

SECOND EDITION

# PATHFINDER<sup>®</sup>



## MYTH-SPEAKER

ADVENTURE PATH

## The Acropolis Pyre

By John Compton and  
Kendra Leigh Speedling

# BAILAX

500 FEET



THE KYLIX

NORTH  
SLOPE

ACROPOLIS

SOUTH  
SLOPE

KOPIS  
HEIGHTS

THE SPUR

4

3

1

2

5



# PATHFINDER

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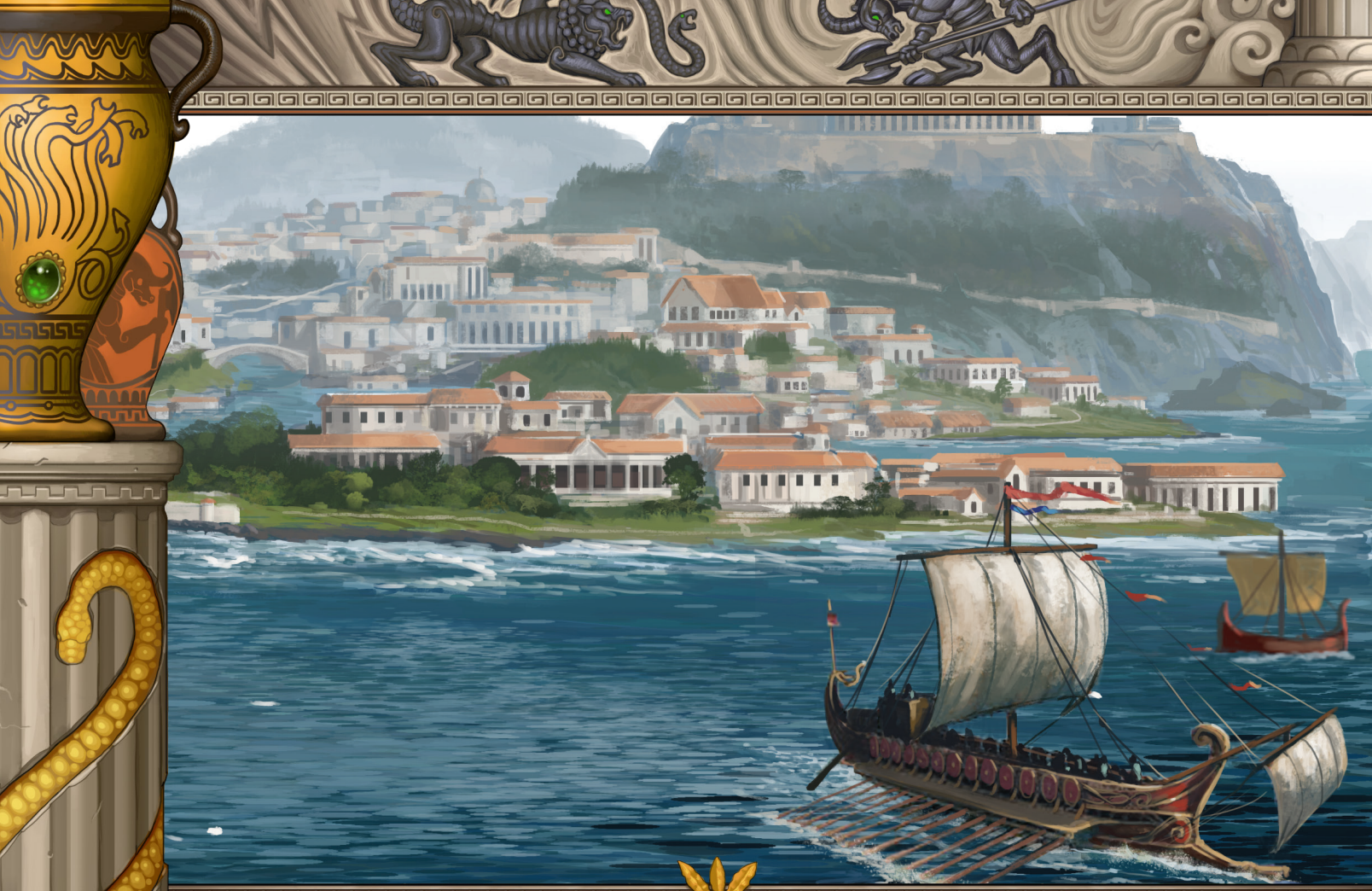
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# CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

The city-states of Iblydos rule an archipelago steeped in mythic power, legendary beasts, and ancient history. Yet the region suffers; the myth-speaking rites that used to elevate great heroes into mortal demigods are failing, with few of the hero-gods surviving to guide their people and grant magic. This all changes with the war god Gorum's death. The resulting fallout known as the Godsrain awakens some forgotten source of mythic potential, transforming the PCs into the first new hero-gods in recent memory. But what is this mythic power, and will it revitalize Iblydos or doom it entirely?

Sangeh, the titan whose body formed Iblydos, has awoken. Between her blessings and the Godsrain, the archipelago is now awash in mythic power. Yet like a runaway mutation, this power is transforming mundane creatures into mythic monstrosities, rending

the bodies of those who can't control the energy, and even animating the land itself as Iblydos transforms into a living fairy tale. All the while, the titan's prophet Pteios travels the island, facilitating and prophesying his patron's will.

## CAMPAIGN BACKGROUND

During the Age of Creation, the gods created titans to assist them in building the multiverse. Yet the titans grew possessive and resentful of their taskmasters. Perhaps the titans believed themselves the rightful rulers of creation, thought the gods acted against the universe's interests, or just grew weary of subservience. The gods' reprimands at the first signs of rebellion only stoked the titans' wrath, leading to a war across the planes. Ultimately, the gods prevailed. Surviving rebels

were banished to the Outer Rifts or condemned to equally grim fates. Those who had remained loyal to the gods were rewarded with wealth and power.

Throughout the conflict, a few titans tried to remain neutral. Sangeh, a titan of art, considered the many planets and planes her canvas, and so long as their beauty remained pristine, she saw no reason to fight. However, this titanomachy quickly gained an “either with us or against us” narrative, and few honored her neutrality. Hounded by both sides to either swear allegiance or perish, Sangeh fled to Golarion, chased by Gorum and Gozreh. The two deities finally cornered and mortally wounded her, letting her body fall into the Obari Ocean.

As her vitality seeped into the sea, her blood painted one last masterpiece: land roiled up from the water, its surface swiftly adorned by autochthonous animals, plants, and habitats of all kinds. Passing eons have erased some of the land’s supernatural grandeur, yet Sangeh remains cocooned underground, and the mythic power that seeps from her slowly healing body has enchanted the archipelago and transformed its hero-gods ever since.

Indeed, Sangeh was fatally wounded but never died. Instead, she has hibernated, slowly recuperated, and experienced brief visions of Ibydos like fleeting dreams. She’s in no rush to awaken, either; as far as she knows, the gods would execute her on sight. However, when a fragment of Gorum crashes into Ibydos, Sangeh senses her ancient enemy is no more. At long last, the time is right to awaken and witness the beautiful world she helped create.

However, her stirring is like a boulder hurled into an overfull basin, sending waves of mythic power coursing across Ibydos and transforming those it pools around. Over the course of this campaign, this phenomenon magnifies monsters, swells mundane creatures to massive sizes, apotheosizes unprepared heroes whose bodies can’t contain so much power, and more. Worse yet, the first mortal mind to commune with the waking titan delights in the chaos and declares himself Sangeh’s prophet, traveling the islands to facilitate change and feeding his patron a rose-tinted narrative of the mythic powers’ impacts. Left unchecked, the titan’s return might spell Ibydos’s doom.

## IBLYDAN HISTORY

Ibydos has been occupied since at least the Age of Legend. Aishmayars—the ancient humans whose descendants would one day branch into Ibydians, Keleshites, and other peoples—colonized the islands and the surrounding coast of Kartaji Bay. The devastating Earthfall spelled the end of the mainland empires. The impact’s ejecta blotted out the sun, triggered

earthquakes, and sent tsunamis sweeping across the lowlands, scattering survivors for generations.

The same cataclysm didn’t doom Ibydos. Years before, benevolent cyclopes fleeing their morally bankrupt homeland of Ghol-Ghan settled in Ibydos, making common cause with the islands’ Aishmayars. Prophecy guided this decision—cyclopean seers had predicted the coming disaster and saw that they would only survive only by allying with humanity. They labored together, building bunkers, sealing literature within vaults, and storing food for lean times ahead. It worked as the cyclopes had foreseen: the islands’ residents emerged battered but unbroken, living off their sequestered food as they rebuilt. This foresight, prosperity, preserved lore, and sequestration from the mainland helped create the Ibydan identity.

However, nothing has shaped Ibydos so dramatically as hero-gods. Guided by the personal prophecies of cyclopean seers, exceptional Ibydians tapped into the archipelago’s mythic power and shared the magic as mortal divinities. Ibydians embraced these hero-gods. After all, the gods had seemingly abandoned Casmaron in the wake of Earthfall. Ibydos had saved itself, and it wouldn’t beg for help from distant gods ever again.

Over the subsequent centuries, Ibydians established colonies along Casmaron’s mainland and absorbed various peoples into their sphere of influence. By the Age of Destiny, though, Ibydos’s advantages had faded as neighboring societies rebuilt. Far-flung colonies were conquered or absorbed into new empires, relegating Ibydos to its home archipelago. Yet their competitive spirit remained. Powerful city-states and their hero-gods clashed with each other, battling out millennia-old feuds and preventing the archipelago from uniting for more than a generation.

Everything changed with a Vudran emperor’s visit. Throughout the sixth century, Maharajah Khiben-Sald made several voyages west, most famously at the head of a massive treasure fleet that showered gifts upon Inner Sea peoples beginning in 563 AR. When the fleet resupplied in Ibydos, locals were confronted with countless challenges to their own self-congratulatory narrative of exceptionalism. Ibydians began revising archaic codes, dismantling outdated ideas, and refurbishing the rotting infrastructure of their legendary ancestors—and not a moment too soon. Peoples of Avistan and Garund were equally amazed by Vudra’s treasures and spices, and they were willing to finance cargo ships that would pass right through Ibydos. The taxes and patronage of these countless vessels bankrolled an Ibydan renaissance, and the prosperous Obari Crossing trade has benefited the archipelago ever since.

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Life fared as normal until the Age of Lost Omens. As prophecy became unreliable, cyclopes struggled to perform the myth-speaking rites that created new hero-gods. Calamity and age have killed off many of the prior age's hero-gods, leaving a handful who cling to life and try to keep the islands' religion intact. It's a losing battle. Ennui has crept into the Ibydan psyche, opening the door to foreign gods and philosophies. Many fear that once hero-gods are no more, the likes of Kelesh or other powers will absorb Ibydos and condemn its proud culture to the history books.

## MYTH-SPEAKING

Cyclopes have a knack for perceiving these threads of power—how they wrap around some individuals, how threads trace the land like ephemeral ley lines, and how strands can tangle around propitious places. From these observations, cyclopes developed myth-speaking: studying a hero, how the threads of mythic power interact with them, and where those threads lead to deliver a prophecy of how that hero might complete a trial and attain mythic power.

In the Age of Lost Omens, myth-speaking has become unreliable (though not useless). Cyclopes still have an honored place in Ibydan society, and good candidates for myth-speaking are still invited to receive a reading. However, the art is fading, and most cyclopes are anxious about their fading supernatural perception and their future in the archipelago.

## PLAYING MYTH-SPEAKER

The *Myth-Speaker Player's Guide* is a free PDF available at [paizo.com](http://paizo.com). This adventure assumes the players have built their characters according to the advice and suggestions presented in that document, but if you choose not to use that resource for your campaign, let your players know what kinds of challenges might await them in Ibydos:

- This campaign grants the PCs mythic power at a low level, using the mythic rules found in *Pathfinder War of Immortals*. These rules introduce abilities that are readily applied and learned during gameplay.
- The Myth-Speaker Adventure Path emphasizes the epic narratives and deeds inspired by real-world myths. The PCs acquire political influence, religious followings, and physical might, making this a good fit for characters with lofty ambitions. Many encounters facilitate clever problem-solving, especially if the PCs concoct mythic solutions like diverting rivers or bamboozling demigods.
- Ibydos isn't hostile to foreign gods, but there aren't many followers or sites dedicated to

deities like Pharama. Divine spellcasters like animists, oracles, sorcerers, and witches fit well, as do clerics and champions of regional deities. Available hero-gods appear in the Ibydan Hero-Gods article starting on page 72, as well as in this Adventure Path's last volume.

## CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

The campaign's adventures are summarized below.

### The Acropolis Pyre

By John Compton and Kendra Leigh Speedling  
Pathfinder Adventure Path #216, Levels 1–3

The port of Bailax hosts lavish funeral games for a recently deceased hero, inviting visitors and locals alike to compete for prizes and glory. However, an ominous meteor crashes nearby and interrupts the festivities. What the adventurers find there won't just transform them into mythic hero-gods, but will also incite Bailax to violent revelry and arson unless the PCs intervene.

### Death Sails a Wine-Dark Sea

By Brian Duckwitz  
Pathfinder Adventure Path #217, Levels 4–6

The PCs have become mortal demigods, yet their uncontrolled mythic power threatens to consume them from the inside. If they're to survive, they must seek a sphinx's sacred wisdom, steal ambrosia from giant bees, reclaim a temple to house the followers flocking to their new faith, and even delve into the Ibydan realm of the dead to gain past hero-gods' blessing. In doing so, they'll learn about the titan Sangeh, the source of their mythic abilities and (if she awakens fully) the potential cause of Ibydos's demise.

### Titanbane

By Dave Nelson  
Pathfinder Adventure Path #218, Levels 7–9

Having realized their divine power, the PCs must find Sangeh and be prepared to destroy her. They must recover the hero-god Aerekostes, an intelligent sword able to kill a titan—assuming the PCs learn the blade's last whereabouts. They then seek allies within a city of monsters and rile a mountain-sized beast that slumbers atop Sangeh's sanctuary. Only then can the PCs descend into her domain of living art and decide the fate of Ibydos and its hero-gods.

## CAMPAIGN TIMELINE

Key events leading up to the Myth-Speaker Adventure Path are listed below, with the year denoted according to Absalom Reckoning (AR).

Date	Event
-5324	Cyclopes settle in Iblydos, working with local humans to prepare for a prophesied cataclysm. Neighboring empires scoff at the islanders' paranoia.
-5293	In an event remembered as Earthfall, an asteroid crashes into Golarion. Its impact ruins civilizations, but Iblydians shelter and survive.
-5203	Earliest written reference to Pol-Hoimpeia, which that city-state upholds as proof that it's the oldest and greatest in Iblydos.
-4800	This is the approximate date when (according to legend) a hero-god commanded the stonemason Tavdrinos to build a magnificent temple based on ambiguous criteria. Tavdrinos completed the project, only for the fickle hero-god to disparage the structure and transform Tavdrinos into the first minotaur.
-3923	Ulunat, the beetle-like Spawn of Rovagug, emerges from the Pit of Gormuz and rampages across southwest Casmaron. Refugees flock to Iblydos. At great cost, hero-gods repel the beast, which is only slain centuries later in Osirion.
-3100	The wandering author Pomeirei pens the <i>Yrtiria</i> , an epic poem chronicling the distant colony of Yrtire and its tragic sacking by an aggrieved Casmari king. Her magnum opus becomes a classic in palaces and classrooms alike.
-200	News of Kelesh and its growing Padishah Empire becomes commonplace in Iblydos.
-43	Kelesh creates the satrapy of Qadira, solidifying its control of a lucrative overland trade route.
5	Hearing of an ascended god ruling a prosperous island realm, Pol-Liachora sends emissaries to the Isle of Kortos to honor Aroden and his magnificent kingdom.
16	The minotaur warlord Voradni Voon gathers a vast army that pillages southern Casmaron for years. Iblydos clashes with and ultimately repels his sailing and flying forces.
23	Seeking an even greater prize, Voradni Voon leads his army to besiege Absalom, where the invaders are defeated.
25	Kelesh applies economic and military pressure to the weakened states of Kartaji Bay, gradually annexing them over the coming centuries. Iblydan city-states intervene to contest Keleshite occupation, but it only delays the inevitable.
311	Kelesh launches an invasion of Iblydos. A coalition of Iblydan ships lure the Keleshite armada into danger before defeating the invaders at the Battle of Shattered Reefs.

315	Kelesh formally ends its conquest of Iblydos, deciding to ignore the archipelago.
562	Maharajah Khiben-Sald's treasure fleet arrives in Iblydos, the first of many stops in its grand diplomatic tour.
563	Khiben-Sald visits Absalom, Nex, and other Inner Sea realms, creating an insatiable desire for Vudran goods. Over the coming decades, ship traffic along southern Casmaron skyrockets, creating the route known as the Obari Crossing. Iblydos is perfectly situated to resupply and profit from these ships.
610	Iblydians undercut the services and docking fees at nearby mainland ports, most of which are administered by Kelesh. Traders flock to Iblydos, rejuvenating local economies.
613	Keleshite agents, advertisers, and even privateers clash with their Iblydan counterparts to control Obari trade. This sparks the First Cardamom War—less a war than a series of naval skirmishes, sternly worded letters, and barroom brawls to control the spice trade. Seventeen other Cardamom Wars follow in the ensuing millennia, with most having nothing to do with cardamom.
944	The harpy Ekriathe musters a monstrous horde to defend Pol-Dhuraxilis from Pol-Sylirican conquerors. Ekriathe leverages this victory to secure equal protections for monsters, transforming Dhuraxilis into a fearsome yet prosperous city.
1292	Reanphoros hosts a multi-event sporting tournament along the Etes River. Though not the oldest of such tournaments held across Iblydos, the Eteian Games held every five years become the most prestigious.
4606	Prophecy becomes unreliable beginning the Age of Lost Omens. With each passing year, cyclopes increasingly struggle to perform myth-speakings and other rites. New hero-gods become extremely rare.
4607	The whale-like behemoth Ousmariku surfaces, terrorizes Iblydos, and swallows most of Pol-Liachora's navy. Many hero-gods band together to slay the beast, but Ousmariku destroys them and the city of Liachora. Surviving hero-gods become very cautious, knowing they might be the last of a dying tradition.
4640	Assailed by decades of political strife, infighting, and other ills, the city-state of Pol-Xamne collapses. Survivors all blame different (sometimes contradictory) factors for its fall. Most of its urban centers are abandoned.

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When a local hero dies suddenly, the people of Bailax host funeral games in his honor. The PCs compete in these events, earning fame and potentially fortune. However, as the games conclude, a grim omen appears in the sky: a warshard, a fragment of the recently slain war god Gorum that crashes over the horizon.

## Chapter 2: Seeking the Bright-Tailed Star ..... 28

The PCs join an investigative mission to an island off Bailax's coast, where the sinister meteorite crashed. As they explore the island, they discover the forgotten temple of a deceased hero-god, her few surviving allies, and an undead servitor who wants nothing more than to ruin that hero-god's legacy. When the PCs finally locate the crater, they find no meteorite, but what remains grants them mythic power.

## Chapter 3: Rage at Rosy-Fingered Dawn ..... 46

The warshard's passing has awoken old rivalries and sparked new conflicts while the PCs were away from Bailax. They return to find the city ablaze with riots, fires, and other skirmishes. The PCs must navigate the urban chaos and make peace with dueling parties before ascending the city's acropolis. There, drawing upon the magic of Bailax's phoenix protector, the PCs might cleanse the city of its supernatural rage.

## A MYTHIC ADVENTURE

This is the first Adventure Path to use the mythic rules featured in *War of Immortals*. In addition to detailing how to tell mythic stories and grant mythic power to PCs, the book also details the Godsrain: the clash that destroys the war god Gorum and scatters his shattered armor across the cosmos, granting mythic power to some of those who find these so-called warshards. A warshard kicks off events in this Adventure Path, though the PCs acquire their own mythic power from the archipelago of Iblydos itself, perpetuating the region's proud hero-god tradition.

This might be your first mythic adventure, too. The following are a few recommendations for presenting a mythic adventure—especially one set in Iblydos.

**Classical Myth:** Iblydos is inspired by ancient Greece and its myths, but it doesn't copy those legends directly. Reviewing some of these myths and their themes—metamorphosis, hubris, hospitality, and demigods—can help set the tone and realize your own mythic experiences.

**Creative Solutions:** Like Heracles cleaning the Augean stables or Orpheus charming Hades with song, mythic adventures thrive when the PCs can accomplish great feats using cunning and their surroundings. The Adventure Path facilitates these scenes, but consider being extra charitable when your players propose their own schemes—especially if they spend Mythic Points to do so.

## ADVANCEMENT TRACK

“The Acropolis Pyre” is designed for four characters

- 1 The PCs begin this adventure at 1st level.
- 2 The PCs reach 2nd level by the time they meet Yasmenei and begin Chapter 2.
- 3 The PCs reach 3rd level by the time they return to Bailax at the start of Chapter 3.  
The PCs should reach 4th level by the end of the adventure.



## CHAPTER 1: TO HONOR THE FALLEN

### GETTING STARTED

Summer winds propel ships east from the Inner Sea to the lucrative markets dotting southern Casmaron and ultimately to the riches of Vudra. For over 4,000 years, Iblydos has provided the optimal stopover for these ships—not just those seeking a chance to restock provisions, but also for merchants off-loading their cargo before tacking west, rather than sailing the whole Obari Crossing. Those same ships often carry passengers seeking adventure in far-off lands.

This same motivation might apply to the PCs, too. The *Myth-Speaker Player's Guide* presents six backgrounds ideally suited to this campaign: the Obari Wanderer who has traveled this trade route before, the Student of Apotheosis drawn to Iblydos's path to divinity, the Beast Seeker eager to encounter the

archipelago's legendary creatures, or the Glory Hound seeking immortality through song and deed. The PCs might instead hail from Iblydos, with backgrounds like Child of the Polis presenting a streetwise Iblydan local or the Kartaji Epicurean delighting in the archipelago's myriad experiences and opportunities.

Whatever the case, the PCs' paths crossed in Bailax, an eminent Iblydan city, shortly after the first ships reach the islands. Bailaxians host these early visitors, eager to meet strangers and demonstrate Iblydans' sacred duty of hospitality. At her estate, the retired duelist and current member of Bailax's Philosopher Council **Terpsime** (bold female human warrior-sage 8) invited an assortment of travelers (i.e. the PCs) to enjoy her hospitality and Bailax's wonders for a week, no matter where their travels might take them afterward.

## CHAPTER 1 SYNOPSIS

In honor of a recently deceased hero, the city of Bailax hosts elaborate funeral games and invites the PCs to compete for glory and prizes.

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As the PCs relaxed or explored today, Terpsime met with other city leadership to discuss the recent death of, and funeral games for, Dintolneon, a city celebrity. When she belatedly joins the PCs for dinner, her demeanor is a mix of fatigue, frustration, and determination, all barely contained behind a veneer of pleasant hospitality.

Terpsime enters with an uncharacteristic grimace just as the second course is being served, muttering, "Felt sure I was going to use this today." She forces a smile and checks the pins in her gray hair before addressing her guests.

"We knew it was only a matter of time before Dintolneon passed," she sighs. "Even so, it seems to have shocked some of my colleagues to the point that they couldn't help but deliver hour-long eulogies." She takes a few bites of fish before continuing. "I suppose I can't blame them; Dintolneon had such promise."

She trails off, lost in thought. This gives the PCs an opening to ask questions. The following are likely queries and her responses.

**Who was Dintolneon?** "He was quite the dashing hero decades ago. He could run without tiring, outsang a naiad quartet, and most famously bested a manticore bare-handed—had all the makings of a hero-god. Bailax adored him, and deservedly so."

**Was Dintolneon a hero-god? or Why wasn't he a hero-god?** Terpsime sighs. "It wasn't for lack of trying. Cyclopes gave him a myth-speaking, said they could sense his path, but couldn't say where it led. They tried again every year after that—no success. It's happened with candidates across the isles since prophecy failed." She stirs her food pensively before adding, "Few myth-speakings succeed, and that means hero-gods are a dying breed. If anyone could ascend, Dintolneon felt like the one. His death... it feels like the end of an era."

**What is myth-speaking?** "When they sense someone special, a city's cyclopes invite them to the acropolis for a myth-speaking ceremony. It shows the giants what deed—if any—could unlock the person's divine potential. And if that person follows through, they can become a hero-god: a living divinity for all Iblydos. But a century ago, it's as if the cyclopes went blind."

Conveying the basics of hero-gods, myth-speaking, and these dwindling traditions provides the players key context for the adventures to come. Once she's shared this information, she announces a new opportunity.

Terpsime pushes her plate to one side. "Understandably, the festival isn't happening quite as planned. Once the council finished"—she pauses, holding back frustration as she chooses words carefully—"opining the meaning of death, a few of us proposed converting the festival into funeral

games to honor Dintolneon's memory. We voted, it passed, I assigned drasikons to coordinate the changes, and now it's out of my hands.

"That is, it's mostly out of my hands." Her mouth quirks in a mischievous smile as she stares at her guests. "I, ah, may have added your names to the list of competitors."

She hears and humorously deflects any protests before continuing.


"What better way can there be to experience Bailax than to compete in a great hero's memory? There will be fame, prizes, fun..." Her smile fades slightly. "And I expect there will also be a few jerks. Iblydos's neighbors are like vultures, circling as they watch our hero-gods die, all while plotting which island to annex, loot, or evangelize to first. I want these games to be a display of strength to the outside world. I want to sponsor you as my champions—to keep Iblydos's traditions alive."

Terpsime leans back appraisingly and awaits questions as the cook brings out the third course.

**What are the contests?** "I don't know for sure," she admits. "That's for the drasikons to decide—those are the officials who oversee various city functions, like sanitation, zoning, festivals, and the like. And the less I know, the better. It wouldn't be honorable if my champions had an unfair advantage. But this is Bailax, yes? No doubt there will be some sailing, running, athletics, and gladiatorial games. Importantly, there will be several main events that you'll need to attend."

**Who are the contestants?** "Anyone can participate and form a team if they pay the entrance fee; I've paid yours." Because there's a five-person limit, if there are six or more PCs, she notes they'll have to create two teams. "Lots of people will be participating for fun. There won't be as many teams competing for prizes; I expect various athletes, eccentrics, and clout-chasers."

**What are the prizes?** "The greatest prize is glory," Terpsime intones, as if reciting an axiom. "Truly, competing well can earn you considerable fame, which opens countless opportunities. But the more physical prizes? Dintolneon's will left part of his wealth—including some of his equipment—to the city. I expect some of that gets used for prize money."



**How long are the games?** “At most five days. That gives us all of Fireday, Starday, and Sunday, plus most of Moonday. But they have to wrap up before dark on Moonday for the send-off.”

**What is the Moonday send-off?** “It’s when the souls of the recently deceased march to the sea to be ferried to the afterlife. The pyres of Bailax help guide the way.” With a knowing nod, she adds, “Helps to keep anyone from getting lost and becoming ghosts.”

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Terpsime concludes her proposal with a warning. “As I mentioned before, these games don’t just honor Dintolneon; they honor Iblydos and its traditions. I don’t want some outsiders barging in and making a mess. So compete well, make friends, and keep any mainland troublemakers from sullyng Pol-Bailax and its hero. And on that note,” she announces with a smile, “let’s have dessert.”

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## THE GAMES BEGIN!

The funeral games don’t begin until afternoon on the following day. Nonetheless, Terpsime ensures the PCs awake to stretch, eat a good meal, and arrive at the opening ceremony early to study their competition.

The festivities begin at the largest park in the Kylix, Bailax’s northernmost district. There, workers hurriedly set up decorations and stages, doing their best to comply with the last minute-changes for the funeral games. **Undyl** (exacting male cyclops judge 7), a middle-aged cyclops with red and blue facial tattoos, dutifully interviews contestants as they arrive and records their information, forming them into teams as necessary. As the PCs approach, he confirms they’re already signed up and encourages them to come up with a team name. If there are six or more PCs, he tells them to split into two teams.

Throughout the games, Undyl officiates the main events. After the PCs have some time to settle in and meet other competitors (see below), he calls for the participants’ attention and explains the rules.

### Teams and Scoring

The funeral games for Dintolneon include five major competitions over the course of five days. Various minor events like foot races, drinking contests, concerts, and drama performances fill the rest of the time, giving the populace exciting diversions as the competitors rest before the next event. Only a handful of citizens enter the games as serious competitors.

As competitors, the PCs are expected to participate in the five main events: sailing, the pyre relay, competitive feasting, the gladiator melee, and the amphora roll. They can use the rest of their time as they please. This

adventure provides several adventuring opportunities beginning on page 22.

**Teams:** Competitors must form teams of 3–5 people, which might require large PC groups to split into two teams. Each team must participate in each of the five events, though not all of a team’s members must participate in each event. Numerous teams enter the competition, but for the sake of simplicity, this adventure presents only three other teams that risk overtaking the PCs.

**Scoring:** The best teams in each of the events earn flame-shaped bronze medallions with Dintolneon’s name etched on the reverse side. The team with the most medallions by Moonday wins the top prize.

Each event notes which NPCs from the rival teams participate, as well as what score the team earns for the event. The team with the top score for an event earns five medallions. The second-best team earns three medallions, and the third-best earns one. In addition, each of an event’s three judges has another medallion they can award, typically given to a participant whose performance was especially memorable. These bonus medallions help a GM keep a team in the competition by awarding extra credit, plus these awards reward PCs for critical successes, good strategies, delightful roleplay, or otherwise stylish stunts.

### The Golden Pegasi

These locals have joined for love of their city-state, often wearing clothing and tokens with warm hues to honor the city’s phoenix.

**Ataiosiphon** (imaginative male human potter 1) is a wiry young man who’s famed for the delicate designs depicting local legends that he paints onto pottery. So much time spent illustrating myths has inspired Ataiosiphon to seek glory of his own.

**Rhetienn** (boastful female centaur brewer 1) lives a semi-nomadic life beyond the city as she tends scattered orchards and turns the various fruits into wine and spirits. She plays hard, parties hard, and enjoys friendly boasting before events.

**Yphani** (timid female cyclops herder 2) enjoys the pastoral life and her flocks. Cyclopes might be most famous as priests and seers, but many pursue more mundane careers. Friends know that although she’s shy, she’s also strong, having killed at least three wolves barehanded.

### The Pearl Chasers

United by their desire for excitement, this eclectic trio joined forces to have fun, win or lose.

**Mellita** (spry female human weaver 2) recently celebrated her 58th birthday and 14th grandchild’s

birth, yet she remains sprier than most citizens half her age. Her thick arms hide ample muscle developed over decades of weaving, dyeing, and scrubbing cloth. With her children grown and retirement approaching, Mellita just wants some exercise.

**Phel** (curious nonbinary merfolk treasure hunter 1) is an eccentric wrecker who plies the archipelago's waters in search of oddities, sunken ships, and lost cargos. They sell much of the recovered treasure, which funds their passion for strange foods and terrestrial experiences.

**Sappil** (patient male vishkanya mercenary 1) hails from Vudra yet frequents Iblydos in search of magical and military work for hire, sending much of his earnings east as remittances. His serious demeanor belies a quick and wry sense of humor.



Phel

### Team Akki

This trio seeks wealth and clout, with little regard for tradition. They play an ongoing role in this campaign, showing up periodically to steal the PCs' glory or instigate trouble for personal gain. More information about them appears on pages 90–91.

When asked for a team name, Ulshuk and Tsemone shrugged, leaving the exuberant Akki to name the team after herself (much to her teammates' chagrin).

**Akki** (proud female tengu stormrager 2) is a living tempest, craving fame, fortune, and a good fight. The Iblydan prospect of achieving divinity has seized her imagination. Although boisterous with an easily bruised ego, she rarely acts with real malice.

**Tsemone** (scheming female human alchemist 2) grew up among Pol-Sylirica's nobility, which valued physical prowess and bravery. Tsemone instead favored subtlety and strategic applications of poison, earning her temporary exile and the threat of losing her inheritance. She's lethally ambitious and seeking new allies who can help her reclaim her birthright.

**Ulshuk** (grimly pragmatic male lizardfolk mystic 2) cheerfully experiments with magic of all sorts in honor of his patron, Nethys. Having heard tales of Iblydan hero-gods, he believes attaining mythic power for himself could unlock new magical possibilities.

## THE FUNERAL GAMES

The funeral games are presented chronologically.

### Sailing and Sardines (Day 1)

Coordinators have shifted a time-sensitive event to the festival's first day: harvesting sardines. Seasonal currents sweep up nutrients from deep in the Obari Ocean, feeding

algae blooms that attract huge shoals of sardines and other small fish. In ancient times, fishers sailed tiny two-person boats along the coast, relying on the waves and handheld nets to torpedo through the shoals, capture fish, and hopefully not crash into reefs.

Contemporary fishers use larger, safer ships and nets. However, the riskier small-boat tradition has survived as a seasonal sport called *baleaning*, which resembles a combination of surfing and polo. The games begin with this event.

**Teams:** Participants compete in two-person crews. The sailor controls the boat's rudder and rigging to sail along the edge of an incoming wave. The fisher wields a conical net mounted on a short pole, leaning over the side of the boat to scoop up as many fish as possible. The longer the sailor can keep the boat moving with the wave, the longer the fisher has to catch fish.

**Boats:** The narrow boats have two seats, a single mast, a deep hull, and a short outrigger for balance. The boats have Hardness 5 and 16 HP (BT 8). Larger boats with the same statistics are available to accommodate any Large PCs.

**Running the Event:** The competition involves four brief stages. Each stage allows one or both participants to attempt a check to affect the competition. A team then paddles back to shore for a short break before repeating the process for a second run. Teams with five members receive two boats so that more of the team can participate, averaging the results of a run.

**Catching a Wave** (1 check, both participants): The team paddles the boat a short distance offshore and then have about 10 minutes to spot an incoming wave. The better the team identifies and chooses a good wave, the longer they'll be able to travel and catch fish.

Each wave also sweeps in different opportunities. Roll 1d6 and reference the chart on page 12, applying the associated effects to the remainder of this run.

**Sail** (1–4 checks, sailor only): Using the sail, rudder, and body mass, the sailor steers the boat along the wave, maintaining momentum as long as possible. Sailing poorly can make the fisher's job harder or even end the team's run early. No matter how well they sail, the wave only lasts long enough for four checks.

**Gather Fish** (1–4 checks, fisher only): The fisher uses balance and upper body strength to scoop up fish at high speeds. Each time the sailor successfully keeps the boat moving, the fisher has a chance to catch fish. The more they catch, the higher the team's score. However, more fish make the boat heavier, making it harder for

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the sailor to handle. A team can return to shore without Gathering Fish all four rounds.

**Scoring the Event:** After each run, a team's catch is weighed. A team's score is based on the combined bulk of the fish they catch over their two runs.

## SAILING EVENTS

d6	Event
1	<b>Mischievous Dolphins:</b> They're lucky but rambunctious. Increase Sailing/Gathering DCs by 1. The fisher can attempt a DC 14 Nature check to Gather Fish, coaxing the dolphins to scare fish out of the water and into the boat.
2	<b>Dangerous Shoals:</b> Rocks and reefs threaten the boat. Unless a PC succeeds at a Perception or Nature check, their first failed check to Sail deals 2d6 piercing damage.
3	<b>Smooth Sailing:</b> No effect.
4	<b>Huge Wave:</b> Increase the DC of Sail checks by 1, but reduce the penalty to Sail for having fish by 2 (minimum 0).
5	<b>Upwelling:</b> A combination of surf and nutrients draws many sardines toward the surface. Critically succeeding at the Gather Fish check earns 1 extra bulk of fish.
6	<b>The Big One:</b> A legendary fish darts alongside the boat to eat sardines. The fisher can Catch the Big One! instead of Gathering Fish.

## CATCH A WAVE

**Check** DC 14 Ocean Lore, DC 15 Sailing Lore, DC 16 Fortune-Telling Lore, DC 16 Nature, DC 16 Survival, or DC 17 Perception

You and your partner identify the best wave and maneuver the boat into position. This also helps identify potential obstacles your boat's likely to encounter. Use either your result or your partner's, whichever is better.

**Critical Success** This run's Sail DC begins at 14, and the PCs can roll the special event twice and choose the result.

**Success** This run's Sail DC begins at 14.

**Failure** This run's Sail DC begins at 15.

**Critical Failure** This run's Sail DC begins at 17.

## SAIL

**Sailor's Check** Athletics, Crafting, Nature, or Sailing Lore (DC varies); the DC is reduced by 2 using Sailing Lore

**Bulk** For every 3 bulk of fish in the boat or net, increase the DC to Sail by 1.

You keep the boat steady, sailing it just ahead of the wave and through the shoals of swarming fish.

**Critical Success** You steer flawlessly. The fisher gains a +1 circumstance bonus to their next check to Gather Fish during this run.

**Success** You capably guide the boat, granting neither penalties nor special benefits.

**Failure** You barely control the boat. The fisher takes a -1 penalty to their next check to Gather Fish during this run. Increase the DC of subsequent checks to Sail by 1 for the rest of this run.

**Critical Failure** As failure, and the boat nearly capsizes. Fish weighing 1d4 bulk fall out of the boat. You and your partner each fall out of the boat and cannot compete in the rest of that run (DC 12 Reflex save negates).

## GATHER FISH

**Fisher's Check** DC 14 Fishing Lore, DC 16 Acrobatics, DC 16 Athletics, DC 16 Survival, or an attack roll (AC 17) using the net as a simple melee weapon with the finesse trait.

Anchoring yourself to the boat's frame and leaning over the edge, you sweep up fish in a pole-mounted net.

**Critical Success** You haul in fish weighing 1d4+2 bulk.

**Success** You haul in fish weighing 1d4 bulk.

**Failure** You haul in fish weighing 1d4-2 bulk (minimum 0).

**Critical Failure** You catch no fish and tangle your net, imposing a -1 penalty on your next check to Gather Fish during this run.

## CATCH THE BIG ONE!

## OPPORTUNITY

**Fisher's Check** DC 16 Fishing Lore, DC 16 Legendary Beast Lore, DC 18 Athletics, or DC 18 Survival; you can instead attempt an attack roll against AC 19 using the net as a simple melee weapon.

On a result of 6 on the Sailing Events table, the PCs spot a fireflank tuna—a rare species famed for its bright orange tail and delicious steaks—flitting among the sardines and eating its fill. This presents an alternative to Gathering Fish, with the PCs instead netting this prize.

**Success** You catch the tuna, which weighs 5 bulk.

**Failure** You don't catch the tuna, but you do net sardines weighing 1 bulk.

**Critical Failure** You don't catch the tuna, and it slams into the boat. The boat potentially capsizes, as though you had critically failed a check to Sail.

## Scoring the Event

Add up the weight of seafood the PCs caught (taking the average if they were given two boats). Compare those totals to the other teams' catches.

**The Golden Pegasi:** Thanks to Yphani's strength, this team nets a huge amount of fish at first, but her mass tips the boat, spilling much of the catch. The team harvests 13 bulk.

**The Pearl Chasers:** With Mellita at the sails and Phel wielding the net, this team harvests 16 bulk.

**Team Akki:** Akki is a natural sailor, leading their team to harvest 18 bulk.

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## The Pyre Relay (Day 2)

The most elaborate event is the Pyre Relay, a multi-stage race that recreates one of Bailax's favorite legends. As the PCs arrive, they see judges driving horse-drawn chariots away from the city as spectators gather on nearby hills. Terpsime stands atop a small stage, leaning on a barrel bristling with javelins.

Terpsime raises her arms for attention, recites an invocation to nymph muses, and shares the upcoming event's origins. "Long ago, when the bites of a miasmic amphisbaena left her friend dying, the hero-god Kaile sought a cure from cyclopean sages. They prophesied that only the sacred tekolis herb hidden deep in the forest could purge the venom, which would kill her friend three dawns hence. Though the forest was distant, Kaile wasted no time, racing the first dawn's sunlight as it spilled across the landscape. She climbed the morning mist as a shortcut, yet this drew the attention of her nemesis, the demon lord Nurgal. Hoping to stop her, he focused the sun's rays at her, burning the mist away. As she descended from the sky, Kaile hurled a javelin at the sun, wounding Nurgal, but not before the scorching sun set the island ablaze. She raced on. Then, herb in hand, she seized a passing chariot and rushed back under cover of night, the wildfires lighting her way. For her efforts, she arrived just before dawn, saved her friend, and inspired Pol-Bailax forever.

"Today, we recreate her journey with the Pyre Relay. Each team will race along the marked route: traveling the clouds, descending from the sky, treading the burning fields, and wounding Nurgal before you retrieve the herb and race your chariot back to Bailax. When the first team is ready, approach the starting line!"

**Overview:** This event functions like a chase (*GM Core* 192), though rather than escaping a threat, the event tracks how many chase rounds it takes for a team to complete the course. Thus, the best team takes the fewest rounds to finish. Each chase round is roughly 10 minutes long. Teams start at staggered intervals so that they confront each obstacle one at a time.

In addition, the race is a relay event, starting team members at different places along the route. As the one competitor reaches their companion, the companion begins their part of the race. Traveling by shortcuts, the earlier participants later reunite for the last part of the race, which the team completes together. For a four-person team, it's recommended one PC handle the Treading Clouds and Steep Descent challenges, 1–2 PCs handle the Fields Aflame and Nurgal's Eye challenges, and then 1–2 PCs handle the Hidden Herb challenge before reuniting the team to handle the Racing Chariots challenges together.

If the PCs are split into two teams, be sure that one begins the race right after the other. This allows both teams to stay near each other, allowing the PCs to plausibly approach and explore the *Shoalskimmer* (page 15) at about the same time.

**Planning:** The event coordinators have kept the exact route secret until now, but the PCs can predict some of the obstacles ahead of time to make informed decisions about how they divide their team. The teams learn what the obstacles are called and the order in which they appear, but nothing more. Each PC can attempt one check to learn more.

## PREDICT THE ROUTE

**SECRET**

You attempt a DC 13 Games Lore check, a DC 13 Hero-God Lore check, a DC 15 Pol-Bailax Lore check, or DC 15 Society check to Recall Knowledge. Alternatively, you can attempt a DC 16 Diplomacy or Perception check to seek rumors or try to sense what's over the next hill. Diplomacy and Perception checks can only uncover information about the Treading Clouds and Chariot Race challenges.

**Critical Success** You guess what two obstacles of your choice entail, including suitable skills used to bypass it.

**Success** As critical success, but you only identify one obstacle.

**Failure** You gain no noteworthy insights.

**Critical Failure** You incorrectly guess an obstacle's details and skill checks.

Once the PCs learn what they can, they must choose how to split up their team along the route. All but the first team member are ferried by chariot to their later starting points. After a short delay, the first competitor chooses a color, receives a trio of javelins whose shafts are painted that color, and then begins the race. Team Akki eagerly goes first.

## TREADING CLOUDS

### OBSTACLE

**Chase Points** 2; **Overcome** DC 14 Diplomacy (Animal Empathy only), DC 16 Nature, DC 16 Intimidation, DC 16 Acrobatics, or DC 17 Athletics

Kaile climbed the morning mist. For this pyre relay, contestants must navigate a different, fluffy obstacle: a pen packed with sheep. A contestant might weave between the sheep, push them aside, or herd them away to reach the other side. Those able to speak with sheep might convince them to move.

