** Tromokratis deals double damage to objects and structures.

**Spell-Resistant Carapace.** Tromokratis has advantage on saving throws against spells, and any creature that makes a spell attack against Tromokratis has disadvantage on the attack roll.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Tromokratis makes three attacks: one with its pincer, one with its tail, and one with its tentacle grasp.

**Pincer.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +18 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d6 + 10) bludgeoning damage, and if the target

**Rough Waters.** Tromokratis is a particularly cantankerous nadir kraken that has claimed all the sea as its territory. A tumultuous sea is often attributed to Tromokratis battling another kraken to assert its claim. Often, before a journey, sailors blow conch-shell horns in the belief that the sound will soothe nearby krakens.

**The Horn of Humenades.** Legend speaks of a magic horn that the hero Humenades used in ancient times to summon Tromokratis to lay waste to a cursed city lost to evil ways. The horn was so powerful that, after the city was destroyed, Humenades took it to Tizerus and buried it under a stone near the palace of Erebus.

is a creature, it is grappled (escape DC 26). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained, and Tromokratis can't use this attack on anyone else.

**Tail.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +18 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 23 (3d8 + 10) bludgeoning damage, and if the target is a creature, it is knocked prone.

**Tentacle Grasp.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +18 to hit, reach 20 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 20 (3d6 + 10) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 26). If the target doesn't escape by the end of its next turn, Tromokratis throws the target up to 60 feet in a straight line. The target lands prone and takes 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +18 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 29 (3d12 + 10) piercing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature grappled by Tromokratis, that creature is swallowed, and the grapple ends. While swallowed, the creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside Tromokratis, and it takes 42 (12d6) acid damage at the start of each of Tromokratis's turns.

If Tromokratis takes 50 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, Tromokratis must succeed on a DC 20 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, which fall prone in a space within 10 feet of Tromokratis. If Tromokratis dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse by using 15 feet of movement, exiting prone.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Tromokratis can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Tromokratis regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Move.** Tromokratis moves up to half its speed.

**Tail.** Tromokratis makes one tail attack.

**Bite (Costs 3 Actions).** Tromokratis makes one bite attack.

### MYTHIC ACTIONS

If Tromokratis's mythic trait is active, it can use the options below as legendary actions for 1 hour after using Hearts of the Kraken.

**Rampage.** Tromokratis makes two attacks: one with its tail and one with its tentacle grasp.

**Coral Growth (Costs 2 Actions).** Each creature within 10 feet of Tromokratis must make a DC 25 Dexterity saving throw, taking 13 (3d8) slashing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Until the start of its next turn, Tromokratis and its hearts gain a +2 bonus to AC.



### TROMOKRATIS AS A MYTHIC ENCOUNTER

Tromokratis numbers among the most powerful creatures a group of adventurers might face. If you wish to make an encounter with the kraken truly legendary, Tromokratis might use its Hearts of the Kraken mythic trait. When this happens, it calls upon a reserve of strength just as it appears to be vanquished. After its hearts are exposed, Tromokratis can choose one of its mythic actions when it uses a legendary action.

Read or paraphrase the following text when Tromokratis uses its Hearts of the Kraken trait:

The titanic monster's carapace cracks, revealing a pulsing, red-purple heart buried amid heaps of blubber and muscle. Fissures run across the beast's ancient shell, revealing three other mighty, ichor-slick organs. The sea terror thrashes, channeling pain into fury.

