

MASKS

OF



THEROS



A COMPLETE ADVENTURE PATH FOR LEVELS 1-11

MASKS OF THEROS

CREDITS

Development: Steffie de Vaan & Cat Evans

Writing: Cat Evans, Christian Eichhorn, Beatriz Dias, Oliver Clegg, Steffie de Vaan

Cover & Original Interior Art: Liz Gist

Additional Art: Adobe Stock, Envato Elements, Colleen O'Dell from Pixabay, Clker-Free-Vector-Images on Pixabay, Open Clipart Vectors on Pixabay, Mohamed Hassan on Pixabay, Gordon Johnson on Pixabay, Pandanna Imagen on Pixabay, Emmie Norfolk on Pixabay, Mana symbols provided by www.filkearney.com.

Layout: Cat Evans

Cartography: Christian Eichhorn

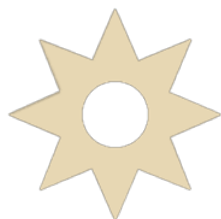
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CONTENTS

| | |
|---------------------------------|----|
| CREDITS | 2 |
| MASKS OF THEROS | 4 |
| WHAT CAME BEFORE | 7 |
| EREBOS' GRIEF | 9 |
| THASSA'S INTERCESSION | 19 |
| MOGIS' GAME | 29 |
| KRUPHIX'S REVELATION | 37 |
| HELIOD'S WRATH | 45 |
| APPENDIX I: THE MASKS OF THEROS | 54 |
| APPENDIX II: ANTAGONISTS | 58 |
| APPENDIX III: MELETIS | 64 |
| APPENDIX IV: MAPS | 68 |



MASKS OF THEROS

GREETINGS, HEROES!

Masks of Theros is an adventure path for the world of Theros. It spans five chapters — one for each color — and takes characters from level 1 to 11. You can play each adventure as a standalone in your own campaign, as every chapter marks which character levels it's appropriate for. You can also play *Masks of Theros* as an epic tale to introduce your players to Theros in a story that defies both fate and death.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Masks of Theros spans five chapters, each offering a chance to gain a piece of the fabled Elpis mask. As an adventure path, we recommend sticking to the chapter order. Don't worry if the heroes miss some of the mask's pieces — this will make their battle against Calisto harder, but not impossible!

Masks of Theros does not specifically plan downtime between adventures where heroes might purchase new equipment. Make sure you create that time and grant characters access to items suitable for their level. If following the adventure path, characters have no chance to return to Meletis from the start of Chapter 3 to the end of Chapter 5, so encourage them to get all their shopping done before then or have them meet well-stocked minotaur traders in Chapter 3. The Elpis mask pieces they find should also help quite a bit!

The end of the adventure path brings the characters into conflict with a champion of Heliad. This is an added complication for player characters devoted to the sun god, and something you may want to consider before allowing one in this storyline.

This adventure path is designed to be used alongside the official *Mythic Odysseys of Theros* hardcover. Specifically, new mechanics such as Mythic Creatures/Actions are found in that book. If you don't have *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*, you'll find a lot of setting lore online, and you can

absolutely play *Masks of Theros* with just that information.

If no other book is mentioned, creature statistics come from the *Monster Manual*, *Treasure* and *Magic Items* from the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Other sources are abbreviated as follows:

- ◇ Eberron: Rising from the Last War (ERftLW)
- ◇ Guildmaster's Guide to Ravnica (GGtR)
- ◇ Mordenkainen's Fiendish Folio Volume 1 (MFFV1)
- ◇ Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes (MToF)
- ◇ Mythic Odysseys of Theros (MOoT)
- ◇ Sword Coast Adventurers Guide (SCAG)
- ◇ Volo's Guide to Monsters (VGtM)
- ◇ Wayfinder's Guide to Eberron (WGtE)
- ◇ Xanathar's Guide to Everything (XGtE)



THE STORY

CHAPTER 1: EREBOS' GRIEF

Calisto, a former lieutenant of the planeswalker Xenagos, asks the heroes to steal the Ainoe Mask from its place of safekeeping in Meletis. Guided by a prophecy, the Twelve who rule the city also ask the characters to move the mask

to a new home. Unfortunately, the mask is not where it is supposed to be, and the characters must explore Meletis in order to find the treasure. Calisto takes the mask from them by force, the characters are drawn into an heroic quest to reassemble the only artifact that can counter Calisto's new source of power: the Elpis mask.

In keeping with **white mana's** principles of order, moral codes and guardianship, safekeeping the mask and opposing Calisto's plans to use it are framed as the heroes' duty to maintain the rightful order of the universe. *Erebos' Grief* is intended for 4-5 characters starting at level 1. The adventure's progression will take them through level 2, and then 3.

CHAPTER 2: THASSA'S INTERCESSION

Thassa's Intercession sends the characters on a journey across the ocean to find Arixmethes, a legendary kraken carrying an ancient city on its back. They must brave monsters of the deep and magic currents to reach their destination. After a parley with Thassa's oracle, the characters enter the Temple of Trials to uncover a piece of the Elpis mask hidden away under the sea for an eternity. Following in the footsteps of a mythical hero, they brave the trials, overcome the eidolon Eirini, and finally hold their prize in hand. However, a giant shadow looms in the distance which could still snatch the piece away from the characters.

Blue mana embodies the sea, logic, intelligence, and arcane prowess. Thassa's Intercession incorporates these themes with an exciting ocean voyage, a temple filled with riddles, and powerful spells.

Thassa's Intercession is designed for a group of four to five characters of 3rd level. Over the course of the adventure, the characters reach level 4 and 5.

CHAPTER 3: MOGIS' GAME

Five minotaur families fight on the plains of Phoberos for the enjoyment of their god, Mogis. The god ordered them to fight until the next moon for the possession of an ancient artifact, and whatever family holds the mask fragment by then receives a boon from the god of slaughter himself.

The characters join this bloody game, making friends or enemies among the families, following **red mana's** principles of impulse and chaos, in order to secure the artifact for themselves.

Mogis' Game is intended for 4-5 characters starting at level 5. The adventure's progression takes them through level 6, and then 7.

CHAPTER 4: KRUPHIX' REVELATION

In Theros, nothing passes under the notice of Kruphix, eldest of the immortals and god of horizons. The god of prophecy is concerned by the threat Calisto poses to the

orderly procession of events, as is his mirror counterpart Klothys, goddess of fate. The two gods drag the adventurers into the surreal dreamscape of Nyx to attempt to influence their actions, and grant a worthy troupe a piece of the Elpis mask, should they prove compliant.

In keeping with **green mana's** principles of growth, scale and sheer unapproachable power, the characters are toyed with by entities bearing agendas so expansive as to defy understanding.

Kruphix' Revelation is intended for 4-5 characters starting at level 7. The adventure's progression will take them through level 8, and finally level 9.

CHAPTER 5: HELIOD'S WRATH

The heroes awaken in the underworld. They've died at the hands of Mogis, which rather complicates their quest. Fortunately (or not), Calisto is already in the underworld seeking the black piece of the Elpis mask. The characters may pursue peace with her and brave the dangers of the underworld together, or confront her to take the Ainoe mask.

The characters must navigate the underworld, where they are hindered and aided by old enemies and friends. After a fight with Kunoros, Hound of Athreos, they finally arrive at the temple where Erebos hid the last piece of the Elpis mask. They must fight Heliod's Champion before they can claim their prize and, with any luck, return to the land of the living.

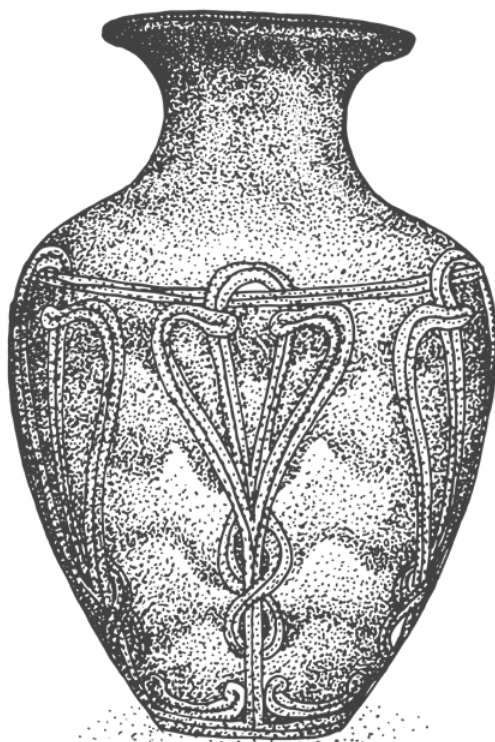
Heliod's Wrath follows **black mana's** themes of necromancy, revenge, and endings. When describing scenes, invoke a perpetual sense of gloom: the underworld is all shadows without sunlight.

This adventure is intended for 4-5 characters starting at level 9.

The adventure's progression takes them through level 10, and then 11 right before the final confrontation.

APPENDICES

Lastly, you will find the eponymous Elpis and Ainoe masks in *Appendix I: Masks of Theros*, new creatures and enemies in *Appendix II: Antagonists*, and an overview of the white polis in *Appendix III: Meletis* to fuel even more adventures!





WHAT CAME BEFORE

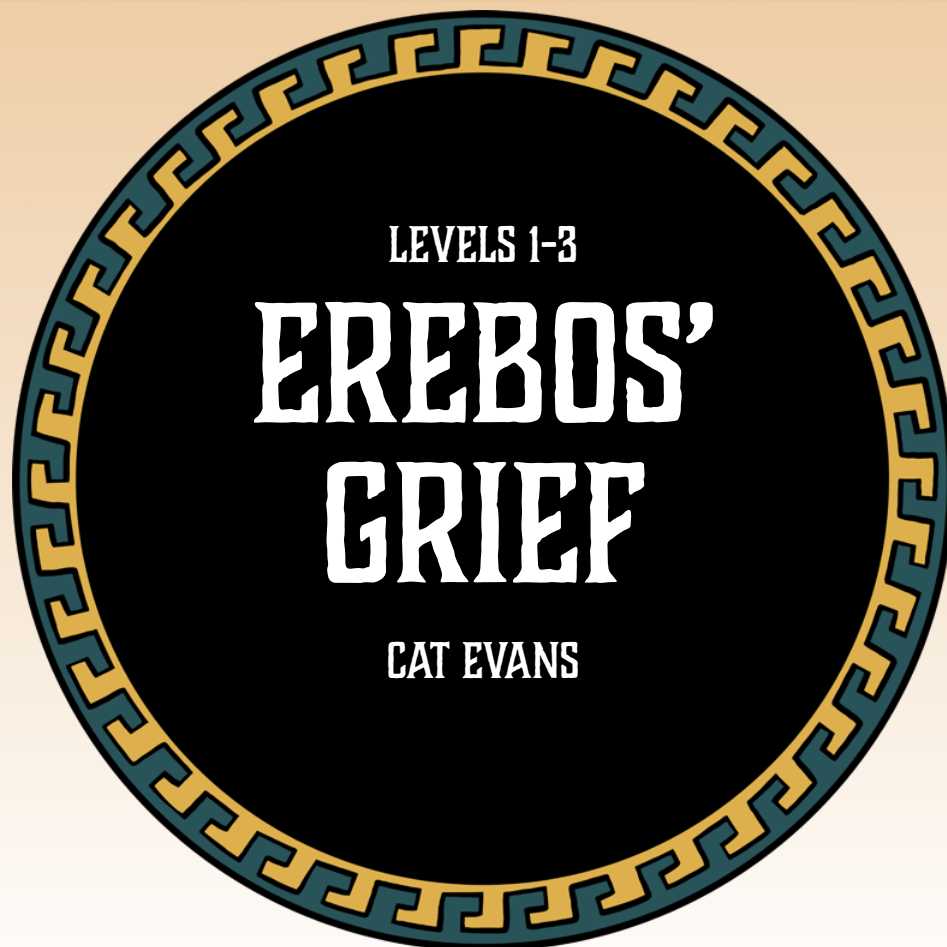
In ages long past, when mortals prayed the gods to life, Erebos the Shadow had two lovers. Ainoe was the goddess of the doom that awaits all empires, the end of magic, and the grind of time. Elpis was the god of repose at the end of grueling journeys, the spark from which magic blooms, and wayward souls coming home. The three complemented each other and could have been happy together, but this was not the path Theros took. Ainoe and Elpis both fell in the war against the Titans.