## STEEP DESCENT

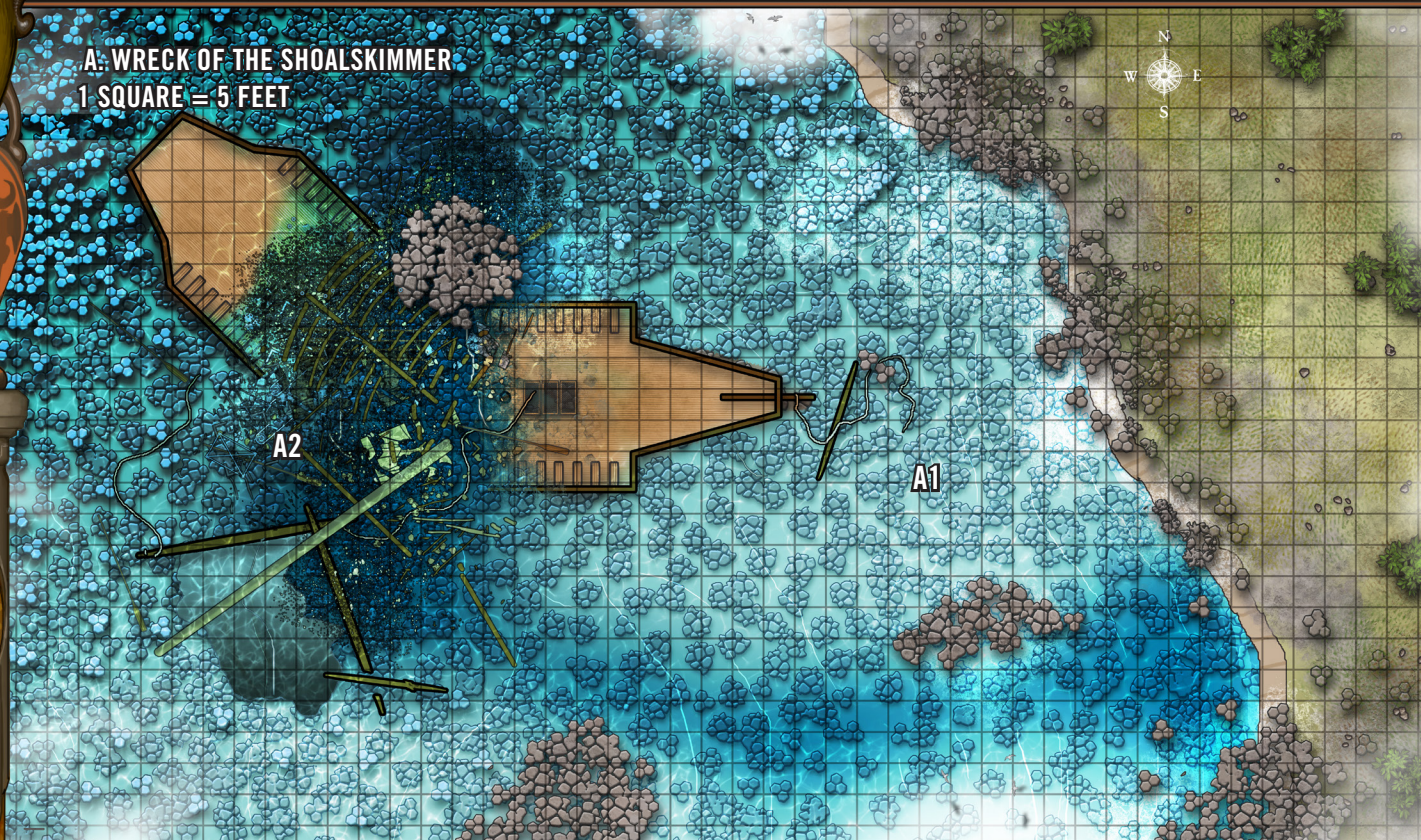
### OBSTACLE

**Chase Points** 2; **Overcome** DC 16 Acrobatics, DC 16 Survival, DC 17 Perception, or DC 17 Reflex

The route descends from a hilltop down a steep slope.



**A: WRECK OF THE SHOALSKIMMER**  
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



The precarious footing and loose rubble could easily trip anyone who doesn't step carefully or spot a good path—or even follow the tracks and safe path left by a previous contestant.

**FIELDS AFLAME** **OBSTACLE**

**Chase Points** 2; **Overcome** DC 16 Fortitude, DC 17 Acrobatics, or DC 17 Performance

Nurgal set fire to the island to stop Kaile. The pyre relay has a safer recreation: walking a shallow trench filled with hot coals. A contestant must dance across the embers or endure the heat.

**Special** A PC who has fire resistance adds the value of their fire resistance as a circumstance bonus to their checks to overcome this obstacle. At the GM's discretion, other fire-resistant abilities (such as reducing the flat check to recover from persistent fire damage) might provide a +1 circumstance bonus to these checks.

**NURGAL'S EYE** **OBSTACLE**

**Chase Points** 2; **Overcome** Ranged attack with a javelin against AC 16

**Steer** DC 14 Vehicle Lore, DC 16 Games Lore, or DC 16 Nature

A chariot with two horses awaits. Three posts stand along one side of the road ahead, each topped with a broad ring, inside which is suspended a smaller ring. Like Kaile, the contestant must blind Nurgal with javelins. As a contestant

drives the chariot, they must throw their three javelins through the large rings; if two PCs participate here, one can steer and the other throw. They must Strike successfully at least twice (piercing the large rings) or critically succeed at the Strike once (hitting the smaller suspended ring) in order to proceed. If they don't, they must retrieve the javelins and drive by again to earn additional points.

Before each throw, a contestant must steer the chariot. This Aids the next attack attempted by whoever throws the javelin.

**HIDDEN HERB** **OBSTACLE**

**Chase Points** 2; **Overcome (Lock)** DC 16 Arcana, 16 Thievery, or DC 18 Perception

**Chase Points** 2; **Overcome (Marble)** DC 15 Thievery, DC 16 Crafting, or DC 17 Reflex

The figurative herb isn't hidden within the wood. Instead, it's a large, green marble trapped instead a puzzle box about 1 foot in each dimension. One side of the box is clear glass, and the other five are made of wood, with a strange dial mounted on one of the sides. The only opening into the box winds through a small maze of twisting passages, requiring the box be carefully tilted to navigate the marble through the maze. A stack of long wires nearby could also be twisted into a useful shape to fish out the marble. Finally, a PC might decipher the dial's symbols and meaning, using it as a combination lock to open the box.

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**Special** Each attempt earns Chase Points that either crack the lock or navigate the marble. To overcome this obstacle, the PC must earn 2 Chase Points toward one of these tasks.

### RACING CHARIOTS

### OBSTACLE

**Chase Points 2; Overcome (First Leg)** DC 15 Driving Lore, DC 16 Games Lore, DC 16 Nature, or DC 17 Intimidation

**Chase Points 2; Overcome (Second Leg)**

With the herb recovered, the contestants reunite and drives their chariot (or chariots, for a larger group) back toward Bailax and the finish line. The first leg of this route travels along the coast before turning inland for the second leg. Upon completing the first leg, the PCs overlook a recent shipwreck—see *Wreck of the Shoalskimmer* below. The skills to overcome this obstacle are identical for both legs.

### A. Wreck of the Shoalskimmer

The *Shoalskimmer*, a cargo ship that travels the archipelago in a regular route, was expected to arrive in Bailax several days ago. However, it experienced weather delays and acquired a devious stowaway: a curious sedachty (*Monster Core 300*) named Shkol who clambered aboard to abscond with some cargo. However, among the wine amphora and bags of grain, she found five barrels of salt water filled with live octopuses to be sold at peak freshness. Using her sea speech, the sedachty commiserated with the cephalopods, removed the grates keeping them trapped in the barrels, and encouraged the octopuses to rebel against their oppressors. Following a tentacled uprising, the harried crew lost control of the ship, which wrecked here within the last hour.

Few of the crew survived. Several have lashed themselves to the stern, which juts out of the water. Many tried to wade to shore, but so much prey attracted nearby reefclaws that dragged survivors out to sea. The only one to make it to shore is **Dikaios** (adventurous male nephilim sailor 1), who is looking for assistance as the PCs complete the first leg of the race's final obstacle. He waves for the PCs' attention.

"Your assistance, please!" shouts a bedraggled man with two prominent horns, patches of fishlike scales covering some of his skin, and torn clothing. "Our ship—the *Shoalskimmer*—it came under attack and wrecked not far from here. My companions... what's left of them... they need aid immediately." He motions to be followed, pausing only to pick up several fist-sized rocks before jogging back toward the coast.

Dikaios can explain the situation as he returns to the wreck, though he knows only about the aggressive

octopuses and the reefclaws (not the sedachty). He's weakened from hours of fending off cephalopods, so his current plan is to pelt the reefclaws with rocks from the shore to perhaps enable his companions to escape. He also knows that the tide is rising, which will lift the *Shoalskimmer* off the rocks it's pinned against and sink what remains; there's little time to spare. He's especially frustrated because his first attempt to flag down help (specifically Team Akki) was apparently ignored.

This is a clear call to action for the PCs. However, it's a diversion that will cost them valuable time during the race. At minimum, the short detour and rescue take 10 minutes or 1 round of the chase. If the PCs spend extensive time planning the rescue, patching up their wounds, or the like, it could take even longer. However, saving the *Shoalskimmer's* crew isn't just the right thing to do, but also it earns the PCs a considerable reward (page 16) at the end of the race.

### A1. The Shallows

Moderate 1

The beach consists of interlocking hexagonal basalt pillars that create uneven footing.

**Shallow Water:** The water here averages 3 feet deep. This is deep enough to enable swimming and is difficult terrain for Small and Medium PCs. That said, the water isn't so deep that all of the rules for aquatic combat apply (*Player Core 437*). Apply only the acid and fire resistance and half the penalty (–1) to attacks with melee bludgeoning and slashing weapons; the other modifiers don't apply, which keeps the encounters interesting without punishing 1st-level PCs who have few resources.

**Creatures:** The shipwreck attracted a host of reefclaws that snagged sailors before retreating to deeper waters. A pair of recently molted reefclaws arrived late and squabble over the scraps while circling the wreck in the hope that some other morsel falls into the water. On spotting the PCs, the reefclaws hide among the rocks and wait for the new arrivals to get partway to the wreck before ambushing them. If one reefclaw dies, the other flees once reduced to 5 HP.

### MOLTED REEFCLAWS (2)

CREATURE 1

Variant reefclaws (*Pathfinder Monster Core 291*)

**Perception** +8; darkvision

**AC** 17

### A2. Broken Hull

Moderate 1

The *Shoalskimmer* beached against the basalt outcropping here, where the incoming tide broke the ship against the rocks. The shattered hull spilled its cargo into the water, much of which has drifted away or become lodged among the basalt. The bow section

is roughly level in the water, whereas the stern section juts out of the water at a roughly 35-degree angle, making it difficult terrain.

**Creatures:** Among the loosed cargo were the riptide octopuses. However, once they sensed the approaching reefclaws, the octopuses scrambled back to the wreck, and crawled as high out of the water as they could without drying out. As the PCs explore the wreck, the hungry octopuses slowly become brave enough to clamber atop and taste the PCs. This quickly erupts into combat, though if the PCs have means of parleying with the cephalopods (such as with Wild Empathy) and can change the animals' attitude from unfriendly to indifferent. In this case, the octopuses maintain a safe distance and wait for their sedachthy friend.

**Treasure:** A pair of *minor healing potions* float among the cargo. A curious riptide octopus snagged both and is puzzling how to open them. If confronted, it gingerly drops the vials and backs away. In addition, the PCs find a variety of cargo such as wine amphoras, bronze ingots, and more. These aren't easily resold (much less the PCs' property). However, one of the ship's investors sends a team a day later and awards the PCs a finder's fee of 12 gp for helping at the wreck and enabling some of the cargo's recovery.

### RIPTIDE OCTOPUS SWARMS (3) CREATURE 0

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**Development:** The octopuses aren't the only survivors. Three of the ship's riggers (*NPC Core 146*) have lashed themselves to the *Shoalskimmer's* stern, trying to be as far out of the water as possible. This has saved them from the octopuses and reefclaws. However, they saw the sedachthy shortly before the ship wrecked, and they know that being about 10 feet out of the water won't save them at that point. The sailors are exhausted and need assistance safely making their way to the beach, and they don't untie themselves until it's clear all threats have passed.

**Reward:** For each of the sailors rescued and returned to shore, the PCs earn 10 XP.

**Treasure:** The *Shoalskimmer's* owners gift the PCs 5 gp for each of the three sailors they rescued.

### The Liberator Returns Low 1

Shortly after confronting the octopuses and meeting

the sailors—optionally after the PCs have 10 minutes to recover or at least recover the healing potions in area A2—the sedachthy Shkol catches up to the wreck to save her eight-legged friends.

**Creatures:** On noticing signs of reefclaws, Shkol is ready for a fight. She studies the wreck from a distance, likely spotting the PCs, before approaching. As she draws near, she assesses how many octopuses are still safe. If the PCs avoided combat with the octopuses, she is indifferent. If they nonlethally subdued most of the octopuses, she is unfriendly. If the PCs killed most of the octopuses, she is hostile. So long as she's not hostile, Shkol announces herself in Thalassic and angrily demands the PCs release her friends. If she's indifferent, she menaces the PCs from a distance but doesn't interfere with their rescue operation. If

friendly, the PCs can Request her assistance in getting the sailors to shore. Otherwise, she attacks.

### SHKOL CREATURE 2

Sedachthy scout (*Pathfinder Monster Core 300*)

**Ranged** ♦ clingy octopus +10 (thrown 15 feet), **Damage** 1d4+4 bludgeoning plus 1 persistent bleed

**Development:** After rescuing the sailors, the PCs can return to their chariots and complete the Pyre Relay. Dikaios later catches up to them to offer his heartfelt appreciation. Hoping to socialize with the PCs further, he joins either the Pearl Chasers or the Golden Pegasi to participate in the remaining games.

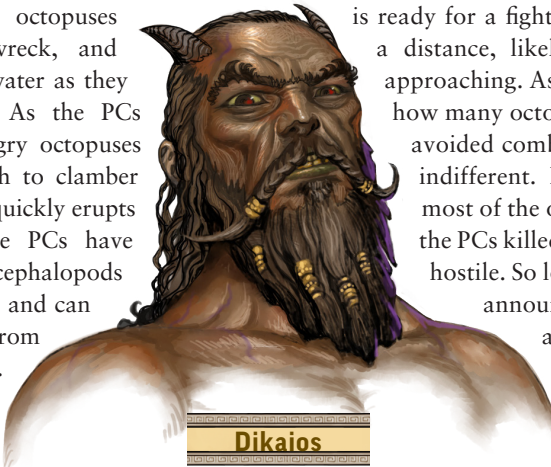
### Scoring the Event

Tally the number of chase rounds the PCs spent completing the race, including one or more spent exploring the *Shoalskimmer*. Upon hearing about the PCs' deeds aiding the sailors, the officials all agree to deduct 1 round from the PCs' time.

**The Golden Pegasi:** Rhetienn is in her element as she zooms through the first half of the race. Ataiosiphon solves the puzzles, and Yphani coaxes the horses to run despite her size. They take 13 chase rounds.

**The Pearl Chasers:** The team makes steady progress but struggles in handling the chariots, taking 15 chase rounds to finish the race.

**Team Akki:** This team misjudges which competitor should complete which tasks, causing delays. They take 16 chase rounds to finish.



## Fastest Feast (Day 3)

Citizens start closing their businesses by noon in anticipation of a city-wide feast on Starday. Restaurants, bakeries, and pop-up kitchens in each district set up eating areas with different fare, encouraging all to wander the city and try a wide variety of foods. Yet one station in South Shore is reserved for the funeral games competitors. Undyl ushers the contestants into a plaza furnished with chairs, tables, and utensils, with the eating area cordoned off and surrounded by wooden bleachers that are swiftly filling with excited onlookers.

Once he's satisfied, Undyl claps three times for everyone's attention and announces the contest.

"Who's hungry?" The giant laughs as the spectators cheer, many of them saluting him with festive snacks. "We have plied the Obari Ocean. We have driven chariots across the land. Now, we tour Bailax in a different way: with food! Our ravenous competitors shall battle their way through four courses, each a celebration of local cuisine. They have 15 minutes per course, and anyone who doesn't clean their plate in time—and keep everything in their stomach—can't advance to the next course."

**Structure:** As Undyl described, the feast involves four courses. As a course begins, each competitor receives a large plate of food, which they must consume within three 5-minute rounds. During each round, a PC chooses how (or how quickly) they want to eat, then they attempt a check or saving throw to earn Victory Points. To finish eating a course, a PC must earn 5 Victory Points.

Each course presents a special opportunity that provides alternate skills for earning Victory Points, lower check DCs, or gives some other advantage.

After completing the second course, the competitors get a 10-minute break. This gives them a chance to mingle and digest. An unexpected bout of elemental weather interrupts the third course, presenting a combat intermission before the competition resumes.

**Earning Points:** Each round, a PC chooses which action they use to earn Victory Points. Many of these actions grant the PC the satiated condition or increases the value of their satiated condition. The satiated condition tracks how full the PC's stomach feels, making it harder to keep eating.

## FEAST

You eat steadily. Attempt a Fortitude save whose DC equals 9 + your satiated value, then increase your satiated value by 1.

**Critical Success** You earn 2 Victory Points without increasing your satiated condition.

**Success** You earn 2 Victory Points.

**Failure** You earn 1 Victory Point.

**Critical Failure** You earn no Victory Points.

## INHALE

You consume your food rapidly, barely pausing to savor the meal, much less breathe. Attempt a Fortitude save whose DC equals 9 + your satiated value.

**Critical Success** You earn 1d4+1 Victory Points (maximum 4) and increase your satiated condition by 1.

**Success** You earn 1d4 Victory Points (minimum 2) and increase your satiated condition by 1.

**Failure** You earn 1d4-1 Victory Points (minimum 1) and increase your satiated condition by 2.

**Critical Failure** As failure, but you also become sickened 1 until you successfully Digest to reduce your satiated value. If you are already sickened, your stomach rebels and you become violently ill, forcing you to drop out of the contest.



Sedacthy Octopus Tamer

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## CHEAT

You furtively hide or dispose of some of the food while pretending to eat. Attempt a DC 17 Deception, Stealth, or Thievery check.

**Success** You earn 2 Victory Points.

**Failure** You earn 1 Victory Point, but Undyl becomes suspicious. Increase the DC of all PCs' checks to Cheat by 1.

**Critical Failure** You're caught cheating! Undyl brings you an extra serving to offset the food you've wasted. You earn no Victory Points. If you've already been caught cheating, you're instead disqualified from the feast.

## DIGEST

You take a moment to relax, mentally urging your stomach to make room for more food. Attempt a DC 16 Fortitude or Will save.

**Critical Success** If the value of your satiated condition is 5 or lower, reduce it by 2. Otherwise, reduce the value by 1d4+1 (maximum 4).

**Success** Reduce your satiated condition by 2.

**Failure** Reduce your satiated condition by 1.

## CONCOCT ANALGESIC

Using nearby ingredients, you create a tonic to soothe your stomach. When someone consumes the tonic, attempt a DC 15 Crafting, Medicine, or Survival check to reduce their satiated value as if they had Digested.

## PSYCH UP

You banter with the audience, flex, or generally act in a charming way. You reduce your satiated value by 1. Attempt a DC 16 Athletics, Diplomacy, or Performance check.

**Critical Success** As success, but you can gain the crowd's encouragement twice.

**Success** You delight the crowd. Once during the competition, after you roll a check to Feast or Inhale and see the result, you can choose to have the spectators encourage you and shout advice. Roll 1d4+1 and add the result to your check retroactively.

**Failure** You don't earn enough spectator support to make a difference.

### First Course: Sea and Shells

The first course is a seafood platter replete with half of a steamed crab, pickled sardines, surf dolmas (kelp wrapped around a filling of amaranth and minced mussels), a baked halibut filet, a dozen three-horn prawns, and more alongside several specialized utensils and optional condiments. The unspoken challenge of this course is the prawns.

According to legend, the hero-god Ptireem battled the titanic, venomous crustacean Shoalrender near Bailax.

Ptireem studied the beast and skewered Shoalrender between its tail plates, harmlessly venting the venom into the sea before dealing a killing blow. Bailax feasted for a week. However, Shoalrender's billion children—the three-horn prawns—are said to have consumed the toxins, storing a little inside each of them.

To properly eat the prawns, one must pierce and drain the blue-hued poison gland through the tail before removing the shell (much as Ptireem did); trying to remove the shell first ruptures the gland and taints the meat. Unfortunately, the first course doesn't identify the prawns or their toxins, relying on the contestants to safely eat the delicacy.

**Special:** At the beginning of the first course, each PC can attempt a check to identify and avoid the prawns' poison. They might know of the legends and how Ptireem disabled Shoalrender (DC 14 Hero-God Lore, Legendary Beast Lore, or Pol-Bailax Lore). The PC can instead dismantle the prawns swiftly and properly (DC 16 Medicine or Nature). By watching others, a PC might learn how to eat the prawns properly (DC 18 Perception). A PC can warn others of the poison, granting them a +1 bonus to their own check to bypass the hazard; however, the crowd jeers, disappointed that contestants are coaching each other and not eating.

A PC who doesn't succeed at the check becomes sickened 2 at the start of the second round and sickened 1 at the start of the third round. Any sickened condition caused by the prawns ends as the first course concludes.

### Second Course: Snacks and Salads

The second course arrives in a shallow bowl filled with grapes, apricots, salad greens, dried cherries, olives, persimmon jam, wafers, and a variety of nuts toasted inside their shells (along with simple nutcrackers and picks). The most difficult ingredient is the barkmelons, which resemble walnuts with a fibrous outer husk. Cracking them open requires a counterintuitive trick. Barkmelons are a common tavern snack, with locals assessing whether someone's a tourist, too intoxicated, or both based on whether they can open the nut.

**Special Check:** Once during this course, each PC can attempt one of the following checks and DCs in place of a Fortitude save to Feast. The PC might recall the best way to crack the nuts (DC 15 Mercantile Lore, Pol-Bailax Lore, Nature, or Society). They can instead smash open the nuts with brute force (DC 16 Athletics) or finesse (DC 16 Thievery). The PC can learn the trick by carefully watching others (DC 18 Perception).

### Third Course: Bread and Oil

Each contestant receives a plate piled with crusty rolls, warm pitas, savory pastries filled with spinach, biscotti,

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hummus, tiny cakes with honey, an assortment of herbs, and a small ewer of olive oil. The secret to this course lies in the herbs; these range from strictly culinary to potentially alchemical, and an astute gourmand can grind and infuse specific herbs into the oil to maximize digestion and soothe the stomach.

**Special Check:** The PC can blend the oil and herbs to create a soothing condiment (DC 15 Cooking Lore), even if that involves some esoteric improvisation (DC 16 Crafting, Occultism, or Religion). If they succeed, the first time their satiation would increase during this course, reduce the value by which it increases by 1.

### Inclement Weather

Throughout the third course, worrisome storm clouds blow in from the sea, and competition staff begin setting up pavilions nearby in case the rest of the feast needs to be completed under shelter.

**Creatures:** The storm clouds bring more than rain; a pair of elementals sense the festivities and descend on the contest, intent on disrupting the fun. They hurl lightning bolts into the crowd before rushing down to batter the contestants. The PCs' gear is close enough at hand for them to arm themselves and fight back, though the PCs might be sickened from eating too much. In addition, nearby guards arrive at the start of the second round and act on initiative count 10, making a single shortbow Strike against each of the elementals at a +6 bonus and dealing 1d6+2 piercing damage.

### DESPAIRING PALLS (2)

*Pathfinder Rage of Elements 82*

**Perception** +5; darkvision

**Development:** After the fight, the spectators return, staff clean up any overturned furniture, and the competition resumes.

### Fourth Course: Meat and Cheese

Competitors are relocated in groups of four around small grills situated low to the ground. Each person receives a plate of sliced cheeses and raw meat, the latter of which they're expected to grill for themselves over the shared fires.

**Special Check:** Grilling the meat correctly makes it easier to eat and enjoy. At the beginning of the course, each PC can attempt a DC 16 Crafting or Survival check, or a DC 18 Perception check. If they succeed, the first time their satiation would increase during

this course, reduce the value by which it increases by 1.

This final course and its shared grill also makes it especially easy to cheat, such as by slipping several pieces of meat onto a rival's side of the grill and pretending that it's their food that they need to eat. Reduce the DC of checks to Cheat by 2.

### Scoring the Event

For each course a team member ate in the time limit, their team earns 1 point (maximum 3 points per team per course).

**The Golden Pegasi:** Yphani has a giant's appetite, and Ataiosiphon devours food as if starved. The team earns 10 points.

**The Pearl Chasers:** Phel devours everything before them with gusto, though their companions are slower. The team earns 8 points.

**Team Akki:** Despite Akki's gusto, Tsemone and Ulshuk each complete only a few courses. The team earns 7 points.

### The Grand Melee (Day 3)

Gladiatorial combat is among the archipelago's oldest sports. Soon after Earthfall millennia ago, as the people of Pol-Reanphoros were clearing debris and burying their dead, raiders from the mainland assaulted the island only to be repelled by Reanphoran militia. Since then, gladiatorial displays have featured in state funerals—as much to entertain as to show that Iblydians always fight to protect the fallen.

Today's gladiatorial contest differs from these ancient fights in two ways. First, combatants wield padded weapons, wear protective gear, and have optional bucklers. Each of these simple weapons' striking surfaces is dipped in orange paint. A weapon must solidly strike a foe's protected head, torso, or arms to count as a wound. Once a combatant has received three wounds, they're defeated and ordered out of the melee.

Second, rather than hold dozens of individual duels lasting the whole day, the organizers have arranged a grand melee—a free-for-all involving all of the contestants at once. The fight takes place in a 50-foot-diameter circle cordoned off with rope, with the various combatants starting just inside the perimeter. When the main judge rings a bell, the melee begins, and combatants can chase after whoever they please.

**Running the Melee:** This event isn't structured like a typical combat encounter. Instead, each PC faces three scenes during the melee—either chosen by the GM or determined randomly by rolling 1d10 three times





and rerolling duplicate results. Each scene includes a description and several options to overcome it with a DC 15 skill check or DC 16 saving throw. A PC can always Strike with a weapon to overcome a scene, targeting AC 17 unless otherwise noted.

The attack, check, or save can earn Victory Points (*GM Core* 184) for the PC, inflict one or more wounds, or both. The more VP earned, the more impressed the judges are, and the more medallions they award.

The melee need not be just randomized moments. Feel free to present specific scenes, allow additional skill check options, or grant small circumstance bonuses based on the PCs' strategies—anything from briefly teaming up to hunting down a rival.

### GRAND MELEE SCENES

d6	Event
1-2	<b>Caught Amid Bedlam:</b> You're trapped amid various battles. You can disappear among the combatants (Acrobatics/Stealth), scare others to buy yourself space (Intimidation), or shove some combatants into each other (Athletics).
3-4	<b>Artful Opportunity:</b> You spot a perfect opening for a flashy maneuver or cunning ploy. You might deliver a dramatic blow (Performance), bait one foe into fighting another (Deception), or Strike with a +1 circumstance bonus.
5-6	<b>Underhanded Foe:</b> A foe is using dirty tactics. Outmaneuver them with your own tricks (Thievery), dodge their tricks (Reflex/Will), or direct the audience to shame the foe (Diplomacy/Performance).
7-8	<b>Back-and-Forth:</b> You become ensnared in a lengthy duel that quickly saps both combatants' energy. Sustain your endurance (Fortitude), scare off your worthy foe (Intimidation), or buy an opening to escape the duel (Deception/Stealth).
9-10	<b>Called Out!:</b> A rival loudly challenges you, presenting a risky opportunity. If you meet the challenge, you must attempt a Strike against AC 18, earning an additional VP on a success or critical success. If you flee the challenge, roll for a different scene and take a -1 penalty to your checks to earn VP in that scene.

### GRAND MELEE CLASH

You maneuver around and clash with nearby foes, doing your best to score hits while avoiding others' weapons. Attempt a DC 15 skill check or DC 16 saving throw based on your current scene. Alternatively, you can make a Strike targeting AC 17, unless otherwise noted. Your result earns you Victory Points and determines the flat check DC to Avoid Wounds.

**Critical Success** You land several blows on nearby combatants, earning 2 VP. Your flat check DC is 8.

**Success** You fight and earn 1 VP. Your flat check DC is 10.

**Failure** You struggle against your current foe, needing to abandon your attacks to protect yourself. You earn no Victory Points, and your flat check DC is 10.

**Critical Failure** The tide of battle turns against you, and nearby foes exploit your momentary weakness. You earn no Victory Points, and your flat check DC is 14.

### AVOID WOUNDS

Through agility, cunning, and defensive training, you dodge other combatants' attacks. Attempt a flat check whose DC is set by your Grand Melee Clash result and possibly modified by the scene. If you are trained in heavy armor or have a defensive ability such as Shield Block or the Nimble Dodge rogue feat, reduce the DC of to Avoid Wounds by 1.

**Critical Success** You take no wounds.

**Success** You avoid nearly all harm, taking 1d4-3 wounds (minimum 0).

**Failure** You take 1 wound.

**Critical Failure** You take 2 wounds.

### Uncontrolled Rage

### Low 1

After resolving three scenes for each PC, any combatants with fewer than three wounds remain.

**Creatures:** Among these is the tengu berserker Akki, who just received her third wound. However, she's in the throes of her battle rage, and the judges' insistence that she needs to leave the ring only infuriates her further. Losing control, she begins pummeling the closest targets and drawing blood. Clearly the judges' and crowd's outrage won't stop Akki, so the PCs must. Akki begins the encounter at the center of the ring. Any PCs with fewer than three wounds begin the encounter within 15 feet of Akki. PCs with three or more wounds can also join the fight, but they begin the encounter 35 feet away from Akki.

The PCs' usual gear is too far away to gather, so they must rely on their tournament gear. Their padding functions as padded armor. Their weapons (including an optional buckler) function as their choice of a light mace, club, or greatclub with the nonlethal trait.

Akki has trouble distinguishing between the game and mortal danger, so she takes a -2 circumstance penalty with her weapon to make lethal attacks.

### AKKI

### CREATURE 2

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Perception +8

**Development:** Once Akki's defeated, she blinks a few times as if coming to her senses before collapsing.



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The judges signal the end to the grand melee, directing medics to assist any seriously injured PCs. The judges also publicly recognize the PCs' bravery and reprimand Team Akki, prohibiting them from earning any medallions from this event.

**Scoring the Event:** Tally each PC's Victory Points. The top-scoring gladiator earns 5 medallions for their team, the second highest earns 3, and the third highest earns 1. This can result in several PCs earning medallions separately for their team. In the case of a tie, the competitor with the fewest wounds wins. If still tied, the PC prevails. In addition, the judges award their discretionary medals to the three PCs who contributed the most in pacifying Akki.

**The Golden Pegasi:** With padded hooves, Rhetienn earned 2 VP. Her companions earned 1 each.

**The Pearl Chasers:** Sappil's martial prowess was on full display. He earned 3 VP, and Mellita earned 1.

**Team Akki:** Though Akki had earned 4 VP, the team earns no medallions for this event.

## Amphora Roll (Day 5)

With its pointed base, narrow neck, and pair of handles, the amphora is a ubiquitous jug for storing and shipping liquids like wine, oil, and fermented sauces. Ideally, a merchant loads amphorae into a wagon or ship's hull for transportation. But when conditions aren't ideal, civilians get resourceful. When a now-forgotten olive presser needed to get her oil to the harbor before her hired ship set sail, she set one of the giant amphora on its side, balanced on top, and spun the jar with her feet to steer it down the sloping street toward port. The desperate feat supposedly ended in disaster. However, the audacious athletics inspired countless others to try. Amphora rolling has since turned into a local sport.

A competitor begins in South Slope with a water-filled amphora roughly the size of a human. They must roll the amphora down the designated streets, which wind their way to the finish line at the harbor. The competitor can run alongside the amphora or balance atop it, but they're prohibited from lifting and carrying it farther than a few steps. The competition judges keep the route clear of civilians and property, but judges often set up mock obstacles like market stalls, carts, or rubble to complicate the race.

A team can choose to compete as a group or separately, with their best race time used to determine their score. For a group, two competitors are designated as rollers and can handle the amphora. Typically, one of the rollers attempts a skill check, and the other can Aid. Any other team members are guides. A guide races nearby on foot to help identify hazards and clear a

path—anything that doesn't involve a guide physically touching the amphora. A guide's efforts sometimes just Aid a roller, and some obstacles have special ways to provide a different benefit.

**The Amphora:** These amphorae are especially sturdy. Each weighs 7 bulk, has 10 Hit Points, has 3 Hardness, and they can support a PC's weight. Even so, some obstacles can damage it. The broken condition imposes a -2 penalty to checks to maneuver an amphora. A destroyed amphora shatters, and a judge brings a replacement. However, this delay wastes one turn.

**The Route:** The amphora roll functions as a chase (*GM Core* 192), and the team's score is based on how many turns it takes for them to cross the finish line. An obstacle lists the Overcome skills or saving throws (for the rollers to earn Chase Points), recommended skills a guide might use to Aid the rollers, and any additional options the obstacle presents.

In this chase, critically failing a check to overcome an obstacle doesn't make the team lose 1 Chase Point. Instead, the check earns no Chase Points, and the amphora takes 1d6 bludgeoning damage (or more, for some obstacles).

### STEEP SLOPE

### OBSTACLE

**Chase Points** 1; **Overcome** DC 15 Athletics or DC 17 Reflex; **Guide** Perception (to spot the slope beforehand)

The street descends at a precipitous angle. There's a risk the amphora rolls away from the team.

### GOAT CROSSING

### OBSTACLE

**Chase Points** 2; **Overcome** DC 15 Acrobatics or DC 17 Athletics; **Guide** Intimidation, Nature, or Survival (to drive off the goats to clear a path)

The judges banned livestock from crossing the route. These goats don't care. A few of them even seem ready to headbutt the amphora and anyone near it.

**Special** If a guide critically succeeds at their check to drive off the goats, the herd scatters, also earning the team 1 Chase Point.

### PEBBLES AND POTHOLES

### OBSTACLE

**Overcome** 1; **Overcome** DC 17 Acrobatics or DC 15 Athletics; **Guide** Crafting (to make a bridge across the gutter), Athletics (to sweep away some gravel), or Perception (to spot a path)

This street needs serious repair. Potholes, gravel, and trash litter the intersection, plus the amphora will need to cross a shallow gutter designed to redirect rainwater. Keeping the amphora balanced will be difficult.

**Special** Critically failing a check to Overcome this obstacle deals 3 additional damage to the amphora.



**DUBIOUS GATE** **OBSTACLE**

**Chase Points** 2; **Overcome** DC 17 Athletics, DC 19 Acrobatics, or DC 16 Performance; **Guide** Athletics (to break the gate), Crafting (to assemble a ramp to jump the gate), Thievery (to unlock the gate) can all bypass the gate, reducing the Overcome DCs by 3.

A rickety gate has been erected, blocking the route and indicating a detour. Following the original route involves getting through the gate, whereas the detour could waste time or even be a distraction.

The team must make a choice about which path to take. The Guides might identify the best route (see below). Taking the long detour earns the PCs 1 Chase Point in Overcoming this obstacle, but doing so takes the entire turn.

**Special** Rather than open the gate, a Guide can attempt a DC 12 Pol-Bailax Lore check or DC 15 Society check to compare the intended route to the indicated detour to know which is better. If the Guide succeeds, they know the detour is safer but takes longer. If the Guide critically succeeds, they identify a more efficient detour that earns the team 1 Chase Point in Overcoming this obstacle.

**OVERCROWDED FINISH LINE** **OBSTACLE**

**Chase Points** 2; **Overcome** DC 16 Acrobatics, DC 18 Athletics, DC 16 Intimidation; **Guide** Deception, Diplomacy, Intimidation, or Performance to manage the crowd and clear a path

It looks like half of Bailax showed up to witness the finish line! The crowd spills partway into the race's route, risking a dangerous collision!

**Scoring the Event**

Tally the number of chase rounds the PCs spent completing the race. The lowest number represents the fastest time. In case of a tie, the competitor with the least damaged amphora wins.

**The Golden Pegasi:** Yphani's strength helps her steer the heavy amphora to the finish line in 6 rounds, but her amphora has only 2 Hit Points remaining.

**The Pearl Chasers:** Mellita is a natural at guiding the ceramics, completing the race in 7 rounds with an undamaged amphora.

**Team Akki:** Akki nimbly navigates the course in 7 rounds, her amphora having 9 HP remaining.

**ADDITIONAL ADVENTURES**

Between events, the PCs are free to socialize and rest. However, as they make a name for themselves, they're approached with various opportunities that won't keep them from attending their next event.

**B. Copper Forge Scamps** **Moderate 1**

"Pol-Bailax bleeds green," boasts an old poem, citing the island's rich veins of malachite and chalcopyrite that crisscross the hills and fuel the city's copper industry. However, a previously unknown menace has infiltrated this ancient industry: metal elementals. A pair of scamps recently hid away in an ore shipment, slipping into Bailax unnoticed. Once inside one of the forges, the scamps ambushed the workers and are now treating the lit furnaces as a personal spa. Guards made an initial attempt to chase off the scamps; however, the elementals' magnetic abilities transformed the forge into a flurry of shrapnel. After being alerted to the incident, Terpsime asks that the PCs assist the guards.

When the PCs arrive, they find seven guards forming a perimeter around the workshop. Two have bandages covering recent wounds, and another two are whittling wooden clubs or braiding slings while watching the building. The supervisor, an officer named **Auppyphory** (cautious female nephilim guard 2) whose body is partly covered in fish scales, warns the PCs not to approach the ongoing standoff. Once it's clear the PCs are there to help, she relents



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and updates them, interrupted by the workshop's foreman, **Ulos** (diligent male human metallurgist 1).

"About two hours ago, several metal demons attacked the forge from inside," summarizes Aupyphory. "We responded quickly, only to learn the imps can control metal—turned the whole workshop into a whirlwind! We retreated and have been preparing for a second raid since then."

A wizened smith stomps up to interject, "And taking your time about it, too! Not all of us made it out, you know!"

The guard raises her hands to placate him. "Steady, Ulos. We've heard from them and know they're alive. Now that we have backup, we can finish this threat and evacuate your employees."

Aupyphory shares her plan and what she knows of their foes. She wants to enter the workshop quietly from several directions, evacuating as many of the four remaining workers as possible before the intruders notice. After that, her guards will prioritize extricating any remaining workers as the PCs distract the imps. Once everyone's safe, the guards can aid in the fight.

Nobody here recognized the metal scamps for what they are. That said, they know there are two creatures, each of them metallic, lamb-sized, looking like a demon, and capable of flight and controlling metal. One of the creatures magically seized a guard's sword and hurled it at another guard, so the squad has been making non-metal weapons for their next assault. Aupyphory encourages the PCs to use whatever arms they want, though there are enough clubs, staves, and slings available to equip the PCs.

**Rescuing Workers:** Combat doesn't begin immediately. Instead, the PCs can help extract the four workers quietly before the scamps notice. Any PCs who don't want to risk this first operation can remain at a safe distance, but in the subsequent combat, they begin 20 feet outside the workshop's south door.

Any PC who does participate can attempt a skill check to Evacuate Workers. If the scamps haven't been alerted after each PC makes one check, the DC of the checks increases by 2, and the PCs can repeat the process to rescue more workers. Once the PCs earn 3 Awareness Points, the scamps become fully alert and begin combat. Use the map on page 22 for this encounter.

### EVACUATE WORKERS

You create a distraction or quietly escort a worker to safety. Attempt a DC 15 Deception or Stealth check. Alternatively, you can attempt a DC 15 Performance check to create a riskier, more overt distraction; treat a successful check as a critical success, but treat a failure as a critical failure. At

the GM's discretion, if you have an ability that enhances your distracting skill (such as the Fascinating Performance feat), you do not treat a failure as a critical failure.

**Critical Success** Your effort allows two workers to escape.

**Success** Your effort allows one worker to escape.

**Failure** You earn 1 Awareness Point.

**Critical Failure** You earn 1d6–3 Awareness Points (minimum 1).

At the end of each combat round, the guards provide cover for another worker to escape safely. At the beginning of any turn when all of the workers are safe, the guards either provide combat support or give medical aid to one PC; for simplicity, the guards aren't placed on the map or given individual turns. Combat support involves a hail of sling stones and battering the scamps with staves, making both scamps off-guard. Medical aid involves providing a PC assisted recovery against bleed damage, restoring 1 Hit Point, and (if the player wants) dragging an unconscious PC up to 10 feet away from the fight.

**Creatures:** The scamps were sleeping contentedly until a worker confused one for an oversized chunk of ore and tried to break it apart with a hammer. The scamps have since rampaged around the workshop and broken the side off a still-warm furnace full of embers and copper to use as a sauna. They periodically hurl an ingot at the workers who hide behind barrels of charcoal in a corner, daring the humans to flee.

The workshop is filled with metal, including several features that always activate the scamps' fast healing, such as the furnaces, the crate of ingots, and the tool bench. In any other space, the scamp attempts a DC 11 flat check at the beginning of its turn. On a success, there is enough metal in the space to activate the scamp's fast healing that turn.

### METAL SCAMPS (2)

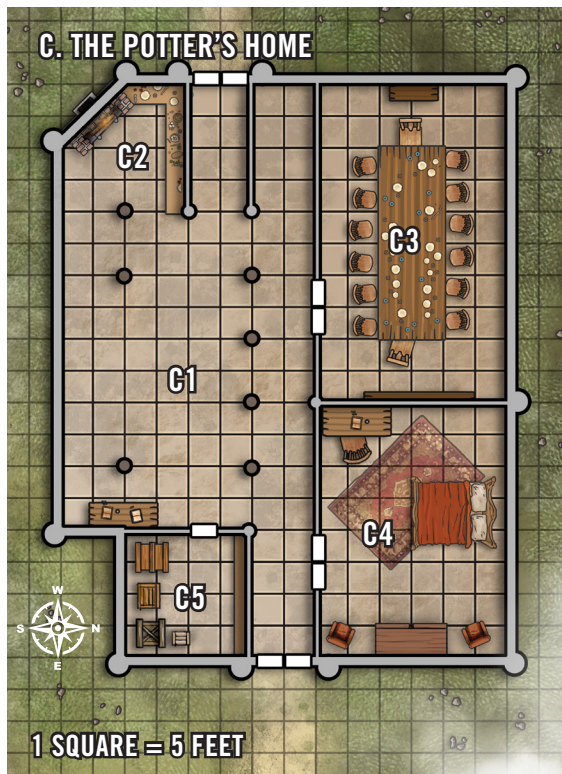
### CREATURE 1

Variant metal scamp (*Pathfinder Rage of Elements* 153)

**Initiative** Perception +3

**Metal Mayhem** In place of the spell's typical effect, the metal scamp can cast *magnetic attraction* (*Secrets of Magic* 114) to send metal tools, ingots, and other objects flying throughout the workshop interior. This deals 1d4 bludgeoning damage (basic Reflex DC 16) to all creatures inside the workshop except those with greater cover or the metal trait. Once per round, the scamp can Sustain the spell to repeat the damage. While this effect is active, the scamps are in contact with metal for the purpose of their fast healing.

The workers maintain greater cover behind barrels whenever the scamps use their metal mayhem ability.



This averts any damage, but the workers also don't flee while taking cover.

**Reward:** The PCs receive 10 additional XP if they evacuate all of the workers safely, plus an additional 10 XP if evacuated all four before the scamps noticed.

**Treasure:** Terpsime gifts the PCs a bronze torque worth 3 gp as a token of her appreciation. The forge gifts the PCs a common metal *+1 weapon* made of bronze.

### Accursed Hospitality

**Timing:** After the eating contest on Day 3

Hospitality ranks among Ibyldos's greatest virtues, and denying succor to a stranger in need—or worse, betraying a guest's guarantee of safety—is one of the gravest offenses. A week ago, the potter Ataiosiphon prepared his home to host his fiancée's parents for a fancy meal. When a knock came at the door, he opened it to find not his prospective in-laws but instead a bedraggled, starving traveler. Fearing an unexpected guest could jeopardize his first impression with his fiancée's family, the potter turned away the stranger and resumed feast preparations.

Ill fortune led to the traveler's death shortly afterward, and he decried the selfish potter who had denied him shelter. Several nights ago, toward the end of Ataiosiphon's otherwise fruitful visit by future in-laws, a ghastly spirit emerged through the door, denounced the young potter's bad manners, and chased

him and his guests from the home. Now, Ataiosiphon's house is haunted, the spirit is destroying his food, and his wedding plans are in jeopardy.

During the eating competition on the third day, a gaunt, half-starved Ataiosiphon ate ravenously. Shortly afterward, he approaches the PCs, hoping they can help exorcise his home. He might ask the city's guards, but he's worried that their intervention would fuel neighborhood gossip and further damage his reputation. Ataiosiphon doesn't expect the PCs to solve his romantic problems; he'll handle those consequences himself. Most of his wealth is invested in his home and job, so as payment he offers to let the PCs sort through and claim a few of his aunt's eccentric memorabilia.

If the PCs are willing to help, the potter leads them to his home, gives them a key, and describes the recent events. He has linked the spirit to the stranger at his door, and he's sure it's punishment for denying hospitality. However, he doesn't know what the spirit is or how to appease it.

### Investigating

The PCs have several ways to investigate and resolve this haunting. These include several clues and an encounter in the house itself (area C3 on page 25).

**Investigating the House:** The PCs can thoroughly explore the home in about 10 minutes. The home has an ominous feel. PCs sense something watching them from the periphery, even catching glimpses of a ghostly figure vanishing around a corner or watching from the reflection of a polished surface. A PC who succeeds at a DC 17 Perception check while Seeking witnesses enough of the spirit to try identifying it with a Recall Knowledge check (DC 21 Occultism or Religion).

**Spirit Research:** A PC might Recall Knowledge about xenia spirits with a successful DC 19 Cooking Lore check or a DC 21 Occultism, Religion, or Society check to Recall Knowledge. They can also spend 2 hours Gathering Information (with a DC 16 Diplomacy check) or researching (granting a +2 circumstance bonus to Recall Knowledge). Nearly everyone here grows up hearing myths of these spirits, though everyone has different, and even contradictory, folk remedies.

Whatever means the PCs use, with a successful check a character learns that a xenia spirit haunts the home, why it's there, and the basics of how to appease it. In this case, the traveler needed food, so a display of culinary generosity—the bigger, the better—might exorcise it.