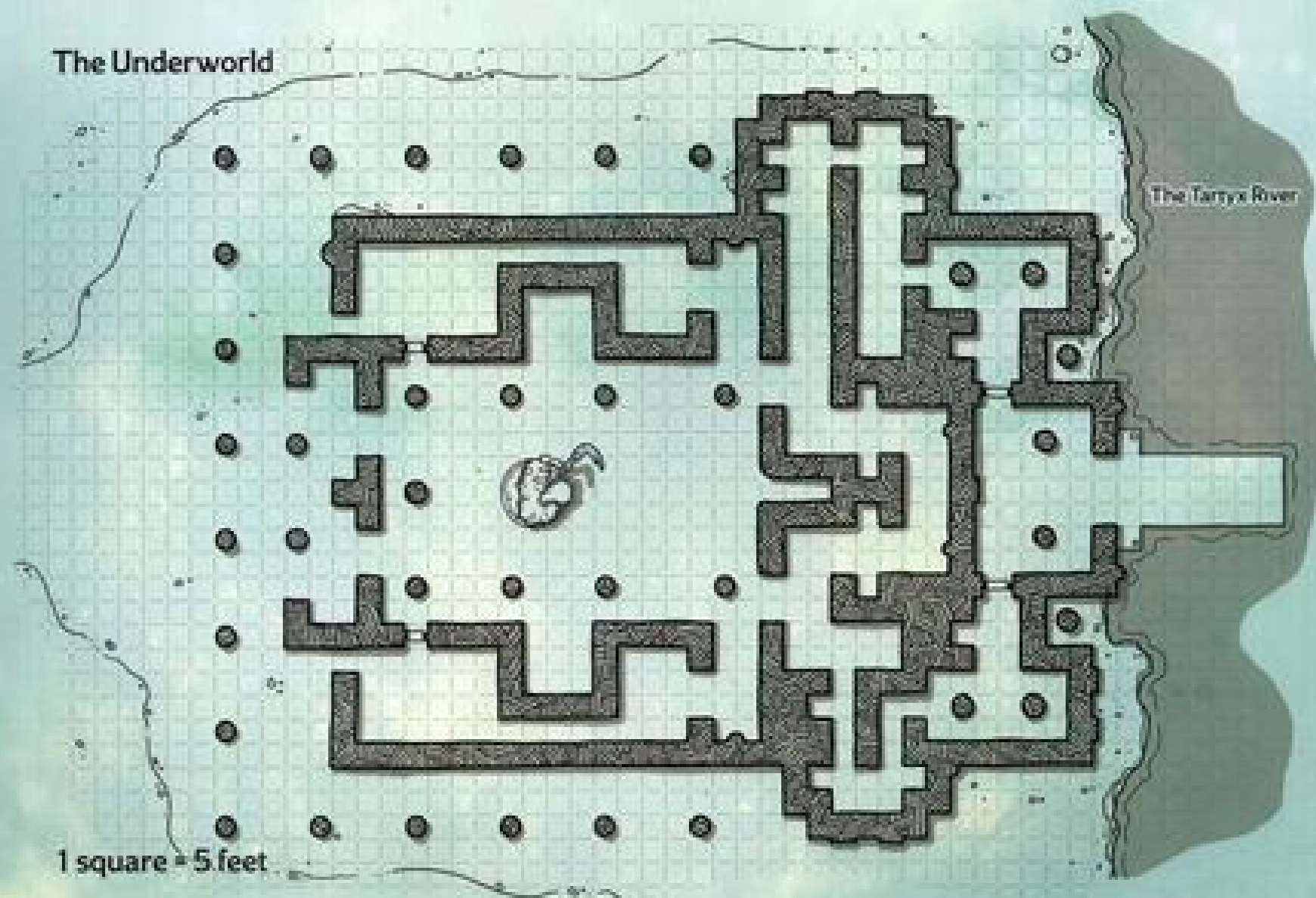
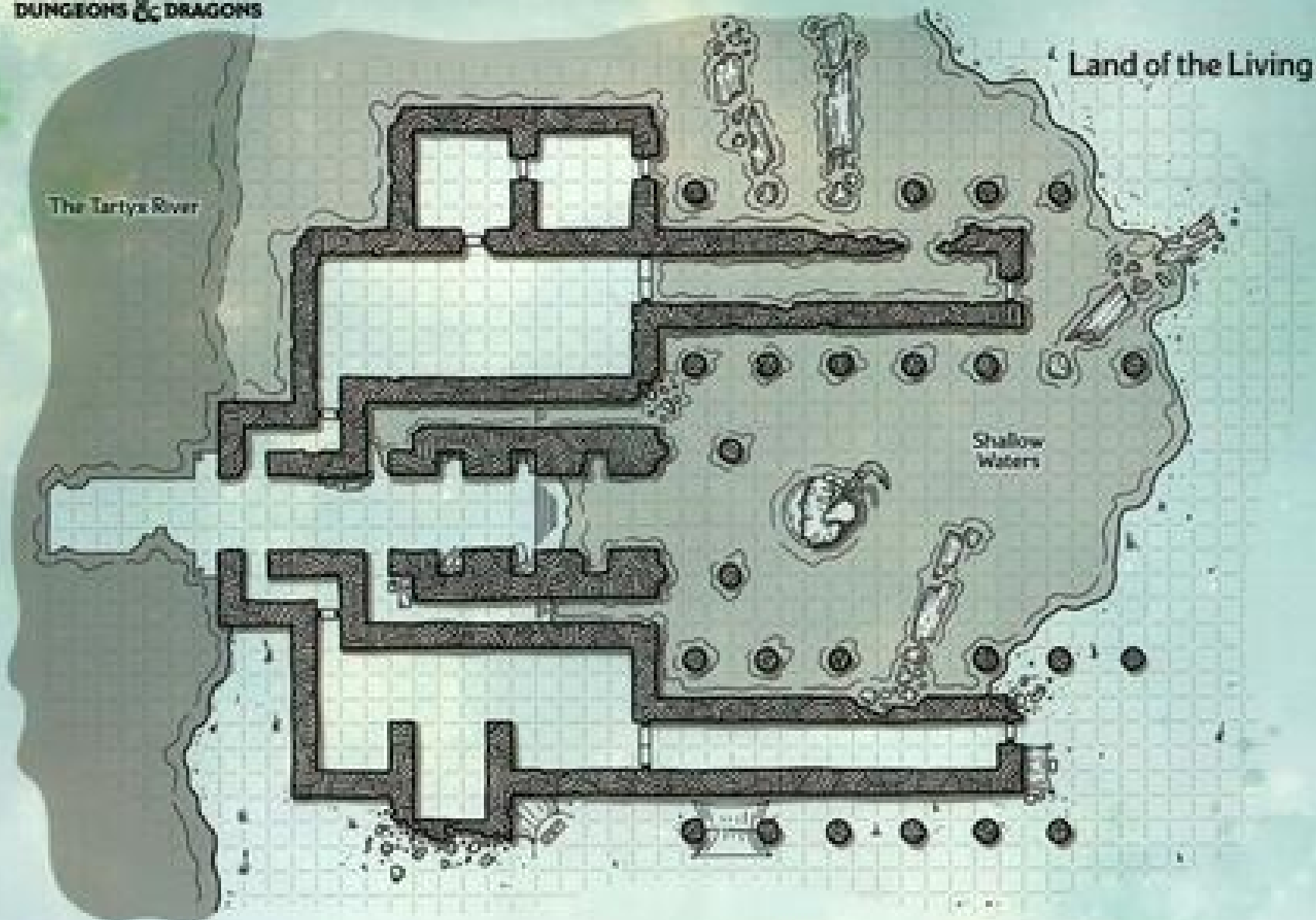
Fighting Tromokratis as a mythic encounter is equivalent to taking on two CR 26 creatures in one encounter. Award a party 180,000 XP for defeating Tromokratis after it uses Hearts of the Kraken.

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