Grieving Erebos created two artifacts to remember his lovers, masks shaped in their visages. All the grief and despair at his loss, he poured into the mask shaped as Ainoe. All his warm memories of their time together, he crafted into the mask shaped as Elpis. Then, unable to bear to look at them, he sealed the masks away.

At the height of Archonia's power, that empire of virtue which held Theros in its merciless grip, the tyrant Agnomakhos set out to find the masks. Legends diverge whether the tyrant never found the masks, or if heroic Kynaïos and Tiro returned the masks to the underworld after they defeated the Archons. Either way, Erebos now feared the masks falling into the wrong hands. He broke the Elpis mask into five pieces and scattered them across Theros. Some pieces he hid where only gods may tread, others he gifted to Theros' greatest heroes, and yet others he gave to dread monsters to guard. The Ainoe mask, which resisted all efforts to destroy it, he gave to the goddess Ephara to keep safe.

The ages passed and now Xenagos, planeswalker and Stranger King, sought the masks to facilitate his rise to godhood. He ultimately abandoned this quest, having found a different way to ascension, and was killed by the hero Elspeth. His knowledge of the masks, however, remains. Calisto, Xenagos' former lieutenant, seeks to follow in her old master's footsteps. She raised an army, and now casts greedy eyes to the masks. The heroes must stop her.





SYNOPSIS

Calisto, a former lieutenant of the planeswalker Xenagos, asks the heroes to steal the *Ainoe mask* from its place of safekeeping in Meletis. Guided by a prophecy, the Twelve who rule the city also ask the characters to move the mask to a new home. Unfortunately, the mask is not where it is supposed to be, and the characters must explore Meletis in order to find the treasure. Calisto takes the mask from them by force, the characters are drawn into an heroic quest to reassemble the only artifact that can counter Calisto's new source of power: the Elpis mask.

In keeping with **white mana's** principles of order, moral codes and guardianship, safekeeping the mask and opposing Calisto's plans to use it are framed as the heroes' duty to maintain the rightful order of the universe.

Erebos' Grief is intended for 4-5 characters starting at level 1. The adventure's progression will take them through level 2, and then 3.

ADVENTURE HOOK

The only preparation required is to get a group of heroes to the polis of Meletis.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Erebos created two masks to commemorate his lovers when they passed beyond his reach. Unable to even look at the artifacts afterwards, he broke the Elpis mask into pieces and scattered them across the world of Theros. The Ainoe mask resisted all efforts to break it. Ephara, Goddess of the Polis and of all that is orderly and civilized, feared this potential for chaos and disaster. She gathered up the Ainoe mask to seal away in her most sacred temple, on the site that would later become the city of Meletis.

Over the countless aeons since, the temple was replaced by a newer and grander home for Ephara's sacred statues and priesthood. History forgot the ancient temple. While obscurity provided safety for many centuries, a prophecy now decrees that the mask must be moved. The heroes of Erebos' Grief must piece together the fragments of history and myth to learn the truth, and retrieve the mask.

SCENE 1 – TRIVIAL SERVICE

The characters encounter Calisto, disguised as an agent of the Twelve who rule Meletis. She asks them to retrieve the *Ainoe mask* from its ancient hiding place for her.

SETTING THE SCENE

Ask the players to introduce their characters, and ask them to describe what the group is doing on a fine, warm afternoon in Meletis. Perhaps they are training at the Gymnasium, or watching a ribald comedy in the Theater of Diaphon? Enjoying strong, local wine in a tavern down on the wharf, or making offerings to one of the many deities on the Street of Gods? See *Appendix III* for city locations and NPCs.

If your players need some assistance, place this scene in the Agora: the bustling marketplace, thronged with shoppers and traders, with Dio the philosopher-mage raving from a podium in one corner of the square. Having characters set the scene themselves offers a more natural introduction and encourages some low-risk roleplaying; it also means that when you introduce Calisto, it will feel less like the group has encountered an NPC with a quest marker over her head.

THE WARLADY CALISTO

Once the characters are settled, they become aware of a woman openly watching them from a nearby patch of shade. She's tall and muscular, with warm olive skin and a thick, black braid falling down her back.

Characters who succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check or have a military background recognise Calisto as a soldier: her alertness, the way she holds herself, and her impressive build all suggest she lives by the sword. However, she does not currently appear to be armed.

Once she realises the characters have seen her, she approaches. Read or paraphrase the following:

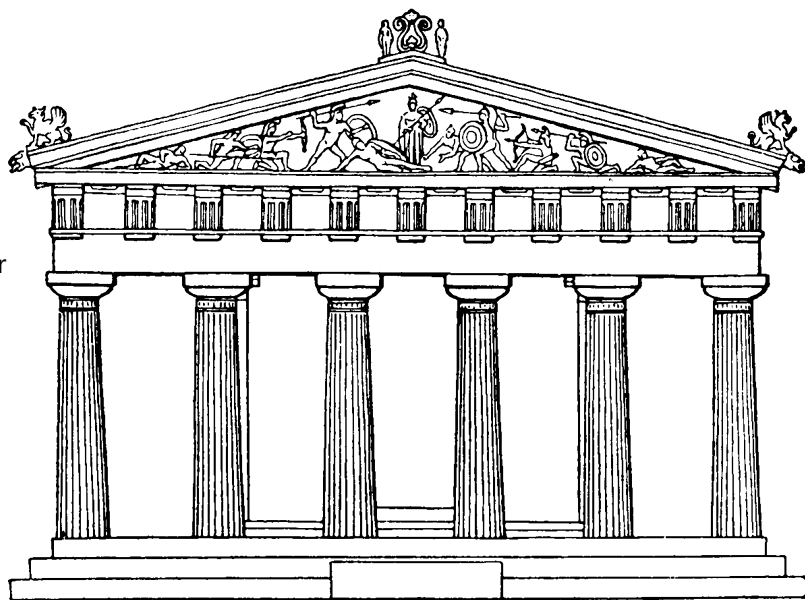
The olive-skinned woman moves languidly, weaving between bystanders like a shark parting a school of fish. Even unarmed, she exudes a confidence usually backed up by a sharp blade. Yet when she smiles at you, she looks friendly, even warm.

"Hail," she calls, before sliding into your group as if she'd reserved a place there.

"You look like you have time to waste. Looking for an afternoon's work?"

Calisto introduces herself as **Melandra**, an ex-mercenary now in the service of the governing council of Meletis, the Twelve. She is in need of some competent professionals to undertake a quick service for the Twelve. She wants it done discreetly, and she is too well-known to do it herself. Meletis's Reverent Army are too conspicuous, so she's turning to outsiders.

It's a simple task: visit the Temple of Ephara and, on the authority of the Twelve, remove a sacred relic from the temple then bring it to her. In return, assuming she hears no "idle gossip" about the removal in the next few days, she will pay them 100 gp, which they are to collect from her in the Agora in three days' time. If asked, she tells the heroes the relic is the Ainoe Mask. A hero who succeeds on a DC 12 Intelligence (History or Performance) check knows the legend of Erebos' Grief. Present them with the information in *What Came Before* (page 7) and ask them to read or paraphrase it for the group, in their character's words. If none of the heroes know the myth, Calisto can relate it to them.



QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS

Calisto answers objections truthfully, as follows:

- ◇ **Prove you work for the Twelve:** Calisto/Melandra carries one of the blue, ceramic tokens given to agents of the Twelve carrying out official business. She will give it to the characters to use as needed during their mission.
- ◇ **Guarantee we will be paid:** Calisto swears any oath the characters ask. She fully intends to pay them for their service.
- ◇ **Why us?** The group looks as though they would be competent, and interested. If they don't want the job, Calisto will find someone else.
- ◇ **What's the catch?** There isn't one. Calisto needs a relic removed from its storage, and she can't do it herself.
- ◇ **Why does the relic need to be moved?** A prophecy foretells that if it is not removed from Meletis, an enemy will take it by force. She simply doesn't mention that the enemy is her.

The heroes might not agree to undertake this sketchy task: it's an obvious setup. That's fine, the next scene will get them back on track. You don't need to steer them here.

CALISTO

Neutral evil human warlord

Calisto (she/her, chaotic evil, see *Appendix II* for stats) was once Xenagos' lieutenant. Since his elevation to godhood, she's spent her time planning her own ascent; to conquer Theros in its entirety, and rule it as her empire. Calisto carries herself with an ease born of great confidence and a leonine grace. Her laughter comes easily and loudly. In the end, though, Calisto is very much an eye-on-the-prize kind of gal. Attempts to flirt with her are well-received and reciprocated, but won't stop her from betraying the characters when the time comes.

Motivation. Obtain the masks, and conquer Theros.

Mannerism. Calisto conserves energy in everything she does, leaning against buildings and sprawling in chairs.

Quote. *"Do what you please. You're good, but you're not unique."*

THE TOKEN OF THE TWELVE

This appears to be the genuine article: a real token, as given by the Twelve to their authorised agents. The heroes may notice that:

- ♦ The blue glaze used is lighter than the "official" blue of Meletis — *successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check*.
- ♦ The token must therefore be out of date, as the supplier used for blue dye and glaze changed several years ago — *successful DC 15 Intelligence (History) check, if heroes have noticed the color difference*.

DEVELOPMENT

When the heroes accept or reject Calisto's offer and she leaves, progress to Scene 2.

SCENE 2 — SACRED TRUST

The Twelve approach the characters, and engage them in a scheme to counter Calisto's actions. For more on Aleixo and her estate, see *Appendix III*.

SETTING THE SCENE

This scene occurs shortly after Scene 1, at whatever location is convenient. If the heroes proceed straight to the Temple of Ephara to retrieve the mask for Calisto, this scene occurs the first time they have downtime afterward.

If the heroes choose to report their strange encounter to city guards or any influential contacts, they are directed to Aleixo's estate, where they are welcomed warmly and served chilled wine in a luxurious garden full of imported, tropical flowers, butterflies, and splashing water features.

ALEIXO OF THE TWELVE

Outside her home, Aleixo is accompanied by a servant who invites the characters to approach her. She is famous in Meletis; local characters recognize her automatically, and others who succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check observe that local people respect and defer to her.

Read or paraphrase the following:

The short, bright-eyed woman watches you shrewdly. There's something grandmotherly about her; albeit a storybook grandmother, rather than a real, human person. Someone kind and stern all at once, with your best interests at heart. Except for the blue stole that marks her as one of the Twelve, she looks like any other middle-aged woman of Meletis, but her bearing and presence make it clear she is someone of considerable status.

ALEIXO

Lawful good human politician

Aleixo (human, see *Appendix III*, she/her, lawful good) is one of the Twelve, the council who rules Meletis. She is responsible for watching and interpreting, and in some cases averting, the many prophecies concerning the polis. Aleixo thinks of herself and the city as almost the same entity: she feels safe and comfortable wherever she is, from the richest noble estate to the most dangerous dockside backstreet. She isn't foolhardy, but she radiates a calm, self-assured presence.