**Identifying the Stranger:** Learning about the stranger can help the PCs empathize with and placate the xenia spirit. By spending 2 hours Gathering Information and succeeding at a DC 15 Diplomacy check, a PC learns that the stranger sheltered in North

Slope alleys before passing away and being carted off to a morgue. Witnesses remember hearing that his name was Gatrion and that he mentioned being robbed by brigands in the island's interior. If the PCs also visit the morgue, Gatrion's body shows signs of being clubbed repeatedly, and he has a tattoo of a forked stick on his left shoulder. With a successful DC 12 Hero-God Lore check or DC 14 Religion or Society check, a PC recognizes the tattoo as a symbol of Metikore, a deceased hero-god of dowers and bronze casters; this suggests Gatrion was a miner, merchant, or other dealer in copper goods.

### C. The Potter's Home

Ataiosiphon inherited this sizable North Slope home from his late aunt.

**C1. Courtyard:** Like many Ibydan homes, this house has a courtyard whose roof covers all but a 20-foot-by-20-foot section, letting in light and a cooling breeze.

**C2. Kitchen:** Cabinets, counters, and ovens wrap around this kitchen niche, potentially accommodating many cooks at once. The cabinets contain jars and sacks whose food has been reduced to acrid dust.

**C3. Common Room:** Ataiosiphon's aunt and uncle loved entertaining large groups around the massive dining table here—far too large for the potter's needs. A mannequin stands in one corner, outfitted with the panoply of an Ibydan soldier: a breastplate, helm, greaves, shield, and spear.

**C4. Bedroom:** Ataiosiphon's quarters are tastefully decorated, including many scroll wall hangings depicting heroes and monsters of Ibydan myth.

**C5. Storage:** About half of this large closet's contents are heirlooms and unopened crates from Ataiosiphon's aunt. The other half consists of spare ceramics tools and materials that don't fit in his off-site workshop.

The aunt's possessions are disorganized and suggest an adventuring lifestyle in her youth. By spending an hour rummaging, a PC can attempt a DC 15 Perception check to locate two of the following (or all of these on a critical success): a survey map (Pol-Bailax), a scholarly journal (multi-headed beasts), a tarnished statuette of a boar (functions as a cold iron chunk), or a kestros (*War of Immortals* 147) with 14 sling darts, one of which is a *type I spellstrike kestros dart* (*GM Core* 256).

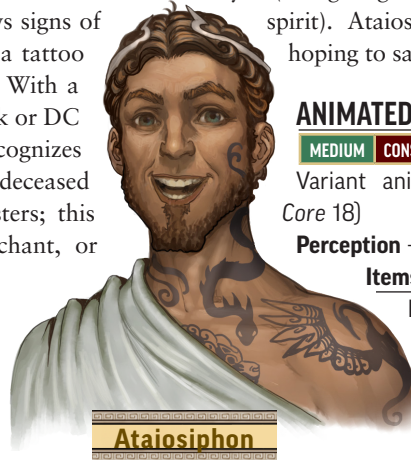
### Armor Attack

**Low 1**

This encounter occurs after the PCs spend a while looking around the home.

**Creatures:** The xenia spirit inhabits the armor display in area C3. If the sight of animated armor doesn't scare

off the intruders, the possessed armor attacks. As it does, parts of the ghostly spirit sometimes poke out from the armored mannequin, as if the two are not perfectly in sync (and giving the PCs more clues about the xenia spirit). Ataiosiphon retreats a short distance, hoping to safely witness the battle.



### ANIMATED PANOPLY **CREATURE 2**

**MEDIUM CONSTRUCT MINDLESS SPIRIT**

Variant animated armor (*Pathfinder Monster Core* 18)

**Perception** +6; darkvision

**Items** spear, wooden shield

**HP** 20; **Hardness** 9; **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, healing, mental, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poison, sickened, unconscious, void

**Shield Block** ↻

**Melee** ✦ kick +10 (agile, magical), **Damage** 1d6+4 bludgeoning

**Melee** ✦ spear +10 (magical, thrown 20 feet), **Damage** 1d8+4 piercing

**Development:** Once the PCs defeat the armor, the xenia spirit seeps out of it and into the floor with a dismayed hiss. Ataiosiphon is torn between bemoaning the damage to his ancestors' armor and praising the PCs' prowess. He decides to relocate (and eventually repair) the armor as the PCs investigate further.

### Appeasing the Spirit

**Severe 1**

After their investigation, the PCs should uncover what a xenia spirit is, clues as to who this spirit likely was in life, and that banishing a xenia spirit who starved involves being very generous with food. Ataiosiphon is happy to oblige, hoping the PCs can help him host a feast for his neighbors that night.

He offers 17 sp—enough to buy basic ingredients—and his kitchen has plenty of equipment. That said, the PCs' own skill and even monetary contributions affect the feast's quality. The PCs can contribute 10 sp to purchase even better ingredients, spend 10 sp to buy food for an even larger crowd, or both. Each of these two purchases grants all PCs a cumulative +1 circumstance bonus to all checks when cooking and entertaining (see below).

Each PC can contribute to the feast's preparations through one of the following activities. Resolve any patrolling and shopping attempts first, as these affect the cooking and entertaining activities. Ataiosiphon successfully Aids one PC, granting them a +1 bonus to their check. In addition, if the PCs use clever tactics to appeal to the xenia spirit's mortal identity (such as

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making mining-themed cakes or ensuring metalworkers are on the guest list), consider granting that PC an additional +1 bonus to their check.

**Shopping:** A PC with at least 10 sp can seek deals and the freshest produce, perhaps even convincing vendors to donate ingredients for the good cause. The PC attempts a DC 15 Diplomacy or Pol-Bailax Lore check or a DC 17 Deception or Society check. On a success, the PCs spend only half as much to gain one or both ingredient benefits. On a critical success, they gain both benefits for free.

**Patrolling:** A PC keeps watch or even arranges ritual defenses, ensuring the xenia spirit doesn't scare guests, oversalt the soup, or otherwise spoil the event. The PC attempts a DC 15 Occultism or Religion check, a DC 16 Intimidation check, or a DC 17 Perception check. On a success, the PC can intervene to avert disaster once during the event; after seeing the result of another PC's check while cooking or entertaining, the patrolling PC can roll 1d4+1 (1d4+3 on a critical success) and retroactively add it to the other PC's roll.

**Cooking:** A PC can create a worthy meal with a DC 14 Cooking Lore check, a DC 15 Crafting check, or a DC 16 Survival check to earn Victory Points (*GM Core* 184).

**Entertaining:** A PC can prioritize their guests' experience by being gracious hosts, providing music, and other entertainment. The PC attempts a DC 15 Performance check, a DC 16 Diplomacy check, or a DC 17 Society check to earn Victory Points.

**Concluding the Feast:** With the PCs' help, the feast draws a crowd that fills the home with light, food, and good cheer. After the last course is served and festivities are starting to wrap up, the potter signals for the guests' attention to begin a short speech thanking the PCs and the guests for such a memorable night.

However, hearing Ataiosiphon reference hospitality to a receptive crowd is too much for the xenia spirit. It emerges from a wall with a wail before lunging toward the potter—at least until the PCs intervene, at which point it focuses on them. Guests quickly get out of the way, watching with excitement from a distance. Use the map on page 24 for this encounter.

**Creatures:** The xenia spirit is similar to a ghost (*Monster Core* 160) with the Inhabit Object, Rejuvenation, and Site Bound abilities—an overwhelming foe for 1st-level PCs. Fortunately, the feast has confused and partially appeased the spirit, dampening its fury. The PCs witness it hesitate at the sight of the grand feast. Add up the Victory Points the PCs earned. If they earned at least 2 VP, apply the weak adjustment (*Monster Core* 7) to the xenia spirit. If they earned at least 4 VP, subtract an additional 2 from the spirit's attack bonuses, AC, DCs, Perception, and skill modifiers.

## XENIA SPIRIT

## CREATURE 4

UNCOMMON MEDIUM INCORPOREAL SPIRIT UNDEAD

**Perception** +8; darkvision

**Languages** Common, Iblydosi

**Skills** Athletics +5, Mining Lore +8, Society +6, Stealth +7

**Str** -5, **Dex** +1, **Con** +3, **Int** +0, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +0

**Site Bound** The xenia spirit is bound to Ataiosiphon's house.

**AC** 20; **Fort** +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +8

**HP** 32 (rejuvenation, void healing); **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, precision, unconscious; **Resistances** all damage 5 (except force, ghost touch, spirit, or vitality; double resistance vs. non-magical)

**Appeased by Hospitality** Displaying the hospitality that a xenia spirit was denied in life can avert its wrath. A plate of food, mug of fine drink, or similar fare held in one hand can be Raised as a Shield and used to Shield Block the spirit's attacks as if it were a buckler; a creature can Shield Block in this way even if they lack the feat.

**Libation Weakness** Pouring fine drink onto a xenia spirit can harm it. This functions like an alchemical weapon with a range increment of 10 feet and the bomb, consumable, spirit, and splash traits. A drink worth at least 1 cp (such as common ale) deals 1d4 spirit damage and 1 spirit splash damage. A drink worth at least 1 sp (such as a bottle of wine) deals 1d8 spirit damage and 1 spirit splash damage. As an Interact action, a creature can anoint a weapon with fine drink; the weapon's next successful Strike damages, the xenia spirit as though it had a *ghost touch* rune.

**Rejuvenation** (divine)

**Speed** fly 25 feet

**Melee** ✦ ghostly hand +12 (agile, finesse, magical), **Damage** 2d6+2 void

**Inhabit Object** ✦ (*Monster Core* 160)

**Starving Invocation** ✦✦ (auditory, divine) The xenia spirit laments the hospitality it was denied, awakening painful hunger in others. Each living creature within 30 feet must attempt a DC 21 Fortitude save.

**Critical Success** The creature is immune for 24 hours.

**Success** The creature is unaffected.

**Failure** The creature is sickened 1. A creature sickened in this way can ingest food and drink, and it can only recover from the sickened condition by spending an Interact action to consume food within reach.

**Critical Failure** As failure, but the creature is sickened 2.

**Development:** Once reduced to 0 Hit Points, the xenia spirit flees before halting near a platter of food. It hesitantly picks up a morsel, savors a bite, gives Ataiosiphon and the PCs a grudgingly approving look, and then dissipates. The watching guests cheer and funnel back into the home, helping to celebrate the victory until the potter kicks everyone out hours later.



**Treasure:** As promised, Ataiosiphon lets the PCs take any two of the four items they find in area C5. Treat the kestros and its ammunition as one item.

**Reward:** If the PCs earned at least 3 Victory Points, they earn 10 XP for throwing a delightful feast that guests brag about for days to come.

## CONCLUDING THE GAMES

After the amphora roll, Undyl gathers the teams to tally their medallions and announce winners. The cyclops has arrayed several lots of Dintolneon's possessions bequeathed to the city, and he identifies the magical items so the PCs (and the players) can make an informed choice. Beginning with the winning team—each of whom also receive a *champion's laurels* (page 81)—and then in descending order, Undyl calls up each team to pick a lot as their prize.

**Lot 1:** A *pyrefeather cloak* (page 81), *pyrefeather token* (page 81), elegant leather boots worth 3 gp

**Lot 2:** A *persona mask*, bronze half-plate armor, and a necklace (worth 8 gp) with dangling fish charms

**Lot 3:** A *gift of olives* (page 81), three bottles of exceptional olive oil worth 2 gp each, and a *scroll of funeral flames* (page 82).

**Lot 4:** A *death tusk helm* (page 81), a bronze +1 *shortsword* whose scabbard depicts heroes fighting harpies, and a steel shield painted with a red phoenix.

Once the teams have claimed prizes and received the spectators' adulation, Undyl offers one last reminder.

"Remember, these games honored our beloved Dintolneon, whose spirit will be among those we guide to the sea tonight. Join us outside the main gate at sundown so that we can bid him safe journeys one last time."

## D. Spirits' Send-off Moderate 1

The hero-god Loptoleon once shepherded the recently deceased to the afterlife, with the spirits walking along the bioluminescent wake of his boat. He has since perished, yet spirits of the Ibydan dead still walk to the sea each Moonday as if answering his call. Bailax guides the spirits with torches and pyres, lighting the way, ensuring the dead don't get lost (and haunt the land), and giving them one last look at their loved ones. Dintolneon's death draws an especially large crowd.

At sundown, a thousand citizens carrying lanterns somberly make their way outside the city, where they stand vigil several steps off the main road. The various friends the PCs have made meet them there with spare torches, guiding them to stand near the front of the crowd. Moments later, the first spirits arrive.



Glowing faintly with spectral light, souls of the recently deceased march along the road, gazing at the onlookers with wonder and even starting to leave the road, only to be repelled by the lanterns' heat. The crowd softly encourages them onward, tosses flower petals on the road, and even calls out messages to be carried to loved ones in the afterlife.

Within minutes, scores of spirits have joined the procession, including a spectral Dintolneon. Then without warning, a third light appears: a meteor streaking westward less than a mile overhead, trailing angry red flames. Its sonic boom crashes into the crowd, bowling over some and extinguishing others' lanterns. Worse, as the meteor's sparks fall among the marching spirits, the ghosts' faces contort with confusion and rage before the spirits begin lunging at bystanders!

**Creatures:** The spirits focus their attacks on nearby creatures, so if they hold their ground, the PCs can draw the spirits' ire and buy others time to escape.

## ENRAGED SPIRITS (3) CREATURE 0

UNCOMMON MEDIUM HUMAN INCORPOREAL SPIRIT

Variant fisher (*Pathfinder NPC Core* 68)

**Perception** +6; low-light vision

**Str** -5, **Dex** +2, **Con** +1, **Int** +0, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +0

**HP** 10; **Immunities** bleed, disease, paralyzed, poison, unconscious; **Resistances** all damage 3 (except fire, force, ghost touch, or spirit; double resistance vs. non-magical)

**Melee** ♦ ghostly hand +7 (agile, finesse, magical, spirit),

**Damage** 1d4+3 spirit

**Development:** Within minutes, the spirits' sudden fury fades. Many of the spirits sheepishly scurry down the road toward the sea, and others wordlessly mouth apologies to loved ones or flee in shame into the nearby woodlands. City officials do what they can to restore order and escort everyone home. Nobody is sure what streaked overhead, but everyone has a theory. Whatever it was, though, it has shaken Bailax. Terpsime lets the PCs know she might need their help investigating it in the coming days.

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## CHAPTER 2: SEEKING THE BRIGHT-TAILED STAR

The meteorite that interrupted the Moonday send-off worries the people of Pol-Bailax. After a day of discussion, several drasikons determined the matter must be investigated. They authorize an expedition to investigate the impact site, a small, currently uninhabited island off the coast of Pol-Bailax known as Eupherae. For details on Eupherae, see page 30.

The PCs are called up to the acropolis's main courtyard to meet with Terspime about the expedition. She's joined by Skorgomos, an elderly cyclops who leads the giant seers.

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Terspime looks up as the door opens, gesturing welcome. "Thank you for coming," she says. "First, I want to offer my thanks—and the city's—for your quick action during the festival. There's no question your intervention saved lives."

From his seat in the corner, Skorgomos nods. "The angry shades may be appeased," he rumbles, "but trouble remains. That meteorite appeared at the same time the send-off was disrupted, and there are no coincidences in the weave of fate."

"Therefore," Terspime adds, "we're authorizing an expedition to Eupherae, the island where the meteorite fell. We'd like you to spearhead this; you've proven yourselves capable and canny, and those involved in Pol-Bailax's official defense will need to remain here in case anything else happens. The mission is to survey the island, determine what crashed there, and neutralize threats if necessary. Are you willing to aid?"

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Terspime explains they've arranged transportation on a ship called the *Tide Hunter*, whose captain and

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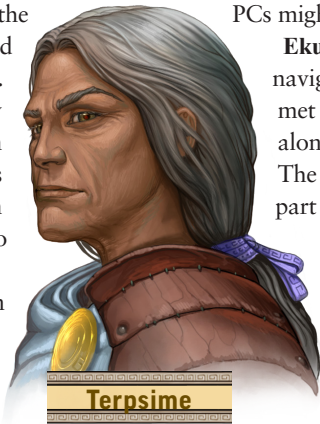
crew will assist. Additionally, several other citizens they've invited onto the expedition will be bringing teams; she indicates the PCs may have met some of them during the festival. Skorgomos lets the PCs know who they'll be working with and says they can meet up near the *Tide Hunter*.

**Dikaios:** Whatever fell from the sky must be highly dangerous to have such an effect, and Dikaios is keen to stamp out this threat. Besides, protecting Pol-Bailax from this danger is an excellent opportunity to test his skills.

**Phel:** This merfolk has heard tales of an ancient hero-god shrine on Eupherae since they were a child. Although they recognize the meteorite is important, their main objective is to investigate the island and learn if there's any truth to the stories.

**Sappil:** After the events of the festival, Sappil is convinced that whatever other secrets the meteorite holds, it must contain valuable skymetals that could turn a nice profit for those who find it.

The PCs can make whatever preparations they wish before heading to the *Tide Hunter*. Terpsime tells them the captain is ready to set sail once they're prepared, though emphasizes they should depart soon.



Terpsime

## THE TIDE HUNTER

Transportation for the expedition to Eupherae is assigned to the capable hands of Yasmenei, captain of the *Tide Hunter*. Yasmenei is a knowledgeable resource about the waters around the region, though she's only recently returned after a long journey and doesn't have current information on the denizens of Pol-Bailax's surrounding islands. For details on Yasmenei, see page 92. The *Tide Hunter* is a twenty-oared light warship (see inside back cover), a long, sharp-keeled ship.

As the PCs arrive, read or paraphrase the following.

Sailors swarm through the harbor, hauling supplies and equipment to a ship at the far end of the docks. Crisp white sails flutter in the breeze on the ship's two masts, and lines of oars march neatly down its sides. The figurehead on the prow is a carved owl, its head facing toward the horizon, and more owl carvings decorate the ship's rails and masts.

Through the hubbub, an elven woman, her hair in a long braid, waves from the *Tide Hunter*'s deck. "You're the ones I'm ferrying to Eupherae, I take it?" she calls. "We'd best get a move on if you want to arrive with some daylight!"

The other expedition members introduce themselves to Yasmenei and her crew, and as soon as everyone is aboard, the *Tide Hunter* departs! During the journey,

Yasmenei introduces herself, chatting with the PCs while the water is calm and inviting them to lend their back in pulling oars. Below are several other crew the PCs might meet aboard the *Tide Hunter*.

**Ekuno Kworale** (wary male human navigator 2) hails from distant Holomog and met Yasmenei when their journeys crossed along the southern coast of Casmaron. The two became fast friends, and he's been part of the *Tide Hunter*'s crew ever since.

He often cautions Yasmenei to be less reckless in the courses she charts.

The quartermaster, "Wandering" **Syrenike** (stern nonbinary undine halfling provisioner 2), earned their appellation from their strict schedule of only staying with a single ship for

five years, give or take any time needed to reach the next port, before moving on. They've never explained this to anyone, nor spoken of their past. As the five-year mark is approaching, Yasmenei's been attempting to convince them to stay.

With her impressive knowledge of crafting and maintenance, **Vakloia** (creative female stheno<sup>B3</sup> carpenter 2) keeps the *Tide Hunter* in good repair. She's a relatively new addition to its crew, having joined a year ago when it visited her home of Dhuraxilis. She's always coming up with new innovations for the ship and enjoys swapping notes with any like-minded artisans.


## The Tide Hunter's Hold

The *Tide Hunter* serves as a makeshift "shop" during this adventure, watched over by the steely eye of Wandering Syrenike. The PCs can sell items to the *Tide Hunter* for half price, as normal, though Syrenike also accepts barter for items of equivalent value. In addition to the supplies the expedition needs for the journey, the hold contains crates of equipment that Syrenike sells to the PCs for the normal price.

The PCs can procure any common, non-magical gear of level 1 or lower, in addition to the uncommon weapons from *War of Immortals* (147–148). The ship also has a small selection of magic items, including a *battle medic's baton* (Treasure Vault 114), *everlight crystal*, *mage's hat*, and *tracker's goggles*, as well as three *lesser healing potions*, six *minor healing potions*, a *sleep arrow*, and an *oil of potency*. At GM discretion, the hold might contain additional uncommon or magic items of level 3 or lower.

## Event 1: Across the White-Frothed Sea

Eupherae is half a day's sail from Pol-Bailax. Normally, the route to the island is straightforward and the



surrounding waters are relatively calm. However, as the *Tide Hunter* gets midway to Eupherae an unseasonable storm kicks up, as weather patterns have been disrupted by the warshard.

Forks of lightning flash across the sky as sheets of rain cascade over the *Tide Hunter's* deck. At the helm, Yasmenei shouts orders to the crew, who struggle to control the oars and take in the sails through the wind and rain.

"All hands!" she calls, pitching her voice to carry over the storm. "Take up your positions! We've got some exciting weather afoot!"

Suddenly, the *Tide Hunter* lurches, something jolting it from below, and a massive, serpentine beast breaches the waves next to the ship. Its fanged maw snaps at the *Tide Hunter's* masts, splinters flying as the ship veers to avoid the serpent's teeth.

"We can't fight that!" Yasmenei shouts. "Everyone hang onto something; it's about to get choppy!"

Yasmenei remains at the helm during the storm, ensuring the *Tide Hunter* stays on course and doesn't capsize. All hands are needed on deck to weather the storm's ferocity, and the PCs are a key part of the effort. To protect the *Tide Hunter* and its supplies, they must assist with sailing, navigating, and dodging the angry sea serpent (*Monster Core* 299)!

This event uses the Diminishing Victory Points variant of the Victory Points subsystem (*GM Core* 185). The PCs' objective is to help bring the *Tide Hunter* safely to Eupherae before it runs out of Ship Points, representing both the structural integrity of the ship and its supplies. The *Tide Hunter* begins with 10 Ship Points; however, for groups of five or more PCs, consider increasing this total by 1–2 for each PC beyond four to account for the additional skill checks (and chances to lose Ship Points).

This encounter is broken into three phases, after which the ship reaches safety. Once per phase, each PC must perform the Weather the Storm activity below to protect the *Tide Hunter*. Several skills are recommended, but feel free to allow other skills if the PC have alternative strategies, using the DCs listed as a guide. At GM discretion, use of certain spells or abilities might provide a bonus on a skill check.

## WEATHER THE STORM

CONCENTRATE | EXPLORATION | MANIPULATE

You take swift action to crew the *Tide Hunter* and protect its supplies. Choose one of the objectives below and attempt a DC 16 skill check from the skills listed, or a DC 14 Sailing Lore check. The results of these checks determine whether you lose Ship Points.

**Batten Down:** You secure the supplies on deck and shield them from damage with an Athletics or Crafting check. If you critically succeed, you retrieve some supplies that were thought lost and regain 1 Ship Point (maximum 10).

**Calm the Serpent:** You distract or placate the sea serpent with a Deception or Nature check.

**Command Crew:** You aid Yasmenei in relaying her orders and issuing your own when she's occupied at the helm with a Diplomacy or Intimidation check. If you critically succeed, you inspire your companions, and all PCs get a +2 circumstance bonus to checks to Weather the Storm during the next phase.

**Maneuver Ship:** You help maneuver the *Tide Hunter* by rowing (with an Athletics check) or tending the sails (with an Acrobatics check).

**Navigate:** You keep an eye on the waters and scan for potential hazards with a Perception or Survival check.

**Success** Your actions prevent the *Tide Hunter* from losing any Ship Points.

**Failure** The *Tide Hunter* loses 1 Ship Point.

**Critical Failure** The *Tide Hunter* loses 2 Ship Points.

The final Ship Point total determines the condition of the *Tide Hunter* and its supplies upon arrival at Eupherae. The *Tide Hunter* sets out with 12 days worth of supplies.

**9-10 Ship Points:** The *Tide Hunter* makes it to Eupherae undamaged thanks to the PCs' efforts, and they earn the respect of their fellow explorers during the storm. Decrease the DCs for the checks in **Event 3** by 2.

**4-8 Ship Points:** The *Tide Hunter* sustains only minor damage and its supplies remain intact.

**1-3 Ship Points:** The *Tide Hunter* is badly damaged and loses one day's worth of supplies. The other teams of explorers must spend a day on repairs before the *Tide Hunter* can set sail for home, preventing them from doing any other activities that day.

**0 Ship Points:** The *Tide Hunter* limps to the beach at Eupherae, barely seaworthy. The expedition loses two days' worth of supplies, and the other explorer teams must spend two days on repairs.

**Reward:** If the PCs ended the encounter with 9–10 Ship Points, they earn 60 XP. If they had 4–8 Ship Points, they earn 50 XP. If they had 1–4 Ship Points, they earn 40 XP, and if they had 0 Ship Points, they earn 20 XP.

## E. EUPHERAE

Eupherae is a small island of roughly 25 square miles. Its terrain is hilly and forested, with small olive groves dotting its landscape and a seasonal creek running part

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of its length to the ocean. The island is too far from Pol-Bailax for most citizens to want to settle there, but over the millennia, it's held military outposts, fishing villages, pirate hideouts, and smugglers' dens. Currently, it's devoid of active humanoid settlements, and most structures on the island are abandoned and largely fallen to ruin.

At one time, however, Eupherae was sacred to the faith of Sophreista, an ancient hero-god. Two millennia ago, Sophreista defeated the Chimera of Avelos, a unique chimera that had been terrorizing the coast for months. On Eupherae's shores, she baited the chimera's heads to turn against one another before slaying the distracted beast. After this deed, the island became the center of Sophreista's worship; a shrine was built there in her honor. Sophreista lived there with her pegasus steed, Iokoris, when the two weren't out adventuring, and many of her followers took up residence on the island. Among these followers were a male aiuvarin named Ekleios, who became Sophreista's high priest, and Merosyne, a human woman and gifted poet who chronicled Sophreista's exploits and eventually became her lover.

For a time, life on Eupherae was peaceful for Sophreista and her cult. Tragically, it was not to last. One of Sophreista's rival hero-gods, Phreskores, envied her powers and sought her destruction, but he knew he couldn't defeat her in a fair fight. Instead, he coaxed Ekleios into betraying her, and the priest betrayed her greatest weakness: when Sophreista first gained mythic power, she was dying from an arrow embedded in one of her ribs, and though she was revived by her empowerment, the arrowhead remained within her. She knew if the spot were struck again, fate would catch up with her, and so she disclosed this information to only her most trusted allies.

Armed with this knowledge, Phreskores challenged Sophreista to battle and quickly targeted her weak point, slaying her. The pegasus Iokoris was badly wounded in the fight, and he barely managed to flee; it took him days to make his way back to Eupherae. Meanwhile, Merosyne discovered what Ekleios had done, and in vengeance, she poisoned him during Sophreista's funeral feast.

Neither Sophreista nor Ekleios would rest peacefully, however. Sophreista rose as a ghost, doomed to roam her former home while lamenting her betrayal. Ekleios rose as a herexen, yet Merosyne believed this wasn't punishment enough. She beseeched naiads of the surrounding sea for aid. Though generally uninterested in mortal affairs, the naiads took pity on Merosyne and granted her a boon. At her request, they performed a ritual to seal Ekleios in Sophreista's shrine, where

he could ponder his betrayal forever. When this was done, they placed Merosyne into a deep slumber, safe within a cave on the island, to allow her to remain with Sophreista's ghost until heroes capable of laying her beloved to rest arrived to awaken her.

Over the centuries, plants grew over Sophreista's shrine and its surroundings, yet the wards imprisoning Ekleios remained strong. However, when the warshard struck the island, the tremors physically cracked the wards and the warshard's mythic power eroded the magical bindings. Ekleios remains confined for now, but his malign influence is beginning to seep out. Without intervention, it's only a matter of time before he escapes.

The island had only one visitor at the time of impact. The stheno Pteios traveled here for inspiration, hoping to write new odes to hero-gods of bygone days. Upon investigating the crater and warshard, he received divine revelation from the slumbering titan, Sangeh. Now considering himself the titan's herald and mortal agent, Pteios absconded with the warshard and traveled first to Bailax, narrowly missing the PCs. The PCs don't encounter Pteios directly in this adventure, but they can learn about him through the one person who witnessed the stheno's movements: the ghost of Sophreista.


### Exploring the Island

When the *Tide Hunter* reaches Eupherae, read or paraphrase the following.

As the cry of "land!" echoes from the crew, Eupherae comes into view through the mist, a lush green landscape. Rocky bluffs rise along the eastern side of the island, stretching to encircle its northern tip, and toward its center, the rolling, forested hills turn to mountains. A creek, swollen with runoff, flows out to the shallows of the ocean, curving from the trees of the interior.

"We'll make our landing there," Yasmenei calls from the helm. She points toward a beach at the southern end of the island, sheltered by cliffs. Past the beach sprawls a scrubby forest of kapalan trees and juniper shrubs. The air carries the fresh tang of salt as the *Tide Hunter* maneuvers toward the beach, and seabirds circle overhead.

Once the PCs arrive, they can begin exploring the island while Yasmenei and her crew set up camp on the beach. Their search of Eupherae uses the hexploration rules (*GM Core* 206). The island is much smaller than the typical hexploration site, with each hex being only roughly 1.5 miles across, and the PCs don't need to use the Travel activity to progress through hexes. They're assumed to be able to reach any point on the island with enough time to explore it and return to



their beach camp. Reconnoitering a hex requires one hexploration activity as normal.

The PCs can enlist assistance from the three other expedition teams by asking them to Reconnoiter or Map a Hex; the teams report back instead of engaging with anything they find and have a +6 bonus to discover hidden features. One team always remains at the beach camp, giving it the benefit of the Fortify Camp activity. If the *Tide Hunter* was damaged during **Event 1**, the teams may need to spend their first one or two days on the island repairing the ship.

As the PCs explore, they find points of interest and learn more about the island and its history. Finding Iokoris or Merosyne gives them advance warning on Ekleios and the shrine, while other locations provide valuable treasure or hints about the warshard's impact. At the crater itself dwells a mated pair of hippogriffs that gained mythic power when suffused with its energy, and the PCs will need to defeat them before they can investigate the crater.

**Supplies:** The *Tide Hunter* arrives on Eupherae with enough fresh provisions to keep the expedition supplied for 12 days, not counting the day of their arrival, though the ship might have lost up to two days' worth of supplies in the storm. If the expedition runs out of provisions, the PCs can direct another team to Subsist, finding enough food and water to supplement the stores for one additional day; the team succeeds but doesn't perform other activities that day. Alternatively, the PCs can make the attempt to Subsist with a DC 13 Survival check. On a success, they find enough supplies for the expedition for one additional day, or two additional days on a critical success.

### Event 2: Unwelcome Visitors Trivial 2

Many of Eupherae's inhabitants have been affected by the warshard's proximity, and its fauna are no exception. A flock of terns once nested near the grotto in area **E8**, but they grew aggressive after the impact, and the naiads of the area shooed them away. At some point during the PCs' explorations, the tern flock visits their camp shortly after dawn, shrieking, stealing small personal possessions, and generally causing a nuisance. The timing of this event is at GM discretion, but should be after the PCs have Reconnoitered at least three hexes.

When the terns arrive at the camp, each PC attempts a DC 14 Perception check, noting that any PC not actively on watch at the time takes a -4 status penalty due to being asleep; remember that the Fortify Camp activity grants a +2 circumstance bonus to this check. To deal with the terns, each PC can attempt a DC 16 Athletics check (to throw things at the birds and scare them off), Nature check (to order the birds away), or

Thievery check (to wrest back stolen trinkets). PCs who didn't succeed at their Perception checks to notice the terns are slow to rouse and respond, taking a -2 penalty. A PC who succeeds at a DC 14 Nature or DC 16 Perception check realizes the terns are acting strangely, as they're not typically aggressive enough to attack a large encampment.

If at least half the PCs succeed at their skill checks to mitigate the terns' mischief, they shoo the flock off before it becomes more than a minor annoyance. If not, the birds mob the PCs and attack. Use the Beach Camp map on page 34 for this encounter if combat breaks out.

**Creatures:** The tern flock is aggressive, biting anyone attacking them but fleeing if reduced below 8 HP.

### TERN FLOCK CREATURE 2

As monkey swarm (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 3 172)

**Initiative** Perception +8

**Speed** 20 feet, fly 40 feet

**Reward:** Award the PCs 40 XP if they shooed the terns away without fighting them.

### Event 3: Tempers Flare Moderate 2

The day after **Event 1**, as the expedition members are preparing to set out for the day, a squabble breaks out between Sappil, Phel, and Dikaios. The exact nature of this argument should depend on events in the PCs' explorations thus far, keeping in mind the motivations of the three for joining the expedition. Perhaps Sappil and Phel disagree on what should be done with a historical relic one of the teams found in one of the ruins on the island; perhaps Dikaios and Sappil argue over where to explore next; or perhaps Phel wants to study the creature in the island's shrine while Dikaios wants to destroy it. Regardless, the quarrel soon gets heated, with the third person jumping in to take one side or argue a different position altogether.

Doing so involves attempting skill checks to earn Victory Points (*GM Core* 184), with each PC having one opportunity to influence someone and break up the argument peacefully. If only a few PCs are present (or only a few PCs want to intervene), consider letting each PC attempt two checks. The number of VP earned by the end of this challenge determines the quarrel's outcome (page 33).

As this encounter begins, each PC can attempt a DC 14 Perception check to Sense Motive. On a success, they identify the skills best suited to influence one of the three NPCs, plus the PC realizes the expedition members are dramatically more short-tempered than they've ever been before—certainly more than their current disagreement warrants. On a critical success, the PC

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identifies two of the NPCs' influence skills, plus the PC realizes that these three seem supernaturally compelled to argue and unaware of that mysterious influence. The first time someone points out that the NPCs have been enchanted, the next check to influence an NPC gains a +1 circumstance bonus.

### IRRATIONAL SQUABBLE

**Dikaios Skills** DC 14 Intimidation, DC 15 Sailing Lore (to demand obedience like a ship captain and make Dikaios snap to attention), DC 16 Diplomacy

**Phel Skills** DC 14 Cooking Lore (to distract Phel with promises of a novel meal), DC 14 Society (to engage them in historical debate instead of attacking their companions), DC 16 Diplomacy

**Sappil Skills** DC 14 Performance (to distract him with verse or music), DC 14 Warfare Lore (to note how this fight weakens the expedition), DC 16 Diplomacy

**0-1 VP** Tempers flare further, and the three NPCs come to blows (see below).

**VP 2** One quarreler relents, grumbling for a moment before offering a sheepish apology for their behavior and admitting they don't know why they got so riled up. However, the other two NPCs become violent.

**VP 3** All of the quarrelers relent, as above.

**Creatures:** Agitated by the warshard's influence, the quarrelers use lethal force but do surrender once reduced below 8 HP. Once the PCs engage them, the NPCs stop fighting each other and turn on the PCs. Noncombatant onlookers urge the PCs to subdue their compatriots without killing them, as they can tell something's amiss.

### SAPPIL

### CREATURE 1

UNIQUE MEDIUM HUMANOID VISHKANYA

Patient male vishkayna mercenary

**Perception** +3; low-light vision

**Languages** Common, Draconic, Iblydosi, Vishkanya

**Skills** Arcana +6, Athletics +6, Diplomacy +3, Intimidation +3, Society +6, Warfare Lore +6

**Str** +3, **Dex** +1, **Con** +2, **Int** +3, **Wis** +0, **Cha** +0

**Items** hide armor, greatsword, spellbook

**AC** 16; **Fort** +7, **Ref** +4, **Will** +5

**HP** 19

**Speed** 20 feet

**Melee** ♦ greatsword +6 (versatile P), **Damage** 1d12+3 slashing

**Magus Prepared Spells** DC 16, attack +6; **1st** *hydraulic push*; **Cantrips (1st)** *detect magic*, *ignition*, *needle darts* (*Rage of Elements* 144), *shield*, *telekinetic projectile*



Sappil

**Conflux Spells** DC 16; **1st** (1 Focus Point) *thunderous strike* (*Secrets of Magic* 144)

**Arcane Cascade** ♦ (stance) **Requirements** Sappil most recent action this turn was to Cast a Spell or make a Spellstrike; **Effect** While in this stance, Sappil's melee Strikes deal 1 extra force damage and gain the arcane trait, making them magical. When he enters Arcane Cascade and at the start of each of his turns while in the stance, if he's wielding a melee weapon in two hands, he gains 1 temporary HP.

**Envenom** ♦ **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** Sappil applies vishkanyan venom (either his saliva or blood) to one weapon that he's holding.

**Spellstrike** ♦♦ Sappil Casts a Spell that takes 1 or 2 actions to cast and requires a spell attack roll and makes a melee Strike, using the attack roll result to determine the effects of both the Strike and the spell. This counts as two actions for his multiple attack penalty, but he doesn't apply the penalty until after he's completed the Spellstrike. This grants the Strike the arcane and magical traits. After using Spellstrike, Sappil can't do so again for 1d4 rounds.

**Vishkanyan Venom** (injury, poison) **Saving Throw** DC 15 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 1d4 poison damage (1 round); **Stage 2** 1d4 poison damage and off-guard (1 round); **Stage 3** 1d4 poison damage, off-guard, and a -5-foot penalty to Speed (1 round)

### DIKAIOS

### CREATURE 1

UNIQUE MEDIUM HUMANOID NEPHILIM

Adventurous male nephilim rigger (*Pathfinder NPC Core* 146)

**Initiative** Perception +10; low-light vision

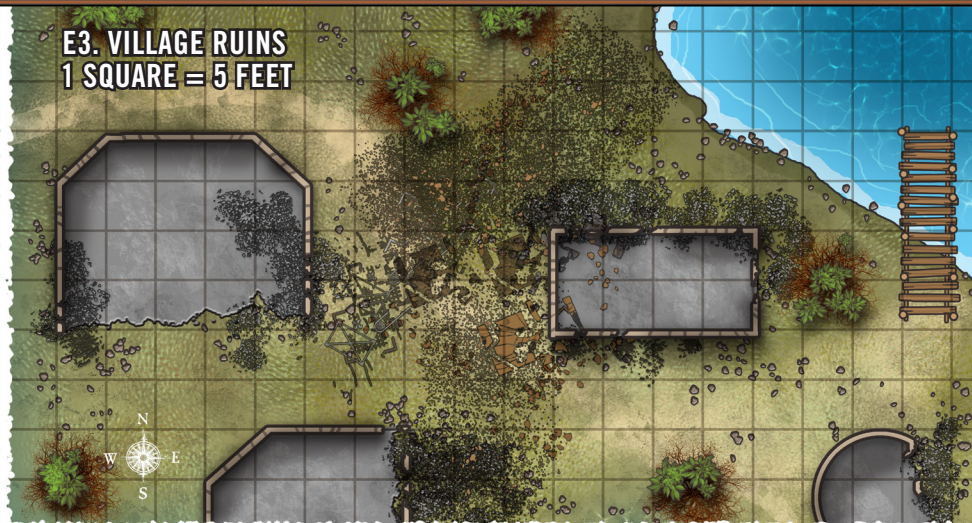
### PHEL

### CREATURE 1

Curious nonbinary merfolk warrior (*Pathfinder Monster Core* 231)

**Initiative** Perception +6

**Aftermath:** The anger fades once the quarrelers are talked down or subdued. A PC who succeeds at a DC 16 Arcana or Religion check notes that the sudden tempers seem to originate from a faint magical miasma, though not a spell or direct mind control. If combat occurred, mistrust spreads among the teams, hampering exploration activities the next day in two ways. First, all checks to perform exploration activities take a -1 penalty. Second, teams other than the PCs automatically fail any exploration activities they attempt, as the different teams work at cross-purposes.



**Treasure:** If the PCs resolve the matter peacefully, Yasmenei offers them a gift in appreciation, a fine leather quiver worth 10 gp.

**Reward:** Award the PCs 30 XP for ending this feud.

### E1. Beach Camp

The *Tide Hunter* anchors just offshore along the coast of this hex, and the expedition sets up camp on the beach with multiple tents and shelters. This is assumed to be the PCs' home base on Eupherae unless they choose to camp elsewhere during their explorations.

### E2. Iokoris's Roost

A forest of short, scrubby trees tapers to reveal steep, rocky bluffs overlooking the coast, with a sheer hundred-foot drop down to the churning waves below. Atop one of the bluffs is a stone pillar, weathered with age, with a sheltered nest of cloth and straw upon it. At this height, the ocean breeze carries a sharp chill.

Iokoris fled to his roost after Sophreista's final battle, and there he spent weeks recovering from his injuries. Afterward, he investigated the island, learned of

Merosyne's binding of Ekleios, and found Merosyne's resting place. The pegasus has lingered on Eupherae ever since, watching over the sleeping Merosyne and keeping an eye on the shrine. His connection to a hero-god grants him considerable longevity, yet his long life and isolation have eroded his mental health. He's wary of outsiders and reluctant to associate with other creatures, as he still feels guilty for being unable to save Sophreista.

When the PCs near Iokoris's roost, read or paraphrase the following.

From the roost, a winged horse, his back crisscrossed with long-healed scars, alights on a nearby bluff, briefly silhouetted against the sun. He regards the interlopers for a moment, then speaks.

"Many come and go from Eupherae, but I have not seen you before. Whatever your business, I suggest you move on quickly and trouble this place no further. The island has seen enough disquiet lately." He stomps a hoof on the ground for emphasis, shaking his mane toward the cliffs.

**Creatures:** The PCs might be surprised to hear a pegasus talk, but Iokoris was granted speech by Sophreista's mythic powers. Although he's suspicious of

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the PCs, he reluctantly gives them his name. If attacked, he flies away and returns to his roost later but will not speak with the PCs again.

The PCs can speak with Iokoris and attempt to win his trust; this encounter uses the influence subsystem (*GM Core* 187). Iokoris is willing to hear the PCs out for 45 minutes (3 rounds).

## IOKORIS

## LEVEL 3

UNIQUE LARGE BEAST

Disheartened pegasus hero's guide (*Pathfinder Monster Core* 261)

**Perception** +12

**Will** +7

**Discovery** DC 16 Hero-God Lore, DC 14 Legendary Beast Lore, DC 16 Nature, DC 18 Perception

**Influence Skills** DC 14 Hero-God Lore (to recount past deeds), DC 16 Medicine (to ease the pain from Iokoris's old scars), DC 16 Society (to discuss developments during his long seclusion), DC 18 Diplomacy, DC 18 Performance (to regale him with tales of heroics), DC 21 Deception, DC 21 Intimidation

**Influence 4** Iokoris tells the PCs about the naiads in area **E8**, but he doesn't trust them enough to share any other information.

**Influence 6** Iokoris offers the PCs a gift to help their exploration (see *Treasure*, right), though believes they need to be tested before he reveals Merosyne's presence or speaks of a dangerous thing like the warshard.

**Influence 8** Iokoris decides the PCs are trustworthy and shares all he knows about Eupherae and its inhabitants with them.

**Resistances** Iokoris has healed from his physical wounds inflicted during Sophreista's final battle, but his mental scars remain, and he's haunted by guilt. Any attempt to encourage him to leave his seclusion and aid another hero, or accusations of cowardice, increases the check's DC by 2.

**Weaknesses** Even in his dispirited state, Iokoris respects a hero, and PCs with a virtuous or altruistic demeanor, or those sanctified as holy, decrease their checks' DCs by 2.

**Appearance** Iokoris is a regal, though grizzled, pegasus with several old scars across his back.

**Personality** devoted, mournful, penitent

**Penalty** Insulting or mocking Sophreista causes Iokoris's temper to flare, reducing the time he'll speak with the PCs to 2 rounds instead of 3.

**Iokoris's Information:** If the PCs earn 8 Influence Points, Iokoris relates Sophreista's history and the tragic tale of her final battle and its aftermath (see page 31). He also indicates the location of Merosyne's cave in area **E6** and tells them that although he's been

unable to wake her, perhaps they could. Finally, he tells them of Sophreista's shrine in area **E10**, warning of Ekleios's presence within. He does know that Sophreista wanders the island as a ghost, but he's too wracked with guilt to approach her. He is aware of neither Ekleios's starting to break free nor of the skeletons that now accompany the herexen.

Iokoris can describe Eupherae's terrain and general geographical features, such as the village ruins in area **E3** and the ancient outpost in area **E4**, if the PCs inquire. He investigated the crater where the warshard fell shortly afterward, but reports he was chased off by an unusually aggressive pair of hippogriffs lairing in the area; he recognized these creatures as empowered by mythic energies. He encourages the PCs to be cautious if they're heading that direction, recommending they investigate the rest of the island first.

If the PCs reach at least 6 Influence with him, Iokoris has a request before they depart. The warshard's impact weakened the foundations of the shrine, along with the wards on Ekleios. Although the herexen remains contained for now, Iokoris fears it won't be much longer before he's able to break free. He asks the PCs to destroy Ekleios once and for all, promising to reward them.

**Treasure:** Iokoris gives the PCs a *holy water* if they reach 6 Influence with him. If the PCs return to him after destroying Ekleios—or if they've already done so—he offers an additional gift: a set of *bracers of missile deflection* inlaid with gold filigree wings, used by Sophreista early in her adventuring career.