Motivation. Keep Meletis safe, and maintain normality.

Mannerism. Aleixo listens intently to anyone talking to her, all of her attention on them.

Quote. *"For the Polis."* For more information see *Appendix III: Meletis*.

THE TRUTH

Aleixo explains she is the member of the Twelve responsible for monitoring the polis' many prophecies. The prophecy of Erebus' Grief shows signs of coming to pass. The auguries and the entrails of sacrifices all say the same thing: only Meletis stands between Elpis and Ainoe, Hope and Doom.

Prophecies are tricky and hard to circumvent, and if the Twelve act directly they risk angering the gods and bringing the worst possible fate to pass. They therefore require heroes who are not officially affiliated with Meletis to move the mask out of harm's way before whoever threatens the peace of Theros can strike.

Aleixo knows how bizarre and far-fetched her request is, but every legend and myth in Theros makes it clear that people who flout the gods' plans come to bad ends. The heroes before her may not represent a strong chance of salvation, but they are Theros' *best* chance.

ASKING ABOUT CALISTO

Aleixo is not aware that someone has already approached the characters. If informed of this, she insists that no Melandra works for the Twelve, and that this must be the foe who seeks the Ainoe Mask. She will investigate further.

ABOUT EREBOS' GRIEF

If no character knows the myth of Erebos' Grief, Aleixo fills them in. See "What Came Before" for the story of Erebos, Elpis, and Ainoe.

Aleixo reveals that the prophecy of Erebos' Grief (distinct from the myth) threatens:

A foe of cosmic ambition will rip open the gates of death, wielding Hope and Doom as her weapons. Only the light of the sun, in shadow, will hold her back.

As Meletis is the White City, where Heliod the Sun God is venerated alongside Ephara, soothsayers including the oracular sphinx Medomai all agree that "the sun, in shadow," means agents working on behalf of Meletis.

THE TASK

The heroes need only walk into the Temple of Ephara, retrieve the Mask of Ainoe, and spirit it out of the city before "Melandra" can get her hands on it. They have three days before Melandra expects them to give her the mask. Aleixo suggests asking around the Wharf, finding smugglers who will help move the mask out of the city, but the characters can explore other options. In return, Aleixo will pay the heroes 150 gp each when their work is complete.

THE TOKEN OF THE TWELVE

Aleixo provides the characters with a genuine token of the Twelve, which will allow them to pay for goods and services and gain access to most parts of the city.

DEVELOPMENT

Either the characters accept Aleixo's mission, or they don't. If they do, progress to Scene 3. If not, in four days' time Calisto's forces storm the city. Meletis doesn't fall, but she obtains the Ainoe Mask. You can cut to Scene 6 at any point where the heroes would otherwise leave

the adventure path permanently (e.g. ending up in jail, spending too long investigating in Scene 4).

SCENE 3 — THE STREET OF GODS

The characters attempt to retrieve the mask, as directed, but find it is no longer where legend claims it should be.

THE TEMPLE OF EPHARA

The Temple of Ephara stands at the top of the Street of Gods, on the hill that rises up near the center of the city. The only sanctuary above it is Heliod's Temple. From both of these large, elaborate estates, the whole of Meletis is spread out below in a panoply of white stone and rippling water.

Two temple guards (**guards**) stand at the gates, and four more patrol the grounds of the complex. Showing the Twelve's token guarantees entry. Showing Calisto's outdated token might work — ask for a DC 14 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check to misdirect them if the characters know the token isn't legitimate; if the characters don't know this, the guards notice the token is out of date, and refuse entry.

If the characters get violent or start making threats, one of the guards uses a *locket of sending* (see *sending stones*, DMG) to contact a local city watch station. Six **Reverent Army guards** (Appendix II) arrive in 1d6 minutes.

DAY AND NIGHT

By day, the temple complex is busy with petitioners leaving offerings to the goddess to bless their businesses, legal cases, or any other aspect of their lives. Every day at noon, the high priest Leander leads a public sacrifice (usually a sheep), and supplicants feast on the meat while the smoke rises upwards to feed the goddess.

By night, the temple is accessible to the public but the only people there are Leander and the guards.

DEAD END

The Ainoe Mask is not in the sanctuary. Allow the heroes to spend as long as they want searching the temple complex, though. Call for Intelligence (Investigation) and Wisdom (Perception) checks. Let the characters find secret doors to secret rooms that contain nothing more than prayers scratched on thin sheets of bronze, or former high priests' wine collections.

Nonetheless, there are leads to follow and clues to be found.

♦ **Leander:** Leander (for more information see Appendix III) knows that this is not the original temple. This one was built no more than 500 years ago, while the original predates the city. It should be in the exact center of the original city layout.

- ◇ **Ephara:** The statue of Ephara, housed in the temple's inner sanctum, sits upon a plinth that reads "Dedicated to the City of Meletis on this day, the blessing of her goddess' new home."
- ◇ **Aleixo:** If the heroes don't speak to Leander, or find the inscription, Aleixo contacts them the following day, wanting to see the mask. When she hears the heroes don't have it, realisation dawns: the current temple is not the first temple.
- ◇ **The Elpis Mask — White Fragment:** A secret room holds this magic item. Heroes find it with a successful Wisdom (Perception) check at DC 18 in the Treasury building of the temple complex. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (History or Performance) check confirms it is not the Ainoe Mask. If the heroes don't find this treasure, fear not: the Twelve will present it to them at the end of the adventure.

There is also treasure to be found. Stealing it will have atrocious consequences. Even if the characters are not seen in the temple complex at all, Leander will quickly realise if something is missing, and Aleixo knows the characters intended to visit. Consequences, in this case, means Aleixo makes the characters return what they took, or jails them.

DEVELOPMENT

Once the characters establish that the Mask is not in this Temple of Ephara and have some leads to follow, progress to Scene 4. If your players are at a dead end, provide some hints based on the heroes' backgrounds and interests:

City Archives: The mages and scientists at the Great Workshop have records and knowledge of everything that's ever happened in Meletis.

History & Myth: The plays performed in the Theater of Diaphon are often based on a combination of local legend and historical fact.

Local Knowledge: Nobody knows cities better than thieves and smugglers, and they are known to congregate at the Wharf.

Milestone: The heroes advance to 2nd level.

SCENE 4 — THREE DAYS TO SALVATION

The heroes explore Meletis, gathering information about where the mask might be.

If they call on Aleixo, she reiterates that Melandra expects to receive the Ainoe Mask three days after she first contacted the characters. She speculates that there will be serious consequences if the mask is still in the city by that point. She also advises them to explore every avenue to find the first temple: maybe no one knows where it is, but many people might know a piece of the puzzle.

SETTING THE SCENE

For the NPCs and locations characters might visit, see *Appendix III: Meletis*.

THE INVESTIGATION

The characters learn the **clues** below from interacting with the NPCs at each location.

If the players enjoy roleplaying, interact with each NPC, and reach the correct conclusion on their own, great! If not, run this investigation as a skill challenge, with as much or as little social interaction as your group enjoys.

The heroes must accrue **30 points** in this skill challenge to learn the location of the First Temple. They accrue points by making an appropriate skill check when they are finished in each location. This might be an Intelligence (Arcana) check to make a good impression on the thaumaturges at the Dekatia, Charisma (Performance) at the theater, or Intelligence (Investigation) or Charisma (Persuasion) at any location. Allow whatever check makes sense. Give out a **clue** on a result of 10 or higher. **Conclusions** are optional information. They help guide the players' thought processes, if they are struggling to make sense of the information given.

The heroes accrue points as follows:

| ABILITY CHECK RESULT | POINTS |
|----------------------|--------|
| <10 | +5 |
| 11-20 | +10 |
| 21+ | +15 |

The characters will need to visit 2-6 locations to gather enough information to proceed. When they do, inform them that they have reasoned out the location of the First Temple: it must be **underneath the Hall of Justice**.

It takes half a day to visit one location. The more places the heroes go to, the more time they will waste and the less time they have to find the mask before Calisto gets bored of waiting (Scene 6). The clock is ticking.

THE WHARF

Clue: The smugglers at the wharf know about numerous secret passageways that lead to ancient, ruined buildings underneath the city.

Conclusion: There is a possibility that the first temple is still preserved and accessible.

THE DEKATIA

Clue: The Dekatia's archive contains records of an earthquake that caused half the city to subside. The original buildings are below ground level now and have been built over. The oldest parts of the city are the Wharf and the Agora.

Conclusion: The first temple is most likely beneath one of those areas.

THE THEATRE OF DIAPHON

Clue: The dramatist Methodia's least successful play, *The Frouros* (The Lookout) is about the first temple of Ephara. In it, the heroine Princess Parthenope speaks a monologue about her fate while gazing out over the city. The speech mentions the view of the Agora, a statue of Helioid, and the sparkling sea across which she hopes to escape.

Conclusion: It should be possible to map the location on a map of Meletis.



THE GYMNASIUM & BATHHOUSE

Clue: The bathhouse is the center of city gossip; city officials relax here, and they occasionally make cryptic comments about secret tolls. Everyone knows the criminals from the waterfront have ways of sneaking in and out of civic buildings to pay their bribes without being seen.

Conclusion: This hints at an undercity below Meletis.

THE STREET OF GODS

Clue: There is an ongoing dispute over who should have the temple at the pinnacle of the Street of Gods: Ephara's first temple was destroyed in an earthquake, therefore Helioid is clearly the more powerful deity.

Conclusion: The First Temple is somewhere in the path of an ancient earthquake, which means it was either destroyed or buried.

THE AGORA

Clue: None of the civic buildings around the Agora are used after sundown: monstrous howls and roars are sometimes heard under them. It is unlucky to be in the market square after midnight.

Conclusion: The First Temple is probably dangerous — and close by.

DEVELOPMENT

Either the heroes gather enough clues to find their way to the First Temple (Scene 5), or they fail and Calisto assaults the city (Scene 6).

SCENE 5 — THE FIRST TEMPLE

The characters traverse Meletis' first temple to Ephara, deep beneath the polis, and obtain the Ainoe Mask.

THE HALL OF JUSTICE

FEATURES

The Hall of Justice is an imposing building, its walls clad in white marble streaked with rose, ringed with carved friezes showing scenes from the legends of Ephara and Helioid, mythical beasts and heroes. It is built on a grand scale, with towering ceilings and acoustics designed for spirited courtroom performances.

Trials and other legal proceedings take place here in public courtrooms the size of theaters, where dozens or hundreds of jurors can assemble. The heroes need only travel down into the cellar where legal records are kept, and then through a crumbling, broken floor to the access staircase (Area 2). Reaching the First Temple takes twenty minutes via this route.

HAZARDS

The heroes can wander freely through the Hall of Justice until they need to access the cellars. At that point, they must show their token to a guard named **Aleia** (she/her, lawful good, human **guard**). If they are using Calisto's token, or don't present a token, Aleia uses a *sending stone* to summon four more guards, who arrive in 1d4+2 rounds.

AREA 1A: STAIRWELL

This is the final stairwell that connects the cellars to the First Temple.

FEATURES

This narrow, cramped staircase is damp, the steps slick and dangerous and the walls visibly wet when light glances off them. There is no light other than what you can provide, and the ceiling is barely the height of a tall man.

- ◇ Five feet wide, six feet high, 100 feet long.
- ◇ The steps are steep, damp and difficult to traverse (difficult terrain).
- ◇ No natural light.
- ◇ A quirk of acoustics occasionally carries the sound of the Guardian Beast (Area 4) roaring.

CHALLENGES & HAZARDS

The stairwell is home to a colony of **psychic grey oozes**. When the heroes are halfway down the stairs, two slither off the walls in front of them, another two behind them, and four attack from the ceiling above. The oozes are sentient, and seeking to ambush and kill these intruders.

AREA 1B: ALTERNATIVE ENTRY POINT – SECRET PASSAGE

If the heroes made a good impression (DM's discretion) on Keranos' Children or other smugglers at the Wharf, they can use the tunnels and passages below Meletis to access the First Temple instead of the Hall of Justice. See *Appendix III* for more on these.

FEATURES

- ◇ A combination of natural tunnels, caves, and cellars that wind from the coast to the center of the city.
- ◇ No natural light.
- ◇ It takes at least one hour to reach the First Temple using this route. The secret passages deposit the characters in Area 2: Snake Pit.

HAZARDS

A group of smugglers (six **bandits**) are stashing their latest cargo of goods in a cave. They assume the heroes are there to take their prize or arrest them, so are initially hostile.

Without a local guide, the characters get lost if they don't succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom (Survival) check. This adds one hour to their travel time, and uses up their torches and lamp oil, unless they deliberately packed extra.

AREA 2: SNAKE PIT

FEATURES

This once-grand room is ruined. An apparently bottomless crevasse, ten feet wide, rips through one corner and chunks of the ceiling have tumbled down onto the floor. Whatever decor once made this chamber distinctive is long lost to time. The whole room reverberates with a loud, constant hissing, and just the briefest glimpse into the darkness reveals that the floor is so densely covered with serpents that it seems to writhe as they slither, curling around and over one another and sometimes rearing up to bare their fangs.

- ◇ The room is thirty feet in diameter, and ten feet high.
- ◇ Stone walls, floor, and ceiling.
- ◇ No natural light.

HAZARDS

The floor of this room is one enormous serpent pit. There are over one hundred **poisonous snakes** here and they are aggressive, frightened of intruders, and immediately hostile. The characters can deal with them any way they choose: fire can drive them into the crevasse, magic can put them to sleep, charm them or allow spellcasters to speak with them, or the heroes might find a way across without touching the floor. Fighting a hundred snakes is also an option, if the characters really want to.

AREA 3: THE FOUNDING OF THE CITY

FEATURES

The walls of this room are covered in friezes showing scenes from the goddess Ephara's life and her founding of Meletis. The remnants of an altar, reduced to rubble by some ancient rockfall, holds pride of place in the center of the room.

- ◇ Twenty-five feet long, twenty feet wide, ten feet high.
- ◇ Stone walls, floor, and ceiling.
- ◇ No natural light.

HAZARDS

The floor is unstable, and a section of it collapses under a group of characters (up to 3 if they are close together, 1 if they're all spread out). Leave at least two outside the pit. Characters who fail a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw fall 20 feet into a pit.

The rock walls of the pit are jagged, and attempts to climb them cause 1d4 piercing damage per round. See the rules for climbing, PHB Chapter 8: Adventuring (Special Types of Movement).

AREA 4: GUARDIAN BEAST

FEATURES

This vast, stone-walled room was once the temple's treasury. Statues, chests, furniture, ornate weapons and armor — every type of treasure — clutters the room, some pieces fallen and smashed, some still proudly standing. The clutter forms a labyrinth, and from deep within it, something growls.

This room is 100 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 10 feet high.

The clutter provides three-quarters cover against ranged/spell attacks, and may provide half cover against melee attacks (depending on positioning).

A **daybreak chimera** named **Cadmon** (he/him, lawful neutral, see *Appendix II* for Daybreak Chimera), prowls this small labyrinth. The creature is thousands of years old, and has been trapped down here for most of his life, surviving on serpents and oozes. He is desperate, starving, and ferocious, living only to carry out his duty of keeping intruders out of the Inner Sanctum. Cadmon is intelligent enough to negotiate, if the heroes can communicate with him.

Two suits of **animated armor** patrol the area, serving as extra security. They carry out their orders of fighting all intruders to the death, and cannot be persuaded not to attack.

AREA 5: INNER SANCTUM

FEATURES

This round room is better preserved than the last. Some columns have toppled, and a stream of cool, clear water trickles in through a fissure in the wall, but in the center stands a stone statue of the goddess Ephara, posed as if addressing a crowd of listeners.

The statue glows with a harsh, white light, dazzling after so much darkness, and upon her face the goddess wears a black mask warped into an expression of profound grief.

◇ This room is 20 feet in diameter, and 15 feet high.



HAZARDS

Heroes who come within five feet of the statue without averting their eyes must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be Blinded for one minute.

Heroes who touch the Ainoe mask must succeed on a DC 13 Charisma saving throw or be overtaken by memories of their most tragic, devastating moment (invoking the Paralyzed condition) for one turn. Ask the players to describe out loud what their characters see. Heroes who are immune to the Frightened condition are immune to this effect.

When the Ainoe Mask is removed from the statue of Ephara, the sun (or moon) above Meletis is eclipsed and the sky is filled with the sound of a thousand souls weeping and a pillar of wailing specters. These restless spirits follow the path of the mask, above ground, and coalesce in the sky above when the heroes emerge from the Hall of Justice or the secret passages to the Wharf.

The Twelve and Calisto correctly interpret this as meaning the mask has been retrieved, and follow the specters to await the characters' return.

DEVELOPMENT

When the characters leave the temple, read or paraphrase the following:

Aleixo and an officer of the Reverent Army await you mere feet from the exit, but they are not alone. Above them are countless wailing, restless dead, screaming in pain in the black sky above Meletis. Melandra is there. She has the point of her sword to Aleixo's throat, and she looks as comfortable and collected as if she was out for a summer stroll.

"The Mask, if you please. Hand it over, now."

The threat to Aleixo's life if you choose not to comply, is plain.

Aleixo has brought one of the Reverent Army (see *Appendix II*) as a bodyguard. The wailing dead in the sky are something of a concern, and she appreciates having a trained warrior at her side.

Calisto has an action readied: at any hostile move from the heroes, she kills Aleixo. Remember that NPCs do not make death saving throws: she is simply and immediately dead. The heroes can hand over the mask, or fight Calisto.

Calisto greatly overpowers the heroes, even with Drakon fighting alongside them. If she can take the mask and leave, she does so. If she has to kill everyone present and search their bodies, she does that. If this is the case, Eftalia resurrects the heroes at the behest of her god. Calisto's power vastly overshadows the heroes, so make sure the players know there's no harm in retreating to fight another day.

SCENE 6 — TAKEN BY FORCE

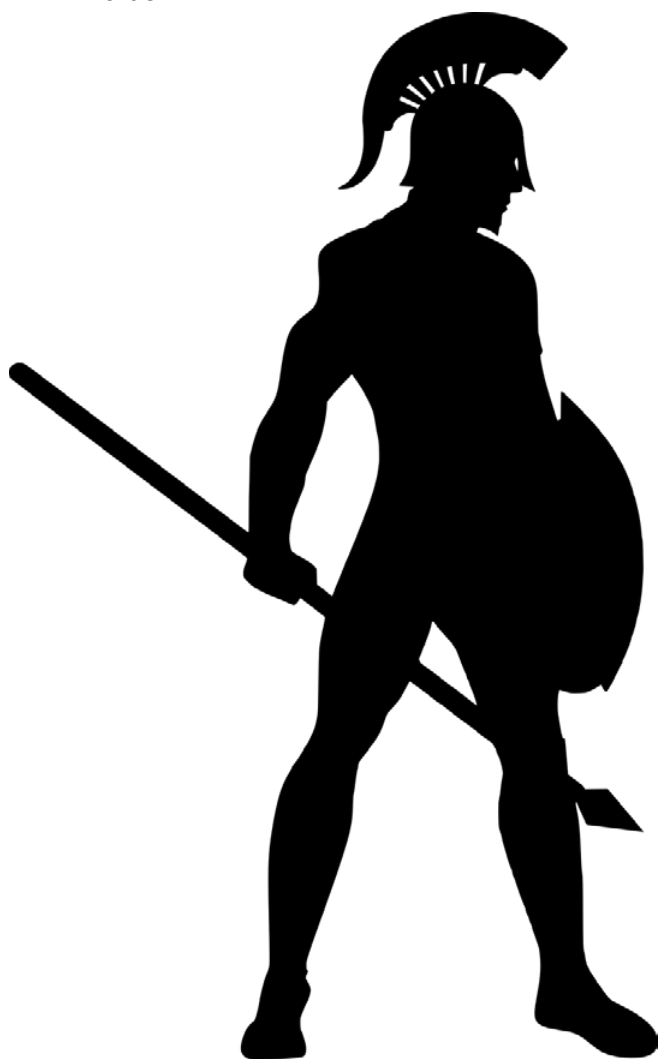
This scene only takes place if the characters do not retrieve the mask within three days of Calisto's initial request. If so, she gathers her troops from outside the city, and storms Meletis, intending to take it by force and retreat only when the Twelve surrender the relic to her.

OVERWHELMING FORCE

Calisto's army easily overwhelms the skilled but unprepared Reverent Army of Meletis. You may simply narrate this defeat if you wish, describing how Calisto's legion of human and humanoid soldiers swarm across the city, revelling in chaos and slaughter.

If you want to immerse the heroes in the consequences of their failure, consider running short vignettes:

- ◇ Saving a civilian from Calisto's minions
- ◇ Evacuating a group of frightened people from a burning, collapsing building damaged in the fighting
- ◇ Defending a building or a street from the oncoming horde



Allow them small, localized successes, but the greater battle will be lost. Within an hour from the first assault Calisto's troops hold the Agora, the Wharf, and the Great Workshop, and she deduces the location of the Ainoe Mask. Within another hour, she retrieves it.

If the characters have the mask, Aleixo orders them to surrender it to Calisto to prevent further slaughter. If they have left the city, she recalls them, using *sending* spells cast by the scientist-mages of the Workshop — and if they do not return she tells Calisto where to find them.

DEVELOPMENT

One way or another, this adventure ends with Calisto in possession of the Ainoe mask. Proceed to Conclusion — A Shard of Hope.

CONCLUSION — A SHARD OF HOPE

If the heroes remained loyal to Calisto, she orders them to take the White Fragment of the Elpis mask from Aleixo's body (if they do not already have it), and directs them to go in search of the other pieces of the mask. The Twelve know of only one other piece, said to be in Arixmethes, the drowned city on the back of a kraken, which currently swims in Thyrmokles' Eddies.