**Reward:** Grant the PCs 80 XP if they speak with Iokoris and earn his trust.


## E3. Village Ruins

## Moderate 2

Scattered remains of wooden buildings dot the coastline, a loose gravel path weaving through them. Some appear to have once been homes, while one toward the center of the village bears a cracked tavern sign, its words faded to illegibility by the salty sea breeze. A long pavilion stretches along the beach in sight of rotting docks. The weathered tables beneath its roof still smell of old fish.

This abandoned fishing village is one of Eupherae's more recent settlements, though no one's lived here for decades; it was founded by a group of Pol-Bailax citizens seeking peace, quiet, and easier access to open ocean fishing opportunities. However, several years of poor weather and worse fishing conditions eventually led to the site's abandonment.

**Creatures:** Two giant crabs lurk along the dilapidated buildings here, picking at the bones of a



dolphin that washed onto the beach weeks ago. Stirred up by the warshard and eager for a meal, they attack the PCs without provocation. A PC who succeeds at a DC 16 Nature or DC 18 Perception check realizes the crabs are behaving more aggressively than normal. Use the map on page 34 for this encounter.

## GIANT CRABS (2)

## CREATURE 2

*Pathfinder Bestiary 2* 55

**Initiative** Perception +8

**Investigation:** A PC who succeeds at a DC 16 Perception check while looking around the village finds an intact journal sealed in a waterproof box. Most of the journal's contents are unremarkable discussions of fishing, the village's poor fortunes, and the weather, but it does describe the writer's attempts to befriend the stony goats in area **E9**, giving PCs who read the journal a +1 circumstance bonus on their skill checks to reclaim the naiads' missing wreath (see page 40).

**Treasure:** Most items left behind by the villagers are ruined and of little value, but a search of the buildings does find a small, intact chest containing an *effervescent ampoule* and a sealed crate of satchels of dried fish flakes and seaweed worth 5 gp.

Additionally, the PCs can bring the crabs back to the beach camp after they're slain, granting the expedition another day's worth of supplies.

## E4. Ancient Outpost

Standing on the cliff overlooking the sea is a square stone tower, with narrow windows placed at intervals up the faces of its walls. Several one-story wooden buildings are arrayed at the tower's base, and the faded remains of a tattered flag fly from its parapets. The crumbling stones of a low fortification wall surround the complex.

Centuries ago, this was a Pol-Bailax military outpost intended to keep an eye on the coastline, but its upkeep and provisioning were costly. When the conflicts that prompted its creation ended, the outpost was abandoned. Most of the buildings are empty, containing only broken furniture, empty crates, and tattered flags upon their walls.

**Investigation:** One of the soldiers posted here was an amateur painter. In his free time, he decorated the barracks with a mural depicting various scenery around the island. Although faded and chipped, portions of this mural are still recognizable, including a scene of a cave with a beautiful, robed woman lying in repose within and another of a pegasus roosting atop the bluffs overlooking the sea. A PC

who succeeds at a DC 14 Pol-Bailax Lore check or a DC 16 Nature or Survival check notices surrounding landmarks in the scenes indicating the depictions are of Eupherae, though these aren't detailed enough to pinpoint specific locations.

**Treasure:** After the outpost was abandoned, a group of smugglers briefly used it as a hideout before their ship capsized, drowning all aboard. The last shipment they received is still buried under a hidden hatch in an outbuilding, which a PC can spot with a DC 16 Perception check. Inside is a lesser smoke ball and a *masquerade scarf*, as well as some ancient coinage of Pol-Bailax worth 30 gp.

## E5. Golden-Horned Guide

This hex is densely forested in its western half, with a rocky beach along the coast on its eastern half. While making their way through the forest, the PCs notice a golden-horned deer with metallic hooves watching them. Read or paraphrase the following.

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A faint rustle comes from the trees, and a majestic deer with golden horns—its coat a dappled reddish-brown—steps out from the forest. It regards the interlopers for a moment, sniffing the air delicately, and inclines its head as if asking a silent question. An intelligence beyond that of an animal gleams behind its iridescent eyes.

---

**Creatures:** This creature is a descendant of the Iblydan hinds (page 86) bred by Sophreista's followers. After the cult left Eupherae, the hinds spread across the island, and many even swam to other parts of the archipelago. A small group still keeps an eye on the cave where Merosyne sleeps, either leading outsiders away from or toward her resting place depending whether the outsiders appear to be a threat. This hind doesn't wish to fight the PCs and flees if attacked. With a successful DC 14 Legendary Beast Lore check or DC 16 Nature check, a PC identifies the creature and knows tales of hinds guiding heroes through dangerous landscapes—often at great speed.

The hind lingers long enough for up to two PCs to attempt a check to befriend it. If a PC has the Animal Empathy feat or speaks to the hind using Iblydosi or Wildsong, they can attempt a DC 15 Diplomacy check. Otherwise, a PC can attempt a DC 15 Nature check. If the PCs fail both attempts, the hind flicks its tail with annoyance and bounds off at great speed. If either check succeeds, the hind waves its head as if beckoning, turns to leave, and then looks back as if confirming the PCs are ready to follow before it bounds away. In either outcome, the PCs can pursue

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the hind, but failing to befriend it first increases the DCs of checks in the subsequent chase encounter by 2.

This encounter uses the chase subsystem (*GM Core* 192). The hind begins the chase one obstacle ahead of the PCs and moves through one obstacle per round. If it reaches the final obstacle before the PCs, it vanishes into the forest. If the PCs catch up to the hind during the chase, they can follow it the rest of the way without further difficulty.

### CATCH THE TRAIL **OBSTACLE 2**

**Chase Points** 2; **Overcome** DC 16 Acrobatics to chase the hind, DC 14 Hunting Lore or Survival to pick up the trail  
The hind bounds into the forest, leaving only the snap of broken twigs in its wake.

### FAST-FLOWING CREEK **OBSTACLE 2**

**Chase Points** 3; **Overcome** DC 18 Athletics to jump across, DC 14 Crafting to form an impromptu log bridge, DC 16 Nature to spot a narrower point to cross

Faced with a fast-moving, rocky creek, the hind barely pauses before effortlessly leaping several body-lengths to the far side.

### JAVELIN-WIELDER'S PITFALL **OBSTACLE 2**

**Chase Points** 2; **Overcome** DC 14 Athletics to quickly climb out of the pit, DC 16 Perception or Survival to spot the pit before stumbling into it

A covered-over pitfall trap lies in the path, left by a hunter long-ago.

### EVADE THE FIERCE-CLAWED **OBSTACLE**

**Chase Points** 3; **Overcome** DC 16 Intimidation to scare them away, DC 14 Nature to command the wildcats to leave, DC 18 Stealth to avoid notice

Though Eupherae has no large predators, a pack of small wildcats roams the island, pouncing on any prey they find.

### FEY RING'S LURE **OBSTACLE 2**

**Chase Points** 2; **Overcome** DC 15 Arcana or Occultism to overpower the magical residue, DC 14 Fey Lore or Nature to avoid the ring, DC 17 Will to resist its lure

A small ring of vegetation holds residual energy from the First World, entralling all who get close.

### GREEN-JEWELED HILLS **OBSTACLE 2**

**Chase Points** 3; **Overcome** DC 16 Acrobatics to dodge between them, DC 18 Nature or Society to recognize the patterns of the rows, DC 14 Survival to navigate through the trees

Small olive groves dot the hilly landscape, forming a tangled maze of foliage.

**Catching the Hind:** If the PCs catch up to the hind, they find themselves near the center of area E6, in front of the Cave of the Sleeper's Vigil. The hind casts a respectful glance at them before beckoning with its horns toward the cave. Once the PCs approach the cave, the hind bounds away.

**Trying Again:** If the PCs can't catch up to the hind, the creature vanishes for the day and strands the PCs far from their starting point; this effectively wastes the day's remaining exploration time. On subsequent days, while they Reconnoiter the hex, the hind appears to the PCs again to repeat the process (including new chances to befriend and chase the creature).

Even if they don't catch the hind, each chase familiarizes them more with terrain near area E6. This reduces the Perception DC to Reconnoiter that hex and find its hidden features by 2.

**Reward:** Award the PCs 60 XP if they successfully follow the hind to the cave.

## E6. Cave of the Sleeper's Vigil

**Hidden Feature:** Discovering the cave requires a successful DC 22 Perception check while Reconnoitering. This DC is reduced to 18 if Iokoris told the PCs about the cave.

Hidden within a cave sequestered in this forested hex, **Merosyne** (mellifluous female human poet 5) sleeps indefinitely, thanks to her plea to the naiads to remain with Sophreista's ghost on Eupherae until her lover is granted peace. Her sanctuary is well-hidden, and most of the past residents of the island never discovered it.

When the PCs approach the cave, read or paraphrase the following.

A fissure in the rock, nearly invisible behind hanging greenery, leads to a small cave within the mountain. Inside, the stone walls are overgrown with moss and vegetation; dappled sunlight shines through cracks in the ceiling. At the far end of the cave, a white-robed woman sleeps upon a stone altar, dark hair fanned beneath her, motionless save for the faint rise and fall of her breath. Her arms are folded over a golden lyre upon her chest.

**Waking the Sleeper:** Merosyne's ritual slumber is deep, and ordinary means of awakening her have no effect. It's apparent from her position and the spell circles around her that she's in some sort of magical stasis. The magic is easily disrupted, yet a PC might detect the associated sapping slumber hazard by the way dust motes slow as they enter the encircled area. Disabling the hazard can break the slumber safely.



## SAPPING SLUMBER

## HAZARD 3

MAGICAL TRAP

**Stealth** DC 17 (trained)

**Description** Ritual circles barely anchor the ancient stasis magic, which dissipates erratically when disturbed.

**Disable** DC 16 Hero-God Lore or Occultism to convince the magic that it's fulfilled its objective; DC 18 Arcana, Nature, or Religion short-circuit the stasis magic; or DC 20 Thievery to disable the ritual circles.

**AC** 16; **Fort** +12, **Ref** +6

**Hardness** 5; **HP** 42 (BT 21); **Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage

**Soporific Backlash**  (sleep)

**Trigger** A creature physically contacts Merosyne; **Effect** The stasis affecting Merosyne is disrupted, but as the magic dissipates, it tries to escape into other nearby bodies, like electricity arcing toward nearby metal. Creatures other than Merosyne within 15 feet of the circles must attempt a DC 21 Fortitude save.

**Success** The creature is unaffected.

**Failure** The creature is drained 1. While drained by this effect, the PC takes a circumstance penalty equal to their drained value on all checks made as part of a reaction (such as Reactive Strike attack rolls).

**Critical Failure** As failure, but the creature is drained 2.

Shortly after the PCs Disable or trigger the hazard, Merosyne awakens. Once the PCs awaken Merosyne, read or paraphrase the following.

The woman's eyes open, and she blinks blearily at those who awakened her, tightening her grasp on her lyre. Slowly, she shifts to sit up.

"Who are you?" she asks, her voice melodic even while raspy from slumber. "How long has it been? If you undid the naiads' spell, it must be time..." She stops, shaking her head. "I apologize. You are strangers, and you may not know of what I speak. It is rude of me to make assumptions before even introducing myself."

She waves one hand and then the other in a complex greeting. "I am Merosyne. Welcome to Eupherae, my home for... likely more years than I realize. But I must ask, what brings you here?"

Merosyne is disoriented from her long slumber but recognizes that the PCs may be able to help Sophreista find rest. She relates the history of Sophreista's cult on Eupherae, though she assumes Iokoris is dead and is



overjoyed if the PCs tell her he's alive and on the island. She warns them of Ekleios's imprisonment in the shrine, but she doesn't know anything about the warhard or recent events. Though Merosyne is shocked to learn how much time has passed, she's quick to warm up to the PCs, particularly ones who share her interest

in poetry and music or those with a heroic demeanor. She's friendly and engaging in conversation, although she grows melancholy and wistful when discussing Sophreista or her past.

Merosyne asks the PCs if they'd be willing to aid in laying Sophreista to rest. She suspects that if Sophreista gains catharsis by feeling she's triumphed in her

final battle at last, she may be able to move on. Merosyne promises to reward them well if they accomplish this. Unfortunately, her long stasis has left her weakened, and Merosyne can't provide strenuous aid in their adventures. At the GM's option, though, she might be fit to accompany the PCs and provide advice, be that immediately or after resting for a few days at camp.

**Treasure:** Once the PCs help Sophreista's ghost find peace, Merosyne gives them her most treasured possession: a *lesser maestro's instrument* in the form of a lyre given to her by Sophreista; she explains that although its magic has faded with her long hibernation, it still retains some of its former powers.

**Reward:** For awakening Merosyne, award the PCs 60 XP.

## E7. The River Toll

## Low 2

As the PCs explore a hex along the river, they run across one of the island's other inhabitants. Read or paraphrase the following.

The surface of the river stirs as a winged, scaly draconic creature emerges. His blue coloration blends almost perfectly with the water, and his maw boasts multiple jagged fangs. With a few powerful wingbeats, he lands on the riverbank and gestures over the water with an extended wing before demanding something in a sibilant, hissing language.

**Creatures:** This haughty being is Zepherides, a river drake who's lived on these waters for several decades, demanding tribute from humanoids passing through. Zepherides only speaks Draconic, but a PC who succeeds at a DC 11 Perception check to Sense Motive realizes he's demanding some type of payment.



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PCs who understand Draconic know Zepherides is demanding “all the gold, gems, and magical items in your possession, foolish mortals, and consider yourselves fortunate to have been graced with the presence of Zepherides of the Riverbank.” A PC able to communicate with the drake can attempt to convince him they have no valuables with a DC 19 Deception check. Zepherides believes himself superior to all others, so Requesting free passage or Coercing him is especially difficult, requiring a successful DC 24 Diplomacy or Intimidation check, respectively.

Otherwise, in the likely event the PCs refuse his demands, Zepherides attacks, intent on taking their treasure by force. Use the map on page 34 for this encounter.

### ZEPHERIDES

### CREATURE 3

Avaricious male river drake (*Pathfinder Monster Core* 129)

**Initiative** Perception +9

**Treasure:** Zepherides keeps his treasures in a driftwood nest perched 20 feet off the ground in the crown of an olive tree. Reaching the nest requires a successful DC 16 Athletics check to Climb. The hoard consists of a *bronze bull pendant*, a jade sculpture of a penteconter worth 15 gp, and assorted gems and coins worth a total of 25 gp. Nest construction is not the drake’s strong suit, made worse by the recent storm. If jostled too much (such as by shaking the tree or critically failing the Athletics check to Climb), the nest breaks apart, spilling the treasures on the ground. The impact cracks the jade sculpture into several pieces, collectively worth 10 gp.

**Reward:** The PCs earn 60 XP if they convince Zepherides they have no valuables and don’t fight him.

## E8. The Naiad Grotto

The rushing river shrinks to a small creek here, terminating in a grotto tucked into the hills, surrounded by cypress trees. A waterfall cascades over a rocky cliff at the far end of the grotto, splashing into a small pool, and the hanging tree branches provide a swaying curtain over the water.

Several slender, blue-skinned people clad in flowing robes sit in the pool, chatting with each other in a burbling tongue; their voices sound concerned and every so often rise in temper. At the approach of outsiders, they look up, their conversation falling silent, and regard the newcomers with their pure white eyes.

One, a man whose robe is pinned by a brooch in a swirling wave pattern, stands. “Greetings, strangers,” he says, his tone cautious but friendly. “Well met, I hope.” He inclines his head. “I am Dimosis. What brings you here?”

**Creatures:** Though not as ancient as Sophreista’s cult, the naiads have lived on Eupherae for several centuries and know its terrain well. They’re wary of the newcomers’ intentions, but friendly as long as the PCs approach peacefully. They ask the PCs about themselves and their purpose on the island, listening to their answers with interest.

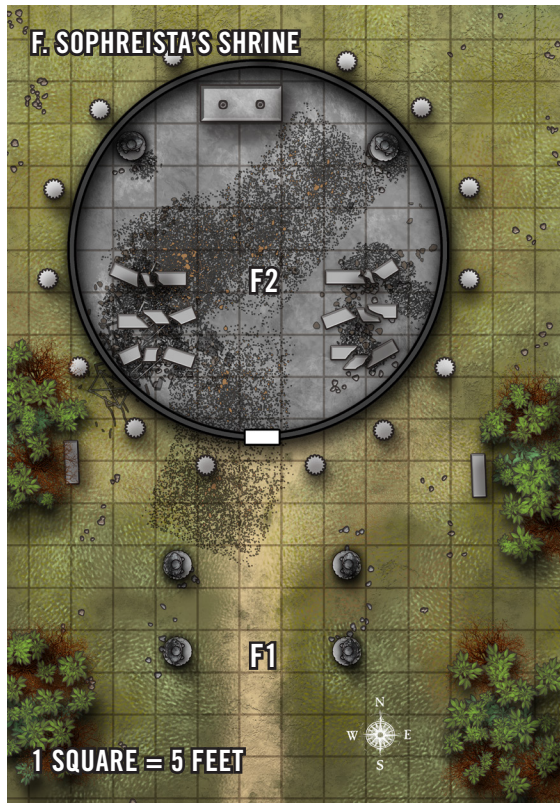
Once they’ve heard the PCs out, or if the PCs ask about the meteorite, the naiads confer briefly, and **Dimosis** (gregarious male naiad acolyte of Lysianassa 2) tells the PCs he’s willing to share his knowledge of the island. First, however, he asks for their assistance.

When the warshard fell—which Dimosis refers to as “the bright-tailed star”—the resulting diffusion of mythic power found a host in one of the naiads, a woman named **Kyrika**. Unfortunately, Kyrika was in mourning for her brother, who had sailed away on an adventure and was slain by a sea monster, and in her grief, her sudden outpouring of mythic power transformed her and several other naiads into cypress trees. Dimosis and the other naiads have never witnessed such power themselves, but recognize it from tales, and he hypothesizes that an artifact of great power must have accompanied the star to cause this.

Dimosis knows a ritual that could return the transformed naiads to their true forms, but a stony goat (*Howl of the Wild* 184) recently rampaged through the grotto and made off with a key ritual component: a wreath of ivy from the First World. The goats have resided nearby for years and have never been aggressive before, and he suspects that this may also be due to the energies from the bright-tailed star. Dimosis asks the PCs to retrieve the wreath from the goat, directing them to the herd in area E9.

He warns them against attacking the goat, however, as they can turn to stone when frightened or injured. If the wreath is petrified as part of the goat, the wreath’s ritual power would decrease. So far, this has made the naiads wary of chasing the goats. If the PCs are willing to help out, Dimosis offers them a reward; he gives them this immediately if they’ve already retrieved the wreath.

**Naiads’ Information:** Assuming the PCs agree to assist, Dimosis and the other naiads are happy to answer any questions they have about Eupherae. They saw the bright-tailed star fall somewhere on the northern tip of the island, but haven’t investigated to find out exactly where, out of concern this could expose more of them to dangerous energies. They warn the PCs that a territorial pair of hippogriffs lairs within area E11, though they’re unaware the hippogriffs are now imbued with mythic power (see page 43). Sophreista’s ghost hasn’t appeared to them, but they mention seeing Iokoris flying over the island,



although they don't know where he resides. They also tell the PCs of the shrine in area **E10**, though Dimosis mentions that some malevolent presence is locked away within and they haven't ventured inside.

**Treasure:** If the PCs retrieve the wreath, Dimosis performs the ritual, restoring Kyrika and the others to their former selves. In gratitude, the naiads gift the PCs a *lesser torrent spellgun* (*Treasure Vault* 198). If the wreath was temporarily petrified, the ritual restores the naiads, but they spend the next day ill as they cough up grit and pebbles. In this case, the naiads answer the PCs' questions but withhold the magical treasure.

**Reward:** For contacting the naiads, award the PCs 40 XP.

## E9. The Grazers

Amid the rolling hills covered in wind-twisted olive trees, a herd of goats grazes among the underbrush. Their long horns are oddly metallic, and as they glance up at the newcomers in their midst, the goats' postures stiffen as if expecting trouble. Cautiously, they return to grazing, though they still appear wary.

Suddenly, a crack resounds through the air as a tree branch breaks, striking one of the goats as it falls. The goat freezes, its hide graying over as it turns to stone. After a moment, the stone falls to pieces and the goat emerges

from the rubble, shaking bits of rock off its back. It bounds to the other side of the grove and resumes its grazing.

**Creatures:** These hills are home to a herd of stony goats (*Howl of the Wild* 184). The goats are docile yet skittish, avoiding humanoids. If the PCs explore this hex before they meet the naiads in area **E8**, they notice one of the goats has a wreath of ivy leaves looped around its neck. A PC who succeeds at a DC 14 Arcana or Nature check, or a PC using detect magic, senses a peculiar magical aura around the wreath and can surmise that if the goat petrifies, whatever magic the wreath holds would be damaged.

**Retrieving the Wreath:** To retrieve the wreath from the goat, each PC must succeed at a DC 16 skill check, representing their teamwork and coordination. These successes don't need to occur on the same attempt; once a PC succeeds at their check, they don't need to attempt again and can Aid another PC on subsequent rounds. Encourage the PCs to be creative with their skills and abilities, recommending potential skills that might benefit their strategy. At GM discretion, use of certain spells or abilities could provide a circumstance bonus or negate the need for a skill check.

Some suggested actions the PCs could take are soothing the goat (with a Nature check), sneaking up on the goat (with a Stealth check), wrestling the goat without injuring it (with an Athletics check), or quickly snatching the wreath before the goat can react (with a Thievery check). As the PCs may not obtain all four successes on the first round, narrate the goat's reaction to their attempts, describing how their successes change its actions as the encounter proceeds. The goat only petrifies if it takes more than 8 damage in a single hit or gains the frightened condition. However, if the PCs don't retrieve the wreath within six rounds, the goat flees, resetting their successes to zero. If the goat flees, a PC can Track it with a DC 16 Survival check to make one additional attempt that day; otherwise, it returns to the herd the next day.

If the PCs retrieve the wreath before talking to the naiads in area **E8**, any attempt to Identify Magic reveals it's not a true magical item, but appears to be a component of a ritual.

## THIEVING GOAT

## CREATURE 2

Stony goat (*Pathfinder Howl of the Wild* 184)

**Initiative** Perception +11

**Gaining an Advantage:** A PC who succeeds at a DC 14 Nature check during this encounter spots a patch of mildly hallucinogenic flowers; if gathered, these provide a +2 circumstance bonus to a skill check involving

distracting, luring, or soothing the goat. Additionally, the surrounding trees provide an elevated vantage point, and a PC who Climbs them with a successful DC 14 Athletics check gains a +2 circumstance bonus to sneak up on or physically maneuver the goat.

**Rewards:** Award the PCs 60 XP for retrieving the wreath without triggering the goat's petrification (or 30 XP if they do trigger the petrification).

## E10. Sophreista's Shrine

This ancient complex was the center of Sophreista's faith. Most of the outbuildings are ruined, but the shrine (area F) remains intact.

### E11. The Crater

When the warshard landed, the impact devastated the surrounding foliage, creating a blasted clearing with a crater at its center. The crater is detailed in area G on page 42.

## F. SOPHREISTA'S SHRINE

Sophreista's shrine is nestled in the hills of this hex, surrounded by numerous outbuildings now crumbling to ruin; little of interest remains in them. Use the map on page 40 for this encounter.

### F1. Shrine Approach

Low 2

A cobbled path leads to a hammered bronze door in a circular building of white stone, ringed by fluted columns. Broken statues and pottery litter the surrounding grass, and several myrtle trees provide shade for worn, pitted stone benches. An unsettling sense of dread and malevolence pervades the area.

The shrine door is locked, requiring a DC 16 Athletics check to Force Open or a DC 14 Thievery check to Pick a Lock. A PC who succeeds at a DC 16 Arcana or Religion check realizes the patterns etched on the door are magical wards sealing something inside.

**Creatures:** Two air scamps quarrel here, in a chorus of hisses, their tempers stirred up by the warshard. Upon spotting the PCs, however, they angrily begin screeching demands toward the PCs in Sussuran. The scamps' argument regards which wind the great Pariol loves best: the east wind or the west wind. Each scamp insists the PCs act as judge to settle the disagreement. With a successful DC 19 Nature check or DC 19 Sailing Lore check, a PC recognizes the name Pariol, being that of a powerful air elemental known as an anemos (*Rage of Elements* 78).

Just understanding Sussuran and providing an answer doesn't calm the scamps, as they quickly start a

new argument as to whether the PCs are biased or even qualified as judges. Unless a PC calms them further or distracts them with a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check or DC 17 Deception check, the scamps call a truce in order to attack the PCs. If placated, the scamps keep debating but do so quietly and without threatening the PCs further.

### AIR SCAMPS (2)

CREATURE 1

*Pathfinder Monster Core* 146

**Initiative** Perception +3

**Rewards:** Award the PCs 60 XP if they bypass the scamps without combat.

### F2. Shrine Interior

Severe 2

This single-room building is dim and cool, sunlight filtering in through several narrow windows near the domed ceiling.



Thieving Goat

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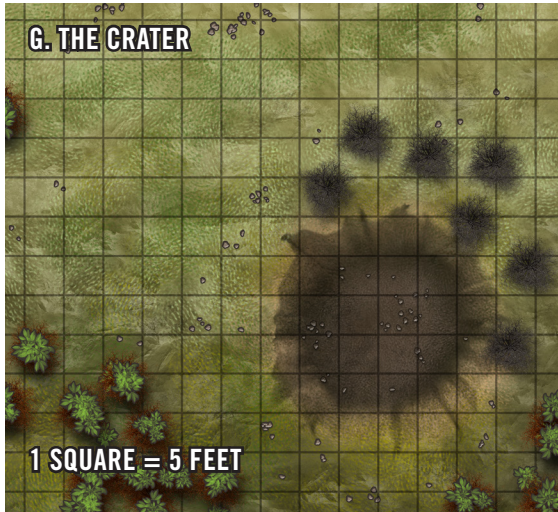
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A colorful mosaic depicting a woman fighting various creatures extends along the floor from the door outside to a stone altar at the other end of the room, atop which shimmers a faintly glowing symbol. Murals on the walls depict the same woman accomplishing more heroic deeds, though they're gouged and smeared with refuse. The shattered remains of wooden benches are pushed against the walls, and two statues near the altar have been tipped over and smashed to pieces.

Once the center of Sophreista's faith, this shrine has taken a heavy toll from the passage of time and Ekleios's destructive rampages, though he's been unable to damage the altar. A PC who succeeds at a DC 12 Hero-God Lore check or a DC 14 Religion or Society check can tell this was a shrine to a hero-god. If the PCs more closely examine the seal on the altar, Ekleios hastily interposes, as he doesn't want to risk them learning what it really does. A PC who persists can attempt a DC 16 Occultism or Religion check to recognize the seal as a focus for a binding meant to imprison something within the shrine.

**Creatures:** Ekleios lurks here, seething from his long imprisonment. He's accompanied by three skeletons, which he created by channeling the warshard's energies; these weren't made from actual corpses, and the skeletons disintegrate moments after they or Ekleios are defeated. The treacherous priest isn't certain what happened to weaken the wards that trap him here, but he is intent on seizing the opportunity to free himself.

Initially, Ekleios tries to trick the PCs by asking for their aid, claiming to be a guardian of the island corrupted by the recent influx of strange energies. He asks that they break the seal upon the altar to purify him, as the wards prevent him from doing so in his current state. It's a difficult lie, thanks to the PCs likely

learning of his imprisonment here beforehand. He has little patience, however, and if the PCs refuse—or after they free him—he attacks.

**ELITE SKELETON GUARDS (3) CREATURE 0**

*Pathfinder Monster Core 6, 312*

**Initiative** +2

**EKLEIOS CREATURE 2**

Male herexen (*Pathfinder Monster Core 195*)

**Initiative** Perception +8

**Items** defiled religious symbol of Sophreista, gladius<sup>WOI</sup>

**Melee** ♦ gladius +10 (deadly d10, versatile S), **Damage** 1d6+4 piercing plus heretic's smite

**Ekleios's Defeat:** Upon Ekleios's destruction, he screams in rage, cursing "that arrogant hero-god and her mewling poet" before crumbling to ash. A PC who succeeds at a DC 12 Hero-God Lore check or DC 14 Religion check can identify his defiled religious symbol, a gladius with laurel leaves entwined around its blade, as once dedicated to an Ibydan hero-god who lived near Bailax millennia ago. With a critical success, the PC identifies Sophreista by name, knowing her as an ancient hero-god of duets and valor.

**Treasure:** A PC who succeeds at a DC 14 Perception check while examining the altar spots a hidden compartment, inside of which is a +1 *weapon potency* rune and incense worth 20 gp.

**G. THE CRATER SEVERE 2**

A jagged crater sits at the center of a small clearing, the trees surrounding it snapped and blackened as if by an immense explosion, although the center of the crater contains only a hollow depression in the earth. The acrid tang of smoke hangs in the air.

This crater marks the warshard's impact site. A cursory examination of the area indicates that something fell from the sky here, much smaller than the typical comet, but before the PCs can investigate further, they're interrupted by the area's inhabitants!

The rush of flapping wings stirs the air above, and a pair of creatures with the hindquarters of a horse and the head of a hawk alight near the crater. They rear up on their hind legs, wings spreading wide, as they shriek at the intruders in their domain. A swirling red miasma emanates from their bodies, and their eyes have an unearthly glow.

**Creatures:** A mated pair of hippogriffs makes their home in the mountains surrounding the crater, and

when the warshard fell, the two were suffused with mythic energy. The transformation hasn't improved their already-aggressive dispositions, and they ferociously attack any who wander into their territory. They don't pursue foes who flee from the crater. Use the map on page 42 for this encounter.

## MYTHIC HIPPOGRIFFS (2)

## CREATURE 2

RARE LARGE BEAST

**Perception** +8; darkvision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

**Skills** Acrobatics +11, Athletics +7, Survival +6

**Str** +3, **Dex** +3, **Con** +2, **Int** -4, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +0

**AC** 18; **Fort** +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6

**HP** 32; **Weaknesses** piercing 3

**Buck** ⤵ DC 17 (*Monster Core* 358)

**Mythic Resilience** The hippogriff's reflexes have been heightened by the warshard, and it treats its Reflex saving throws as one degree of success better than it rolled.

**Speed** 30 feet, fly 65 feet

**Melee** ⬥ beak +9, **Damage** 1d10+3 piercing

**Melee** ⬥ talon +9 (agile), **Damage** 1d6+3 slashing

**Melee** ⬥ wing +9 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 1d6+3 bludgeoning

**Mythic Power** 3 Mythic Points

**Deadly Striker** The hippogriff deals an additional 1d6 precision damage on its next Strike whenever it uses an action to Stride or Fly 10 or more feet.

**Flying Strafe** ⬥⬥ The hippogriff Flies up to its fly speed and makes two talon Strikes at any point during that movement. Each Strike must target a different creature. The attacks take the normal multiple attack penalty.

**Unimpeded** ⬥ **Cost** 1 Mythic Point; **Effect** The mythic striker automatically ends one effect that would give it a circumstance penalty to Speed. When it attempts to Escape an effect that has it immobilized, grabbed, or restrained, it automatically succeeds

**Hazard:** The warshard is gone, but residual energy emanates from the crater, fanning the flames of conflict when hostilities break out. The hippogriffs have acclimated to and aren't affected by the hazard.

## SHARD'S FURY

## HAZARD 2

ENVIRONMENTAL MAGICAL

**Stealth** DC 15 (trained)

**Description** Wisps of red energy and violent urges emanate from the crater.

**Disable** DC 18 Intimidation to overpower the warshard's will, DC 18 Religion to calm the belligerent miasma

**Inflame Battle** ⤵ **Trigger** A creature rolls initiative for combat within 100 feet of the crater; **Effect** An infectious battle frenzy threatens to overtake all creatures within

## A MYTHIC FIGHT

This event is the PCs' greatest challenge so far, and its difficulty could overwhelm some 2nd-level groups. That said, the encounter also includes mitigating factors—most notably the PCs' ability to Absorb Power, granting them a brief taste of the mythic power they'll soon command permanently. Keep in mind that the PCs have a generous time limit for exploring the island, and retreating to rest and devise new strategies should be a clear option in this encounter.

100 feet of the crater, driving them to lash out at anything nearby. Affected creatures must attempt a DC 18 Will save.

**Critical Success** The creature is unaffected.

**Success** The creature resists the battle frenzy, but takes 1d6 fire damage from the roiling fury coursing through its blood.

**Failure** As success, and the creature is slowed 1 as it fights off the frenzy.

**Critical Failure** The creature is confused for 1 round.

**Reset** The residual energies reset after 1 hour.

**Channeling Mythic Power:** The hippogriffs' mythic powers are unstable, giving the PCs an opportunity to channel that power for themselves! During this encounter, the PCs feel the mythic power and intuit that they can tear it from these beasts; the players should be aware they have this option. A PC gains the benefit of Absorb Power as a free action if they critically hit with a Strike or spell attack, or if a hippogriff critically fails a saving throw against a spell they cast.

## ABSORB POWER ⬥

DIVINE CONCENTRATE

**Requirements** You are not mythic.

You attempt to momentarily siphon energy from a mythic creature, drawing its power into yourself. Choose a mythic creature within 60 feet; it must attempt a Will save against your class DC or spell DC, whichever is higher.

**Success** The creature is unaffected.

**Failure** You siphon some mythic power from the target, granting you the Rewrite Fate free action (*War of Immortals* 78) until the end of your next turn. You gain 1 Mythic Point that you can only use for this free action; this doesn't affect your Hero Points. If not used before the duration expires, you lose this Mythic Point.

**Critical Failure** As failure, and the creature loses access to its mythic abilities until the end of its next turn.

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**Treasure:** When the PCs defeat the hippogriffs, the lingering mythic power infuses one of their feathers, which can be harvested as a *hippogriff feather* (*Howl of the Wild* 118).

**Investigating the Crater:** After the PCs defeat the hippogriffs, they're free to look around the crater, although there's not much left to find. Investigation reveals that a small object, about the size of a human head, fell from the sky here, though no trace of it remains. A PC who succeeds at a DC 14 Survival check or a DC 16 Perception check spots some humanoid footprints around the crater, though these are at least several days old, and their trail is soon lost in the scuffling left by the hippogriffs.

Once the PCs have had a moment to recover and look around, however, a ghost appears before them!

### Event 5: The Hero-Ghost

When Sophreista's ghost appears to the PCs, read or paraphrase the following.

The transparent figure of a muscular human woman, clad in linothorax armor, strides across the crater. Her sandaled feet don't touch the ground, but bursts of dust and grass rise where she walks. She hefts her gladius high, pointing it warningly at the newcomers.

"I am Sophreista of Eupherae," she declares. "Slayer of the Chimera of Avelos, scourge of the armies of Pol-Sylirica, she who held back the tide at Melekei. Who are you?"

As she waits for an answer, her outline briefly shimmers crimson, but the aura dissipates as she shakes her head. "I rage at my own behest, fury-star," she grumbles under her breath. "No one else's."

**Sophreista** (valiant female human ghost hero-god 11) listens while the PCs introduce themselves and explain their purpose on the island. She's bellicose and stubborn, but not overtly hostile. She glimpses in the PCs the potential of burgeoning heroes, especially if they describe some of their exploits thus far and relays her history to them if they're not already aware of this, cursing Ekleios for his treachery.

Her impressions of events since her death are fragmented and incomplete. If the PCs inquire about the falling star, Sophreista reports that a shard of some strange material fell from the sky, exuding an aura of aggression and rage. She was briefly overtaken by its effects but was able to fight off the violent impulses. Shortly after the shard fell, a sthenon man visited the crater and retrieved it, then departed. Sophreista sensed a strong presence around the man and, wary of his intentions, didn't show herself to him. She doesn't know the man's identity and had

never seen him on Eupherae before, nor does she know what the shard is.

Regarding her former companions, she knows Iokoris still resides on Eupherae; respectful of his avoidance of her, she hasn't approached him. She can sense Ekleios's presence and is aware he's sealed within her shrine in area **E10**; she requests the PCs destroy him if they haven't already.

Sophreista doesn't know that Merosyne still lives and is overcome with emotion at her lover's dedication if she learns this. She asks that they bring Merosyne here so she can see her again. If they do so, Sophreista and Merosyne share a tearful reunion, in which Merosyne promises to help bring Sophreista peace, and Sophreista asks her to live on, not become lost in grief.

**Sing, O Muse:** To help Sophreista find her final rest, the PCs must take on the roles of her foes in a dramatic reenactment of her final battle, allowing her to find catharsis in her triumph. This encounter uses the Victory Point subsystem (*GM Core* 184). The PCs must earn 8 Pathos Points before the "play" ends at the conclusion of the fourth round.

To earn Pathos Points, a PC can attempt a DC 16 Acrobatics or Athletics check to stage a fight, Deception or Performance check to monologue, or Society check to craft compelling lines fitting Sophreista's history; alternatively, they can attempt a DC 14 Theater or Warfare Lore check. Encourage the players to narrate their actions as the mock combat proceeds, in a manner befitting a grand epic. At the GM's discretion, particularly inspiring roleplay could grant a +1 circumstance bonus. If Merosyne accompanies the PCs, she can Aid a PC attempting a Deception, Performance, or Society check each round.

**Hazard:** If the PCs fail to obtain enough Pathos Points, Sophreista's spirit falters to the warshard's influence, giving rise to a haunt. Enraged at the prospect of another failure, the haunt lashes out at the PCs; they don't gain additional XP for the haunt. Disabling the haunt also lays Sophreista to rest, albeit in a more dangerous fashion.

### HERO-GOD'S RAGE

### HAZARD 3

COMPLEX HAUNT

**Stealth** +12 (trained)

**Description** Sophreista's ghost glows red, and shrieking in fury, she flies at her opponents.

**Disable** DC 18 Athletics (trained) to subdue the spirit, DC 18 Religion to calm the spirit, DC 16 Deception or Diplomacy to talk the spirit down; two total successes are required to disable the haunt

**Cry Havoc** **Trigger** The performance concludes with fewer than 8 Pathos Points; **Effect** Sophreista screams in rage;



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all living creatures in the area must succeed at a DC 20 Will save or be frightened 1 (frightened 2 on a critical failure).

**Routine** (1 action) Sophreista lashes out at the nearest living creature, dealing 1d10+6 bludgeoning damage (DC 20 basic Reflex save) and binding their fate to hers; a creature that critically fails their save is doomed 1 (maximum doomed 3).

**Hero's Rest:** Once the PCs successfully complete the performance or disable the haunt, read or paraphrase the following.

Sophreista lowers her sword, the haze of battle fading from her eyes, and she surveys those around her. "Thank you, my friends," she says. "I feel..." She begins to glow, the edges of her form blurring and fragmenting. "I feel I can travel to the afterlife at last. I hope only that I've earned enough renown to live among our islands' great heroes. I hope... you remember my deeds..."

She glows brighter, then vanishes, leaving only the scent of laurel behind.

**Reward:** For laying Sophreista's ghost to rest, award the PCs 120 XP.

### Event 6: Sangeh's Dreams

As Sophreista's ghost dissipates, the energy of her departing spirit and the residual energies from the warshard combine, sending a shock wave over the crater and knocking the PCs to the ground. Read or paraphrase the following.

The crater and blackened trees vanish, replaced by fractured visions cycling past at a dizzying rate. An immense woman, towering hundreds of feet high, weeps over a blighted landscape, clashes with silhouettes of other massive figures under a blood-red sky, and is driven back by hurricane winds out over the ocean. Another vision flashes of a gauntlet-clad hand driving a blade through her chest, and she sinks below the waves. For a moment, the vision goes black. A red spark appears through the darkness, followed by the silhouette of a humanoid figure with snakes for hair. A feeling of relief and urgent demand suffuses the image, then it fades, leaving only the empty crater behind.

Though the PCs don't know it yet, they've made mental contact with Sangeh, the titan sleeping beneath Iblydos. This momentary connection grants them mythic power, setting them on the path to fulfill their destinies! As they make their way back to the expedition, the PCs should get the sense that something about them has changed; perhaps one PC's vision briefly heightens, granting them a view of impossibly distant terrain,

while another might lean on a tree and snap it in two. Players should familiarize themselves with the mythic rules (*War of Immortals* 76-84) and choose a mythic calling and a 2nd level mythic feat for their PC; they also gain the Rewrite Fate ability.

**Reward:** Award the PCs 60 XP for experiencing Sangeh's vision.

### RETURN TO POL-BAILAX

Once the PCs explore Eupherae, learn about the fall of the warshard, and lay Sophreista's ghost to rest, they can return to Pol-Bailax. Depending on their choices and actions, they may have some new companions returning with them. Yasmenei sets the expedition's departure to the next day's dawn, as the currents will be favorable then.

The journey proceeds without incident. However, as the *Tide Hunter* approaches Pol-Bailax, it's soon apparent that all is not well in the city...



Sophreista



## CHAPTER 3: RAGE AT ROSY-FINGERED DAWN

Though initially localized to Eupherae, the warshard's influence rapidly spreads. As the titan Sangeh stirs in her slumber, creatures, objects, and landscapes absorb this mythic power, leading to dangerous, uncontrolled eruptions. The PCs witnessed some of these instances on Eupherae, and it'll soon be apparent to them that these weren't isolated events; in fact, they're threads in a wider pattern stretching throughout all Iblydos and causing trouble that the PCs will confront throughout the rest of the Adventure Path.

While the PCs investigated Eupherae, Pteios made his way through Pol-Bailax, having already recovered the warshard. During his time in the city, he preached of a new age coming for Iblydos, one where a powerful benefactor grants unparalleled mythic power to the archipelago and its residents. When this

ancient patron rises, he claimed, myth-speaking and prophecy will be reknit anew, bringing prosperity and fortune. Most citizens of Pol-Bailax paid little attention to Pteios's proselytizations, simply viewing him as an eccentric street preacher. The warshard he carried, however, had an unintended effect: the fragment of Gorum's essence magnifies nearby chaos and conflict. Iblydan culture condones grudges, and the warshard caused many simmering resentments to flare into open hostility.

Largely unaware of these scuffles, Pteios soon departed Pol-Bailax to continue Sangeh's work elsewhere. The warshard had already had its effect, however. Airborne cinders of conflict left in the descending warshard's wake days ago finally began drifting to the ground. In some places, these

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sparked literal fires, yet their psychological effect was far more dire: the embers ignited intense feelings of conflict and belligerence in nearby witnesses. Squabbles spiraled into brawls, and brawls turned into arson, fury, desperation, and riots. Those who've avoided the embers' effects have hunkered down in their homes or the remaining intact public buildings, hiding from those rampaging through the streets. The warshard rages are intermittent; those affected retain their sense of self, but they're easily set off by minor slights and other stimuli. Some are taking this opportunity to settle old grievances, enact vigilante justice, or indulge in uncontrolled revelry, while others try to keep some semblance of order.

There is one hope for peace in Pol-Bailax, however: a ritual to channel its absent phoenix patron, sending mystical healing flames over the city to purify the embers' influence. The method and implements for carrying out this ritual lie within the city's acropolis, and the mythic power now borne by the PCs is a key component!

**New Powers:** This chapter isn't just the players' first opportunity to use their mythic abilities; it's likely also the GM's first time tracking Mythic Points and deciding when a PC's calling comes into effect. Many encounters in this chapter note which callings might regain a Mythic Point after the event, helping a GM spot additional opportunities in this Adventure Path's subsequent volumes.

## SKIES OF ROSE, SKIES OF BLOOD

As the *Tide Hunter* nears Pol-Bailax, read or paraphrase the following.

Warm dawn light spreads over the eastern horizon, casting its rosy-fingered rays over the deck of the *Tide Hunter*. To the west, the silhouette of Pol-Bailax's skyline comes into view, glowing as bright as the dawn. A red mist hangs over the city, and black plumes rise from several of the buildings.

At the helm, Yasmenei frowns. "What's that?" she asks, raising her spyglass to her eye. She surveys the city for a moment, then lowers the spyglass, her frown deepening. "Fires. Multiple ones. But Pol-Bailax has a system to fight any fires that arise—how did it get this bad?"

"Perhaps we should seek another port until they have this issue under control," Ekuno says, regarding the city with concern.

Yasmenei shakes her head. "No. Something's wrong, and people might need help." She raises her voice to pitch across the *Tide Hunter*. "Stay on course! We'll anchor offshore and investigate."

Yasmenei motions to the PCs to speak with her as she guides the ship toward Pol-Bailax. She tells them that whatever's wrong in Pol-Bailax, they and the crew of the *Tide Hunter* might be the only ones available to offer assistance. Once the ship anchors, Yasmenei springs to action, seeking out her contacts in Pol-Bailax for information while the crew sets up camp on an eerily deserted beach near the harbor. The other expedition teams disperse upon arrival, heading into the city to see to their own family and friends, though depending on their relationships with the PCs, they might offer to check in as needed. The acrid smell of smoke is strong in the air, and distant explosions and shouts occasionally echo from further in the city, adding to the unsettling atmosphere.

As the crew finishes setting up camp, Yasmenei returns. Read or paraphrase the following.