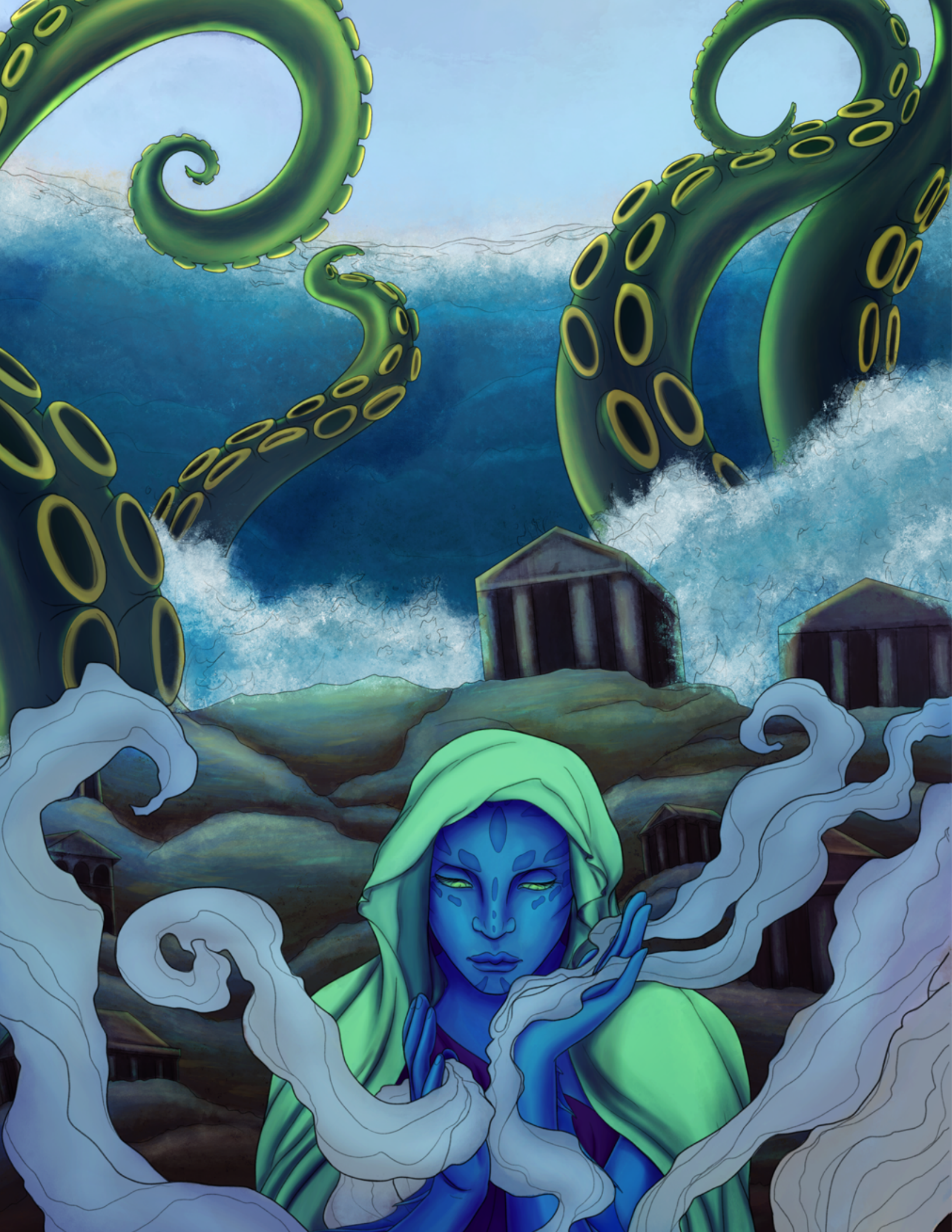
If the heroes were loyal to the Twelve, when Calisto escapes, Aleixo (or Drakon if she died) presents the heroes with the White Fragment of the Elpis mask (if they have not already obtained it), and explains that this defeat, disastrous as it is, must be part of the prophecy. Stopping Calisto from using the power of the mask remains the heroes' sacred duty, and her power can now only be countered by reuniting the pieces of the Elpis mask. When they are successful, the city will reward them with:

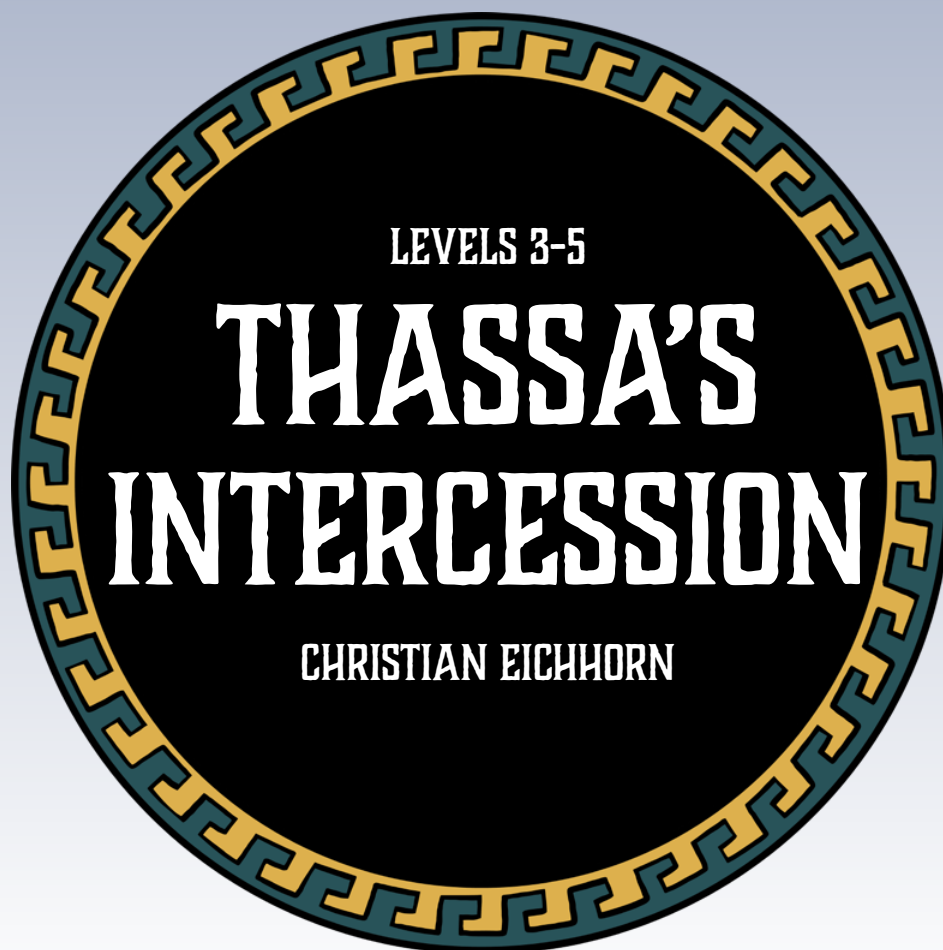
- ◇ A Wealthy lifestyle, paid for by the city of Meletis, for life
- ◇ An estate in the center of the city (Aleixo's, if she died)
- ◇ The right to nominate themselves for seats on the Twelve, without the 10+ years of public service usually required — though their appointment would still be decided by public vote
- ◇ A festival in their honour

Milestone: When the characters accept the quest, they advance to third level.

REWARDS

If the characters were working for Calisto, they receive the 100 gp promised to each of them. If they were loyal to the Twelve, they receive 150 gp each.





SYNOPSIS

Thassa's Intercession sends the characters on a journey across the ocean to find Arixmethes, a legendary kraken carrying an ancient city on its back. They must brave monsters of the deep and magic currents to reach their destination. After a parley with Thassa's oracle, the characters enter the Temple of Trials to uncover a piece of the Elpis mask hidden away under the sea for an eternity. Following in the footsteps of a mythical hero, they brave the trials, overcome the eidolon Eirini, and finally hold their prize in hand. However, a giant shadow looms in the distance which could still snatch the piece away from the characters.

Blue magic embodies the sea, logic, intelligence, and arcane prowess. *Thassa's Intercession* incorporates these themes with an exciting ocean voyage, a temple filled with riddles, and powerful spells.

Thassa's Intercession is designed for a group of four to five characters of 3rd level. Over the course of the adventure, the characters reach level 4 and 5.

ADVENTURE HOOK

Use one of the following hooks to start off the adventure.

- ◇ The characters have concluded the first chapter of the *Masks of Theros*, *Erebos' Grief*, and gained invaluable information about the missing pieces of the Elpis mask. They set out to follow the lead they received.
- ◇ The characters heard rumors about Arixmethes' location, a kraken old as time that carries a city on its back. Supposedly, an artifact of immense power is hidden away in one of the many temples. The rumors suggest that whoever owns the artifact, can steer the world's destiny.
- ◇ An infamous captain, known as Argon around these parts, approaches the characters. The returned is in need of a crew after the previous walked out on him. The cargo hold of Argon's ship, the *Eternal Seeker*, is filled with treasure the returned does not need. For helping Argon brave Thyrmokles' Eddies, he offers the characters riches beyond belief. After clearing the obstacles, Argon wants to speak with the oracle Phoebe. Maybe she has something interesting to say to the characters as well? The adventure starts with scene 2.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

To prevent too sudden changes in the world's affairs, Thassa—goddess of the sea, grand journeys, and gradual change—hid away one piece of the Elpis mask in the Temple of Trials. Only true heroes should be allowed to unleash its powers upon Theros! The trials test potential heroes' wit and power of deduction, as well as their frailty to vices, imprudence, and greed. Devised by the goddess of the sea, the characters must naturally brave the tests submerged in the ocean. Underwater combat and the threat of drowning complicate the endeavor.

However, the Temple of Trials isn't the only challenge the characters face. First, they must reach the temple's site on the back of an island-kraken. Secondly, the characters must fend off Calisto's myrmidon Osa, a terrible brine giant, but they don't stand alone. The sea-journey, back and forth, takes several days and may contain more adventure than this story can ever hope to cover. Battles from ship to ship or enchanted islands can dot the characters' path.

SCENE 1 — RISING WINDS

The characters must find a way to reach Thymokles' Eddies, where Arixmethes is supposedly located. They can enlist the help of Captain Argon, an infamous returned, or commandeer a vessel.

PREPARATIONS

To find Arixmethes and the Oracle, the characters must determine the location of Thymokles' Eddies and acquire suitable transportation. Read or paraphrase, when the characters head to Meletis' harbor:



Sailors' and dockers' calls echo across the harbor. Hammering from the dockyards and screaming seagulls accompany the many voices. Workers carrying sturdy crates, and thick sacks whirl between the ships and warehouses, while burly merchants argue about the prices. A stiff breeze, carries in salty air from the sea. It accumulates as a thin, white sheet on the houses and people.

Asking around, the characters learn that nobody is willing to bring them to Thymokles' Eddies, no matter the price. Undertaking the journey is plain suicide, and none of the captains want to accompany the characters on their "fool's errand." However, the characters receive one hint: in the shadier part of the harbor lies the *Eternal Seeker*, the ship of Captain Argon. If the characters are desperate, they should petition the "Cursed Captain" as the harbor folk calls him.

Information on Argon. A successful DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check convinces one of the captains to disclose the following information: Captain Argon is a returned, an undead creature without feelings and regard for life. Whoever sails on his ship is cursed for the rest of times; if they return at all. All others keep their lips tightly sealed, believing that talking about Argon brings about bad luck.

Information on Thymokles' Eddies. A successful DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) or DC 12 Intelligence check using cartographer's tools reveals the location of Thymokles' Eddies. A successful DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) or Intelligence (History) check reveals that strong currents aren't the only threats in this region of the sea. Dangerous beasts dwell in the vicinity, gorging themselves on drowned sailors and lost freight. Some wait for their meal patiently, others hunt ships down and sink them.

CAPTAIN ARGON

Read or paraphrase, when the characters reach the *Eternal Seeker*.

Aside from the drab, black sails, the ship doesn't differ much from the rest anchored in the harbor. Several clawed bronze shields reinforce the hull, which is made from planks of varying colors. Leaning against the rail, a leather clothed and masked figure lets its hidden eyes wander across the harbor. Its golden mask glimmers in the light.

Negotiating Passage. Speaking to Captain Argon (he/him, neutral, returned **bandit captain**), the characters learn that he is a taciturn man. He immediately agrees to take the characters to their destination, provided they find some additional sailors and help out on the ship during the voyage. The characters must find at least five hardy sailors, who demand no less than 2 sp per day.

Argon's Past. Unbeknownst to Argon, the returned visited Arixmethes and Thassa's priestess Phoebe many times already. After a few years go by, he forgets what he learns and returns to Phoebe.

ARGON

Neutral returned seeker

Argon (returned **bandit captain**, he/him, neutral) has scoured the sea for decades, searching for the identity he lost when leaving the Underworld. He helped those in need, and committed atrocities on other occasions, but forgets about all his deeds eventually.

Motivation. I must find what I lost.

Mannerism. To the horror of his crew, Argon often doffs his mask to polish it.

Quote. "Agreed."

RETURNED

The returned, also known as the Noston, are undead creatures that escaped the Underworld. To reach the world of the living, they must leave their identity and memories behind. The returned wear golden masks to replace the masks they wore for their funeral, which also hide their non-existent faces.

DEVELOPMENT

Once the characters have stocked up on supplies and brought their affairs in order, they can depart Meletis and head towards Thymokles' Eddies. If the characters boarded the *Eternal Seeker*, Argon lays a course since he knows the eddies' location. The journey takes seven days.

SCENE 2 – THYRMOKLES' EDDIES

The characters reach Thymokles' Eddies. They must navigate the treacherous waters and fend off awful creatures to find Arixmethes.

CLEARING THE EDDIES

Until the characters reach Thymokles' Eddies, their journey is uneventful. The slow days offer ample opportunity for roleplaying. The characters have time to share more about their backstory or learn about Argon. Shortly before they reach the dangerous waters, monsters attempt to take their lives.

ATTACK OF THE BEASTS

Argon, and however many sailors (**commoners**) the characters recruited, join the fight. Read or paraphrase, when the encounter begins:

The sea is calm and the sky blue, as the sound of roars reverberates through the ship's hull. Tentacles wrap over the rail, and winged beasts shoot out of the waters.

Monsters. The characters face a **chimera**, one winged siren (**spined devil**), and a **giant octopus**. The chimera has the heads of an eel, a shark, and a narwhal. Its body is scaly, like that of a fish. Instead of fire, its breath attack deals lighting damage and originates from the eel head. Instead of their Tail Spine, the siren attacks with thin bone javelins, which deal poison instead of fire damage (no saving throw).

Tactics. The chimera and siren emerge from the water and fly above the deck. The siren stays airborne and throws its javelins at the characters while the chimera lands and opens combat with its breath weapon. The giant octopus only grapples the ship and doesn't interfere with the characters. On its turn, it attempts to grapple a sailor to pull them off the ship for consumption. The aggressors concentrate their attacks on one character and switch targets once the character falls unconscious. If the siren identifies a character that restores hit points, it focuses on the healing character. The siren attempts to flee if it drops below half of its hit points.

Treasures. The characters can collect whatever javelins the siren didn't use up, if they kill it. The javelins are worth 1 gp each.

TREACHEROUS WATERS

Thyrmokles' Eddies are deadly since the currents are invisible. A *detect magic* spell reveals the true extent of the whirlpools. Read or paraphrase:

Although the water looks calm, the going gets tough. The ship is thrown from here to there, like a nutshell in a torrent.

Argon Captains. If the characters sail on the *Eternal Seeker*, Captain Argon is at the helm. The characters need only support him by adhering to orders. Without losses, the *Eternal Seeker* reaches the calm center of the Thyrmokles' Eddies.

Commandeered Ship. If the characters captain their own ship, they must brave the currents alone. A successful DC 16 Dexterity check using a vehicle (water) successfully clears the eddies. If a character can see the eddies, for example by using a *detect magic* spell, the characters make the check with advantage. If the characters fail, the ship sinks and the characters fall unconscious after they start drowning.

DEVELOPMENT

If the characters make it through the currents, they find Arixmethes surfacing soon after. Should the characters have sunk in their attempt to steer their ship through the eddies,

they awake in the temple with 3 levels of exhaustion. Phoebe foresaw their blunder and came with Arixmethes to their rescue. Continue with Scene 3 *Thassa's Temple* in the case of the latter.

SCENE 3 – ARIXMETHES

The characters meet Phoebe, who has been awaiting them. She explains the task that lies before them and looks forward to the future unfolding as predicted.

EMERGING KRAKEN

Read or paraphrase, when the characters clear the eddies:

The sea calms down. The ship continues to sway and creak but it soon settles down as well. No waves or ripples distort the ocean, the sky above mirrors in the sea. In the distance, a small rock emerges from the water. More rocks follow, growing into mountains. Then spires, walls, columns, streets, and houses appear from the sea. An entire city emerges! This is Arixmethes, the drowned isle, and seeing it emerge is a once-in-a-lifetime event!

Mooring the Ship. The characters can make landfall in the harbor area, using available facilities, or anchor near the coast.

The City. The harbor area and the entire city are devoid of life. Clams and seaweed cover walls and streets; water still trickles from many door frames and windows.

THASSA'S TEMPLE

REACHING THE TEMPLE

Thassa's Temple is not immediately recognizable among the myriad of imposing structures. Since Phoebe foresaw the characters' arrival, she prepared a welcoming committee. Read or paraphrase, when the characters set out to explore the surfaced city:

Dozens, if not hundreds of crabs and lobsters emerge from the houses and shadows. They form a path, standing left and right of the street. With their heads and claws, they all point onwards.

If the characters follow the path marked by the crustaceans, they arrive at the temple's doorsteps.

THE ORACLE PHOEBE

The temple is round, surrounded by marble columns, and topped with a golden dome. Steam rises from the streets and buildings, obscuring much of the surroundings.

Welcome. When the characters enter the temple, they notice that the interior is covered with a thick mist. It is a mixture of evaporated water and incense. Braziers burn with

blue and green flames, giving the chamber an underwater feeling. Phoebe (she/her, lawful neutral, merfolk **priest**) awaits the characters in a pool of water, surrounded by a half-circle of marble merfolk statues, spouting water into the pool.

The Quest for the Blue Mask Fragment. Read or paraphrase, when the characters approach Phoebe:

"You have come seeking knowledge on Elpis' broken mask. Your wish will be granted. One is hidden in a temple on Arixmethes' back, not far from here. I wish you luck with your trial!" After the words ring out, the ground shakes, and the sound of rushing water echoes through the chamber.

While the characters speak to Phoebe, Arixmethes submerges in the sea. To help the characters, Phoebe casts *water breathing* on them, which she can cast at will. However, the spell only lasts for 10 hours, limiting the characters' ability to take rests — they have only time for one long rest. She sends crustaceans with them which guide the characters to the Temple of Trials. Phoebe tells the characters to return after they succeed so she can tell them more about their future.

PHOEBE

Lawful neutral merfolk oracle

Phoebe (she/her, lawful neutral, merfolk **priest**) is a devotee of Thassa. As the oracle, she can be aware of all possible futures and attempts to pluck the strings in favorable ways. She is not an ally of the characters. If the characters one day threaten the status quo in a rushed, imprudent manner, Phoebe would curb them.

Motivation. I serve Thassa, her will is my command.

Mannerism. Phoebe often stops mid-sentence and assesses how her words influence the future.

Quote. *"The future has much in common with a lump of clay."*

DEVELOPMENT

The characters leave Thassa's temple and head to the Temple of Trials, where the mask piece is hidden. If they arrived with Argon, he stays behind to talk with Phoebe about his lost identity.

SCENE 4 — THE TEMPLE OF TRIALS

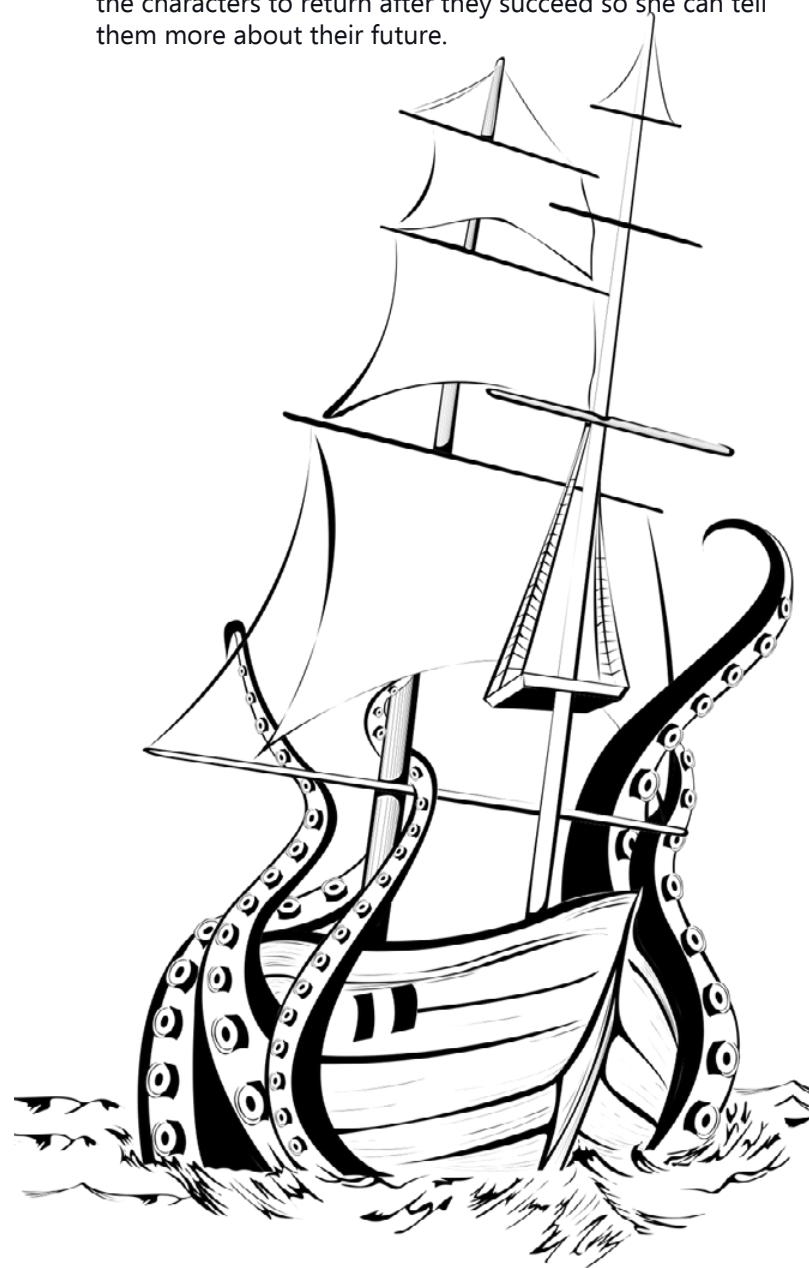
GENERAL FEATURES

Temple. The Temple of Trials is built from marble, featuring many columns and statues in classical designs. All rooms are brightly lit by magic, there is no visible light source.

Trial Master. Deep in the Temple of Trials, an eidolon called Eirini (they/them, neutral, eidolon) oversees the characters' struggles. It can indirectly influence the characters' progression through the temple by using abilities described under "Lair Actions" below. Eirini increases the difficulty of the trials to bring the characters to their limit. The eidolon's purpose is to test the characters, not to kill them. Additionally, Eirini taunts the characters telepathically, which the DM can also use to provide hints if the players are struggling.

Submerged Temple. After Arixmethes dives into the ocean, the Temple of Trials is completely submerged. The characters can freely travel in all three dimensions. The restriction for underwater combat in the *Player's Handbook* apply. Consider the following optional rule: after 1 hour of swimming, the characters must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution (Athletics) check or gain 1 level of exhaustion.

Living Murals. The characters can interact with living murals—paintings that move—by speaking with a hero figure. The hero accompanies them in their trials. The hero can help by uncovering dangers and is integral to advance through some of the rooms.



EIDOLON

An eidolon is the severed identity of a returned. It is incorporeal and can't interact with the physical world directly.