Yasmenei motions for the expedition to gather around. "Well, we've got *some* answers, but fewer than I'd like," she says. "Apparently, yesterday morning, Pol-Bailax just... erupted. People started fights, riots, frenzied festivities—it's chaos out there. Half the citizens are roaming around setting fires and causing mayhem, while the other half have barricaded themselves inside anything they can defend. No one's sure what's caused it, but it seems to be connected to falling embers from the skystone you recovered."

"What about the acropolis?" Vakloia asks, her snakes hissing uneasily. "The drasikons should have done something to calm things down by now."

Yasmenei shakes her head. "No one's heard from anyone up there since all this started. I pinpointed a few of the worst trouble spots. We should deal with those and help who we can while we try to figure out what's going on... and how to put a stop to it."

Yasmenei asks that the PCs investigate these hotspots, tamping down fires—literal and metaphorical—as they can, and protect Pol-Bailax's people. She and the crew will perform damage control where they can while maintaining a haven for the PCs to retreat to if needed. She leaves it to the PCs to determine the best order for addressing the various leads, wryly commenting that "fires seem to be everywhere, so we'll have to do our best." Although the situation is serious, she encourages the PCs not to overextend themselves and return to the *Tide Hunter* to rest as necessary, as they'll be no help to anyone if they get themselves killed.

Depending on the order in which the PCs address these leads and how quickly they work, circumstances in some places might worsen as time elapses, as noted in the encounter areas. These adjustments are intended to complicate an event, not deny the PCs a



### NONLETHAL SKIRMISHING

At times while dealing with the chaos in Pol-Bailax, the PCs may wish to subdue opponents without killing them, as the citizens aren't entirely responsible for their actions. Consider having an NPC, such as Yasmenei, loan the PCs a *merciful rune* (*Treasure Vault* 33) or a *wand of mercy* (*Treasure Vault* 141). Additionally, if the PCs are trying not to kill a combatant, consider using the dying rules for PCs for such creatures, so they have a chance to save their opponent if they fail to pull their punches.

chance to experience the event altogether. The PCs should have a sense of urgency, but not so much that they feel they lack time to rest and regroup. Keep track of how many days pass before the PCs successfully perform the purification ritual, as the more time passes, the more damage is done, affecting the rewards the drasikons present the PCs at the end of the adventure (see page 64).

**Boiling Point** (page 48): Two rival family-run restaurants in North Slope have been feuding for over two centuries. An ember landed on each of their restaurants, causing the families' simmering tensions to erupt into violent hostility. They've turned their neighborhood into a war zone.

**Coils of Mercy** (page 50): A deadly malady is spreading among the residents of South Slope. Pol-Bailax's healers are overwhelmed by the troubles in the city, but an eccentric alchemist has a remedy that requires a dangerous ingredient.

**Feathered Inferno** (page 51): Pyrefowl have been sighted atop Pol-Bailax's northwest watchtower, attracted by the fires smoldering there. Unfortunately, their own flames are spreading the blaze, putting the tower at risk of collapse.

**Pyre's Light** (page 52): A group of citizens have a plan to attract Pol-Bailax's patron phoenix back to the city—by building a massive bonfire within its library. Despite the danger, this group refuses to be dissuaded, reacting violently to any who try to stop them.

**Serpents' Teeth** (page 53): A woman bearing a strange magical bag of dragons' teeth is roaming the city, with peculiar warriors springing up in her wake. Her motivations are unclear, but her warriors cause fights wherever they go, before disintegrating.

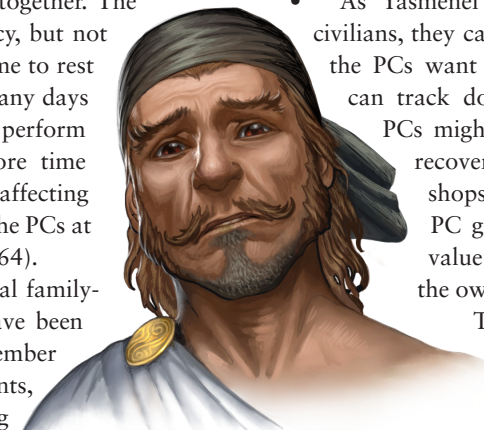
**Steel-Winged Death** (page 54): The people of Kopis Heights are under attack by terrifying... butterflies? Rumors vary, but residents are in danger and need assistance.

### Resupplying

The PCs just returned from a lengthy adventure and likely have coin to spend—only to find the city in chaos and few merchants in any position to open for business. Fortunately, there are a few ways for PCs to purchase gear—especially now that they can afford striking weapons and the wealth of exciting 2nd- and 3rd-level magic items.

- Yasmenei's ship carries a variety of basic supplies the PCs can still access (see *Tide Hunter's Hold* on page 29).
- As Yasmenei and her crew assist nearby civilians, they can inquire about specific goods the PCs want to purchase. In general, they can track down most common items the PCs might desire, even if that involves recovering gear from abandoned shops. However, Yasmenei insists a PC give her at least half an item's value in coin to hold in escrow for the owner, paying the other half later.

The PCs can take some liberties when borrowing gear, yet Yasmenei knows citizens will need money to rebuild after this disaster, after all.



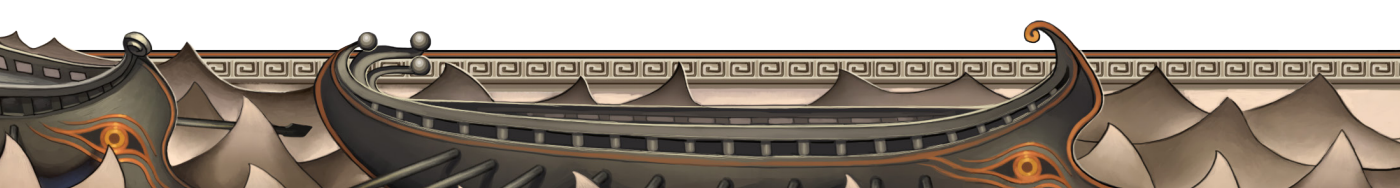
**Ouraikos Demokori**

### Boiling Point

Two families of North Slope, the Xantrious and the Demokoris, are famous restaurateurs with generations of experience. Each boasts the finest grilled meat skewers, stuffed grape leaves, and honeycakes, using very similar recipes with minute, fiercely defended differences. Each family claims they created the original recipes, only to have the other family steal the secrets and open a competing venue. The feud has extended for centuries, rarely erupting into anything more than shouting matches by the families and vigorous debate among the shops' loyal customers.

However, the warshard stirred up bellicose impulses, sparking open hostilities. Now, the families have turned their neighborhood into a war zone, with their restaurants as their defensible bases as they skirmish against each other in the streets. Without intervention, it's only a matter of time before someone gets killed.

When the PCs arrive, read or paraphrase the following.



Signs of recent fighting are everywhere on this street. Impromptu barricades have been hastily assembled across the alleyways and buildings' doors, and flowerpots and benches are overturned and smashed in the road.

The most heavily defended locations are two restaurants, standing diagonally across from each other at a broad intersection. One bears a sign reading "Xantrious' Restaurant: Best in Town," and the other's sign reads "Demokoris' Classic Cuisine: The Original!" Fresh graffiti slathered in red paint adorns the stone facades and boarded windows of both restaurants, including condemnations such as "frauds!" and "thieving liars!"

A PC from Pol-Bailax automatically knows the story of the families' feud; otherwise, a PC can Recall it with a successful DC 12 Pol-Bailax Lore check, a DC 15 Cooking Lore check, or a DC 18 Society check. They can also learn this by canvassing the neighborhood to Gather Information with a DC 18 Diplomacy check, though especially dedicated partisans might begin the conversation by demanding to know whether the PCs are "for the Xantrious or Demokoris."

When the PCs go to either restaurant, the wary family assumes the PCs are spies for the other restaurant—an accusation the PCs can dismiss or deflect with a DC 18 Deception, Diplomacy, or Intimidation check to convince the wary restaurateurs they aren't a spy for the other family. Once they're allowed inside, they're greeted by **Iadosia Xantrious** (ambitious female human chef 3) at Xantrious' or **Ouraikos Demokori** (dedicated nonbinary human chef 3) at Demokoris'. The chef the PCs visit first has an initial attitude of indifferent, while the one the PCs visit second has an attitude of unfriendly, as the chef saw them visiting their rival. The two chefs are eager to share their woes with those who might commiserate and speak with the PCs regardless of their attitudes, but the PCs can attempt to Make an Impression during these conversations with a successful DC 16 Diplomacy check (or DC 18 if the PCs didn't dispel the accusations of being spies), as winning the chefs over can benefit them later.

Both Iadosia and Ouraikos claim that shortly after their restaurants were founded, the other family stole their recipes and passed them off as their own, pointing to similarities in the recipes as their proof. They both try to get the PCs on their side, enlisting their aid in fighting the other family. They grumble if the PCs demur, but this doesn't worsen their attitudes. If the PCs ask about the eruptions of violence in Pol-Bailax, both treat this as perfectly reasonable, though if pressed, they do admit they've felt more temperamental than usual.

### TAKING SIDES

Some parties might want to help one family defeat the other. If they do so, they must fight six servants and one innkeeper (NPC Core 66, 69) in their restaurant. However, as defeating restaurant workers isn't particularly heroic, resolving the matter this way doesn't count as a mythic deed.

**The Truth:** The Xantrious and the Demokoris are correct that their recipes came from the same source, but in fact, neither family stole them. The founders of the two families were two cousins, once co-owners of a single restaurant, who had a falling out and went their separate ways. Each took their family recipes and applied their own unique flourishes. Over the years, the families' original connection was forgotten—or at least overshadowed by the feud.

**Finding Clues:** To resolve the feud, the PCs must find out as much as they can about its true cause, then convince the families to bury the skewer. The two chefs will allow them to look into the matter, though each warns the PCs not to be fooled by "those conniving Xantrious/Demokoris."

- **Family Tales:** A PC can talk to the family members and delve into their histories with a DC 18 Diplomacy or Intimidation check. On a success, they spot similarities in the descriptions of the families' origins, suggesting they might have once been related.

- **The Lockbox:** The Xantrious possess a lockbox passed down for generations, but its key has long been lost. Iadosia grants the PCs permission to try to open the box. A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Crafting check to disassemble the box or a DC 20 Thievery check to Pick a Lock finds some correspondence within from the Xantrious' founder with someone with the surname Demokori; by the tone of these missives, they were relatives having a fight.

- **Recipes:** A PC can compare the recipes of both families with a DC 18 Cooking Lore or DC 20 Perception check. On a success, they notice that these recipes do seem to have the same source, but oddly, some of the earlier notations are in the same two handwritings in both recipe books.

- **Restaurant Provenance:** A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Legal or Pol-Bailax Lore check, or a DC 20 Society check, check finds legal text suggesting both restaurants operated under different names long ago, with both changing at the same time.

**Resolving the Feud:** Once the PCs have finished their investigation, they can bring Iadosia and

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Ouraikos together to relay their findings, attempting a Diplomacy check to convince them to mend fences. Alternatively, they can attempt a Deception check to concoct a spurious explanation for why the families should end their feud. The DC of this skill check depends on how many clues the PCs found. One PC must attempt the primary check, though others can Aid. If the attitudes of both chefs are at least friendly, the PCs gain a +1 circumstance bonus to this check; if both are helpful, the bonus is +2.

### CLUES FOUND

Number of Clues	DC
0	23
1	21
2	19
3	17
4	15

If the PCs succeed, the families are astonished to learn of their shared origins, and Iadosia and Ouraikos agree to meet up to discuss things. Although old wounds won't be healed overnight, the families are willing to start taking steps toward reconciliation.

If the PCs fail, the families aren't convinced and begin brawling, and the PCs must defeat one side (see Taking Sides sidebar on page 49) to restore peace to the neighborhood, or leave them to their fight.

**Time Pressure:** If the PCs take more than 48 hours to come here, the feud has erupted into another brawl on the street. The combatants are eight servers (use the servant stat block from page 66 of *Pathfinder NPC Core*), four Xantrious and four Demokoris; they attack both their opposition and the PCs, if they intervene. The PCs don't earn additional XP for this combat. If the PCs don't intervene, each side kills a member of the enemy family before they retreat to their restaurants; this increases the end DC to resolve the conflict by 2. The DC also increases by 2 if the PCs kill any of the combatants.

**Mythic Points:** Settling this centuries-long feud is a mythic deed, which restores 3 Mythic Points to each character.

**Treasure:** In thanks for uncovering the truth, the Xantrious and Demokoris each gift the PCs a honeycake that functions as power journeybread (*Treasure Vault* 49), with some good-natured challenges that they should report on whose spice blend they like better.

**Reward:** For resolving the families' feud, award the PCs 80 XP.

### Coils of Mercy

### Low 3

When Yasmenei tells the PCs about the spreading sickness, she indicates that a local apothecary, **Aliklaos** (eccentric male human alchemist 5), has been asking for capable hands to help him gather materials for a cure. She directs them to his shop, where he's sheltered since the fighting began. The shop door is locked when the PCs arrive, but Aliklaos answers the door upon hearing a knock. Read or paraphrase the following.

This small shop appears untouched by the chaos outside. Drying herbs hang in the windows, and glass jars full of powders and viscous liquids sit on shelves along the walls.

The man who answers the door is a wiry human with brass spectacles perched on the end of his nose. He leads visitors over to the shop's counter. "You've heard about the situation?" he says, hands darting over several cups as he prepares some tea. "Thank you for coming. I know things are bad everywhere, but we really could use some help."

Aliklaos explains that a malady has been spreading through the neighborhood, causing victims to bleed from the eyes and mouth; if untreated, the condition eventually results in death. The symptoms are reminiscent of several obscure afflictions, each of whose cures require equally esoteric ingredients. One of the recipes calls for amphisbaena venom, and fortunately, he's heard rumors of a two-headed snake in the Spur—one of many dangers now wandering Bailax. Such reptiles enjoy warm caves, so Aliklaos predicts the amphisbaena might be sheltering among the forges of Copper Row. He asks the PCs to find it and harvest its venom, though he warns that the creature's venom becomes inert swiftly after death; they should either harvest it from a live beast or act swiftly after killing it.

The PCs find the amphisbaena in the workshop they rid of scamps only days before. When they arrive, the beast is asleep in the corner. Harvesting the venom uses the Victory Points subsystem (*GM Core* 184), in which the PCs must obtain 5 Remedy Points for Aliklaos to formulate enough medicine to cure the afflicted.

To gain Remedy Points, a PC can attempt a DC 18 Medicine or Nature check to identify the most efficient way to obtain it from the amphisbaena, or a Stealth or Thievery check to sneak up on the creature and get the venom without its notice.

**Creatures:** If a PC critically fails their check to obtain Remedy Points stealthily, the amphisbaena awakens and attacks. Use the map on page 22 if combat breaks out.

## AMPHISBAENA

*Pathfinder Bestiary 3 15*

**Initiative** Perception +10

A PC can attempt to harvest venom from the amphisbaena during combat as a two-action activity with the manipulate trait, but the DC for the skill check increases by 2. Once slain, the amphisbaena's venom becomes inert after one round. If the PCs don't obtain 5 Remedy Points before the amphisbaena by that time, they fail to harvest enough venom for the cure.

**Time Pressure:** If the PCs take more than 48 hours before attempting to harvest the amphisbaena venom, they must obtain an additional 2 Remedy Points to succeed, as more people have fallen ill.

**Mythic Points:** Collecting the venom for the cure follows the caretaker's and thief's Calling.

**Treasure:** For bringing him the venom, Aliklaos gifts the PCs two golden sprite apples (*Treasure Vault 51*), contained within a silver box worth 25 gp.

**Reward:** Award the PCs 30 XP for harvesting enough venom for the cure.

## Feathered Inferno

When the PCs head to the watchtower, read or paraphrase the following.

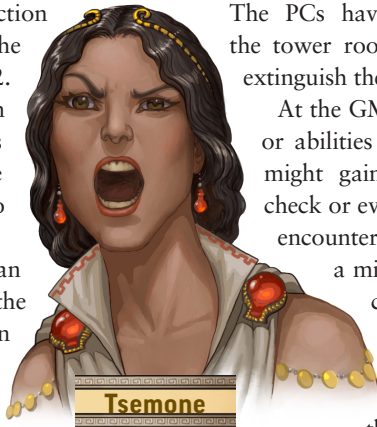
A thin plume of smoke rises from the watchtower's roof, where a flock of pyrefowl nest in the ashes of the surrounding blaze. The door at the base of the tower is broken, and inside, the smoking remains of the spiral stairs leading up hint at the pyrefowl's path up the tower.

Spooked by the urban chaos, a flock of pyrefowl retreated to the watchtower's roof, scattering embers that ignited the structure. Though capable of flight, these birds do so reluctantly and prefer staying in the comforting flames. Unfortunately, their presence fans the tower's smoldering fires, weakening the structure and risking imminent collapse. Any PC trained in Crafting or Engineering Lore recognizes this danger upon arrival at the site. If the tower collapses, it could kill dozens of citizens, damage homes, and even ignite nearby buildings. The pyrefowl must be relocated.

To reach the tower roof, a PC must succeed at a DC 15 Acrobatics check to Balance on the remains of the stairs or a DC 20 Athletics check to Climb the walls. A PC who reaches the roof can lower the watchtower's ladder, allowing their companions to follow without difficulty.

Attacking the pyrefowl (page 87) and killing at least three would scatter the rest of the flock and resolve the

## CREATURE 4



Tsemone

problem, but slaying these sacred creatures is taboo in Pol-Bailax and would lead to widespread condemnation if discovered. Instead, the PCs are strongly encouraged to capture them and usher them down from the tower.

The PCs have eight rounds once they reach the tower roof to retrieve all six pyrefowl and extinguish the blaze before the tower collapses.

At the GM's discretion, a PC who uses spells or abilities that would provide an advantage might gain a circumstance bonus to their check or even succeed at a check outright. The encounter can also last eight longer phases of a minute or two each so as to facilitate clever PC tactics that might take additional time to execute. If you do so, both of the actions below last the length of a phase, not just three actions.

Retrieving the pyrefowl can be achieved with the following action.

### RETRIEVE THE PYREFOWL >>>

#### MANIPULATE

To Retrieve the Pyrefowl, a PC can attempt a DC 16 Hunting Lore or DC 18 Survival check to set traps to capture the pyrefowl without harming it, a DC 18 Deception check to lure a pyrefowl down, a DC 18 Nature check to Command an Animal, or a DC 20 Athletics check to wrestle a pyrefowl into a metal net.

**Critical Success** The PC retrieves two pyrefowl.

**Success** The PC retrieves a pyrefowl.

**Failure** The PC doesn't retrieve any pyrefowl.

**Critical Failure** The PC spooks the pyrefowl, taking a -1 circumstance penalty on their next attempt.

Once all six pyrefowl have been relocated, the PCs can extinguish the fires in the tower with the Extinguish the Blaze action, requiring two successes or one critical success.

### EXTINGUISH THE BLAZE >>>

#### MANIPULATE

To Extinguish the Blaze, a PC can attempt a DC 18 Athletics check to smother the flames, Crafting check to construct suppression methods using the surrounding environment, or Diplomacy or Intimidation check to enlist help from citizens. Magic such as *create water* grants a +2 circumstance bonus, as can other abilities that manipulate water or fire, at GM discretion.

**Critical Success** The PC completely extinguishes the blaze.

**Success** The PC makes progress toward extinguishing the blaze, earning one success.

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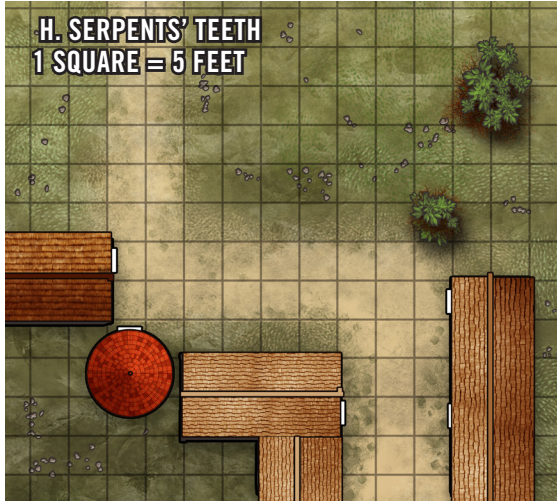
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**Failure** The PC makes no progress.  
**Critical Failure** The PC accidentally makes matters worse, requiring an additional success before the blaze can be extinguished.

After the fires have been put out, Yasmenei's crew can shore up the tower and keep it from collapsing. Otherwise, if no one has Extinguished the Blaze by the end of the eighth round, the tower collapses, dealing 3d6 bludgeoning damage to any creatures on it and leading to numerous casualties on the ground.

**Rivals:** As the PCs begin collecting the pyrefowl, their rivals arrive at the tower, intent on collecting the pyrefowl themselves and getting the credit. After each round, the rivals retrieve one pyrefowl. If the rivals retrieve more pyrefowl than the PCs, they take all the credit for saving the tower, decreasing the rewards the PCs earn from Pol-Bailax at the end of the adventure (The City's Rewards, page 64) by 20 gp. A PC can spend 2 hours trying to counter this story when they hear rumors of their rivals' "heroics" by attempting a DC 18 Diplomacy check; on a success, they negate this effect.

**Time Pressure:** If the PCs take more than 72 hours to attempt this mission, the tower is structurally weaker, and they only have six rounds to retrieve the pyrefowl and extinguish the blaze.

**Mythic Points:** Retrieving the pyrefowl follows the acrobat's and handler's Calling.

**Reward:** For retrieving the pyrefowl and saving the tower, award the PCs 30 XP.

### Pyre's Light

When the PCs arrive at the library, read or paraphrase the following.

---

Outside the library, a mob of citizens is hard at work tossing

books and scrolls upon an unlit pyre. Barrels of oil are lined up outside the building, with torches placed dangerously close to them. The frenzied mob seems to care little what they toss on the pyre, as long as it'll burn.

It should be apparent to the PCs that the situation is extremely dangerous. Not only do the mob's actions risk destroying a vast amount of accumulated knowledge, but it's likely that the blaze, if lit, would quickly go out of control, engulfing the entire neighborhood. The people are heedless of the pleas of the head librarian, **Cleirope** (studious female aiuvarin librarian 4), to leave the books alone and cease this foolishness.

There are dozens of citizens involved, and the PCs should be aware that massacring them is unlikely to win them any favor in Pol-Bailax, even under such circumstances. To talk the mob out of its unwise plan, the PCs can attempt the Placate the Mob action.

### PLACATE THE MOB

AUDITORY CONCENTRATE VISUAL

To Placate the Mob, a PC can attempt a DC 18 Deception check to mislead the mob into giving up; Diplomacy or Intimidation check to convince them their strategy is too dangerous; or a Pol-Bailax Lore, Religion, or Society check to cite religious teachings or historical precedent indicating the pyre won't summon the phoenix.

**Success** The PC earns one success toward Placating the Mob.

**Failure** The PC fails to make an impact on the mob, but can try again.

**Critical Failure** The mob laughs at the PC's overtures and deride further arguments. This increases the DC of subsequent checks by 1 for all PCs.

The PCs must earn a total of four successes within two rounds to Placate the Mob. If they do, the citizens reluctantly disperse, giving up on their plan to summon the phoenix. If the PCs fail, the mob grows increasingly unruly and sets the pyre alight, and the PCs must contain the damage with the Extinguish the Blaze action (page 51). If the PCs Extinguish the Blaze within two rounds, they save the library's contents from major damage.

**Rivals:** The PCs' rivals from Team Akki have arrived on the scene first. They think lighting the pyre is a great idea, already dreaming of the glory they'll receive for helping attract the phoenix back to Pol-Bailax, and they're egging on the mob. At the start of each of the two rounds, Tsemone or Akki use rhetoric to stir up the crowd, increasing the check to DC 19 to Placate the Mob for one turn. A PC can attempt a DC 18 Deception, Diplomacy, or Intimidation check to



counter their rivals' arguments, rather than Placating the Mob, reducing the DC to 18 for that round on a success (or DC 17 on a critical success).

If the PCs must Extinguish the Blaze, the rivals again interfere, increasing the check DC by 1 unless a PC spends their actions attempting a DC 18 Acrobatics, Athletics, or Intimidation check to outmaneuver the trio.

**Time Pressure:** If the PCs take more than 24 hours to address the situation, the group has already set the pyre alight. The PCs don't get a chance to Placate the Mob and start the encounter needing to Extinguish the Blaze.

**Mythic Points:** Saving the library's contents from the pyre follows the sage's Calling.

**Treasure:** Cleiroke gives the PCs a *lesser comprehension elixir* in appreciation for saving the library.

**Reward:** Award the PCs 60 XP for preventing or containing the blaze.

## H. Serpents' Teeth Moderate 3

Investigation of this report indicates that the woman and her strange warriors have been wandering the Kylix, causing fights wherever they go. She hasn't spoken to anyone, nor made any demands, but seems almost in a trance. If the PCs ask around, locals identify this woman as **Phermeina** (starry-eyed female stheno harpist 1), a musician who often plays at the surrounding taverns. None have any idea where she's found these warriors, nor why she'd want to attack anyone, as she's normally kind-hearted.

The cause of Phermeina's activities is an heirloom passed down in her family for generations, a bag of magical dragons' teeth. Her old family tales said that the teeth could summon warriors in times of great need, but they didn't seem to possess any magical properties besides a faint residual aura, so Phermeina assumed that it was either a tall tale or the magic had faded. However, with the recent surge of mythic power across the city, the teeth's properties reactivated, calling forth a horde of warriors and magically entrancing Phermeina when she didn't immediately take control of them. Now, she leads them around the neighborhood in a daze, fueling their appetites for warfare and strife.

To find Phermeina, the PCs can attempt a DC 20 Survival check to Track. On a failure, it takes them longer to locate her and their rivals arrive first (see Rivals).

**Creatures:** Entranced by the chaos her warriors are causing, Phermeina

commands her troop to attack any who interfere. The speiroikos fight all in their path, save Phermeina, unless distracted. A PC who succeeds at a DC 14 Perception check to Sense Motive notices that she's moving oddly, as if in a dream, and that whispers emanate from the bag in her hand.

The PCs have one round to speak with Phermeina before combat begins; they can attempt a DC 14 Diplomacy check to talk her down, or a DC 14 Arcana or Occultism check to break the magical link between her mind and the dragon teeth bag. On a success, the PC confuses Phermeina, preventing her from Scattering Teeth until the second round of combat. On a critical success, Phermeina escapes her haze entirely and tries to call off the warriors, but to no avail; however, she tells the PCs about their Diverted Fury weakness.

If the PCs talk down or subdue Phermeina, she shares an important piece of information with them



**Phermeina**

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once combat concludes: a few days before the chaos started, she saw a stheno prophet in a tavern, preaching of a newly awakened patron for Iblydos. She didn't pay his tales much mind, but did notice that he had a shard of a peculiar gleaming substance attached to his hip, and after he departed, a brawl of unusual violence broke out among the tavern patrons. Use the map on page 52 for this encounter.

### PHERMEINA CREATURE 1

Starry-eyed stheno harpist (*Pathfinder Bestiary 3* 258)

**Initiative** Perception +4

**Scatter Teeth** **↔↔** (manipulate) **Frequency** once per hour; **Effect** Phermeina reaches into the bag, extracts a handful of teeth, and tosses them up to 15 feet. The teeth create a prone speiroikos troop with 36 Hit Points that acts at the end of the initiative order and fights in Phermeina's defense.

### SPEIROIKOS CREATURE 3

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**Initiative** Perception +9

**Rivals:** If the PCs' rivals arrive on the scene first, they've antagonized Phermeina, and she orders the warriors to attack immediately. When the PCs find them, the rivals are losing to the speiroikos; they take the opportunity to retreat, shouting that they've "softened them up for you." (They've done nothing of the sort.)

If the PCs succeed at their Survival check, they arrive at the same time as their rivals. Upon seeing them, their rivals disengage, calling parting taunts; each attempts to Demoralize a PC at the beginning of the first round before they retreat.

**Mythic Points:** Protecting the neighborhood from the warriors follows the guardian's Calling.

**Treasure:** In thanks for freeing her from the warriors' influence, Phermeina presents the PCs with another family heirloom, a *bracelet of dashing*.

## I. Steel-Winged Death Low 3

When the PCs head to Kopis Heights to investigate, read or paraphrase the following.

This normally bustling street is eerily silent, the window shutters of its homes and shops firmly closed. Not a soul can be seen outside. Suddenly, a scream splits the air, echoing through the stillness.

Residents here took shelter as Bailax erupted into fighting, but the upswelling of mythic energies had another unexpected effect: local butterflies that frequented the neighborhood's gardens metamorphosed, growing far larger and more deadly, and began terrorizing anyone who ventured outside. Unfortunately, Ataiosiphon and his family, whose house is in the neighborhood, have run out of fresh water. With little alternative, he's braved the streets to try to retrieve some, but the butterflies spotted him. As the PCs arrive on the scene, he's cornered in a nearby garden where he tried to hide; he's relieved to see the PCs and asks for their aid. Use the map on page 54 for this encounter.

**Creatures:** The butterflies' mythic metamorphosis has turned them into razor-winged creatures known as ferrous butterflies, normally found on the Plane of Metal. When the PCs arrive, the butterflies quickly turn their attention to them. The swarms begin approximately 40 feet from the PCs.

### FERROUS BUTTERFLIES (3) CREATURE 1

*Pathfinder Rage of Elements* 152

**Initiative** Perception +7

**Rivals:** Within a few hours after the PCs defeat the butterflies, they hear tales spreading across Pol-Bailax of the heroic deed... but the rumors say their rivals were the ones to defeat them and save the neighborhood! Jealous of the PCs' accomplishments, their rivals have taken credit for their hard work. A PC can attempt a DC 18 Diplomacy or Performance check to spread the real story, taking two hours. Otherwise, this reduces the reward the PCs get from Pol-Bailax (see *The City's Reward*, page 64) by 10 gp.

**Mythic Points:** Defeating the butterflies follows the hunter's Calling.

**Treasure:** In appreciation for his timely rescue, Ataiosiphon presents the PCs with a hand-crafted amphora worth 35 gp.

## The Rending Rites

After two days have passed, or after the PCs have completed four of their initial missions, whichever

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comes first, Yasmenei comes to them with a troubling report on the morning of the next day. Read or paraphrase the following.

Yasmenei waves to attract attention; although dark circles have grown under her eyes, she's maintained her unflappable demeanor.

"We've got another problem," she says without preamble. "Some residents in South Slope started an impromptu street festival the other day. It's more frenzied than the usual festival, and rumor has it they've been spicing their wine with fragments of the meteor. Our scouts indicate the revelers have been destroying statues, art, buildings—anything they can get their hands on. While the property damage isn't ideal, at least they didn't appear to be hurting any people. Unfortunately, that seems about to change."

She sighs, running a hand over her braids. "The crew I sent out to scout the situation this morning reported that the revelers have captured a cyclops. They seem to have got it in their heads that if they tear this poor person limb from limb, they can absorb the power of myth-speaking for themselves and save Pol-Bailax. I doubt this cyclops even *is* a myth-speaker, but regardless, they're in trouble. I know you've got a lot to handle, but could you see about a rescue mission?"

Yasmenei tells the PCs that the cyclops is set to be sacrificed at sundown that day and recommends they get to the festival early so they have time to assess the situation. She's not sure where exactly the cyclops is being held and cautions them that the revelers haven't been letting anyone leave the festival once they enter; her scouts had to sneak out. Although Yasmenei doesn't know the cyclops' identity, the players will soon discover the cyclops is no stranger to the PCs: it's Yphani!

There are dozens of people involved in the festival, far too many to fight head-on, and Yasmenei tells the PCs she hopes they can avoid a bloodbath, as the revelers clearly aren't in their right minds. To rescue the cyclops, the PCs will have to adopt a subtler approach. This encounter is structured as an infiltration (*GM Core* 196).

### Running the Infiltration

While infiltrating the festival, the PCs accumulate Awareness Points (AP) and Infiltration Points as they confront obstacles, learn information, and discover opportunities. As they gain Awareness Points, the infiltration becomes more difficult. Due to the short time frame, the PCs have no chance to make downtime preparations, though depending on what

they still need to accomplish, they may have time to attempt another mission or two before heading to the festival, at GM discretion. However, during the infiltration, they can spend Mythic Points as Edge Points to overcome obstacles or complications. If they do, encourage the players to describe how their mythic abilities aid them in overcoming the obstacle; perhaps a PC with the thief's calling is able to pick a lock to a hiding place with preternatural speed, or perhaps a PC with the sage's calling has knowledge appear in their mind at just the right moment to be useful. When the infiltration begins, you should explain to the players how Awareness Points and Infiltration Points work.

Track Awareness Point thresholds as follows.

**5 Awareness Points:** The PCs' attract notice. The first time the characters reach this tier, the Mandatory Libations complication occurs (see page 56).

**10 Awareness Points:** The revelers grow suspicious. Increase the DC for obstacles by 1. The first time the PCs reach this tier, the Suspicions Rising complication occurs (see page 56).

**15 Awareness Points:** The infiltration fails. The revelers notice the PCs don't belong, and dozens surround the PCs, determined to "honor" them with the rite of sparagmos (being torn apart), forcing the PCs to flee the crowd. After an hour, the PCs' Awareness Points reset to 9, falling to 6 points after 24 hours. This lets the PCs return and try again, though they may need to repeat some obstacles depending on what they accomplished before being caught.

### Obstacles

The PCs' objective is to locate and free the cyclops, then escape the festival without attracting notice from the revelers. They must overcome the following four obstacles in order, though feel free to create alternative obstacles if the PCs have other strategies. At GM discretion, use of certain skills or abilities can provide a circumstance bonus on skill checks to overcome obstacles.

If failure to overcome the Escape obstacle results in combat, use the map on page 52.

### BLEND WITH REVELERS

### OBSTACLE

**Infiltration Points** 2 (group); **Overcome** DC 16 Alcohol Lore; DC 18 Deception, Performance, Society, or Stealth  
The PCs must join the crowd of frenzied revelers, blending in while avoiding the worst of its excesses. The atmosphere on the street is raucous, with citizens daubing their faces in red paint, drinking copious amounts of wine, and going on destructive rampages against nearby monuments and buildings.



### LOCATE THE PRISONER

### OBSTACLE

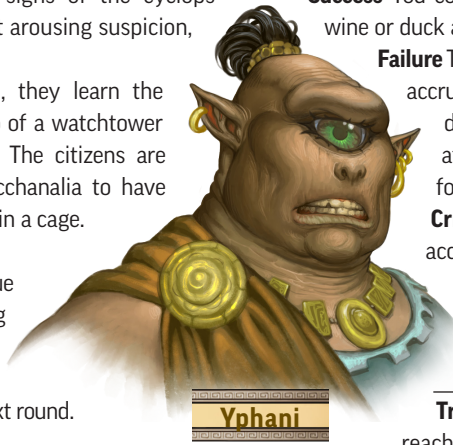
**Infiltration Points** 2 (group); **Overcome** DC 17 Scouting Lore; DC 19 Deception, Diplomacy, Intimidation, or Survival

The PCs scout the festival for signs of the cyclops' holding place, ask around without arousing suspicion, or search for tracks.

**Success** When the PCs succeed, they learn the cyclops is being held at the top of a watchtower overlooking the neighborhood. The citizens are too preoccupied with their bacchanalia to have posted guards, but she's locked in a cage.

**Failure** The PCs accrue 1 AP.

**Critical Failure** The PCs accrue 2 APs and obtain misleading information, giving them a -1 circumstance penalty on checks to overcome this obstacle the next round.



Yphani

### FREE YPHANI

### OBSTACLE

**Infiltration Points** 3 (group); **Overcome** DC 16 Engineering Lore; DC 18 Athletics, Deception, Stealth, or Thievery

When the PCs reach the top of the tower, they discover that the prisoner is none other than Yphani. She's relieved to see them, though insists they should leave her and escape the festival themselves. To free her, the PCs must break or pick the lock on her cage, or obtain a key through silvered words or sleight of hand on their way to the tower.

### ESCAPE

### OBSTACLE

**Infiltration Points** 3 (group); **Overcome** DC 17 Pol-Bailax or Scouting Lore; DC 19 Acrobatics, Deception, Intimidation, Society, or Stealth

Once the PCs secure Yphani, they must escape the festival with her in tow!

**Failure** If failure to overcome this obstacle would put the PCs at or over the 15 Awareness Point threshold, they don't immediately fail, as they've already secured Yphani. Instead, they're faced with a horde of revelers who try to get back their sacrifice by force. The PCs must defeat this group, composed of six commoners (*NPC Core* 66) and a dancer (*NPC Core* 124). If they successfully knock out or kill their assailants, they escape the festival before more descend upon them.

### Complications

The following complications may occur during the infiltration, depending on the PCs' Awareness Points.

### MANDATORY LIBATIONS

### COMPLICATION

**Trigger** The PCs' 5 Awareness Points total reaches 5 for the first time; **Overcome** DC 18 Deception, Diplomacy, or Stealth

The PCs are noticed by an enthusiastic reveler who presses

a glass of wine that has a metallic film resting atop it. The reveler urges them to drink up, becoming visibly upset if the PC hesitates or refuses.

**Success** You convince the reveler you've consumed the wine or duck away from their notice.

**Failure** The reveler grows suspicious, and the party accrues 1 AP. To avoid this, you can choose to drink the wine, but you must then succeed at a DC 16 Fortitude save or be stupefied for the next round of skill checks.

**Critical Failure** As failure, but the party accrues 2 AP; drinking the wine decreases this to 1 AP.

### SUSPICIONS RISING COMPLICATION

**Trigger** The PCs' 10 Awareness Points total reaches 5 for the first time; **Overcome** DC 20

Deception, Performance, or Religion

A belligerent drunken reveler accosts the PCs, finding their behavior suspicious, and his accusations draw attention. The PCs can try to divert his notice by spinning tales or cite parables playing into the crowd's religious fervor to mollify them.

### Opportunities

The PCs can use the following opportunity once during the infiltration.

### FRIENDLY FACE

### OPPORTUNITY

**Trigger** A PC fails or critically fails a check to Blend With Revelers or Locate the Prisoner.

As the PCs are about to get into trouble, they recognize one of the revelers from a much less bloodthirsty festival: they're someone the PCs helped during the events of the Moonday send-off. The PCs can attempt a DC 18 Diplomacy or Society check to catch their acquaintance's notice; at GM discretion, other skills could be used depending on the interests of the person in question, such as Medicine for a town apothecary.

**Success** The reveler snaps out of their fugue and vouches for the PCs, changing the failure or critical failure to a success.

**Failure** The reveler recognizes the PCs but isn't as convincing at drawing attention or their information isn't as good. The PCs still don't succeed but accrue no Awareness Points for the failure.

**Reaching Safety:** Once the PCs rescue Yphani and make it to safety, read or paraphrase the following.

Yphani exhales a sigh of relief, sinking down to rest on a broken column. "Thank you," she gasps, her cheeks flushed. "I'm sorry to have caused you trouble. They surprised me, and there were so many of them—I didn't want to hurt



them. But I'm afraid that what they intended wouldn't have helped the situation at all; I don't have that kind of power."

She glances up at her rescuers, and her eyes widen in surprise. "Oh!" she exclaims, then winces at her own outburst. "I apologize. Something about you feels... different. It's almost as if..." She trails off, frowning thoughtfully.

Yphani offers to provide any assistance she can in calming the city, though bashfully says she's not the best combatant. If the PCs haven't already discovered details about what's going on, she relays what she knows to them. Yphani indicates that the chaos began shortly after the expedition left for Eupherae. After a few days, small, localized scuffles turned to city-wide chaos, erupting in earnest a day before the PCs' return. She knows many of the city's elites and cyclopes sought refuge atop the acropolis, trusting in its walls to fend off attacks from raging mobs of citizens.

So far, no mobs have broken through the walls, but no one has emerged, either, worrying Yphani. From her community elders, she knows there's a ritual Pol-Bailax uses to channel its phoenix patron's energy, called the Rite of Cleansing Flame. Though it can't directly summon the phoenix, it's a powerful cleansing ritual, and Yphani indicates that in such dire circumstances, she'd expect Pol-Bailax's leaders to at least attempt it. She fears it's a bad sign that the pyres within the acropolis remain unlit. Additionally, damage is evident on some of the acropolis's buildings. Yphani doesn't know what's going on inside, but she asks the PCs to investigate once they've finished handling emergencies.

Yphani heard of Pteios as he was passing through, but doesn't immediately connect the prophet to the disaster unless the PCs ask if she's seen a stheno stranger in town. If they do, she tells them she heard of an odd man who called himself a prophet and preached of a new golden age for Ibydos, though she thinks he's moved on by now.

If the PCs ask about her comments about them, Yphani apologizes again before explaining. She's never met anyone imbued with mythic power, but she's heard stories from her family and the myth-speakers. She knows a few signs of this power, though she has trouble describing this beyond saying it feels like "a weave of fate around someone." She reacts to the PCs' tale of what happened on Eupherae with wonder, if they share it, and surmises they must have absorbed this power from their visions. Though Yphani isn't a myth-speaker, she knows the basics of how mythic power functions and that it grows if exercised. She encourages the PCs to keep experimenting with their abilities and see what else they discover.

## ACROPOLIS OBJECTIVES

There's no set order to exploring the acropolis; some parties might head straight for the megaron, while others might explore some or all of the other areas first. The order of the PCs' actions is up to them, but to attempt the Rite of Cleansing Flame, they need to accomplish the following:

- Relight Pol-Bailax's pyres in area **J1**
- Mediate the conflict between the cyclopes in area **J2** and the officials in area **K2**
- Repair the ritual scrolls in area **K5**
- Quell the fire elemental guardians in area **J4**

**Mythic Points:** Rescuing Yphani from a horde of frenzied revelers right under their noses is a mythic deed, restoring 3 Mythic Points to each character.

**Treasure:** Grateful for her rescue, Yphani gifts the PCs her prized *lifting belt*.

**Reward:** Award the PCs 100 XP for rescuing Yphani.

## J. THE ACROPOLIS

Once the PCs resolve the immediate major problems in the city and learn of the ritual from Yphani, it should be clear that their next order of business is the acropolis. Yasmenei assures them she and her crew will keep matters under control in the city in the meantime. Without treating the root cause, however, the chaos will continue.

Unfortunately, although the acropolis was able to withstand attacks from without, those who sought refuge within its walls soon fell to infighting, fueled by paranoia and rage shed by the falling warshard. Government officials lashed out at the cyclopes myth-speakers and priests of the temple of Phyrtharros, blaming them for the disaster and the phoenix's failure to reappear. The cyclopes and priests responded in kind, and after several bloody clashes, both sides retreated to defensive positions. The primarily human drasikons and officials barricaded themselves within the megaron, while the cyclopes and priests are holed up in the temple of Phyrtharros.

The acropolis is located on a hill, with the megaron at its highest point. A white stone wall surrounds the complex. The gates of the acropolis are closed, requiring a DC 20 Thievery check to Pick a Lock or a DC 23 Athletics check to Force Open. Otherwise, the walls are fifteen feet high and can be climbed with a DC 20 Athletics check. Visible signs of damage mar the gates where prior mobs attempted to force their way in.

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As the PCs explore the acropolis, they'll learn more about what transpired here and what they must accomplish to carry out the ritual.

## J1. Stoa

Beyond the acropolis gates, a covered walkway lined with columns stretches from one end of the white stone walls to the other. At the corners, the bases of four immense braziers are visible, though no light of flickering flames shines through. Next to each, a ladder leads up a column to the roof above. Ordinarily, this walkway would be bustling with citizens; now, it's eerily silent, and a few corpses lie in pools of blood on the stone.

The bodies here are of minor government functionaries who were slain in the clashes between the officials and the cyclopes. PCs who examine them determine they were slain by large blades; a PC who is at least trained in Medicine additionally notes that they've been dead for a day or two. Past the stoa across the rest of the acropolis, the PCs see additional corpses and clear signs of combat.

**Relighting the Pyres:** The PCs may not realize the importance of the pyres immediately, but they're a key anchor for spiritual energy, symbolizing Pol-Bailax's bond with its phoenix patron. They've been damaged amid the chaos, and their flames have gone out; they'll need to be relit before the Rite of Cleansing Flame can be performed.

No mundane flame can light the pyres, however. To relight the pyres, the PCs must succeed at a DC 18 Athletics, Crafting, or Engineering Lore check to repair the damaged metal, followed by a DC 18 Arcana, Nature, Occultism, or Religion check to call forth the mystical fires. If they obtained the ritual tools from Pyrekeeper Cymene in area J2, they gain a +1 circumstance bonus on these checks. The results for these checks are cumulative.

**Critical Success** The PCs decrease the ritual DC (see page 65) by 2.

**Success** The PCs decrease the ritual DC by 1.

**Failure** The PCs light the pyres, but obtain no additional benefit.

**Critical Failure** The pyres are improperly lit and the ritual DC increases by 1. Each PC attempting or Aiding a check takes 2d6 fire damage.

**Treasure:** The government officials in the megaron can identify the dead once the PCs make contact with them. If the PCs return the bodies and their personal effects to the deceased's families, the grateful survivors gift them bottles of rare perfume and jewelry worth a total of 15 gp.