LAIR ACTIONS

Inside the Temple of Trials, Eirini can invoke the ambient magic to take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), or any time out of initiative, Eirini takes a lair action to cause effects according to the Lair Actions table. Eirini can't use the same action type (Creature Enchantment, Curse, etc.) more than once per room and can't use a lair action more than the indicated number of times before the characters finish a long rest, during which Eirini takes a long rest as well. Also remember that Eirini wants to test the heroes, not outright kill them.

LAIR ACTIONS

| NAME | TYPE | NUMBER |
|------------------|----------------------|--------|
| Armor | Creature Enchantment | 3 |
| Haste | Creature Enchantment | 1 |
| Regeneration | Creature Enchantment | 2 |
| Ineptitude | Curse | 1 |
| Shackle | Curse | 3 |
| Terror | Curse | 2 |
| Summon Sea Horse | Monster | 3 |
| Summon Shark | Monster | 1 |
| Summon Octopus | Monster | 2 |
| Ferocity | Room Enchantment | 1 |
| Resistance | Room Enchantment | 1 |
| Vigor | Room Enchantment | 1 |

CREATURE ENCHANTMENTS

Armor. Eirini picks an allied creature. It gets a +2 bonus to AC until it drops to 0 hit points.

Haste. Eirini picks an allied creature which benefits from the *haste* spell until it drops to 0 hit points.

Regeneration. Eirini picks an allied creature which recovers 5 hit points at the beginning of its turn until it drops to 0 hit points.

CURSES

Ineptitude. Eirini picks an enemy creature. It must succeed on a DC 16 Charisma saving throw or it must roll a d4 and subtract the number rolled from each of its attack rolls or saving throws for 1 minute.

Shackle. Eirini picks an enemy creature. It must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or is shackled at its current location for 1 minute, reducing its speed to 0. The creature can attempt a DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check to break free at the end of its turn, ending the effect on a success.

Terror. Eirini picks an enemy creature. It must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or is frightened of a creature or object of Eirini's choice for 1 minute. The creature can attempt another DC 14 Wisdom saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effect on a success.

MONSTER

Summon Sea Horse. Eirini summons a **giant sea horse** in an unoccupied space of its choice within the Temple of Trials.

Summon Shark. Eirini summons a **hunter shark** in an unoccupied space of its choice within the Temple of Trials.

Summon Octopus. Eirini summons a **giant octopus** in an unoccupied space of its choice within the Temple of Trials.

ROOM ENCHANTMENT

These room enchantments last until the end of combat.

Vigor. Eirini's allied creatures in a room gain a +5 bonus to their initiative. If Eirini uses Vigor after rolling for initiative, the order changes accordingly.

Resistance. Eirini's allied creatures in a room gain resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage from nonmagical attacks (Eirini's choice).

Ferocity. Eirini's allied creatures in a room roll an extra d4 to determine the damage of a melee attack.

ROOM 1. TEMPLE EXTERIOR

Read or paraphrase, when the characters reach the temple:

Worn stairs lead up to dozens of marble columns that surround the oblong temple. A staggered marble roof rests on top of the columns, adorned with frescos of beasts and heroes.

ENTRANCE

When the characters arrive, the temple's entrance is only a mural. It can't be opened with spells like *knock*, nor can the characters damage the walls. The entrance becomes a real door once the characters solve the riddle of the living mural.

LIVING MURAL

Riddle. The temple's eastern and western wall feature living murals, which are animated and show the characters different scenes on repeat. The characters can interact with the murals only by speaking with the hero on the western wall. The characters' goal is to lead the hero to the entrance, and onward, by giving them directions.

Western Mural. The mural on the temple's western wall depicts a hero sitting at home. The house is surrounded by a dense forest. Read or paraphrase, when the characters first see it:

You see an impressive, well-defined figure, sharpening a sword. It sits in a homely room, where a shield and armor hang on the walls, and a fire crackles in the chimney. The house is surrounded by a dense forest, where the shadows of giant creatures loom.

The characters must tell the hero that the village on the eastern mural is under attack. After being told, the hero runs outside but is ambushed by several minotaurs. Unless the characters tell the hero to remember to don their armor and shield, the minotaurs gore the hero. The scene repeats until the characters solve the riddle. Armored and shielded, the hero kills the minotaurs and runs into the eastern mural.

Eastern Mural. The mural on the temple's eastern wall depicts three hags that run amok in a small village. Read or paraphrase, when the characters first see it:

Three hunched, seaweed-draped crones run amok in a cottage, tearing the flesh from the panicked villagers. The humped monsters go from house to house, drag the denizens outside, and cackle with glee.

A successful DC 14 Intelligence (History or Nature) check reveals the monsters to be **sea hags** that can frighten creatures with their mere sight and kill them with their glare. If the characters manage to guide the hero to the village, they witness it seeing the creatures, falling to their knees, and shaking with terror. Then lightning shoots from the hags' eyes and the hero dies. The scene repeats until the characters tell the hero to avert their eyes. Averting their eyes, the hero manages to route the hags.

Southern Mural. After routing the hags, they run to the southern mural, throw open the door, and run inside. The door becomes real, and the characters may enter.

Riddle Unsolved. If the players are unable to solve the riddle, the characters can attempt a DC 12 Intelligence check to solve it over the course of 10 minutes. If all characters fail the check, they solve the riddle over the course of 4 hours, preventing them from taking a long rest before the *water breathing* spell ends.

ROOM 2. FESTIVAL HALL

Read or paraphrase, when the characters enter the room:

A lavish celebration is well underway in this room. Humans and merfolk enjoy wine, grapes, and lounge on satin couches. A band of satyrs plays on pan flutes, sending bubbles rising to the ceiling. A mural on the wall shows the same scene, silhouetted guests enjoying painted morsels. The hero glides along the walls, joining you at the entry to this room to await further instructions.

Hidden Hags and Illusory Guests. Every guest and piece of furniture in the room is an illusion, created by a permanent *major image* spell. Eirini controls the illusion and can speak through the guests if the characters attempt to speak with them. The hags that fled from the eastern mural hide among the guests, both the painted and the illusory ones.

The Right Tools. Several pieces of real equipment adorn the room's far wall. The characters see four tridents, four spears, ten javelins, and two shortswords hanging on the walls.

Painted Door. As with the entrance to the room, the exit is only painted on the wall. If the characters kill the hags hiding in the room, the hero does as well and opens the painted door for them.

Poisoned Wine. After the characters had time to explore the room, the hags, disguised as satyrs, offer the characters chalices filled with sweet wine and poison. A character watching the hero, or if none watch a character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) of 14 or higher, notices the same happening to the hero. After the hero drinks, the satyrs change into monsters and go in for the kill. A character who drinks from a chalice must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or is poisoned for 1 hour.

Monsters. The characters face three **sea hags**. The hags don't have access to the features of a hag coven.

Tactics. The hags swarm one character and concentrate their claw attacks until the character falls unconscious.

ROOM 3. ALTAR ROOM

Read or paraphrase, when the characters enter the room:

An altar stands on the far wall, with a fuming censer resting upon it. On the wall above the altar hang dozens of clay masks in various forms and sizes. A mural on the wall shows the same room, altar, masks, and investigating hero.

Investigating the room, the characters find that the top of the altar can be moved. In regards to the clay masks hanging on the wall, the characters know that those are traditionally worn by the dead as a burial gift.

Riddle. A secret passage, hidden under the altar's top, leads out of the room and onward. Inside the altar hides a feral undead (**mummy**) that wears a clay mask. If the characters wear clay masks also, the undead creature does not attack the characters. Instead, it shambles out of the

room. Otherwise, if the characters wear no masks, it attacks them.

Living Mural. The characters can talk to the hero on the mural, who has opened the door and entered the room. For example, the characters can tell the hero to open the altar's top. The characters then witness how the undead creature attacks and kills the hero. If the characters tell the hero to don one of the clay masks, the hero advances, being ignored by the enemy.

Monsters. The characters face a **mummy** if they open the altar's top and don't wear clay masks. **Tactics.** The mummy first uses its Dreadful Glare and then attacks with its Rotting Fist. The mummy doesn't attack characters infested with mummy rot. Instead, it switches targets to infect as many characters as possible.

ROOM 4. VESTIBULE

Following the secret passage in room 3 downward, the characters arrive in the vestibule. The chamber is 300 feet high, and the characters enter it from the ceiling. Read or paraphrase:

The long, vertical shaft opens into an extensive chamber as a hole in the ceiling. In this room, a gigantic statue stands next to a door of a similar size. In one hand, the statue holds a spear, stretched out into the room, as if warding the entrance. In the other hand, the statue holds an iron chain that extends from a hole in the ceiling into the floor. The door is built into the corner of the room, forming a double door with a mural on the wall. Like in the other rooms, the mural shows a mirror image of this grand chamber.

Advancing. To open the door to the next room, the characters must pull on the iron chain, while the hero who arrives in the mural pulls on the painted chain. Pulling on the chain not only opens the door, but also a secret compartment as explained below. Pushing the chain upwards closes the door and the secret compartment.

Riddle. While the characters pull down the chain to open the door, the statue's mouth starts moving and speaks a cryptic message:

"Tshehc desolc a ni ytefas dnif ylno uoy! Regnad slleps tshehc nepo na."

A successful DC 14 Intelligence check reveals that the message is spoken in Common, only backwards. The statue speaks the words in correct order if the characters push the chain upwards:

"An open chest spells danger. You only find safety in a closed chest!"

Chest in the Chest. A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a secret compartment in the statue's chest. When the characters pull on the chain the secret 10-foot-square compartment opens. Inside, the characters find a chest, which is a **mimic** in disguise. If the characters fall for it and kill the mimic, they gain nothing. If the characters close the compartment while one of the

characters remains inside the compartment, the mimic turns into a proper chest which contains three *potions of heroism*.

Monsters. If the characters don't solve the riddle and attempt to open the chest, the **mimic** attacks. The mimic doesn't leave the secret compartment and returns to its inert state when no characters are within 15 feet of it.

DEVELOPMENT

After clearing the trials, the characters advance into Eirini's sanctum.

Milestone: At the end of scene 4, the characters reach 4th level. Remember to unlock the second stage of whatever Elpis mask pieces they possess.

SCENE 5 – EIRINI'S SANCTUM

Read or paraphrase, when the characters enter the room:

A marble statue stands in the center of the room, wearing a broken piece of a mask. A sphere surrounds the statue, shimmering in all colors of the rainbow. Seven soldiers, each carrying a shield in one color of the rainbow, are painted on the walls. They look determined and ready for a fight.

General. The room is 100 feet long and 80 feet wide. It is brightly lit due to the *prismatic wall* spell in its center. A high-pitched hum originates from the sphere which gradually gets quieter the more layers of the *prismatic wall* the characters deactivate.

Eirini's Statistics. Eirini (they/them, neutral, **eidolon** (MTof), or **ghost**) hides in a hollow marble statue that counts as a sacred statue. The mask piece is stuck to the statue. Chipping the mask away means destroying the statue, which coincidentally fulfills their quest. The statue has an AC of 16 and 50 hit points. While the statue is intact, Eirini can cast the *eldritch blast* (+6 to hit, 1d10 damage) and *shocking grasp* (+6 to hit, 2d8 damage) cantrips through it. With the statue destroyed, Eirini can no longer control actions in the temple.

Prismatic Riddle. The statue is surrounded by a *prismatic wall* spell shaped into a sphere 30 feet in diameter. The mural on the wall depicts seven shields, one for each of the colors of the *prismatic wall*: violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, and red.

The encounter plays out according to the following rules and considerations:

- ◇ A successful DC 19 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals the properties of the *prismatic wall* spell.
- ◇ The *prismatic wall* spell has a save DC of 14.
- ◇ As per the *prismatic wall* spell, a creature that can see the wall and moves to within 20 feet of it or starts its turn there, must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution

saving throw or become blinded for 1 minute.