**Reward:** Award the PCs 40 XP for relighting the ritual flames.

## J2. Temple of Phyrtharros

An open plaza surrounds this stone temple. Relief carvings of phoenixes cover the temple's pointed pediment below the roof, and columns flank the porch leading to the temple interior. Inside, a statue of a muscular human man forging a clay pot above a flame stands at the far end of the room. Niches in the walls hold several more statues, and the floor is inlaid with gleaming red gems.

This temple has honored Phyrtharros, hero-god of pyres and pottery, for centuries. When hostilities broke out within the acropolis, the priests and cyclopes myth-speakers retreated here, sealing themselves within the inner shrine located behind the statue. A PC who succeeds at a DC 16 Society or DC 13 Pol-Bailax Lore check recognizes the statue as Phyrtharros; any PC who's a long-term resident knows this automatically.

The PCs may note that unlike the complex outside, there are no signs of fighting here. This is thanks to the temple's sacred guardian, whom the government officials didn't dare attack even in their fury.

**Creatures:** The temple is guarded by a divine warden (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 3 72) devoted to Phyrtharros, which he forged from clay and fired using the phoenix's flames. This warden, known as the Earthen Lady, was imbued with a spark of sapience and has protected the temple ever since, watching over generations of the faithful. She approaches the PCs when they enter. Read or paraphrase the following.

The statue in the far-left wall niche, a woman in flowing robes, steps down from her pedestal, moving to block the path. She holds up a hand, her earthenware face creasing in a frown.

"Leave," she says. "The meteor brings chaos, and the priests are secluded. Visitors are no longer welcome." She pauses, regarding the intruders for a moment, then lowers her kestroms. "But you do not carry the scent of fury. Perhaps you can help set things right... if you have Phyrtharros's favor."

The Earthen Lady explains she has a test for the PCs, and if they succeed, she'll bring them to the priests and myth-speakers. She tasks them with crafting an oinochoe (a type of wine jug) "worthy of Phyrtharros" and leads them to the workshop adjoining the temple if they agree. Crafting the oinochoe takes 4 hours.

If the PCs take hostile action against the Earthen Lady, an ancient ward activates, and they're forcibly flung

through the temple doors, taking 4d6 force damage (DC 18 basic Fortitude save) and landing outside. A *wall of force* with a duration of 1 hour appears over the temple entrance. The Earthen Lady has a short memory, however, and repeats the same offer to the PCs if they enter again.

## CRAFT THE OINOCHOE

CONCENTRATE | EXPLORATION | MANIPULATE

To Craft the Oinochoe, each PC must take on one of the following tasks, as the Earthen Lady asks everyone to participate. A PC with the Specialty Crafting feat in pottery applies their bonus to any of these checks.

**Shape the Clay:** Kneading and shaping the clay on the wheel requires a DC 16 Art Lore check, a DC 18 Crafting check, or a DC 20 Athletics check.

**Coat with Slip:** To prepare the oinochoe for painting once fired, it must be coated with clay slip, requiring a DC 16 Crafting check or a DC 18 Thievery check.

**Fire in Kiln:** Once prepared, the oinochoe must be fired in the kiln with a DC 16 Engineering Lore check or a DC 18 Crafting or Nature check.

**Paint the Oinochoe:** Painting a suitable scene on the oinochoe once fired requires a DC 16 Art Lore or DC 18 Religion or Society check.

When the PCs have finished Crafting the Oinochoe, total the number of successes they obtained. A PC who critically succeeds on their check earns two successes. As long as the PCs obtain at least two successes, the Earthen Lady is impressed by the results and leads them to the inner shrine.

If the PCs obtain fewer than two successes, the Earthen Lady is about to turn them away when Pyrekeeper Cymene emerges from the inner shrine, having heard the sounds of activity. In this case, upon determining the PCs aren't hostile, he brings them to the myth-speakers, but without the Earthen Lady's blessing, the DC to negotiate a truce between the two factions (see area J5, page 61) goes up by 2.

**Meeting the Myth-Speakers:** Within the inner shrine are Cymene and the other priests, as well as Skorgomos and the myth-speakers. When they meet with the PCs, Skorgomos relates the violence that overtook the acropolis, noting that the cyclopes lost their tempers as well, though the meteor's influence has now waned thanks to their seclusion within the sacred temple. He fears the drasikons are still lost to the frenzy, and cautions the PCs to be careful if they approach the megaron.

If the PCs ask about the ritual, Pyrekeeper Cymene agrees it could solve Pol-Bailax's woes, though he laments that the ritual won't function properly without

a hero-god or mythic creature to channel their power into it. If informed of the PCs' newfound capabilities, he's overjoyed, though he bitterly comments that "those short-sighted drasikons" have possession of the scrolls detailing the ritual. It's clear there's still bad blood between the two factions, and that getting them to cooperate for the ritual will be no easy task (see area J5). Cymene can tell the PCs about the necessary steps to prepare for the ritual, including lighting the pyres in area J1. She also provides the PCs with the ritual tools to light the pyres if they haven't already done so.

The PCs may wish to inquire about their powers with the myth-speakers; if they do, the cyclopes acknowledge that they are bearers of mythic power, but defer further examination until the situation in the city is resolved.

**Treasure:** If the PCs obtained three or more successes when Crafting the Oinochoe, the temple's spiritual energy infuses it, turning it to a magic



Warden of Phyrtharros

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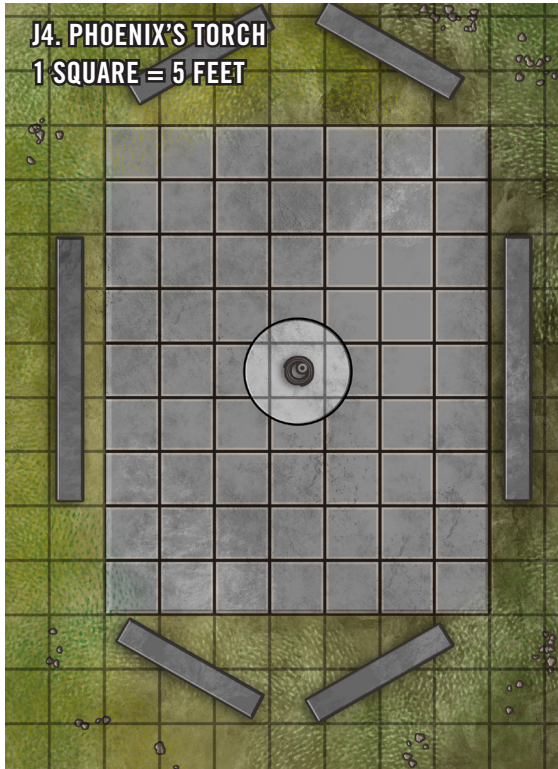
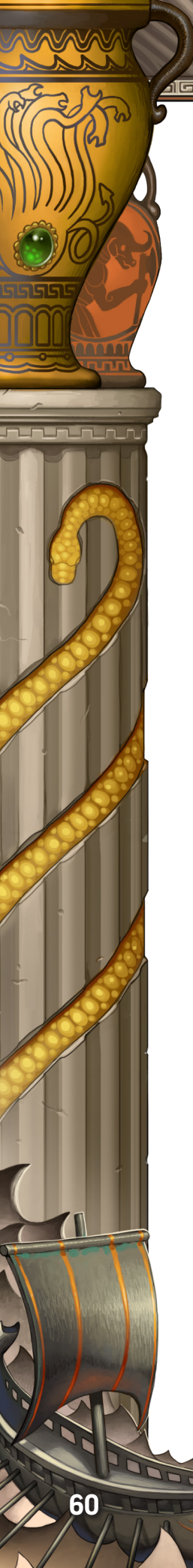
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**J4. PHOENIX'S TORCH**  
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

item. The oinochoe functions as a *jug of fond remembrance* (*Treasure Vault* 115).

**Mythic Points:** Creating the oinochoe follows the artisan's Calling.

**Reward:** For gaining access to the temple and speaking with the cyclopes, award the PCs 60 XP.

### J3. High Agora

Market stalls and carts are overturned and smashed throughout this plaza, and gashes mar the columns demarking its borders.

The high agora is the center of banking in Pol-Bailax, as well as a market for valuable commodities and food stalls catering to those working in the acropolis. A PC who succeeds at a DC 16 Perception check hears noise coming from a drainage grate in the western corner. By investigating, the PCs find Tolon (one of the weaver Mellita's adult children) and his family. They were trapped in the acropolis when it was sealed and then hid to escape the violence outside.

Tolon himself is wary of the PCs until his younger daughter, Phoebe, recognizes the PCs from the funeral games. Tolon begs the PCs' assistance in finding a safe place to stay, whereas Phoebe excitedly boasts (to the rest of the family's restrained bemusement)

about how her grandmother's probably wrestling a hydra right now to save the city. If any PC has failed countless rolls or otherwise struggled to feel heroic since returning to Bailax, Phoebe recounts something amazing she saw that PC do in Chapter 1. That PC regains 1 Mythic Point from hearing her sincere praise.

**Treasure:** Before escorting his family to safety, Tolon gives the PCs a *lesser healing* potion. After the adventure, he gifts them an amphora of fine wine worth 30 gp.

### J4. Phoenix's Torch

**Severe 3**

A tall metal torch stands at the center of a plaza ringed with reddish stone, though no flame dances atop its tip. A rectangular divot in the ground before the torch carries the scent of smoke.

The Phoenix's Torch is the most sacred pyre of Pol-Bailax, dedicated by Phyrtharros himself. Its flame has burned through numerous turbulent periods in the city's history, and its absence is unnerving to any long-term resident. The PCs might be directed here by the cyclopes in area J2 or the officials in area K2.

**Creatures:** Three fire elementals power the Phoenix's Torch: two elite fire scamps and a mythically empowered, unique elemental created by Phyrtharros called the phoenix flame. Bound by ancient agreements, these elementals normally remain atop the torch, forming its flame, but they've become corrupted by warshard's influence and retreated within the metal base. They now lash out at anyone attempting to interact with the torch, although they don't attack those just passing by.

#### ELITE FIRE SCAMPS (2)

**CREATURE 2**

*Pathfinder Monster Core* 6, 147

**Initiative** Perception +5

#### MYTHIC PHOENIX FLAME

**CREATURE 4**

UNIQUE MEDIUM ELEMENTAL FIRE

**Perception** +11; darkvision, smoke vision

**Languages** Pyric

**Skills** Acrobatics +12, Athletics +15

**Str** +3, **Dex** +4, **Con** +2, **Int** -1, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +0

**Smoke Vision** The mythic phoenix flame ignores the concealed condition from smoke.

**Titantic Might** The phoenix flame ignores size limitations when performing actions like Grapple or Trip.

**AC** 20; **Fort** +8, **Ref** +12, **Will** +11

**HP** 48; **Immunities** bleed, fire, paralyzed, poison, sleep;

**Weaknesses** cold 5; **Resistances** mythic 4



## THE ACROPOLIS PYRE

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Phoenix Flame

**Flame Cloak** (aura, fire, primal) 10 feet. 1d6 fire, DC 18 basic Reflex save. A creature that critically fails its save takes 1d4 persistent fire damage.

**Mythic Ferocity**  $\curvearrowright$  **Cost** 1 Mythic Point; **Trigger** The phoenix flame is reduced to 0 HP; **Effect** The phoenix flame avoids being knocked out and regains 4d10 Hit Points, but its wounded value increases by 1. When it is wounded 3, it can no longer use this ability.

**Speed** 30 feet, fly 40 feet

**Melee**  $\curvearrowright$  fiery talon +12 (fire, magical), **Damage** 1d10+5 slashing plus 1d10 fire plus Grab

**Mythic Power** 3 Mythic Points

**Breath of Smoke**  $\curvearrowright$  **Requirements** The phoenix flame has a creature Grabbed; **Effect** The phoenix breathes into the lungs of the grabbed creature, which must attempt a DC 18 Fortitude save.

**Critical Success** The creature is unaffected and is temporarily immune to Breath of Smoke for 1 minute.

**Success** The creature is unaffected.

**Failure** The creature is sickened 1.

**Critical Failure** The creature is sickened 2.

**Inferno Dance**  $\curvearrowright\curvearrowright$  The phoenix Strides up to its Speed, leaving a trail of blazing flame through each space it passes through that lasts until the end of the phoenix's next turn. This trail is difficult terrain and deals 5d6 fire damage to each creature in its path (DC 18 basic Reflex save).

**Torch Aflame:** Once the PCs defeat the fire elementals, the creatures' essences re-infuse the torch, setting it ablaze. If the PCs completed all other preparations, they can begin the ritual (Rite of Cleansing Flame, page 65).

**Mythic Points:** Because it is a mythic creature, defeating the mythic phoenix flame restores 2 Mythic Points to the PC whose attack, spell, or effect defeated it, and 1 Mythic Point to all other PCs.

## J5. Amphitheater

Circular rows of seats overlook a round, open-air stage. Its northeastern corner juts out above the city below, supported by stone pylons.

Plays, concerts, and other public performances are held in this amphitheater, though it's currently deserted. Once the PCs contact both the cyclopes and priests in area J2 and the government officials in area K2, they can attempt to negotiate a truce between the two groups. As neither group is willing to meet in the other's safe haven, the amphitheater serves as a neutral ground for the meeting.

**Mediating the Forum:** When the factions meet here, their discussion soon turns to bickering. The priests and cyclopes favor performing the Rite of Cleansing Flame, while the drasikons doubt its efficacy and fear the ritual could even backfire if performed poorly. They also blame each other for the recent violence between the factions. To convince everyone to work together, the PCs need to mediate.

However, Akki, Tsemone, and Ulshuk (pages 90–91) soon arrive, having heard the PCs were investigating the situation here. Determined not to let the PCs get the glory for saving Bailax, the trio interject to control the dialogue, sabotage the PCs, and stoke the conflict so they can resolve things themselves later.

Mediating the forum uses the Victory Points subsystem (*Pathfinder GM Core* 184). There are three topics. For each, a rival NPC voices dissent (see page 62), after which a PC can retort and Mediate Forum, with each party earning Rhetoric Points. The discussion addresses each topic once, revisiting old topics again until a group earns 7 Rhetoric Points and thereby sways the factions to their side.

- **Topic 1:** Ritual (Arcana, Occultism, Religion): Ulshuk argues for performing the ritual with untested modifications.
- **Topic 2:** Violence (Pol-Bailax Lore, Society): Akki applauds the factions for resolving their problems with weapons, not words.
- **Topic 3:** Authority (Society): Tsemone insists this squabbling is proof that Bailax should appoint an autocrat to oversee the catastrophe (implicitly nominating herself).



## MEDIATE FORUM

CONCENTRATE | EXPLORATION

You invoke various discussion and debate techniques, emphasize your points, and try to make a good impression on your audience. Attempt a DC 16 check to earn Victory Points using one of the following strategies and its recommended skills. Using the same strategy you used earlier bores the audience and increases the DC by 1.

**Allegory:** You recite a tale or fable that metaphorically illustrates your point with a Religion or Society check.

**Baiting:** You attempt to lure your opponents into verbal traps and fluster them with a Deception or Intimidation check.

**Boasting:** You talk up your own accomplishments and emphasize your qualifications with an Acrobatics, Athletics, or Performance check.

**Flattery:** You praise your audience's good points, soothing ruffled feathers and ingratiating yourself with a Deception or Diplomacy check.

**Logic:** You cite facts and appeal to the audience's reason with a skill check listed for the topic.

If the PCs win, the factions make peace and agree to cooperate on the ritual. If the PCs lose, their rivals' sabotage increases the infighting among the two factions; after several hours of arguing, they reluctantly agree to participate in the ritual, but the dissension increases the ritual DC by 2.

**Mythic Points:** Brokering a peace in this august setting follows the demagogue's and thespian's Calling.

**Treasure:** If the PCs brokered peace, the two factions jointly gift them a *persona mask*.

**Reward:** For mediating the forum, award the PCs 60 XP.

## J6. Megaron

The megaron serves as the central meeting place of government, as well as holding Pol-Bailax's archives. See below.

## K. THE MEGARON

The megaron is built of white stone, with a portico overshadowing the double door leading within. Ceilings within the megaron are fifteen feet high, or twenty feet high in area **K2**. Use the map above for this encounter.

The door is barricaded, though damaged by the cyclopes' attempts at intrusion; it requires a DC 20 Athletics check to Force Open. If it takes the PCs more than two attempts to break through, the animated statues in area **K1** move to stand in front of the door and Ready Strikes against the first person through it.

### K1. Anteroom

Moderate 3

Painted murals depicting Pol-Bailax's history decorate the walls of this chamber. Two brightly colored statues of cyclopes stand in the corners near the door outside, while another statue of a phoenix, its wings outspread, stands beside the double door leading further in.

**Creatures:** The cyclopes are animated statues that guard this chamber. Ordinarily, these don't attack citizens unless they cause a disturbance. However, the paranoid officials sheltering in area **K2** have commanded the statues to attack anyone who enters the building.

## ANIMATED STATUES (2)

Pathfinder Monster Core 19

**Initiative** Perception +9

## CREATURE 3

### K2. Central Megaron

Low 3

Four ornately carved columns are at the center of this large room, surrounding a circular platform with steps leading up to it. Long benches line the walls.

After the conflict with the cyclopes and priests, the drasikons and other officials barricaded themselves in here. Since then, they've debated the best course of action, though their enchanted, erratic behavior has prevented any consensus.

**Creatures:** When the PCs enter, the officials perceive them as a threat and attack, though quick-talking PCs may be able to pacify them. Each PC can attempt a DC 18 Diplomacy or Performance check to talk the mob down or bewilder it with oratorical debate. If at least half the PCs succeed, the officials stand down; otherwise, they attack, but surrender once reduced to the 8-square threshold. If a PC has an ability to placate a crowd such as the Group Impression skill feat, grant that PC a +2 circumstance bonus to their check.

## BUREAUCRAT MOB

## CREATURE 4

GARGANTUAN HUMAN HUMANOID TROOP

**Perception** +12

**Languages** Common, Ibydosian

**Skills** Intimidation +9, Performance +12, Society +11

**Str** +3, **Dex** +2, **Con** +1, **Int** +3, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +3

**AC** 20; **Fort** +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +12

**HP** 45 (4 segments); **Thresholds** 30 (3 segments), 15 (2 segments); **Weaknesses** area damage 5, splash damage 5

**Aura of Argumentation** (auditory, aura, mental) 30 feet. The mob argues among itself even while attacking; creatures within the aura must succeed at a DC 18 Will save or be confused for 1 round.

**Troop Defenses** (NPC Core 231)

**Speed** 25 feet; troop movement

**Knives Drawn** ◆ to ◆◆◆ **Frequency** once per round;

**Effect** The mob descends on its opponents with knives, dealing damage to each enemy in its space and in a 5-foot emanation, with a DC 18 basic Reflex save. The damage depends on the number of actions.

◆ 2d4 piercing damage

◆◆ 2d4+5 piercing damage

◆◆◆ 2d4+7 piercing damage

**Orate** ◆◆ (auditory) The mob shouts at its opponents, dealing 2d6 sonic damage to any creature within 30 feet that can hear it (DC 18 basic Fortitude save).

**Troop Movement** Whenever a troop moves, you move one of its segments and the other segments follow behind it. At the end of the movement, you can group the other segments adjacent to the one you moved as you see fit, provided none of them moves farther than the moving segment. If you choose not to move the troop any distance, you can instead reshape the position of all the segments as long as one stays in place.

**The Drasikons' Report:** Once the PCs talk down or subdue the mob, they can speak with the drasikons, who describe the conflict with the cyclopes and the priests. Terpsime indicates that she fears the myth-speakers are no longer acting in Pol-Bailax's best interest, and asks the PCs if they can find out the cyclopes' "true" motivations. She expresses skepticism if the PCs defend the cyclopes, but the officials are willing to meet with the cyclopes and priests on neutral ground (see area J5).

If the PCs mention the Rite of Cleansing Flame, the drasikons indicate it's a possibility, but they believe it's doomed to failure without the mythic power of Pol-Bailax's phoenix patron. They're more hopeful if the PCs tell them of their own newfound mythic power; however, they report that the scrolls containing the ritual text are located in the archives, which are currently in disarray (see area K5).

**Treasure:** Once they realize the PCs are trying to save the city, the drasikons present them with an *oil of potency*, indicating they'll reward them further if they resolve things before major catastrophe occurs.

**Reward:** If the PCs talked down the officials without fighting them, award them 60 XP.

### K3. Armory

Once they've allied with the PCs, the drasikons offer to loan any equipment they require from the armory to them while they resolve this situation. The armory contains an assortment of all common weapons and armor, in addition to the kilted breastplate, gladius, and kestros (*War of Immortals* 146-147).

### K4. Offices

These offices are used to conduct administrative business, but most of the furniture in them has been upended in the mob's intermittent rages.

### K5. Archives

Shelves line the walls of this room, their surfaces marked by deep gouges and burn marks, and the books and scrolls they once contained scattered over the floor. Torn pages and bits of paper are everywhere.

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### THE CITY'S REWARDS

The PCs' rewards for helping save Pol-Bailax are noted below; the longer it took them to resolve the situation, the fewer resources the city has to thank them.

**5 days or fewer:** The damage to Pol-Bailax and casualties were minimal, and the drasikons award the PCs a prize of 75 gp.

**6-8 days:** Some of Pol-Bailax's available funds are needed to repair the damage, and the drasikons grant the PCs 50 gp.

**9 days or more:** Casualties were high and most of Pol-Bailax's budget must go toward repairing the devastated city, but the drasikons scrape together a reward of 30 gp.

These archives contain documents pertaining to Pol-Bailax's history, hero-gods, economy, and government administration. Normally, they're exceptionally well organized, but a group of officials seized by magical fury embarked on a destructive rampage here, leaving the room a mess. To find and piece together the ritual scrolls, the PCs must investigate the archives using the research subsystem (*GM Core* 190). Each skill check takes 2 hours. Though there's no time limit restricting the PCs' access to the archives, every day of delay is another day that chaos reigns in Pol-Bailax, potentially affecting their rewards at the end of the adventure. Relocating the archives would be impractically time-consuming, but if the PCs have scholarly contacts, those NPCs might Aid a PC's check if brought here.

The different tasks the PCs can perform in the archives are listed below.

**Historical Archives:** A PC examines historical accounts referencing the Rite of Cleansing Flame; **Maximum RP 2; Research Checks** DC 16 Pol-Bailax Lore, DC 18 Society, DC 20 Perception

**Interpret Ritual Language:** A PC studies the language of the numerous ritual scrolls to locate the correct ones; **Maximum RP 3; Research Checks** DC 16 Religion, DC 18 Arcana, Occultism, or Nature

**Restore Documents:** A PC re-organizes materials or pieces together shredded books and scrolls; **Maximum RP 3; Research Checks** DC 16 Library Lore, DC 18 Crafting or Thievery

**Survey Officials:** A PC questions the officials present in the megaron, transcribing their memories of the material; **Maximum RP 2; Research Checks** DC 16 Scribing Lore, DC 18 Diplomacy

## POL-BAILAX ARCHIVES

## RESEARCH 3

### UNIQUE

**Research Checks** historical archives, interpret ritual language, restore documents, survey officials

**4 Research Points** The PCs locate fragments of the ritual scrolls, detailing portions of the ritual.

**8 Research Points** The PCs piece together the majority of the ritual, with a few blank spaces; they can attempt the ritual at this point, but the DC increases by 1.

**10 Research Points** The PCs recreate the complete ritual scrolls.

**Mythic Points:** Piercing together the ritual scrolls follows the bookkeeper's Calling.

**Reward:** Award the PCs 40 XP for repairing the ritual scrolls.

## K6. Storeroom

This storeroom contains food stores, jugs of water and olive oil, and other mundane supplies.

## Rite of Cleansing Flame

Once the PCs have made the necessary preparations (see Acropolis Objectives on page 57), they can attempt the Rite of Cleansing Flame to purify Pol-Bailax of the warshard's influence. When they're ready to begin, read or paraphrase the following.

Before the Phoenix Torch, a bed of hot coals smolders, as Pyrekeeper Cymene finishes setting up braziers of incense at each of its corners. Several of the temple's priests are practicing notes on their double-reeded auloi and pan flutes, the slightly discordant music echoing over the plaza. The scent of smoke hangs in the air.

Cymene nods as the ritualists approach. "We've prepared the site for the ceremony," she says, sweat glistening on his forehead from the heat. "We're ready to begin whenever you are."

**Performing the Rite:** The Rite of Cleansing Flame is detailed below. Depending on the PCs' successes or failures, the ritual DCs might be adjusted up or down. If the PCs mediated peace between the cyclopes and the government officials, each sends a secondary caster to assist with the ritual; these casters can either attempt a secondary check, with a modifier of +9, or Aid a PC attempting a check. The priests at the temple of Phyrtharros provide the Cost for the ritual, except for the required Mythic Point.

The Rite of Cleansing Flame involves an ancient firewalking tradition in which the participants must perform a dance over hot coals while casting. Each primary and secondary caster must attempt a DC



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18 Acrobatics or Performance check to gracefully dance over the coals, or a DC 17 Fortitude save to withstand the heat, upon beginning the ritual; NPC secondary casters, if involved, automatically succeed (but not critically succeed).

**Critical Success** You perform the firewalking perfectly, gaining a +2 status bonus to your skill check for the ritual.

**Success** As critical success, but you gain a +1 status bonus.

**Failure** You gain no bonus or penalty and take 2d6 fire damage (DC 17 basic Reflex save).

**Critical Failure** You take a -1 penalty to your skill check for the ritual and take 3d6 fire damage (DC 17 basic Reflex save).

### RITE OF CLEANSING FLAME

### RITUAL 2

RARE CONSECRATION FIRE

**Cast** 8 hours; **Cost** rare incense worth 300 gp and 1 Mythic Point from the primary caster; **Secondary Casters** 3

**Primary Check** DC 20 Religion or Occultism; **Secondary Checks** DC 18 Acrobatics, Nature, or Performance

**Area** The city-state of Pol-Bailax

**Duration** instantaneous

Drawing on the latent power suffused within Pol-Bailax by its phoenix patron, you and the secondary casters send an ephemeral rush of cleansing energy through the city. Those within the area when the ritual successfully concludes are immediately cured of all detrimental emotion and mental effects; affected creatures cease any current hostilities as though they'd failed a save against *calm*, though this doesn't control their future actions.

**Critical Success** The ritual's power lingers within its casters, granting them a +1 status bonus against emotion and mental effects for 1 month.

**Success** The ritual succeeds.

**Failure** The ritual has its intended effect, but alters its casters' forms as they fail to contain the phoenix's power. All casters develop a feature reminiscent of a phoenix, such as feathers, glowing red eyes, or talons, and gain weakness 5 to cold and unholy. This is a curse effect.

**Critical Failure** As failure, but each caster must succeed at a DC 17 Fortitude save or be permanently drained 1 for as long as they have the phoenix features.

Read or paraphrase the following as the ritual concludes.

As the last ritual chant and musical notes fade, the ground of the acropolis trembles. The flames in the braziers flare, sending a wave of fire washing over the plaza. This fire doesn't burn the creatures in its path, however, but carries

only a gentle heat that imparts a sense of peace and camaraderie.

The feather-like flames spread out over the city below, and the distant shouts and sounds of battle falter, then stop. For a moment, the silhouette of a phoenix, outlined in glimmering smoke, appears in the sky above Pol-Bailax, and as it dissipates, a calm falls over the city.

**Reward:** For performing the ritual and cleansing Pol-Bailax, award the PCs 80 XP.

### Concluding the Adventure

After the ritual, the cyclops myth-speakers examine the PCs, having recognized their mythic powers even if they didn't explicitly mention this. The myth-speakers are fascinated by this development, barraging the PCs with questions about the circumstances surrounding their mythic ascension and how they feel. They're eager to revitalize myth-speaking and view the PCs as a fortuitous opportunity.

The cyclopes also note something troubling once the PCs relate their story, however: their mythic power is developing at a dangerous rate—far beyond the steady growth expected in a hero-god. The giants warn that this exceeds what their mortal bodies can handle. If the growth continues unchecked, the PCs mythic power will become uncontrollable and escape by any means possible, eventually immolating them from the inside out. The PCs can rest for now, but they need to find some way to stabilize their mythic power before it's too late.

In the aftermath of the chaos, Pol-Bailax begins patching itself together. As the PCs descend from the acropolis, they see bewildered citizens coming out of their fugue and making amends to the neighbors they'd been fighting. The drasikons express their utmost gratitude to the PCs for returning peace to the city, offering them rewards from the city treasury in thanks (see The City's Rewards on page 64).

Even if the PCs don't flaunt their mythic status, word quickly circulates of their heroic deeds and rumored hero-god status. NPCs they met previously in Pol-Bailax approach them to express their admiration or offer minor gifts, and they attract attention when out and about. In the days following the ritual, they even begin gaining a nascent cult of their own. Their following is—for now—small and disorganized, but many in Pol-Bailax have their eyes on the PCs, eager to see if they'll become the hero-gods Iblydos hasn't seen in a generation. The road to such power is fraught with peril, however, and the PCs will have new challenges to contend with in the next adventure!



# BAILAX, CITY OF PYRES

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Ships sailing the Obari Passage between the Inner Sea and Vudra thread right through Iblydos, restocking supplies or even off-loading their whole cargo at this halfway point to hurry home before the seasonal winds shift. Yet nestled in the easternmost reaches of Kardaji Bay, the islands controlled by Pol-Bailax lie off the beaten path and receive relatively little of this traffic. Nevertheless, this port city thrives not only by producing unique goods with international demand, but also by mastering local trade during the monsoon's off-seasons.

As with other Iblydan polities, the term Pol-Bailax refers to the whole city-state, including its various territories. Bailax is its eponymous capital.

## BAILAX

## SETTLEMENT 7

### CITY

Ancient port city famed for its copper work, dyes, and scribes, all protected by the city's sacred flames and blessed by an ageless phoenix's magic.

**Government** Noocratic democracy

**Population** 11,300 (80% human, 5% centaur, 4% nephilim, 2% cyclops, 9% other)

**Languages** Common, Cyclops, Iblydosi, Kelish, Thalassic

**Religions** Local hero-god faiths such as Aerekostes, Pharimia, Phyrtharros, Ytildos

**Threats** sea hags, sedachies, storms, wildfires

**Text Tradition** Bailax offers higher level access to written magic; grimoires, scrolls, and other written magical items of up to 13th level are available.

**Terpsime** (bold female human warrior-sage 8) Poet, retired duelist, and leading member of the Philosopher Council

**Skorgomos** (introspective male cyclops fate-priest 8) Leader of the cyclopean seers

**Pyrekeeper Cymene** (outspoken female centaur priest 7) Conservator of sacred fires and speaker for the Bailaxian pantheon.

## HISTORY

Iblydians trace their origins back more than 10,000 years. When Earthfall crashed into Golarion and shattered most ancient civilizations, the proto-Iblydan people survived thanks to an unlikely alliance with cyclops prophets who foresaw the disaster. By working together, they built bunkers, filled underground silos with food, recorded their lore,

and sheltered until the worst devastation had passed. Within a generation, the survivors spread across the archipelago, establishing independent city-states whose shared identity as Iblydians set them apart from their neighbors—most of whose once-beautiful cities had been blasted back to the figurative stone age.

Over time, new cities arose and old ones faded, yet nine of the largest have remained relatively intact over the millennia, earning them the self-appointed title of “historical city-states.” This includes Bailax, whose first foundations were laid within centuries of Earthfall. As other city-states fought among themselves to control the islands, Bailax sought fortune along Kardaji Bay's eastern coast. There, it established colonies that revitalized the local societies shattered by Earthfall, many of whose survivors had been reduced to hand-to-mouth subsistence after their kingdoms collapsed. Of course, the Bailaxian presence didn't come without cost; Iblydan colonists extracted resources, wealth, and lost lore from the mainland, sometimes to locals' detriment.

Nonetheless, Pol-Bailax fancied itself a champion of healing and restoration. This narrative gained legendary validation through the city-state's most famous citizen: Phyrtharros, the hero-god of pottery and pyres. As he explored the mainland and vanquished the fearsome beasts that prowled the Age of Darkness's twilight, Phyrtharros befriended the mighty phoenix Salquin. After decades of shared adventures, the aging Phyrtharros longed to see his homeland again and die in peace. The phoenix accompanied him, and for his last year, the two bestowed countless blessings upon Pol-Bailax. At last, the two embraced atop the acropolis as Salquin self-immolated, serving as a living pyre for her mortal friend. From the ashes, Salquin arose refreshed and then departed, and she has returned every 137 years since to be reborn, scattering her sacred ashes over the island to revitalize its soil.

Over the millennia since, Pol-Bailax has experienced times of plenty and relative deprivation. Its colonies and mainland peoples gradually gained independence and seceded, denying the city-state the generous tribute on which it had grown reliant. Even so, Bailax maintained warm relationships with most of these



## LOCAL SUPERSTITIONS

The people of Bailax maintain some old traditions.

**Aid Travelers:** In Iiblydos, hospitality is a sacred obligation. It's uncouth to turn away a stranger seeking temporary shelter. It's even worse to betray a guest once they've entered the home. Those who transgress these standards might be haunted by a xenia spirit (page 26).

**Possessing Spirits:** Many believe that animating spirits can infiltrate bare stone, animating the likes of columns and statues. Keeping stone painted—even to the point of garishness—can repel these spirits. It's unclear whether the paint itself creates a barrier or whether the bright facade scares away curious ghosts. Either way, many Bailaxians view unpainted or weathered statues with suspicion.

**Extinguish Flame, Extinguish Life:** Bailax is a city of fires and pyres. When a fire extinguishes suddenly, it portends the imminent death of someone nearby or someone associated with that hearth. Dousing someone's hearth is treated like a curse.

lands—a contrast to the often aloof attitude other city-states hold. These connections survived even into Age of Enthronement, when Kelesh systematically conquered the nations surrounding Kardaji Bay, turning them into far-flung satrapies.

Even as the Age of Lost Omens shook the world and threatened Iiblydos's ability to create new hero-gods, Pol-Bailax has survived. After all, 4724 AR, the year of the phoenix's return, promised renewed prosperity. Then the year passed without any sign of Salquin. With mounting dread and dwindling hope, Bailax enters a new year praying that their fiery patron is merely delayed and not dead.

## DISTRICTS

The city is divided into six regions that have each developed their own unique character.

**Acropolis:** The island's basalt bedrock juts from the surrounding landscape, creating a craggy hill that Bailax has turned into a monumental and ceremonial hub. Major temples, old palaces, and cyclopean dwellings dot the summit, surrounding the plaza where the phoenix Salquin returns to self-immolate.

**The Kylix:** Like its namesake drinking vessel, the Kylix is a low, wide basin in sharp contrast to the hilly neighborhoods surrounding the acropolis. The expansive district hosts an array of markets, parks,

workshops, and lower-cost homes. It's also the favorite destination for the island's centaurs, who built and maintain the communal dwellings and storehouses scattered throughout the district.

**Kopis Heights:** A low, curving hill marks Bailax's southeast border, earning its name from the way the hill resembles the hooked blade of a kopis sword. It's the preferred working-class neighborhood for those with workshops along the Spur, yet it has few of the attractions and amenities found closer to the acropolis. That said, Kopis Heights serves as an informal religious district thanks to the myriad shrines that pepper its streets—each dedicated to a different hero-god, past or present. Dedicated custodians maintain these sites even well after the hero-god's demise, keeping each lit with a sacred fire.

**North Slope:** Compared to its southerly counterpart, North Slope is less glamorous and more residential—thanks in part to the acropolis's long shadow that darkens the neighborhood for part of the day. Small shop storefronts and tiny parks break up the multi-family apartments.

**South Slope:** With a commanding ocean view and unfettered sunshine, South Slope contains the city's finest homes. It's also a cultural hub, with prestigious shops, theaters, restaurants, museums, and key government buildings.

**The Spur:** A steady sea breeze blows over the Spur, a narrow peninsula that shelters the harbor to the north. That breeze also provides much-needed ventilation for the city's smelliest industries like tanning, smelting, and processing fish, carrying those odors away from residents except when the wind shifts in an inopportune direction. Though it has a rocky core, most of the Spur is made of compacted sand that gradually erodes and accumulates, making it ill-suited for further development.

## GOVERNMENT

Bailax is a noocracy—a state ruled by the wise. Its Philosopher Council consists of 25 learned citizens who serve 5-year terms, with five being elected and potentially replaced each year. These elections involve logic tests, esoteric debates, and essays, with each candidate and their performance scrutinized by the city's various constituencies. In theory, the Council rules Bailax. In practice, it handles some executive decisions and otherwise focuses on judicial review, debating less of what the city is and more of what the city and its virtues should be.

Understandably, the Philosopher Council isn't known for making quick decisions. As a matter of practicality, the Council appoints drasikons, each

one the director of a specific department or service such as defense, infrastructure, or commerce. A drasikon serves for 2 years, during which they must follow the laws but otherwise have broad latitude to make hiring and policy decisions regarding their respective offices.

Finally, legislation and funding decisions fall to the assembly known as the Four Hundred, whose members serve 1-year terms. This eclectic body draws representatives from all backgrounds and classes, including a large fraction from all across Pol-Bailax (and not just from the city's immediate residents). In addition to their bimonthly meetings, the Four Hundred undertake a 2-month legislative session each winter to untangle any grievances and issues they couldn't resolve earlier in the year. The assembly isn't known for its gravitas; sessions periodically break into shouting matches, brawls, and even pub crawls that spill across South Slope, eliciting exasperated sighs from the Philosopher Council.

Historically, local hero-gods have comprised an informal fourth pillar of Bailaxian politics. Different hero-gods have reigned as tyrants, served as drasikons, held indefinite seats on the Philosopher Council, or even eschewed politics altogether. Currently, the city has no hero-gods in permanent residence, though several like Pharimia and Ytildos occasionally visit.

## SOCIETY

In general, Ibyldans thrive on good-natured rivalry: rivalries between businesses, between suitors, and especially between city-states. Competition encourages effort and excellence. Each city-state assumes that it's only a matter of time before it triumphs over its rivals, either seizing territory, demanding tribute, or forcing the neighbor to publicly acknowledge the victor's superiority. The cities rarely seek a rival's destruction, and once two factions resolve their current spat, the next day they can become the closest allies. This sensibility trickles down to individuals' interactions and relationships, with even close friends goading each other to perform ever-greater feats. After all, those who do great things might be immortalized in song or even become the next hero-gods!

However, thanks to Pol-Bailax's historic focus toward the mainland, its people diluted this sense of rivalry with a far more diverse array of values. It's common for a foreign idiosyncrasy to fascinate the city, becoming a fad that inhabitants test out for weeks or months. Those practices that gain traction often remain, becoming part of the city's eclectic culture.

The most enduring attitude is hope. Even when times are tough, Pol-Bailax has always counted on the phoenix Salquin's return and the prosperity that follows. This extends to daily life, with citizens shrugging off temporary misfortune with the confidence that tomorrow will be better. The optimism and forgiveness further blunt the Ibyldan love of rivalries, for Bailaxians rarely hold grudges or take rivalries too personally.

The city's greatest festival celebrates Salquin's arrival. Warm-hued banners and flowers adorn every home, and citizens set up massive barbecues in the plazas to roast meat. Ill petitioners clamor for the phoenix's attention and healing magic, drowned out by daily parades filled with performers dressed in avian costumes. This is also a time for fresh starts and renewal. Citizens empty their homes of unwanted goods, setting usable possessions on the street for others to adopt. Anything unclaimed by the festival's end becomes fuel for celebratory bonfires that cleanse the city of old grievances and clutter.

Salquin rarely participates in these festivities, instead watching from the relative quiet of the acropolis, communing with the Philosopher Council, and leading rituals. By the time the phoenix finally ignites and regrows, much of the city is too intoxicated or exhausted to watch as she flies away. The flames burn so furiously that metalworkers lay malachite near the pyre, using the heat to smelt ore in an instant. When blended with tin, this "pyre bronze" is said to repair itself over time and burn unholy foes.

## PEOPLE

Humans of Ibyldan descent make up most of Pol-Bailax's population. Ages ago, they shared common ancestors with those who now inhabit mainland regions such as Midea, Mishyria, and Khattib. However, Ibyldans adopted a unique identity in the wake of Earthfall, and the population has developed into a distinct ethnicity over time. Their skin ranges from tan to light brown, and their hair is often dark and wavy, tending toward curliness. Whether it's a cultural quirk or inherited trait, Ibyldans are often ambitious and gutsy, their eyes flashing with the excitement of unspoken dares. On top of that, Ibyldan society instills a respect for local history into children; the archipelago is a storied realm with an unbroken legacy extending back millennia.

**Other Humans:** Kelesh conquered the neighboring mainland centuries ago, yet because these satrapies lie at the extreme end of the empire, only a modest number of Keleshite people visit the area—and by

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## FAMOUS PRODUCTS

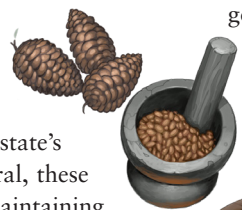
Pol-Bailax is famous for two products in particular, producing most of the world's known supply.

Also called water hogs, **kapalan trees** guzzle seasonal rainwater and store it in their trunks, much like cacti. Several sap-sucking bugs parasitize the abundant sap, excreting carotenoid-rich waste from their moisture-rich diet. By collecting this fluid in clay troughs and then refining it to concentrate and preserve the pigment, Bailaxians create the rich purple kapalan dye prized across Casmaron.

**Zofa** refers to both an evergreen shrub and the spice made from grinding its seeds. Said seeds are sequestered within small cones, requiring extensive labor to extract, roast, and grind them. The numbing, mildly bitter flavor is worth the effort, making this a staple in Bailaxian cuisine.

extension, frequent Bailax. Trade along the Obari Passage has also introduced various entrepreneurs and immigrants, most notably a vibrant Vudrani community.

**Centaur:** Centaurs comprise a significant minority, not just because of their population, but also because of the role they play in the city-state's unincorporated rural areas. In general, these centaurs live semi-nomadically, maintaining far-flung fields, orchards, and foraging grounds. As one crop ripens, the band migrates to harvest, clean up the area, and replant as necessary, rarely visiting more than a few more times over the coming months to weed and chase off squatters. As a result, centaurs have become a powerhouse in supplying fruit, spices, and dyes to Bailax.



However, centaurs also have a reputation for vagrancy and mischief. In Bailax, they maintain communally owned stables that any centaur can use, creating a rotating roster of visitors that sometimes cause trouble—including theft, which the centaurs don't always realize is wrong due to their communal ownership within a band—before escaping to the countryside. They're also infamous for overindulging in wine, starting brawls, and unsanctioned races through the streets. To manage these misunderstandings and represent centaur interests, the community elects two tribunes who serve as liaisons to the Philosopher Council. **Tribune Kotos** (vigilant male centaur ambassador 9) is especially

watchful, and he occasionally hires adventurers to help track down, prank, and shame centaurs who aren't willing to behave while in the city.

**Cyclopes:** Like any upstanding Ibyldan city, Bailax hosts a community of cyclopes. Only a handful of the giants dwell atop the acropolis and serve in ritual roles, such as the famous myth-speaking rite. The majority live among their smaller neighbors, engaging in various trades like smithing, weaving, and military service. By law, public buildings have high ceilings and tall doorways to accommodate cyclopean users, though private residences and smaller shops vary in their construction.

In ancient times, cyclopes were enlightened creatures whose society gradually declined and disintegrated, resulting in the reckless giants found across much of Golarion. Yet some—including those of Ibydos—fled before their society's collapse, preserving their values and learning into the modern era. As a result, Ibyldan cyclopes are often erudite, rarely succumbing to the rage and violence.

**Planar Scions:** Hero-gods pass traces of their divine essence to their children. Over generations, countless hero-gods' bloodlines have intersected, with nearly everyone able to make a credible claim to some godling ancestor. On occasion, this divinity manifests, causing a child to be born a nephilim or develop elemental abilities. In general, Ibyldans celebrate these divine offspring, including those with more fearsome features and infamous ancestors.

## POINTS OF INTEREST

Significant locations in Bailax are detailed on the following pages and correspond to the numbers on the map on the inside front cover. Sites featured in the adventure but not described here are also labeled, using their encounter area.

### 1. Nine-Step Aviary

In addition to their acropolis-cliff nests, pyrefowl (page 87) frequent this park built around a nine-step ziggurat that gives the birds additional nesting space. By law, harassing, harming, or harvesting parts of pyrefowl is illegal, with nobody but a cadre of wardens allowed to clean the area and manage the population. In return, the wardens have the right to collect and sell discarded feathers, which are a commodity in high demand for expensive fashion.

Though widely beloved, pyrefowl periodically cause trouble. Their love of shiny objects that they use to decorate their nests can result in a small



flock following a gaudily dressed individual, hoping some bauble falls from their outfit. During breeding season, most avoid wearing too much jewelry, as male pyrefowl occasionally mug tempting targets in hopes of stealing a pin or ring. Pyrefowl also don't suffer predators, killing the occasional dog or cat that strays too close. Most pets learn to give the birds plenty of space. That said, a mysterious feline has been hunting pyrefowl, making the birds especially jittery. It's unlikely a large cat is wandering the city, so wardens hypothesize an elanax (*Monster Core* 139) stalks the city.

## 2. The Kailean Field

When Kaile, a former hero-god of scouting and sports, competed in the festival games to celebrate her recent apotheosis, she hurled a javelin so far it escaped the stadium and embedded itself in the ground far beyond. Where it landed, Bailax created a new sports field, considering it blessed by their newest patron. The park and fields have expanded over the millennia, yet the javelin remains, unmovable and seemingly untouched by time. In fact, it's a common childhood challenge to try and pull the javelin free, with legends promising fame and a peerless athletic career to whoever does so. None have succeeded. Instead, a flagstone sundial has been set up there, using the javelin to cast its shadow.

## 3. Blood Plaza

Winnowing and threshing amaranth is a messy business. Since the Age of Destiny, Bailaxians used a prominent plaza's even flagstones to process the grains, staining the plaza red over generations. Citizens gave the plaza its overly dramatic name since then, finding wry amusement when the pigment dyes rainwater, creating macabre runoff that spooks neighbors downhill. That said, the plaza's associations are wholly whimsical; attitudes would quickly change were it to ever be the site of a real atrocity.

## 4. Thunderstep Spices

Nearly three centuries ago, the cunning centaur Bragha Thunderstep executed a scheme that nearly bankrupted Bailax's spice merchants and cornered the market, giving him an opportunity to start up his own spice refinery. The business remains in operation, managed by his descendants and their extended clan. The refinery specializes in dried herbs and regional spice blends, especially those made with zofa (see sidebar). Yet Thunderstep's coup generations ago made many enemies, and the business has diehard

rivals to this day. They and the centaurs delight in using their profits to hire saboteurs who can undermine and embarrass their foes.

## 5. Copper Row

This street winding along the Spur is famous for its quality copper and bronze production, creating fine wares such as helmets, tripod braziers, and jewelry made famous with merchants and customers all along the Obari Passage. Other industries have moved in to the area gradually, filling vacant lots with fishmongers and garum brewers. Ages of discarded fish guts dumped off the southern coast have chummed the waters, attracting bristled reef sharks (page 84) and even larger predators. Yet those animals scattered not long ago, as if afraid to approach the shore. In fact, the debris recently congealed into a cluster of globsters (*Pathfinder Monster Core* 171) that gobble up the trash and seize passing sharks. As the oozes grow larger and hungrier, they'll inevitably slither onto land and drag unsuspecting crafters into the sea.



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# IBLYDAN HERO-GODS

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When the *Starstone* struck Golarion, earth buckled, tsunamis roared, and debris choked the sky. Thankfully, the cyclopes of Iblydos—blessed by inborn divinatory powers—had foreseen the disaster. Banding together with humans, they set aside food, built bunkers, and fared far better than most. After the dust had settled and neighboring empires crumbled, these survivors knew they emerged not because of any cosmic god’s intervention; it was the work of mortal hands. In response to this divine apathy, worship of Pharasma, Desna, Gozreh, and other deities atrophied in a matter of generations. In the resulting vacuum arose hero-gods.

Hero-gods are defined by three M’s: mortal, mythic, and magical font. A typical hero-god is born a mortal person in mundane circumstances before rising to greatness. Traditionally, promising mortals present themselves to cyclops diviners, seeking guidance on how best to achieve their full potential. In most cases, the cyclopes sense nothing of note before sending a petitioner away. However, a rare few have the ineffable spark of mythic power. Through a process called myth-speaking, cyclopes study and prophesy over the mortal, sensing what great deed they might perform in order to awaken their mythic abilities.

Those who prevail can become hero-gods. Yet merely achieving mythic abilities—using rules presented on pages 72–85 of *War of Immortals*—isn’t enough to earn the title of hero-god in Iblydos. One must also open and share part of their divine spark, granting spellcasting abilities to prospective worshippers as a divine patron. Over the course of months or years, a new hero-god’s cult can grow to be tens of thousands strong. And inevitably, despite often living several lifetimes longer than average, a hero-god grows old and passes away. Their mythic power dissipates, their divine magic ceases flowing to the faithful, and new hero-gods inevitably arise to fill the vacuum.

## METHODS AND ORIGINS

The early cyclopes of Iblydos immigrated from Ghol-Gan, a cyclopean empire in northwestern Garund dating back to the Age of Legends. Ghol-Gan achieved remarkable sophistication, thanks in part to the now-lost prophetic sciences its seers developed. As the society declined due to corruption, infighting, and depravity,


refugee groups peeled away, carrying what remained of their traditions to distant lands like Iblydos and Iobaria.

When cyclopes arrived in the archipelago, they sensed something unique: strands of fate crisscrossed Iblydos, as if the islands and its inhabitants were the warped threads of a loom operated by squabbling norms. To an untrained cyclopean eye, these strands are barely perceptible, registering as an itch or faint heat shimmer in one’s peripheral vision. With training, a cyclops can examine the threads directly. The more threads coil around a person, the greater their potential destiny. By studying where the threads lead and how they intersect, a cyclops can predict an exceptional person’s road to greatness—a process known as myth-speaking.

Traditionally, a powerful mortal receives their cyclopean prophecy before embarking on a quest to fulfill the giants’ vision. If they succeed (and the cyclopes’ divinations were accurate), the mortal awakens their mythic power. In truth, the mortal isn’t realizing their fate so much as breaking free of it. Completing the prophecy causes most of the threads to unravel and snap, releasing a burst of stored energy. In an instant, this faint explosion destroys part of the mortal’s body, only for the archipelago’s ambient mythic power to replace what was lost. At least, that’s the ideal outcome. Not all survive the process. Others fulfill their prophecy imperfectly, and their devastated bodies are chaotically rebuilt, resulting in novel monstrosities. Yet with the right combination of willpower and care, a mortal can transform into a mythic being.

The Age of Lost Omens made all prophecies unreliable, including myth-speaking. With each passing year, reading the threads becomes more difficult, with few new hero-gods arising to replace those lost to age and accident. And thanks to the misfortune and mutation that can befall a would-be hero-god, myth-speaking isn’t a harmless tradition someone might attempt on a lark. Those few who do succeed are happy exceptions, with a few mythic heroes arising over the past century because they stumbled onto their prophesied quest by accident without a cyclops’s involvement.

Even so, myth-speaking appears to be a dying art taught to fewer cyclopes with each passing generation. As hero-gods perish, the religious landscape of the islands’ future remains uncertain.

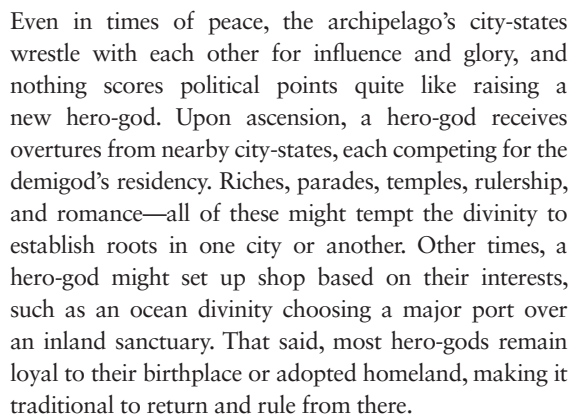


### THE SOURCE OF MYTHIC THREADS

This article explores for the first time how cyclopes understand myth-speaking. However, these prophetic threads' origins are a mystery even to the giants. There is no shortage of hypotheses. Perhaps Ibydos arose around a tangled knot of fate that Pharama couldn't unravel and tossed aside. It might be these threads are spun from mythic power and hold the islands together, with each new hero-god's creation weakening the archipelago's geological integrity. Some even speculate that tiny amounts of mythic power leak from every inhabitant, and the islands weave these minute fibers like a gigantic cord.

The PCs learn more about this mythic power during the Myth-Speaker Adventure Path; it isn't spoiled here.

### POWERS, PERKS, AND OBLIGATIONS



Even in times of peace, the archipelago's city-states wrestle with each other for influence and glory, and nothing scores political points quite like raising a new hero-god. Upon ascension, a hero-god receives overtures from nearby city-states, each competing for the demigod's residency. Riches, parades, temples, rulership, and romance—all of these might tempt the divinity to establish roots in one city or another. Other times, a hero-god might set up shop based on their interests, such as an ocean divinity choosing a major port over an inland sanctuary. That said, most hero-gods remain loyal to their birthplace or adopted homeland, making it traditional to return and rule from there.

**Powers:** This isn't strictly a symbolic choice. Unlike true deities, a hero-god's divine influence has a limited range that grows as their mythic power develops. At first, their divine power might extend only a few dozen miles from their primary temple. Powerful hero-gods can easily reach all of Ibydos and even much of Casmaron. Beyond this, a hero-god struggles to impose their divine will; at most, they might expend extra energy to empower a few favorite champions abroad.

Within their sphere of influence, a hero-god's power can become terrible: summoning storms, bellowing divine decrees audible for miles, seeding hope into the hearts of thousands, growing forests from barren rock, and more. Beyond these more dramatic miracles, a local divinity's influence gradually seeps into their realm—most often rejuvenating the soil, expanding local fisheries, revitalizing tapped out mines, and providing other economic boons. But a more sinister divinity's presence

might just as readily sharpen swords, stoke storms, or reignite old rivalries. Part of this power comes directly from the hero-god's mythic power, yet they also derive power through their followers' dedication and prayer.

In terms of gameplay mechanics, these local miracles are typically mythic feats granted by a character's mythic destiny (*War of Immortals* 103, 106-141), with additional options presented in this Adventure Path's final volume, "Titanbane." In addition, hero-gods can draw power (and favors) from their followers, detailed in the Ibydan Mystery Cults article in the campaign's second volume, "Death Sails a Wine-Dark Sea." Of course, a GM is welcome to add even more abilities, as best fits their campaign, PCs, and NPCs.

**Perks:** Beyond their divine power, a hero-god can access a wide range of wealth and worldly power. Divine monarchies or oligarchies rule several cities, such as Aelysos, where the demigods Kelksiomides and Psomeira share power with a mortal council. Throughout history, other divinities have become unquestioned tyrants, aloof advisors with veto power, and anything in between as befits the hero-god's aspirations. Their prestige tends to silence any objections.

From there, it's a matter of sustainability. Most favor the long game: ruling with a gentle hand, providing consistent blessings, and accepting donations with grace. This plays into Ibydan hospitality, in which both guest and host are expected to honor and not exploit each other. Yet history's replete with divine scoundrels who exploited their hosts for months, even years, before being ousted (with a few even being killed by their one-time followers).

**Obligations:** Divinity isn't all paeans and parades. In addition to not being an atrocious neighbor, hero-gods are loosely bound by myriad expectations that most mythic characters rarely face.

The most important obligation is residency. A hero-god's primary holy site doesn't just broadcast their power; it also acts as a battery. If the divinity doesn't visit at least a few times a year, the site's power and reach dwindle. This allows most hero-gods to travel Ibydos and even pursue adventures abroad, but permanent relocation effectively collapses their faith.

Cities and city-states also expect their hero-gods to intervene and protect their realms from exceptional threats. A warrior hero-god is expected to lead armies or at least battle on the front lines and vanquish unruly monsters. A city might call on their loquacious divinity to lead negotiations, leveraging their mythic wordplay to gain political advantages. These are hardly beyond the scope of what a mythic adventurer might do already, yet the hero-god relationship makes it deeply taboo to ever turn down their host city's demands.

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Beyond this, a hero-god's free time dwindles as their following grows. Sure, ruling a city, wrangling nobles, and intervening against other mythic creatures takes a toll. But more vexing, a mortal's mind isn't designed to handle the round-the-clock prayers of their faithful, which buzz in the back of the mind like stray thoughts. Many hero-gods informally retire or reform their policies after several decades' service, becoming more aloof for the sake of their mental health. Until recently, there have always been fresh hero-gods to take their place.

## FORMER HERO-GODS

A hero-god rarely lives longer than a few centuries. As a result, hundreds or even thousands of these divinities have come and gone.

**Eyapinea:** Even though hero-gods grant spellcasting as divinities, they lack the latter's ageless immortality. This doesn't stop some hero-gods from striving for eternal life. Most famous of these was Eyapinea, hero-god of monuments and immortality, whose cult was famous for its storytelling and healing services. As old age inevitably caught up with her, she desperately invoked increasingly potent healing rituals to stay alive, until eventually she resorted to the direst of measures: undeath. Terrified by her new form, most of her cult scattered. With each passing year, her once-glorious reputation became more tarnished. At last, the same myth-speaking tradition that had empowered Eyapinea became her doom; a cyclops foretold that a young hero would attain divinity by slaying a terrible monster—her.

Eyapinea's legacy teaches humility. Even the greatest hero-gods know to accept their eventual death, perish on their own terms, and find immortality through stories, not the flesh.

**Loptoleon:** Few have reached Iblydos's afterlife and returned to speak of it, yet Loptoleon has made the journey countless times. As hero-god of bioluminescence and ghosts, he tirelessly sailed his small ship about the islands to shepherd the recently

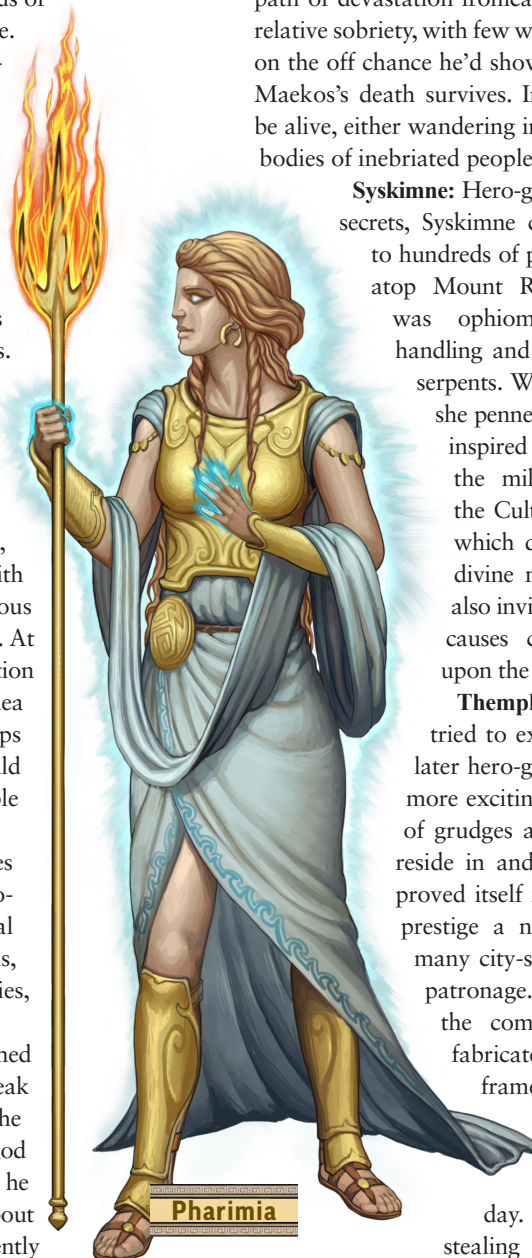
deceased to the hereafter. These spirits would trail in his wake in a miles-long parade. Even today, glowing marine life like shoals of lantern fish are considered indicators of nearby ghosts.

It's been many generations since Loptoleon completed his final trip. Though he's presumably dead, many speculate he serves as an ageless guide along the River of Souls.

**Maekos:** Be they holy or unholy, most hero-gods champion some greater ideal or purpose. Not Maekos. As the hero-god of drunkards and brawling, he spent decades wandering in an apparent quest to patronize (and start fights in) every tavern in Kardaji Bay. His path of devastation ironically inspired a generation of relative sobriety, with few willing to risk public drinking on the off chance he'd show up. No credible record of Maekos's death survives. In fact, he's thought to still be alive, either wandering in the flesh or possessing the bodies of inebriated people.

**Syskimne:** Hero-god of snakes and whispered secrets, Syskimne channeled oracular insights to hundreds of prophets from her sanctuary atop Mount Ral. Her favorite tradition was ophiomancy—divination through handling and studying the movement of serpents. While Syskimne is long dead, she penned countless scrolls that have inspired many mystery cults over the millennia. Most infamous is the Cult of Syskimne the Scrivener, which doesn't just consider snakes divine messengers; its practitioners also invite snake bites, whose venom causes cryptic phrases to appear upon the skin like ephemeral tattoos.

**Themphis:** Whereas Eyapinea tried to extend her life indefinitely, a later hero-god sought a far briefer and more exciting tenure. Themphis, patron of grudges and blood-feuds, offered to reside in and bless whichever city-state proved itself most worthy. Eager for the prestige a new hero-god could bring, many city-states competed to earn her patronage. However, Themphis used the competition to stoke rivalry, fabricate international scandals, frame politicians as assassins, and other schemes that created generational rifts—some of which survive to this day. Her final ploy involved stealing griffon eggs and planting



## HERO-GODS ABROAD

Hero-gods rarely venture far, and their divine power is equally localized. This can create problems for clerics, champions, and other characters whose patron is a hero-god yet must travel to distant lands. The effects correlate with distance; a follower might lose their highest-level spell slots as they reach Jalmeray, and they might lack any divine feats and spells in Arcadia.

That said, PCs are exceptional. A hero-god might spend the energy to grant their favorite followers their full powers at any distance. Optionally, a PC might experience minor complications while abroad, such as a DC 3 flat check to cast spells (as if they were stupefied) or a small penalty to their spell attack modifier and spellcasting DC. Whatever the case, the impact should be fun, minor, and even surmountable through gameplay.

them inside a victim's home, hoping the vengeful beasts would attack her target. Instead, the griffons caught and dismembered Themphis! Her memory survives in the phrase "themphitic death," which refers to someone causing chaos that ultimately backfires and kills them.

**Ximakter:** As the hero-god of sails and leviathan-hunting, Ximakter patrolled Kardaji Bay, ensuring beasts of the Obari Ocean didn't prey on Ibydos. His efforts made the century preceding the Age of Lost Omens one of the safest periods for the Obari Crossing. However, when prophecy failed and cataclysms rocked the world, the whale-like behemoth Ousmariku awoke, rose from the depths, and nearly destroyed the city-state of Pol-Liachora. Ximakter led a coalition of hero-gods to slay the beast, yet their divine entourage failed catastrophically. With a sickly crunch, Ousmariku bit Ximakter in half, and the hero-god's sword was thrown far from the fray (and later became the hero-god Aerekostes; see below).

## CURRENT HERO-GODS

The following presents a non-exhaustive list of contemporary hero-gods. The hero-god Iapholi (associated with monstrous heritage and acceptance) features later in this Adventure Path and is detailed there.

### Aerekostes

#### THE MENTOR IN BLADES

**Areas of Concern** contingencies and intelligent items

**Edicts** make items, treat items well, prepare for many possibilities

**Anathema** destroy an intelligent item

**Divine Attribute** Constitution or Intelligence

**Religious Symbol** kopis encircled by mystical runes

**Sacred Animal** lungfish

**Sacred Colors** blue and bronze

#### Devotee Benefits

**Cleric Spells** 1st: *object reading* (Player Core 2 248), 2nd: *animated assault* (Player Core 2 240), 7th: *contingency*

**Divine Font** harm or heal

**Divine Sanctification** none

**Divine Skill** Crafting

**Domains** creation, healing, knowledge, metal (*Divine Mysteries* 267)

**Favored Weapon** falcata (*Pathfinder Treasure Vault* 27)

When the behemoth Ousmariku ravaged western Ibydos, the hero-god Ximakter drew his curved blade and led a band of other mythic warriors against the beast. Ousmariku consumed Ximakter, sending his sword flying to lodge into the nearby beach. Within days of being recovered, the blade awoke with magical intelligence and mythic power. Recognizing this as a novel hero-god, Ibydians swiftly constructed a temple-armory for the divine blade. Known as Aerekostes, the sword has never confirmed the origin of its personality, be it the trapped soul of Ximakter or some spontaneously created entity.

Aerekostes doesn't just lend magical power; they lend themselves. Aspiring heroes can petition the sword for help, and Aerekostes occasionally agrees to accompany them for some worthy quest. However, if the quest goes awry, the sword sometimes disappears for weeks or even years before resurfacing.

## Chinostes

### THE FALLEN BLADE

**Areas of Concern** tragedy and sacrifice

**Edicts (Redeemer)** aid your neighbors, wield humble weapons, destroy Chinostes

**Anathema (Redeemer)** hog credit, create undead

**Edicts (Nightwarden)** aid your neighbors, sacrifice others for the greater good, leave cryptic calling cards of your actions

**Anathema (Nightwarden)** disparage others for seeking terrible power to achieve laudable goals

**Divine Attribute** Charisma or Dexterity

**Religious Symbol** heart pierced by two swords

**Sacred Animal** horse

**Sacred Colors** black and white

## THE ACROPOLIS PYRE

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### Devotee Benefits

**Cleric Spells** 1st: *jump*, 2nd: *gecko grip*, 7th: *true target*

**Divine Font** *harm* or *heal*

**Divine Sanctification** can choose holy or unholy

**Divine Skill** Acrobatics

**Domains** cities, death, luck, sorrow (*Divine Mysteries* 268)

**Favored Weapon** dagger

In a Sylirican raid on Pol-Reanphoros, the saddle-maker Chinostes took up his tack knife in a desperate attempt to defend his neighbors. His efforts killed the raid's leader and scattered the other warriors, awakening the first spark of his mythic power. Chinostes never abandoned his role as a humble, folk-hero vigilante, even as a hero-god. One day, he tracked and confronted a murderer, only to find this was no mortal foe, but a vampire, who overpowered Chinostes and turned him into one of their kind.

Even so, Chinostes retained his mythic abilities. He still stalks Reanphoros, most often fighting whatever threatens his city-state. However, the occasional citizen vanishes, only to reappear later, drained of blood—a grim price most citizens accept due to the worse evils he keeps at bay.

Two diametrically opposed cults venerate Chinostes. Those calling themselves Nightwardens celebrate his undead majesty and necessary evils. In contrast, the Redeemers keep the older faith, condemning the monster Chinostes has become. To the Redeemers, the greatest service they can ever perform for their hero-god is to drive a stake through his heart. Bizarrely, Chinostes grants spells to both groups, suggesting his tacit approval of both agendas.

## Drokalion

### THE PRIDEFATHER

**Areas of Concern** being a lion

**Edicts** embody a lion's hunting strategies, savor meat, be chased or eaten by Drokalion

**Anathema** back down from a fair challenge, cower to avoid harm, ruin Drokalion's hunt

**Divine Attribute** Constitution or Strength

**Religious Symbol** roaring lion

**Sacred Animal** lion

**Sacred Colors** brown, yellow

### Devotee Benefits

**Cleric Spells** 1st: *fleet step*, 2nd: *animal form*, 5th: *chameleon coat*

**Divine Font** *harm* or *heal*

**Divine Sanctification** none


**Divine Skill** Athletics

**Domains** family, indulgence, nature, zeal

**Favored Weapon** jaws or pick

Hero-gods are supposed to have backstories, doctrines, myth-spoken origins, and even intelligible speech. Somehow, the lion known as Drokalion proved an exception. Though smarter than an average animal, Drokalion is nonetheless a fairly mundane lion with fairly mundane motivations, which seemingly includes no self-awareness of his hero-god status. Nevertheless, a hero-god he is. His small cult happily hunts along the periphery of Drokalion's territory and draws spellcasting from him, exulting in the no-nonsense lifestyle their unwitting patron teaches by example. Followers take special joy in Drokalion's attention, even





though this attention almost always involves the lion charging at (and sometimes even eating) his faithful.

## Ongalte

### THE DEATH OF DIVINITY

**Areas of Concern** deicide

**Edicts** ruin the reputation of other hero-gods, aid those whom the hero-gods have wronged, kill gods

**Anathema** make a sincere prayer to any other hero-god, perform deeds that ultimately glorify another hero-god

**Divine Attribute** Strength or Wisdom

**Religious Symbol** pierced skull of a cyclops

**Sacred Animal** parasitic wasp

**Sacred Colors** gray, red

#### Devotee Benefits

**Cleric Spells** 1st: *sure strike*, 2nd: *paranoia*, 6th: *disintegrate*

**Divine Font** *harm*

**Divine Sanctification** can choose unholy

**Divine Skill** Survival

**Domains** ambition, destruction, fate, nothingness (*Divine Mysteries* 268)

**Favored Weapon** greataxe

When cyclopes and Ibydians first joined forces, they lived as equals. However, humanity gradually overshadowed their giant colleagues, with cyclopes uplifting hero-gods but rarely becoming divine themselves. As she trained in the art of myth-speaking, the cyclops Ongalte became bitter at her species' decline and humans' ascendancy. Without change, her people would eventually dwindle and vanish entirely. She enacted her own myth-speaking, soon after which she collapsed the temple, crushing her and many others beneath the rubble. Yet moments later, she emerged unscathed and ascendant.

Since then, Ongalte has haunted Ibydos as a hero-god of deicide. She has killed at least three hero-gods, and she may have orchestrated others' demises without formally claiming responsibility. Her greatest obstacles are the city-states themselves; surviving hero-gods rarely leave their urban sanctuaries, so Ongalte relies on slander and disgrace to force these demigods into the open.

Ongalte has only elevated one hero-god other than herself: her lieutenant Ytildos (page 79). His betrayal decades ago confirmed her belief that all hero-gods must die.

## Pharimia

### THE HORIZON FLAME

**Areas of Concern** ports and lighthouses

**Edicts** guide others between places of safety, maintain travel infrastructure, unite contentious parties to achieve greater goals

**Anathema** deny directions to the lost, extinguish a lighthouse or similar beacon, bring destruction upon Ibydos

**Divine Attribute** Intelligence or Wisdom

**Religious Symbol** three stars above a lighthouse

**Sacred Animal** rattlesnake

**Sacred Colors** red, yellow

#### Devotee Benefits

**Cleric Spells** 1st: *tailwind*, 2nd: *floating flame*, 5th: *control water*

**Divine Font** heal

**Divine Sanctification** none

**Divine Skill** Survival

**Domains** duty (*Divine Mysteries* 265), fire, travel, water

**Favored Weapon** ranseur

For a divinity of clarity and light, Pharimia's origins are ironically murky; she has traveled the archipelago to build lighthouses, signal fires, and ports throughout living memory. She asks for little in return beyond respect for travelers and responsible infrastructure budgeting to maintain what she creates. In any other age, her mundane mission would be forgettable. However, as myth-speaking became unreliable and the pantheon dwindled, Pharimia has become a self-appointed defender of Ibydan hero-gods and their associated traditions. She's one of the few voices that can convince unholy demigods and righteous divinities to unite against common threats. Her priests seek similar challenges, serving as negotiators and leaders for ragtag coalitions whose members would otherwise stab each other in the back.

## Uption and Warrik

### THE SHIELDBROTHERS

**Areas of Concern** shield-bearers and promises

**Edicts** share stories that glorify your companions, guard your friends' backs, find joy in grim circumstances

**Anathema** betray a lover, flee battle before your companions have a chance to escape

**Divine Attribute** Charisma or Constitution

**Religious Symbol** pair of overlapping circular shields

**Sacred Animal** wolf

**Sacred Colors** brown, orange

#### Devotee Benefits

**Cleric Spells** 1st: *mindlink*, 2nd: *laughing fit*, 6th: *wall of force*

**Divine Font** *heal*

**Divine Sanctification** can choose holy

**Divine Skill** Performance

**Domains** family, might, passion, protection  
**Favored Weapon** shield boss

When Upion received his myth-speaking, he politely thanked the cyclopes but refused to seek divinity or hear their whole prophecy. To do so would mean outliving his lover, Warrik, by decades or even centuries. Instead, the pair continued their military careers, believing it better to find immortality together on the front lines than chase some goal they couldn't share. Both appeared to perish in the Battle of Tesikon Heights, only to arise imbued with mythic power to turn the tide of battle. Since then, Upion and Warrik have acted as a single hero-god, seemingly able to grant spells only when together. The pair encourage camaraderie, neither expecting nor disparaging those whose loyalty develops into consensual romance.

## Ytildos

### THE TIDEFANG

**Areas of Concern** reefs and shipwrecks  
**Edicts** capitalize on others' misfortune for profit, subtly ruin navigation tools, set traps  
**Anathema** despoil a coastal ecosystem, give away a treasure map for free  
**Divine Attribute** Dexterity or Intelligence  
**Religious Symbol** a ship wrecked atop a reef  
**Sacred Animal** hermit crab  
**Sacred Colors** brown, orange

### Devotee Benefits

**Cleric Spells** 1st: *hydraulic push*, 3rd: *coral scourge* (RoE 172), 8th: *whirlpool* (RoE 175)  
**Divine Font** harm  
**Divine Sanctification** can choose unholy  
**Divine Skill** Thievery  
**Domains** disorientation (*Divine Mysteries* 264), secrecy, water, wealth  
**Favored Weapon** macuahuitl (*War of Immortals* 148)

In her efforts to kill other hero-gods, Ongalte performed an act of hypocrisy: she created a hero-god of her own. A marauder and iconoclast, the pirate Ytildos seemed like a perfect lieutenant who could hound Iblydos's pantheon from the sea. However, when Pharimia wounded Ongalte in battle, the cyclops fled and relied on Ytildos to guard her as she recuperated. He did... for a time. Greed and contrariness got the better of him, and he absconded with much of Ongalte's wealth, earning her eternal ire.

Ytildos is an inconsistent divinity. One moment, he's encouraging his worshippers to cause and pilfer shipwrecks, only to become jealous of their newfound wealth. It's common for sailors to cast a portion of their

wealth into the sea, hoping to assuage the hero-god's avarice. He drags the ships of any who fail to placate him onto reefs, delighting as the coral tears open a vessel's belly and spills its cargo into the sea.

## Zeaki

### THE MATRON OF METAMORPHOSES

**Areas of Concern** tides and transformation  
**Edicts** inflict poetic justice upon those who wrong you, assist others' personal transformations, learn esoteric secrets that others might value  
**Anathema** become complacent with your current self, offer aid to a stranger without exacting some price (even if the cost isn't obvious)  
**Divine Attribute** Charisma or Intelligence  
**Religious Symbol** open hand with each finger from a different creature  
**Sacred Animal** hermit crab  
**Sacred Colors** brown, orange

### Devotee Benefits

**Cleric Spells** 1st: *ill omen*, 2nd: *animal messenger*, 3rd: *feet to fins*, 4th: *bestial curse* (PC2 240), 5th: *moon frenzy*, 6th: *cursed metamorphosis*, 7th: *warp mind*, 8th: *migration*, 9th: *metamorphosis*  
**Divine Font** harm or heal  
**Divine Sanctification** none  
**Divine Skill** Occultism  
**Domains** change (*Divine Mysteries* 262), fate, magic, moon  
**Favored Weapon** chakri (*Pathfinder Treasure Vault* 30)

The sea hags of Kardaji Bay's eastern coast are infamous for offering dangerous bargains. Whatever the sea hag Zeaki offered the cyclopes of Hoimpeia remains a mystery, yet apparently it was too good to refuse. In return, they enacted a myth-speaking on her behalf. The hero-god now haunts Itia, an island south of Dhuraxilis, where she listens to petitioners, hoards secrets, and offers extraordinary magic for a price. On occasion, she even joins and empowers other covens, though misfortune often befalls these partners before Zeaki returns home.

Like the ocean's tides, Zeaki's appearance varies from day to day and for each visitor, and she happily shares some of her shapeshifting magic with the dysmorphic. Despite her sinister reputation as a hag, Zeaki engages most visitors with an open mind. Those who reciprocate find she's a civil host and mostly fair bargainer. However, anyone who insults or attempts to cheat her earns a terrible enemy, with forgiveness rarely granted except by performing some great service for the hag. The unrepentant often find themselves transformed into witless beasts, cursed to roam Itia.

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# ADVENTURE TOOLBOX

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Many of the following character options appear in this adventure as rewards, and others represent available gear the PCs might purchase and techniques they might learn while adventuring in Bailax.

## NEW ITEMS

Though rarely seen beyond Iblydos, the following items are often created in Iblydos (and Pol-Bailax in particular).

### CHAMPION'S LAURELS

ITEM 2+

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE MAGICAL TALISMAN

**Usage** affixed to armor; **Bulk** –

**Activate**  $\diamond$  (concentrate) **Trigger** You are about to roll an Acrobatics or Athletics check, and you are trained or better in the skill; **Requirements** You can perceive at least 12 allies or friendly bystanders encouraging you.

This elegant crown of laurels can be worn on the head, atop a helmet, or even wrapped around the neck as a torc, signaling the wearer's athletic achievements in a past competition. When you Activate the laurels, you draw strength from your adoring crowd and gain a status bonus to the triggering check. If you critically succeed at the check, you gain temporary Hit Points equal to the item's level that last for 1 minute.

**Type** *amateur champion's laurels*; **Level** 2; **Price** 6 gp

These laurels grant a +1 status bonus to the check.

**Type** *professional champion's laurels*; **Level** 10; **Price** 160 gp

These laurels grant a +2 status bonus to the check.

**Type** *renowned champion's laurels*; **Level** 18; **Price** 3,200 gp

These laurels grant a +3 status bonus to the check.

### DEATH TUSK HELM

ITEM 3

UNCOMMON INVESTED MAGICAL

**Price** 55 gp

**Usage** worn helm; **Bulk** L

Slivers of boar tusk are sewn into this leather cap, creating a scaled helmet that channels dozens of boars' ferocity into the wearer.

**Activate–Boar's Last Stand**  $\diamond$  (auditory, concentrate);

**Frequency** once per day; **Trigger** Your turn begins;

**Requirements** You have a doomed or wounded value of 1 or higher; **Effect** You unleash a fearsome roar. 1 creature

of your choice within 30 feet must attempt a DC 16 Will save or become frightened 1 (frightened 2 on a critical failure). Increase this DC by the sum of your doomed and wounded values (maximum DC 20). You then gain 5 temporary Hit Points that last 1 minute.

### GIFT OF OLIVES

ITEM 3

UNCOMMON MAGICAL PLANT

**Price** 48 gp

**Usage** held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

This expertly trimmed olive branch remains lush and vibrant, even months after being ritually harvested. With a little soil and patience, it can quickly grow into a sheltering tree that later bestows the user with a new *gift of olives*.

**Activate–Sew the Cutting**  $\diamond\diamond$  (healing,

manipulate, plant); **Requirements** You are

outside and standing atop an unoccupied

5-foot square with some soil; **Frequency**

once per day; **Effect** You drive one end

of the cutting into the soil. The cutting

immediately grows into an olive tree

whose boughs shelter a 15-foot-diameter

area. Creatures in the sheltered area

gain resistance 3 to any environmental

damage (*GM Core* 90), gain a +1 status

bonus to saving throws against environmental

hazards, and gain a +1 status bonus to Survival

checks to Subsist. After 10 minutes, the tree

sprouts 8 olives, each of which can be eaten

as an action to restore 1 Hit Point and

nourish the eater as if they had consumed a

full meal. After 8 hours, the olives lose their

potency, and the *gift of olives* cutting

detaches from the tree and falls harmlessly

to the ground. The olive tree loses its

protective abilities and becomes a normal,

non-magical olive tree that survives so long

as it's growing in a suitable location.



Pyrefeather Cloak

### PYREFEATHER CLOAK

ITEM 3

UNCOMMON INVESTED MAGICAL

**Price** 50 gp

**Usage** worn cloak; **Bulk** L

The red and dark-orange feathers of a pyrefowl have been woven into a beautiful cloak.

**Activate–Deflect Flame**  $\curvearrowright$  (manipulate); **Trigger** You would be affected by a fire effect; **Frequency** once per

day; **Effect** You flourish the cloak, using the feathers to reduce the incoming heat. You gain fire resistance 5 and a +1 circumstance bonus to saving throws against the triggering effect until the beginning of your next turn. If you are taking persistent fire damage, you can immediately attempt a flat check to end the persistent damage.

### PYREFEATHER TOKEN

ITEM 3

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE MAGICAL TALISMAN VITALITY

**Price** 5 gp

**Usage** affixed to armor; **Bulk** –

**Activate**  (concentrate) **Trigger** You succeed at, fail, or critically fail a recovery check while dying by 1.

This pyrefowl feather, accentuated with beadwork, stores a spark of the bird's self-healing power. When you Activate the token, you reduce the triggering recovery check's DC by 1, potentially improving your check's degree of success. You also gain 5 temporary Hit Points that last for 1 minute. You can Activate this talisman even while unconscious.

## NEW SPELLS

Bailaxians developed the following spells inspired by their hero-gods and pyrefowl.

### FUNERAL FLAMES

SPELL 1

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE FIRE MANIPULATE

**Tradition** divine, primal

**Range** touch; **Targets** one club or staff you're wielding

**Duration** 1 minute

You transform a bludgeon into a fearsome torch suited to casting undead into the afterlife. One end of the weapon ignites, becoming wreathed in blue flame. While you wield the target weapon, it becomes a +1 *weapon*, gains the versatile fire trait, and sheds light as brightly as a torch. Whenever you successfully Strike a creature with the weapon, you can Dismiss the spell as a free action to deal 1d6 persistent fire damage to the target; if the target is undead, increase the persistent damage dice to d8s.

**Heightened (+2)** The persistent fire damage increases by 1d6.

### PYREFOWL REBUKE

SPELL 2

UNCOMMON FIRE MANIPULATE MOVE

**Tradition** arcane, primal

**Trigger** A creature within 10 feet of you Strikes and deals damage to you.

**Defense** basic Reflex

Fiery wings briefly envelop your arms, and with a swift wingbeat, you flutter away from your attacker in a shower of searing sparks. You deal 1d6 fire damage to the triggering creature, with a basic Reflex save, and Fly up to 10 feet in a straight line directly away from it. If the creature critically fails its saving throw, your movement

does not provoke reactions from it, and it's dazzled until the end of its next turn.

**Heightened (+2)** The damage increases by 1d6, and the maximum distance you can Fly increases by 5 feet.

## NEW FEATS

As an archipelago famous for its mythic beasts, Ibydos rewards those who know their way around a ship or the best way to skewer a leviathan. The following feats provide an edge against some of the challenges ahead.

### MYTH HUNTER

FEAT 1

UNCOMMON GENERAL SKILL

**Prerequisites** trained in Hero-God Lore or Legendary Beast Lore

**Trigger** You successfully Recall Knowledge to identify a creature that has the mythic trait.

**Frequency** once per 10 minutes

Your ancestors confronted and bested mythic beasts of Ibydan antiquity. Through a combination of hearing these tales and channeling a hint of those warriors' mythic power, you've developed a knack for bypassing a mythic creature's fabled defenses. The next time you successfully Strike the triggering creature, your Strike treats its mythic resistance as 2 lower. You treat its resistance as 4 lower if your Hero-God Lore or Legendary Beast Lore proficiency rank is expert, 6 lower if your rank is master, and 8 lower if your rank is legendary.

If your Strike would already ignore mythic resistance (because you are a mythic character or wield a mythic weapon), your next successful Strike against the creature instead deals an additional 1d6 precision damage. This additional damage increases to 1d8 if your Hero-God Lore or Legendary Beast Lore proficiency rank is expert, 1d10 if your rank is master, or 1d12 if your rank is legendary.

### FIERY REBIRTH

FEAT 4

UNCOMMON FIRE HEALING MYTHIC

**Trigger** You regain Hit Points while you are unconscious.

When you escape death, you return to life with retributive fire that burns those who harmed you. You expend 1 Mythic Point, return to consciousness, Stand, and regain additional Hit Points equal to your level. You then erupt in flames, dealing fire damage equal to twice your level to adjacent foes, with a basic Reflex save against your class DC. Foes that critically fail the save are also pushed 5 feet away from you.

## ANIMIST APPARITIONS

These apparitions are especially common in Ibydos, being drawn to the archipelago by its seasonal winds and prophetic traditions.

## Shepherd of Errant Winds

Often spun from eddies in the wake of air elementals, a shepherd of errant winds delights in movement and freedom. They might seek animists in breezy canyons or aboard ships cruising the trade winds, after which the apparition follows an animist to less airy locales. However, a shepherd of errant winds chafes at idleness and stirs up trouble if its surroundings seem too still.

**Apparition Skill** Sailing Lore, Scouting Lore

**Apparition Spells** **Cantrip** slashing gust (*Rage of Elements 71*); **1st** tailwind; **2nd** propulsive breeze (*Rage of Elements 71*); **3rd** wall of wind; **4th** vapor form; **5th** scouting eye; **6th** mislead; **7th** vacuum (*Rage of Elements 72*); **8th** punishing winds; **9th** wrathful storm

**Vessel Spell** gift of the anemos

**Avatar** *Will of the Winds* Speed 40 feet, fly 70 feet, ignore difficult terrain and greater difficult terrain; **Melee** ✦ air blast (air, reach 20 feet), **Damage** 6d8+6 bludgeoning; **Ranged** ✦ thunderclap (electricity, range 120 feet, versatile sonic), **Damage** 6d6+3 electricity

## Speaker in Sibillance

Whether witnessed in hissing serpents or the whisper of pungent fumes wafting up from a forlorn cave, a speaker in sibillance offers forbidden knowledge and revels in the anguish of an unprepared mind. These apparitions often take medusa-like forms, each serpent providing different (and often contradictory) advice.

**Apparition Skill** Fortune-Telling Lore, Mountain Lore

**Apparition Spells** **Cantrip** puff of poison (*Player Core 2 249*); **1st** ill omen; **2nd** stupefy; **3rd** hypercognition; **4th** snake fangs (*Howl of the Wild 86*); **5th** slither; **6th** petrify; **7th** mask of terror; **8th** unrelenting observation; **9th** unfathomable song

**Vessel Spell** crown of prophets

**Avatar** *Medusa of Merciless Mysteries* Speed 60 feet, climb 60 feet; **Melee** ✦ biting hair (poison, reach 15 feet), **Damage** 6d6+6 piercing plus 2d6 persistent poison; **Ranged** ✦ jarring prophecy (mental, range 120 feet, versatile sonic), **Damage** 6d6+3 mental

## Apparition Vessel Spells

### CROWN OF PROPHETS ✦

FOCUS 1

UNCOMMON ANIMIST FOCUS MORPH

**Defense** Fortitude; **Duration** sustained up to 1 minute

Serpents sprout from your head, equally ready to bite your foes or offer you counsel. You gain a fangs unarmed attack that deals 1d6 piercing damage and has the agile, finesse, and versatile poison traits. The first time you Cast or Sustain this spell each round, you can perform one of the following as a free action.

**Serpentine Advice** The snakes compete to offer you counsel. You gain the Dubious Knowledge feat until the end of your turn, then you Recall Knowledge.

**Toxic Prophecy** (poison) **Requirements** A creature within 15 feet damaged you since the end of your last turn; **Effect** The snakes spit toxic curses at the required creature, dealing 2d4 poison damage (basic Fortitude save).

**Heightened (+1)** The poison damage dealt by Toxic Prophecy increases by 1d4.

### GIFT OF THE ANEMOS ✦

FOCUS 1

UNCOMMON AIR ANIMIST AURA FOCUS

**Area** 10-foot emanation

**Defense** Reflex; **Duration** sustained up to 1 minute

Your apparition envelops you in gusting winds that can speed your steps or buffet your foes. When an enemy in the aura critically fails a Strike against you, they must succeed at a Reflex save or become off-guard until the end of your next turn. When you cast or sustain this spell, you can either Step, Shove a creature in the aura using your spell attack modifier in place of your Athletics modifier, or jump 10 feet in any direction (you must land on solid ground, or else you fall).



Funeral Flames

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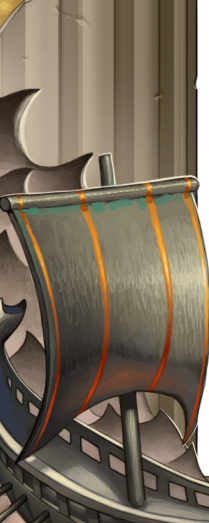
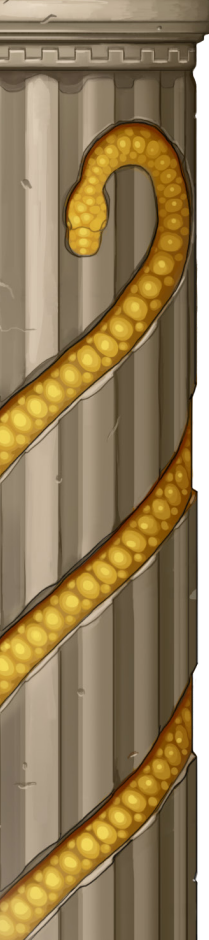
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### EATER OF TOES

The riptide octopus didn't get its name from living in tidal zones but from being more stubborn than a riptide pulling someone out to sea. Beachcombers know not to dip their toes into tidal pools lest a riptide octopus mistake them for prey, and many bear scars that remind them of the dangers of ignoring such advice. Dislodging a hungry riptide octopus sometimes takes extreme measures in the form of a crowbar; fortunately, the octopus's skin is sensitive to fermented fluids like vinegar and wine, and dousing the creature with such concoctions usually encourages it to detach and flee.

## AQUATIC CREATURES

Kartaji Bay's shallow waters support vast reefs and diverse wildlife.

### Riptide Octopus Swarm

Riptide octopuses have adapted to these isolated hunting grounds with their strength, pulling themselves hundreds of feet across dry land to check their territory's pools for prey. Under most circumstances, such mollusks are solitary. However, massive scavenging opportunities like a beached whale or a wounded mammal can draw hundreds of these creatures to one place.

#### RIPTIDE OCTOPUS SWARM

CREATURE 0

LARGE ANIMAL AQUATIC SWARM

**Perception** +6; low-light vision

**Skills** Acrobatics +6, Athletics +5, Stealth +6, Thievery +4

**Str** +2, **Dex** +3, **Con** +3, **Int** -4, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +0

**AC** 16; **Fort** +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +4

**HP** 14; **Immunities** grabbed, precision, prone, restrained, swarm mind; **Resistances** physical 5 (except slashing); **Weaknesses** area damage 3, splash damage 3

**Speed** 15 feet, swim 30 feet

**Camouflage** In wet environments like open water, tide pools, and even wet ship decks, a riptide octopus swarm can Hide and Sneak without cover or being concealed.

**Compression** A riptide octopus swarm can move through a gap at least 6 inches wide without Squeezing and can Squeeze through a gap at least 1 inch wide.

**Swarming Bites** Each enemy in the swarm's space takes 1d4 piercing damage and must attempt a DC 16 basic Reflex save. A creature that fails its save takes 1d4 persistent piercing damage as octopuses cling to and continue biting the creature.

### Bristled Reef Shark

Small enough to slip through labyrinthine corals yet large enough to overpower potential prey, bristled reef sharks prowl coastal reefs at night. By day, they're gregarious creatures that congregate in large groups and communicate with each other by performing dance-like maneuvers. On occasion, the sharks team up to drive away predators or mob large prey; more often, they dart for cover amid the corals. Those that aren't fast enough to avoid being swallowed by orcas and larger sharks flare their dorsal spines, forcing most predators to cough up the bristled shark who quickly flees to safety.

#### BRISTLED REEF SHARK

CREATURE 1

MEDIUM ANIMAL AQUATIC

**Perception** +7; blood scent, scent (imprecise) 100 feet

**Skills** Acrobatics +7, Athletics +5, Performance +6

**Str** +1, **Dex** +4, **Con** +2, **Int** -4, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +2

**Blood Scent** The shark can smell blood in the water from up to 1 mile away.

**AC** 16; **Fort** +7, **Ref** +10, **Will** +4

**HP** 21

**Bristle** Trigger The bristled reef shark becomes grabbed, restrained, or otherwise immobilized in a creature's grasp; **Effect** The shark flares its bristles, dealing 1d6 piercing damage to the triggering creature (basic Reflex DC 17). If the creature critically fails, the shark can also try to Escape as part of this reaction.

**Speed** swim 35 feet

**Melee** jaws +5, **Damage** 1d8+1 piercing

**Compression** When a bristled reef shark successfully Squeezes, it moves through the tight space at half speed (or full speed on a critical success).

**Reef Rake** ♦ **Requirements** The shark's last action was a successful jaws Strike, and the target is adjacent to a solid surface like a wall or reef; **Effect** The shark attempts an Athletics check to Reposition the target into the adjacent surface. If successful, the target is thrown into the surface and takes 2d6 bludgeoning damage. If the surface is jagged (such as a reef), target instead takes 2d6 slashing damage and 1 persistent bleed damage. This neither applies nor counts toward the shark's multiple attack penalty.

## Coralclaw

With the physique of a giant lobster and the artistic sensibilities of a hermit crab, a coralclaw relies on ambush to catch prey. As their name suggests, they adorn their shells by secreting an adhesive and attaching broken corals to blend in with their local reefs. Older coralclaws often foster barnacles, anemones, and even living coral on their back to enhance the disguise. Once properly adorned, the coralclaw finds a hollow to hide within and wait for prey.

### CORALCLAW

### CREATURE 2

UNCOMMON MEDIUM ANIMAL AQUATIC

**Perception** +8; darkvision, scent (imprecise) 60 feet

**Skills** Athletics +8, Stealth +7 (+9 in coral reefs)

**Str** +4, **Dex** +3, **Con** +2, **Int** -4, **Wis** +1, **Cha** -1

**AC** 18; **Fort** +8, **Ref** +11, **Will** +5

**HP** 30

**Coral Camouflage** In reefs and rocky marine environments, a coralclaw can Hide and Sneak without cover or being concealed.

**Dislodged Armor** Once the coralclaw is reduced to half its Hit Points, its AC decreases by 2, it gains a +5 circumstance bonus to its Speeds, and it loses coral camouflage. A coralclaw can repair its coral armor with 4 hours of work.

**Shuffler** A coralclaw struggles to pivot quickly, leaving its hind limbs and tail vulnerable. When the coralclaw is off-guard, it gains weakness 2 to physical damage except against effects for which the coralclaw has standard cover or greater cover.

**Speed** 20 feet, swim 15 feet

**Melee** ♦ crusher claw +11, **Damage** 1d8+4 bludgeoning plus Grab

**Melee** ♦ piercer claw +11 (agile), **Damage** 1d6+4 piercing plus 1 persistent bleed damage

**Ambushing Snap** ♦ **Requirements** The coralclaw is hiding in corals and a creature that hasn't detected it is within 25 feet; **Effect** The coralclaw moves up to its swim Speed + 10 feet toward the triggering creature. When the creature is within reach, the coralclaw makes a melee Strike against it. The creature is off-guard to this Strike.

**Constrict** 1d10 bludgeoning, DC 18

**Crushing Drag** ♦♦ (attack, move) **Requirements**

The coralclaw is grabbing or restraining a creature; **Effect** The coralclaw Constricts the creature, extends the grabbed or restrained condition until the end of the coralclaw's next turn, and attempts an Athletics check to Reposition the creature.



## CORALCLAW CACHES

When a coralclaw molts, it leaves behind its coral-covered shell. These husks provide temporary homes for various fish, and they warn divers that an ambush predator dwells in the area. In addition, these shells are often studded with not just valuable corals and shells, but coins, glassware dredged from forgotten shipwrecks, and even the occasional magical item!

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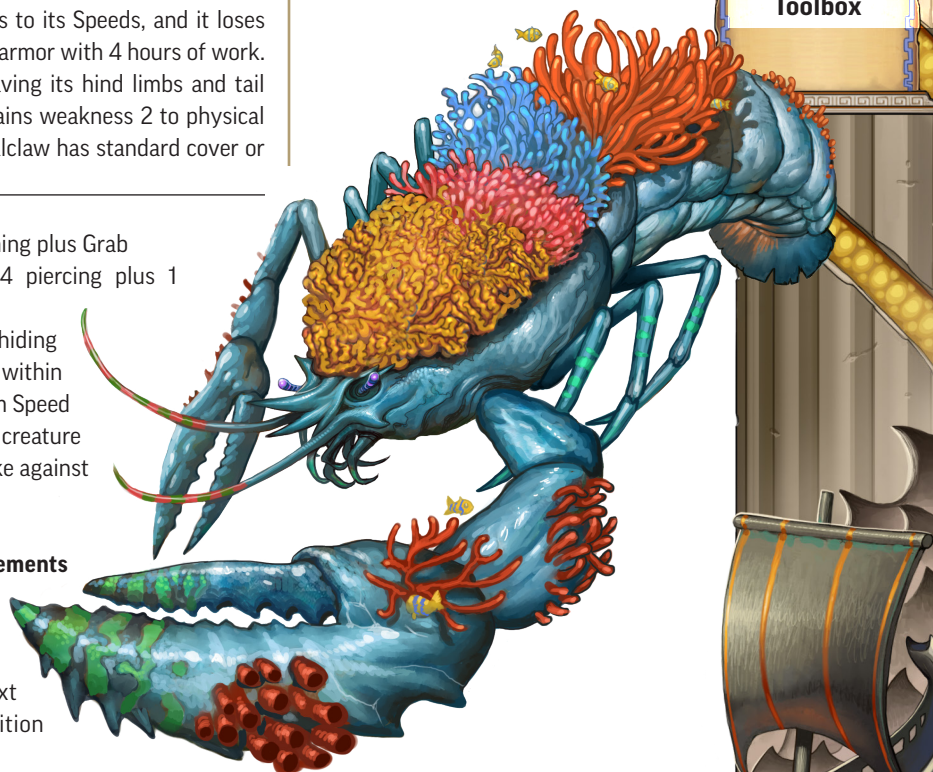
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### CHASING THE HIND

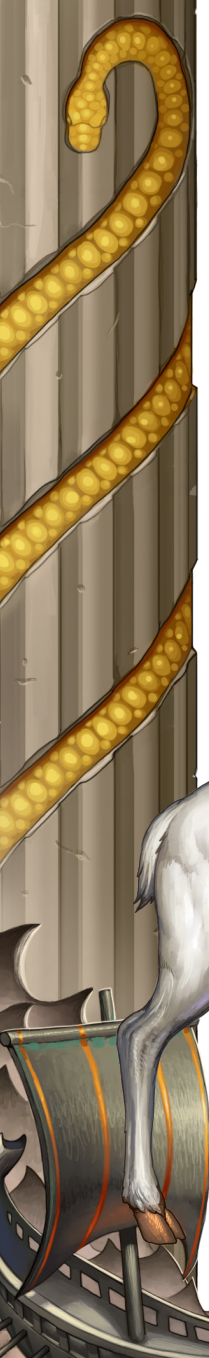
Chasing down and catching an Iblydan hind is a well-known rite of passage for Iblydan heroes and hero-gods, who often use this as a test of their speed and stamina. "Hind catching" is also a common game at festivals, with a dog or deer standing in for the hind, and golden antlers are a popular hair accessory at these events. Heroes aim to catch and release the hind without harming it; however, some who pursue Iblydan hinds do so with darker motivations, as the creatures' golden antlers fetch a high price on the black market.

## IBLYDAN HIND

An unusual breed of cervid, Iblydan hinds are closer to the size of a bull or a moose than the average deer, often ten feet or more in height. They have smooth, pale coats, hooves formed of bronze, and both the males and the females of the species bear antlers of pure gold. Iblydan hinds are known for their exceptional speed and agility as well as their intelligence, making them extraordinarily elusive in the wild.

There's some debate as to the origins of the Iblydan hind. Some scholars believe the species came to the Universe from the First World through a long-ago planar breach, noting how the hinds' unusual characteristics are similar to the unpredictable evolutions of creatures from that plane. Others point to historical records that indicate the hind was purposefully bred by ancient druidic circles, though the purpose of their creation has been lost to time.

Regardless of their pedigree, Iblydan hinds are a key symbol of Iblydan culture, often depicted in art and heraldry, with various superstitions surrounding them. A recurring element in hero-god stories is for an Iblydan hind to lead a hero-god to the correct path when they become lost, and it's said that a hunter who glimpses a hind in the forest is assured of a long life and good fortune. Due to the hinds' near-sacred status throughout Iblydos, slaying one is banned by all the city-states and punishable by exile, even death. In tribute to the hinds' fire breath, a common punishment for poachers is a trial by fire; if they survive the flames, they're allowed to live in exile.



### CREATURE 4

#### IBLYDAN HIND

RARE LARGE BEAST

**Perception** +11; low-light vision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

**Languages** Iblydosi, Wildsong (can't speak any language)

**Skills** Athletics +12, Stealth +13, Survival +10

**Str** +4, **Dex** +5, **Con** +3, **Int** -2, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +0

**Fleet of Hoof** An Iblydan hind ignores non-magical difficult terrain or greater difficult terrain when Striding or Stepping.

**AC** 21; **Fort** +11, **Ref** +14, **Will** +8

**HP** 62

**Evade Ensnarement** **Trigger** The hind is targeted with an effect that would give it the grabbed or immobilized condition; **Effect** The hind Steps, gaining a +2 circumstance bonus to its saving throw or increasing its DC by 2 against the effect.

**Speed** 50 feet

**Melee** antlers +13, **Damage** 2d6+6 piercing

**Melee** hoof +13 (agile), **Damage** 2d4+6 bludgeoning

**Primal Innate Spells** DC 19; **Constant (2nd)** *vanishing tracks*

**Fire Breath** (fire, primal) The hind snorts a 15-foot cone of fire, dealing 5d6 fire damage (DC 18 basic Reflex save). The hind can't use fire breath again for 1d4 rounds.

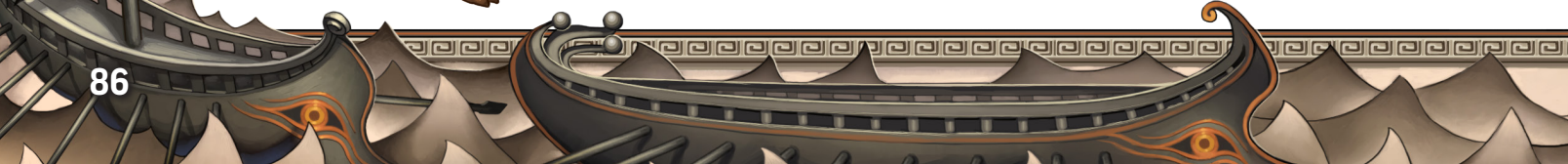
**Bright-Horned Flare** (visual) The hind tosses its head, causing its golden horns to reflect the light. All creatures within 30 feet of the hind must attempt a DC 18 Fortitude save.

**Success** The creature is unaffected.

**Failure** The creature is dazzled for 1 round.

**Critical Failure** The creature is blinded for 1 round.

**Trample** Medium or smaller, hoof, DC 18



## PYREFOWL

Though sometimes dubbed “lesser phoenixes,” the pyrefowl resembles the legendary firebirds in appearance and abilities, yet any direct connection between the two species is entirely anecdotal. A typical specimen resembles a bustard or peafowl with brown, red, and orange feathers. When it’s excited, the feathers flicker with incandescence, and an irate pyrefowl can create sparks with a click of its beak or blow burning embers down at a foe with a wingbeat.

Pyrefowl travel in small flocks for protection, and some hunt collectively by fanning out in a crescent and beating their wings. The resulting heat wave scatters insects and small mammals into the waiting beaks of other fowl. When threatened, a flock might turn this tactic against aggressors, even starting a brush fire to chase off intruders.

Though they often roost in high places like rooftops in cities or on rocky bluffs and are certainly capable of flight, pyrefowl spend much of their time on the ground standing on their sturdy legs. Though these creatures are protected in some places, in others they’re seen as a dangerous nuisance for their tendency to start or spread fires. In these locales, pyrefowl nests are hunted down, and the birds are either scattered or slain. Their beautiful feathers are sometimes harvested for artistic purposes, often decorating fancy clothing and adornments. Pyrefowl lay few eggs, far less than a typical chicken or duck, and in a few regions their eggs are seen as a delicacy and prized by elite cooks who feature them in baked egg dishes or incorporate them into baked goods. Most note the warm and smoky taste, with a slight hint of almond.

### PYREFOWL

### CREATURE 1

UNCOMMON SMALL BEAST FIRE

**Perception** +7; low-light vision

**Languages** Pyric (cannot speak)

**Skills** Acrobatics +6, Performance +5, Stealth +6

**Str** +1, **Dex** +3, **Con** +4, **Int** -3, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +1

**AC** 15; **Fort** +10, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6

**HP** 24; **Resistances** fire 3

**Smoldering Convalescence** (fire, healing) **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** When a pyrefowl dies, its wounds ignite and smolder as its body tries to heal. After 1d4 rounds, the pyrefowl attempts a DC 9 flat check. The check automatically fails if the smoldering pyrefowl is doused with water, sand, or other fire suppressant while recovering.

**Critical Success** As success, but the pyrefowl regains 10 Hit Points, Stands, and deals 1d6 fire damage to adjacent creatures and objects (DC 16 basic Reflex save).

**Success** The pyrefowl is returned to life with 5 Hit Points.

**Failure** The pyrefowl remains dead.

**Speed** 20 feet, fly 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ peck +7 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 1d6+1 piercing plus Pyrebite

**Flame Flutter** ♦♦ (fire, move) The pyrefowl Steps before or after using this ability. With a flap of its wings, the pyrefowl blows sparks in a 15-foot cone, dealing 2d4 fire damage to creatures in the area (basic Reflex DC 16).

**Pyrebite** ◀ (fire) **Trigger** The pyrefowl hits a target with its peck **Strike** on its turn; **Effect** The target must attempt a DC 16 Reflex save or take 1d4 persistent fire damage.



### FORTUNE AND FIREPROOFING

Thanks to their association with its patron phoenix, the city-state of Pol-Bailax extends legal protections to its resident pyrefowl. Harassing or killing the birds is prohibited, though licensed wardens are allowed to harvest naturally shed feathers. Pyrefowl roosting atop one’s roof is said to bring good luck to a household, so the Bailaxians build roofs out of clay tiles, slate, or other fire-resistant materials to protect themselves while hoping to lure luck to their homes with small, built-in troughs of grains.

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## WANDERING SPEIROIKOS

On rare occasions, a surviving member of a speiroikos troop will maintain its existence after battle, gaining full autonomy; this occurs more often in those created spontaneously. Such survivors often experience an existential crisis, having previously existed only to fight. Some wander the world seeking combat, while others attempt to blend in with humanoid societies and find new aspirations.



## SPEIROIKOS

Speiroikos are born of an unusual ritual in which dragon teeth are sown in the ground, giving rise to a legion of fierce warriors formed of earth. Magic items to summon speiroikos also exist and, on rare occasions, they can arise spontaneously after a dragon is slain, and its body decomposes into the soil.

At first glance, a speiroikos looks like a normal humanoid, though close inspection reveals their skin to have a clay-like texture and their teeth to be draconic fangs. They eagerly follow the one who crafted them into battle and obey their creator's orders without question. One might expect them to be perfect soldiers, but they're prone to fighting among themselves if provoked. Typically, speiroikos last only as long as there's a battle to fight, disintegrating back into dirt once hostilities conclude. Some canny creators manage to prolong their existence by hurrying them from one battle to another.

### SPEIROIKOS

CREATURE 3

UNCOMMON GARGANTUAN CONSTRUCT TROOP

**Perception** +9

**Languages** Ibydosi

**Skills** Athletics +11, Intimidation +7, Warfare Lore +9

**Str** +4, **Dex** +3, **Con** +3, **Int** +1, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +0

**AC** 18; **Fort** +10, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6

**HP** 50 (4 segments); **Thresholds** 34 (3 segments), 17 (2 segments); **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, healing, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poison, sickened, spirit, unconscious, vitality, void; **Weaknesses** area damage 3, splash damage 3, diverted fury

**Diverted Fury** The speiroikos' aggression can be redirected against their own numbers. A creature within 30 feet of the speiroikos can take an action to throw a small object such as a rock among the troop, attempting a DC 17 Deception check; this action has the manipulate trait. On a success, the troop deals its two-action Dory Strike damage to itself on its next round, taking no other actions.

**Troop Defenses** (NPC Core 231)

**Speed** 25 feet; troop movement

**Dragonhide** ♦ The speiroikos channel the power of their progenitor dragon to grow thick, scaly hides. Until the end of their next turn, they gain a +1 circumstance bonus to AC, and they reduce their weaknesses to area damage and splash damage by 2.

**Dory Strike** ♦ to ♦♦♦ **Frequency** once per round; **Effect** The speiroikos make a melee attack against each enemy in its space and in a 10-foot emanation (DC 17 basic Reflex save). The damage depends on the number of actions.

♦ 1d6 piercing damage

♦♦ 1d6+6 piercing damage

♦♦♦ 2d6+6 piercing damage

**Kestros Volley** ♦♦ The speiroikos let loose a flurry of heavy darts flung from slings. The volley is a 10-foot burst within 60 feet that deals 1d8 piercing damage (DC 17 basic Reflex save) plus 1 persistent bleed damage. When the speiroikos are reduced to 2 or fewer segments, this area decreases to a 5-foot burst.

**Troop Movement** Whenever a troop moves, you move one of its segments and the other segments follow behind it. At the end of the movement, you can group the other segments adjacent to the one you moved as you see fit, provided none of them moves farther than the moving segment. If you choose not to move the troop any distance, you can instead reshape the position of all the segments as long as one stays in place.

## TORCHEATER

When bright lights or large fires illuminate terrible crimes, the perpetrators' shadows can animate and take on a life of their own. However, such an existence is temporary; the spirit slowly fades over the course of days or weeks unless it can rest in shadows and consume light, both of which restore its shadowy body.

Known as torcheaters, these spirits often haunt settlements and play pranks on nighttime travelers by stealing their lamps. They're also a threat to travelers, especially those traversing the roads after dark. An encounter with a torcheater on a dark and winding road through the mountains can be deadly if they snuff the traveler's light. However, torcheaters can't stand being the subject of pranks in turn. If caught or taunted, a torcheater can quickly turn violent and attack their tormentor.

In rare places of near-constant light where shadows don't fall, a torcheater can still exist in a sort of limbo where they're aware of their surroundings but unable manifest enough to affect the world around them. They can only hope for some shade to fall across them so they can then begin to restore their shadowy forms.

### TORCHEATER

### CREATURE 2

UNCOMMON SMALL INCORPOREAL SPIRIT

**Perception** +8; darkvision, low-light vision

**Languages** Common, Shadowtongue

**Skills** Acrobatics +6, Occultism +5, Stealth +8, Thievery +6

**Str** +0, **Dex** +4, **Con** +1, **Int** -1, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +3

**AC** 18; **Fort** +5, **Ref** +10, **Will** +9

**HP** 30; **Resistances** fire 5, physical 5 (except bronze)

**Shelter Within the Shadow Cast** When a torcheater succeeds at a saving throw against a fire or light effect, it gets a critical success instead.

**Speed** 25 feet; shadow stairs

**Melee**  $\blacklozenge$  claw +11 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 1d8+2 slashing

**Melee**  $\blacklozenge$  jaws +11 (finesse), **Damage** 1d8+2 piercing plus 1d4 cold

**Inhale Light**  $\blacklozenge$  or  $\blacklozenge\blacklozenge$  (darkness, healing) The torcheater sharply inhales to consume a source of light within its reach, such as a torch's flame, a *light* spell, or another effect no larger than a human. It automatically extinguishes a non-magical flame, and it attempts to counteract a magical fire or light effect at 2nd-rank with a counteract modifier of +8. If the torcheater successfully counteracts an effect, it gains a reach of 10 feet, a +5 foot status bonus to Speed, and fast healing 2 until the end of its next turn, plus an additional number of rounds equal to the counteracted effect's rank. During this time, the creature's body solidifies, reducing its resistance to physical damage to 2.

The torcheater can spend two actions to instead affect a light source it can perceive within 30 feet.

**Shadow Stairs** A torcheater can create and climb wispy steps made of shadow. While in dim light or darkness, a torcheater gains a fly Speed equal to its Speed. If it's airborne and enters an area of bright light, the torcheater immediately falls without taking falling damage.



### SHADOWY WITNESSES

A torcheater's first glimpse of the world is whatever crime created it. Most of these spirits treat the event as inspiration, teaching them that tormenting others is acceptable. However, a placated torcheater might provide unique testimony about what they witnessed, helping investigators track down an otherwise unstoppable criminal.

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# TEAM AKKI

Self-centered and caring little for Ibydan tradition, this trio hopes to profit from Dintolneon's funeral games.

The ideal Ibydan hero is brave, resourceful, and respectful of the myth-speaking tradition that might eventually transform them into a hero-god. As that tradition creeps toward extinction, iconoclasts have emerged from the figurative woodwork to deliver the deathblow and make a tidy profit at the same time.

Akki, Tsemone, and Ulshuk are three such vultures. They met months ago in Jalmeray, each seeing their new companions as useful pawns in achieving their greater goals. Tsemone's promises of fame, fortune, and power in her homeland convinced Akki and Ulshuk to accompany her to Ibydos. They've since developed enough camaraderie to stay together and suffer each others' idiosyncrasies. Joining the funeral games was all Akki's idea, and her companions wearily acquiesced when she named their team after herself.

**Statistics:** Most of the trio feature in skill-based challenges, especially in this adventure's third chapter. Thus, Tsemone and Ulshuk receive only abridged statistics here. Akki's statistics appear in full, as the PCs clash with her during the grand melee in Chapter 1.

## Akki

*Prideful female tengu stormrager*

Traditionally, tengu are supposed to bring luck to a ship's crew. Akki only brought storms. Her braggadocious manner limited her tenure aboard any vessel, made worse by her electrical outbursts whenever she lost her temper. Akki is certain about what's really happening: her companions simply couldn't abide traveling with such an exceptional tengu.

Though Akki has an inflated sense of self-importance, she has the muscle and determination to confront and clobber any doubters. She believes she's on the path to greatness, so her feathers rustled with excitement when Tsemone explained myth-speaking. At last, Akki could realize divinity and silence her detractors!

Akki is brash, egotistical, and uninhibited, but she's not cruel. She happily drinks with rivals so long as they're fun and show her respect. Unfortunately, Akki is vulnerable to Tsemone's manipulation; the latter has a knack for convincing the tengu that greatness lies just over the next hill—a hill made from the corpses of Tsemone's enemies.

## Tsemone

*Scheming female human alchemist*

Pol-Sylirica values martial prowess, especially among its aristocrats. By contrast, the young noblewoman Tsemone specialized in everything Pol-Sylirica disdains: lies, political intrigue, and even poison. Her peers ostracized her for her unbecoming conduct, and after a judge nearly died from a too-convenient bout of food poisoning, her parents exiled her to avoid bringing further shame onto the family.

To Tsemone, Pol-Sylirica is a backward, bellicose city-state too attached to tradition to appreciate her talents. Yet she's unwilling to abandon her home; no, she wants to rule it. Akki and Ulshuk are her lieutenants and the first pawns in her army that will one day overthrow Sylirica's elite. In the meantime, she delights in undermining conservative Ibydan values, which remind her of the inflexible culture that raised her.

## TSEMONE

## CREATURE 2

UNIQUE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Female human operative

**Skills** Acrobatics +6, Crafting +8, Deception +7, Society +6,

Stealth +6, Thievery +8

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +10, **Will** +8

## Ulshuk

*Grimly pragmatic male lizardfolk mystic*

Ulshuk has wandered the Inner Sea region for over a decade, seeking spells he might learn to honor his divine patron, Nethys. To him, the ends justify the means, so long as those ends involve more magical power. Usually, he causes minimal trouble. However, Tsemone enables his avarice and ambition, tempting him to consider escalating atrocities if it would serve the All-Seeing Eye.

Ibydos holds a special fascination for him. The archipelago's gods are dying, the islands brim with mythic power, and an enterprising lizardfolk could evangelize Nethys's faith to fulfill its wayward inhabitants' divine needs. Along the way, he hopes to tap into the hero-god magic for himself, wielding hitherto inaccessible magic or even becoming a being of living magic in service to his god. If he has to kill a hero-god or two along the way, he won't shed a tear.

## ULSHUK

## CREATURE 2

UNIQUE MEDIUM HUMANOID LIZARDFOLK

Male lizardfolk priest

**Skills** Arcana +7, Athletics +6, Diplomacy +6, Performance +6, Religion +7

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +6, **Will** +11

### Campaign Role

These three upstarts appear throughout the Adventure Path—often leaving messes that the PCs have to clean up. Each violates some virtue or tradition dear to Ibydos. Akki embodies hubris. Tsemone delights in treachery. Finally, Ulshuk's faith and goals threaten the archipelago's hero-god tradition. Each time the trio vexes the PCs, there's an opportunity to reinforce the campaign's themes and Ibydan values.

In Chapter 1, they're rival competitors who use underhanded tactics to gain an edge. In Chapter 3, they vacillate between causing chaos and stealing credit for the PCs' heroics. Later in the Adventure Path, these three obtain their own mythic power and masquerade as hero-gods whom the PCs confront and ultimately defeat in the campaign's final volume, *Pathfinder Adventure Path #218: Titanbane*. Until then, consider seeding additional rumors as to Akki's, Tsemone's, and Ulshuk's antics on other islands, keeping these NPCs in the PCs' thoughts.

## AKKI

## CREATURE 2

UNIQUE MEDIUM HUMANOID TENGU

**Perception** +8; low-light vision

**Languages** Common, Ibydosi, Tengu

**Skills** Acrobatics +6, Athletics +8, Intimidation +6, Performance +8, Sailing Lore +7, Survival +6

**Str** +4, **Dex** +2, **Con** +3, **Int** +1, **Wis** +0, **Cha** +2

**Items** falchion, grappling hook, javelins (3), rope (50 feet), scale mail

**AC** 17; **Fort** +11, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6

**HP** 38; **Resistances** electricity 2

**Blood Storm** ⤴ (electricity) **Frequency** once per day; **Trigger** Akki takes piercing or slashing damage; **Effect** Akki's blood sprays from the wound, forming a crimson cloud laced with tiny lightning bolts. Adjacent creatures take 1 electricity splash damage, and Akki is concealed until the end of her next turn.

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ⬥ tournament greatclub +10 (backswing, nonlethal),

**Damage** 1d10+4 bludgeoning plus tempest rage

**Melee** ⬥ falchion +10 (forceful, sweep), **Damage** 1d10+4 slashing plus tempest rage

**Ranged** ⬥ javelin +10 (thrown 30 feet), **Damage** 1d6+4 piercing plus tempest rage

**Tempest Rage** ⬥ (concentrate, electricity,

emotion, mental) Akki channels the ferocity of a raging storm, causing her feathers and weapons to crackle with electricity. She gains 5 temporary Hit Points, deals an additional 1d4 electricity damage with her weapon Strikes, and cannot use actions (except Seek) with the concentrate trait unless they also have the rage trait. These effects last for 1 minute, until she falls unconscious, or until the encounter ends, whichever comes first. After Akki uses this ability, she cannot do so again for 1d10 minutes.

**Thunderous Echo** ⤴ (sonic) **Trigger** Akki fails but does not critically fail a Strike against a target within 15 feet; **Requirements** Akki is affected by Tempest Rage; **Effect** Even though her attack missed, a thunderclap follows an instant later in the weapon's wake. The Strike's target takes 1d4 sonic damage (DC 16 basic Fortitude save). The target is deafened for 1d4 rounds if they critically fail the saving throw.



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# YASMENEI

**The captain of the Tide Hunter is daring, dashing, and always up for a challenge, but adventuring serves as a distraction from her private regrets.**

Yasmenei has been a presence around Pol-Bailax for decades, operating primarily as a trader. As a baby, she was found in the shallows by a family of fisherfolk from Pol-Bailax, and they raised her as her own. She showed an aptitude for sailing from a young age, often taking the family fishing boat on explorations of the coast after the day's work was done. She wasn't content with a simple fishing life, though, and when she came of age, she started adventuring around Pol-Bailax's environs, hoping to save up enough coin for a ship of her own.

One fateful day, she signed on with a merchant vessel called the *Tide Hunter*, ferrying cargo from Pol-Bailax to Pol-Liachora. The ship came under attack by pirates, who killed the *Tide Hunter's* captain in the ensuing melee. Yasmenei took charge and rallied the remaining crew, defeating their attackers and defending the cargo. In thanks for her decisive action, the merchant offered her the *Tide Hunter* as a gift.

This was the opportunity Yasmenei had been waiting for. Wanting to see the world, she set off on a journey to distant Avistan. She intended to return home after a few years but ran into a series of difficulties that delayed her return journey. While sailing past Garund, a storm threw the *Tide Hunter* off course toward the coast of Qadira, and her attempts to secure resources to repair the ship embroiled her in the nation's patronage politics, obliging her to fight in several conflicts on the satrap's behalf. No sooner had she settled her debts and set sail again was she captured by sedachies and imprisoned beneath the waves with her crew, eventually being rescued by merfolk who aided her in reclaiming her ship. When the *Tide Hunter* finally neared the waters of Ibydos once more, another storm stranded the ship on a remote island. They soon encountered a sect of harpies worshipping Hshurha, Duchess of All Winds, who believed that Yasmenei was a prophesied stranger who must be sacrificed to Hshurha after five years of captivity. Yasmenei and her crew eventually outwitted the cult and escaped, sailing to freedom, but again got delayed fighting pirates on the southern coast of Casmaron before finally making it back to Pol-Bailax. Elsewhere, such mishaps might earn Yasmenei an unlucky reputation. Along Casmaron's southern coast, though, such misadventures are to be expected. In

fact, by surviving these adventures and sharing tales afterward, Yasmenei became known as a reliable captain who doesn't flinch when the worst happens.

Although she'd watched some of her crew grow old and pass on or retire during her long journey, Yasmenei hadn't truly processed how much time had passed. She'd hardly aged during the sixty-year voyage, but when she returned home, she found her human adoptive parents were long gone. The loss devastated her, and since then, she's tried to keep some emotional distance with those of shorter lifespans, valuing their friendship and counsel while not expecting them to be around for long. Despite this, she's quite protective of her crew and is quick to action whenever one of them is threatened or harmed.

Over the next three centuries, Yasmenei has seen Pol-Bailax grow, change, and struggle with the problems caused by myth-speaking's decline. She remembers a bygone age of glory for the city-state and Ibydos as a whole but doesn't mourn what the land has been as much as wonder what might come next. These days, she's primarily a trader, ferrying goods from far-flung lands to Ibydan markets, and although she's learned not to grow too attached to any one person or place, she's fond of her old home and often returns there between trips. She was on one of these sojourns when the warshard fell, and knowing her skills, Pol-Bailax's leaders ask her to lead the expedition to Eupherae.

Yasmenei approaches life with zeal, her enthusiasm undimmed by her years. She enjoys sharing tales of exploits across far-flung lands, both her own and others, and has a keen curiosity about parts of the world she hasn't yet visited. She's seen many hero-gods rise and fall during her lifetime, and she knows that often, the difference between a successful hero and a dead one is one part preparation, one part skill, and one part luck. Although she's no stranger to action, she views herself more as an observer of events instead of a hero herself. She jokes that her biggest adventure was plagued with such bad luck that she's had enough heroics for a lifetime, and though she recounts lighthearted stories about her experience readily enough, she's never been able to shake the shadow of guilt for those she lost or left behind.

## CAMPAIGN ROLE

In Chapter 2, Yasmenei ferries the PCs in search of the fallen star. To her, it's another interesting adventure, and it's all the better because it's a service to Bailax. What's more, she's curious about any up-and-coming adventurers she might encourage in their pursuits or even recruit as crew.

Yasmenei remains with the PCs throughout the campaign, transporting them where they need to go with the *Tide Hunter*. This provides the PCs a reliable ship in a campaign that spans the archipelago. In addition, Yasmenei and her crew handle the day-to-day sailing decisions while welcoming help from the PCs when more exciting maritime encounters—anything from skill challenges in storms to fighting off aquatic raiders in battle—strike the *Tide Hunter*.

Yasmenei's open to calculated risks, especially with glory and potential wealth to be gained, and is interested in seeing how the PCs progress. Although she's slow to open up to people, a PC who earns her trust and esteem will find himself with a dedicated friend indeed. She's an excellent source of knowledge about sailing and navigation, and she is happy to advise those interested in such topics. As the PCs gain more power and their hero-god cults grow, she and her crew may even become converts. She has a strong ethical code, however, and PCs who abuse their newfound power to harm the weak or use their abilities for evil might find themselves with an implacable foe instead!

### YASMENEI

### CREATURE 5

UNIQUE MEDIUM ELF HUMANOID

**Perception** +12; low-light vision

**Languages** Common, Elven, Fey, Iblydosi

**Skills** Acrobatics +13, Athletics +11, Diplomacy +12, Intimidation +12, Nature +9, Sailing Lore +15, Society +10, Survival +14

**Str** +2, **Dex** +4, **Con** +0, **Int** +1, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +3

**Items** moderate alchemist's fire (5), compass, tethered<sup>PC2</sup> harpoon (*Treasure Vault* 30), +1 striking *kopis* (use *falcata*, *Treasure Vault* 25), leather armor, +1 striking *longbow*, *sextant of the night* (*Treasure Vault* 116)

**Mental Periplus** Yasmenei has sailed the seas for years and is very knowledgeable about navigation and seafaring. If she succeeds at Sailing Lore check or a Survival check to Sense Direction, she critically succeeds instead.

**Trade Connections** As a practiced negotiator, Yasmenei gains a +2 circumstance bonus to Diplomacy checks to Request during a business deal or when haggling over buying and selling goods.

**AC** 21; **Fort** +9, **Ref** +13, **Will** +11; +1 vs. emotion effects

**HP** 62

**Hold Fast**  $\curvearrowright$  (auditory, fortune, mental) **Trigger** An ally

within 60 feet fails a saving throw against an emotion or mental effect; **Effect** The ally rerolls the saving throw, taking the better of the two results.

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee**  $\blacklozenge$  *kopis* +11 (fatal d12), **Damage** 2d8+4 slashing

**Ranged**  $\blacklozenge$  *longbow* +13 (deadly d10, range increment 100 ft., volley 30 ft.), **Damage** 2d8+4 piercing

**Ranged**  $\blacklozenge$  harpoon +13 (tethered, thrown 30 ft.), **Damage** 1d8+4 piercing

**Primal Innate Spells** attack +13; **2nd** *water walk*; **1st** *hydraulic push*, *tailwind*; **Cantrips (3rd)** *detect magic*, *know the way*

**Blazing Shot**  $\blacklozenge\blacklozenge$  Yasmenei applies a flask of alchemist's fire to her arrow's tip, crafted to ignite upon impact, then attempts a ranged Strike with her longbow. On a hit, the Strike deals an additional 2d8 fire damage, 2 persistent fire damage, and 2 fire splash damage.



### THE ACROPOLIS PYRE

#### Campaign Overview

Chapter 1:  
To Honor the Fallen

Chapter 2:  
Seeking the Bright-Tailed Star

Chapter 3:  
Rage at Rosy-Fingered Dawn

Bailax

Iblydan  
Hero-Gods

Adventure  
Toolbox

# NEXT MONTH

## Death Sails a Wine-Dark Sea

by Brian Duckwitz

If the PCs are to master their mythic power, they must seek a sphinx's sacred wisdom, steal ambrosia from giant bees, reclaim a temple, and even descend into the realm of the dead to gain past hero-gods' blessing.

## Iblydos Gazetteer

by John Compton

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## Hero-God Cults

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### LOST OMENS

## DIVINE MYSTERIES



## TIDE HUNTER

VEHICLE 8

UNIQUE GARGANTUAN

Price 1,500 gp

Space 145 feet long, 30 feet wide, 20 feet high

Crew 1 pilot, 20 rowers; Passengers 6

Piloting Check Sailing Lore (DC 25), Diplomacy (DC 27), or Intimidation (DC 27)

AC 24; Fort +17

Hardness 15, HP 150 (BT 75); Immunities critical hits, object immunities, precision damage

Speed swim 30 feet (rowed, wind)

Collision 6d10 (DC 25)

**Koukouvagian Figurehead** (figurehead, magical) Yasmenei is attuned to the ship's figurehead and can activate Warning Cry.

**Warning Cry** (fortune)  $\curvearrowright$  **Frequency** once per day; **Trigger** The pilot or a crew member critically fails a check that would result in the ship being damaged; **Effect** The figurehead hoots a timely warning. The triggering creature rerolls the check and uses the new result.

**Maneuverable** With a crew of 20 or more skilled rowers, the *Tide Hunter* can turn swiftly, turn in place, or row backward. Each 90-degree turn made while moving less than 150 feet costs 5 extra feet of movement. It can row backward at half speed, and it can't turn while rowing backward. With a crew of at least 40 rowers, the *Tide Hunter's* rowed speed increases to 40 feet.

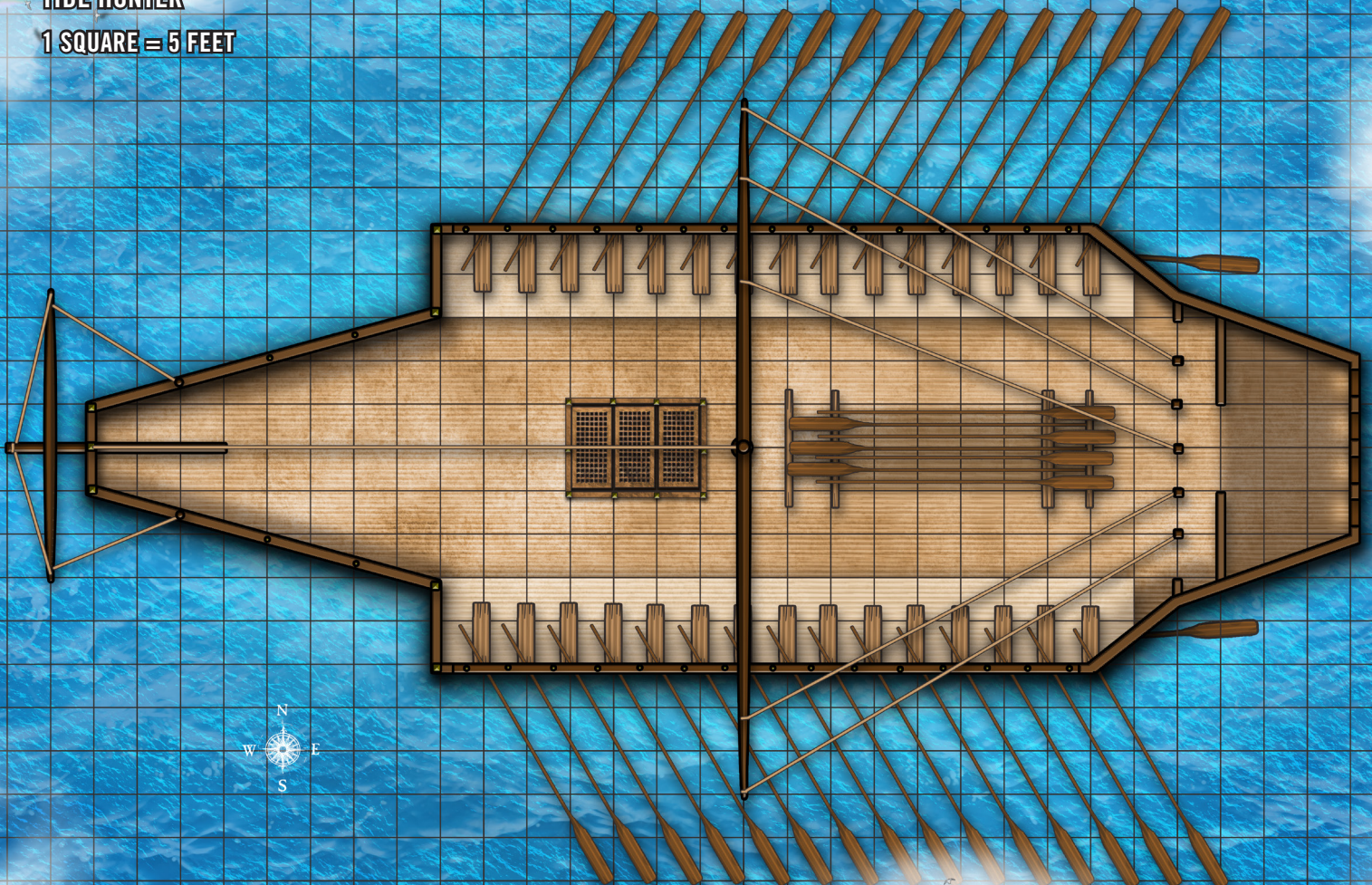
When Pol-Xamne commissioned the *Tide Hunter* for its navy, its admirals didn't know that the city-state would collapse mere months later. The Ptirmean shipwrights mothballed the partially built ship for years until a merchant bought it at a discount for use hauling cargo. After decades of faithful service, the *Tide Hunter* nearly fell into pirates' hands, only for one of the sailors to rally a counterattack and save the day. By then, the ship had already paid off its investment, and the merchant bequeathed it to the brave sailor, Yasmenei (page 92), who has carefully maintained it since.

The *Tide Hunter* is a bireme, a small galley designed for two people to handle each oar. In fair weather, it relies on its square mainsail and small foresail for propulsion. But rowers leap into action when maneuverability and speed are necessary—especially to bring the ship's underwater ram to bear. Like many galleys, this ship's deck is far wider than its hull, with considerable overhangs to make space for rowers. The cabin at the stern is Yasmenei's, but she usually offers it to passengers, preferring to sleep on the deck with her crew.

Yasmenei has invested much of her profits into the ship, not only maintaining its planks and blue paint, but also commissioning minor enchantments that reduce the number of rowers needed, ward off barnacles, and grant a hint of intelligence to the ship's owl-shaped figurehead.

## TIDE HUNTER

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



# BECOME THE LEGEND!

The port of Bailax hosts lavish funeral games for a recently deceased hero, inviting all to compete for prizes and glory. When the adventurers investigate an ominous omen that interrupts the festivities, what they find won't just transform them into mythic hero-gods, but also will incite Bailax to violent revelry and arson. Can the new hero-gods save the city from self-destruction? The Myth-Speaker Adventure Path begins with "The Acropolis Pyre," a complete adventure for 1st- to 3rd-level characters.



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