- ◇ The hero can, according to the characters' wishes, strike a shield and deactivate a layer of the corresponding color. Striking a shield for a second time activates the layer again. Activating or deactivating a layer during combat requires an action.
- ◇ The red layer blocks mundane ranged weapons like bows. If the characters only deactivate the red layer, they can make ranged attacks against the statue.
- ◇ The orange layer blocks Eirini's *eldritch blast* spell. If the characters deactivate the orange layer, they are at risk of an attack.
- ◇ Eirini doesn't attack immediately after the orange layer is gone. It waits until all but three layers are gone before using its *eldritch blast* against the characters.

Destroying the Statue. Once the statue is reduced to 0 hit points, it crumbles, the piece of the Elpis mask falls to the ground, and Eirini emerges. The eidolon congratulates the characters and invites them to take the *Blue Mask Piece* into their possession.

DEVELOPMENT

After defeating Eirini, the characters receive the artifact and can leave the temple.

SCENE 6 — OSA'S ATTACK

After recovering the *Blue Mask Piece*, the characters either return to Phoebe or swim to the surface. Whatever the characters decide, they encounter Osa, one of Calisto's lieutenants sent to retrieve the piece of the Elpis mask hidden on Arixmethes. Osa attempts to slay the characters, no matter if he suspects they carry the piece or not.

ENCOUNTER IN THE TEMPLE

Entering the temple, the characters find Phoebe floating and Argon agitated. Read or paraphrase, when Phoebe greets the characters for a second time:

"My congratulations, you have done well. Alas, the future holds one more contestant." With these words, the doors to the temple slam open, and a shell covered giant steps inside.

Monsters. The characters face Osa (he/him, neutral evil, **brine giant**, see *Appendix II*).

Allied Tactics. Both Argon and Phoebe support the characters throughout the fight. However, their life is more important to them than that of the characters and they try to retreat if threatened. Argon attempts to get behind the giant's back. Phoebe heals characters using her *cure wounds* spell on the highest available level. If the tide turns against the characters, she uses the *guiding bolt* spell to help them.

Giant Tactics. Osa opens combat by casting the *control water* spell, using the whirlpool variant. It attacks the closest enemy on its subsequent turns.

Treasure. Searching Osa's body reveals a *stone of good luck*.

DEVELOPMENT

The characters have overcome all challenges and can leave Arixmethes, after hearing Phoebe's final words detailed under "Conclusion" below. The characters can return with Argon, with their own ship if they commandeered one and it didn't sink, or use the ship Osa arrived on.

Milestone: At the end of scene 6, the characters reach 5th level.

CONCLUSION

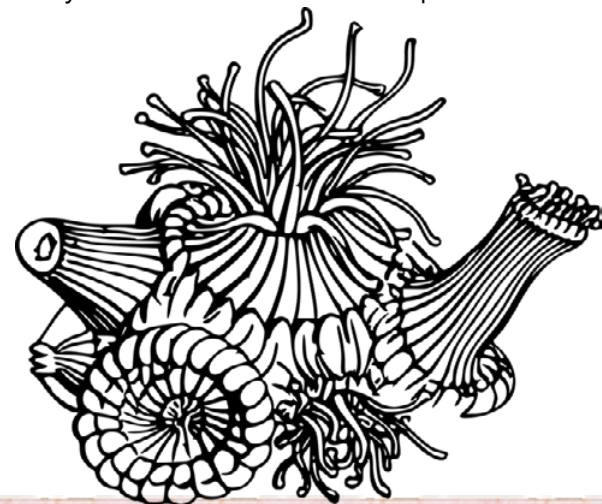
PHOEBE'S WARNING & PREDICTION

After the characters have the *Blue Mask Piece* in their possession and deal with Osa, Phoebe addresses them for a final time. Read or paraphrase:

"You carry ancient artifacts with immense power. Once you assemble all, you are rewarded with great influence over the course of history. Use it wisely and sparingly. Otherwise, you might bring doom over us all." Phoebe's eyes become white, when she continues with a voice that shakes the temple: "The Plains of Phoberos are your destination if you seek another piece. A wise choice or timely betrayal will secure your victory."

ARGON'S LAMENT

Argon learned for the 13th time that Phoebe is unwilling to help him find his lost identity. Before he forgets, Argon tells the characters what he learned, hoping they will remember and help him one day. You can use this as a future plot point in a larger Theros campaign.







SYNOPSIS

Five minotaur families fight on the Plains of Phoberos for the enjoyment of their god, Mogis. The god ordered them to fight until the next moon for the possession of an ancient artifact, and whatever family holds the mask fragment by then receives a boon from the god of slaughter himself.

The characters join this bloody game, making friends or enemies among the families, following **red mana's** principles of impulse and chaos, in order to secure the artifact for themselves.

Mogis' Game is intended for 4-5 characters starting at level 5. The adventure's progression takes them through level 6, and then 7.

ADVENTURE HOOK

If playing this as a standalone adventure, a Meletian merchant named Chloris (see *Appendix III*) approaches the party, wanting the fighting in the Plains of Strife to end so his caravans can keep travelling. She offers 500 gp to any group that can find out what is going on and stop it.

If you're following the *Masks of Theros* adventure path, the party was already pointed to the Plains of Strife as the probable location of a mask fragment.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

When this adventure starts, five minotaur families have been fighting in the part of the Plains of Phoberos known as the Plains of Strife for months. This is because one of the pieces of the Elpis mask surfaced in the plains while druids were shaping the earth, and Mogis thought it was time for a grand game of blood. He demanded the minotaurs fight for the honor of presenting him with the fragment. Only one of these families is originally from this part of the plains, the rest have been summoned by Mogis to compete.

During the course of this adventure the characters can befriend or antagonize these families with their actions. Below is the description of each family and how to gain or lower your renown with them. Minotaurs don't take kindly to strangers, so the starting renown for all families is -3, gaining or losing renown with a family is +1 and a -1, respectively, to their total renown level unless said otherwise. Killing a member of a family makes a character

lose renown with that family.

Having a positive renown with a family grants advantage on all Charisma checks with members of that family, on the other hand having a negative renown value with a family grants disadvantage on Charisma checks with members of that family.

BLOODHORN

This family is known for favoring their horns as weapons, most of the warriors forgoing the traditional battleaxes. They also decorate their fur and horns with blood, each individual having their own personal pattern. The pattern depends on their parents and deeds, so as a little calf a minotaur only has their parents' lines, but as they age their pattern starts incorporating different symbols. These can come from great deeds the minotaur has done, like saving their family from a dangerous animal, or something that meant a lot to them like reading a life-changing book. The Bloodhorns have 25 members.

Gaining renown with the Bloodhorn. The Bloodhorns love their patterns, having a stranger take interest in them and ask what's the meaning of their pattern raises their renown with the family. Another way of increasing renown with the Bloodhorns is to gift them pieces of art, as for the Bloodhorns looking at art inspires their own art.

Losing renown with the Bloodhorn. Mocking a Bloodhorn's blood pattern is a grave offense and makes a character lose renown with the family. Working with the Felhide also decreases the renown with the Bloodhorn.

FELHIDE

The most violent minotaur family in all of Theros, they scare even other minotaurs. Felhide believe that they grow stronger with every creature they kill, so they dedicate themselves to it. **Dakun** (he/his, chaotic evil, for full stats see *Appendix II*), the family leader and druid, is known to have single handedly murdered entire families. But the Felhide draw a line at hurting their own family members, thinking of it as a great crime that is punishable by exile. They do fight each other as entertainment, in intricate fights with no injuries. To an outsider these fights look brutal, but the truth is they're more like dancing than anything else. The Felhide have 35 members.

Gaining renown with the Felhide. To gain respect from this family one must show their strength, killing a strong creature increases the renown with the Felhide family

Losing renown with the Felhide. To the Felhide everyone but them is weak, so helping other families makes the heroes lose renown with them.

MOCID

The family that originally lived in this corner of the plains of Phoberos, called the Plains of Strife. It is their home and they are not pleased with everyone else stomping it. Due to this, Mocid not only know the best camping spots in all

of Phoberos, but they are also the ones who care the most about said camping spots. For decades the Mocid have been planting and decorating these spots with flowers and they take great pride in it. **Nalke** (they/them, chaotic neutral, **minotaur**) is the leader of the Mocid and is willing to help the party take the fragment away from Mogis. They are secretive about it, but this family has no love for the god of slaughter. They can't outright say it, in fear Mogis will order the other tribes to destroy them, but they do what they can to subvert the god's orders. The Mocid have 15 members.

Gaining renown with the Mocid. All actions that protect the plains of Strife increase renown with the Mocid. Tending to the flowers in Mocid camping grounds also increases renown with the family.

Losing renown with the Mocid. In the same way, if the characters do something that damages the plains of Strife they lose renown with the Mocid. Working with the Felhide also decreases renown with the Mocid.

THOUHOOV

The Thouhoov pride themselves in being the fastest chargers of all minotaurs, and they like to show off by organizing races throughout the year. These races are a bit mocked by other families because the Thouhoov may crown the "fastest charger in Theros", but only Thouhoov compete. There's beef between them and the Goldust so they are always willing to fight them with deadly hit and run tactics. But if asked why, no one remembers why exactly there's bad blood between Thouhoov and Goldust. The Thouhoov have 19 members.

Gaining renown with the Thouhoov. Fighting or just generally angering the Goldust increases renown with the Thouhoov. Participating and helping in the races also increases renown.

Losing renown with the Thouhoov. If a character shows themselves as clumsy they lose renown with the Thouhoov. Helping the Felhide or Goldust also makes the heroes lose renown with the Thouhoov.

GOLDUST

A completely nomadic family, the Goldust have been to all corners of Theros. They even made enemies with the Thouhoov thanks to that, and have been fighting them for the past decades. No one remembers exactly why though, as it's an old feud. The Goldust are avid traders and have an eye for bargains, and in their camps one can find all kinds of knick knacks. There are 23 Goldust in the Plains of Strife.

Gaining renown with the Goldust. Goldust are keen traders, so offering them supplies, weapons or other things that are hard to come by increases renown with the Goldust. Fighting the Thouhoov or Felhide also increases renown with the nomadic family.

Losing renown with the Goldust. Helping the Thouhoov or the Felhide makes the characters lose renown with the

Goldust. Swindling a Goldust is also a way to not only lose renown but also get put on a blacklist, so that no Goldust trades with that character again.

SCENE 1 – ARRIVAL AT THE PLAINS OF STRIFE

As they arrive at the plains the party finds a wounded minotaur, who tells them how the Felhide family has a powerful artifact. The minotaur volunteers to help the party retrieve it from them. The characters learn about the challenge Mogis gave to the minotaur families and find out the Felhide no longer have the artifact with them.

THE WOUNDED MINOTAUR

The earth has been disturbed in several places, there's dry blood, scorch marks, and the sweltering sun coats all remaining vegetation in a dry, golden color. These plains have been the battleground of several minotaur families for a few months. While entering the area the party can spot a minotaur, lying in the middle of the road.

It is **Gundak** (he/him, chaotic neutral, **minotaur**), a member of the Goldust family. He is severely wounded (10 hit points) because he fled an altercation between his scouting party and a Felhide group.

GUNDAK

Chaotic neutral minotaur

Gundak is a clever and opportunistic minotaur, which is how he managed to survive several sticky situations. However his tendency to escape when things get rough didn't bring Gundak any love from his family.

Motivation. I'm gonna prove my family that I'm smart enough to bring us to victory

Mannerism. I repeatedly touch all my fingers in rhythm as if I'm counting something, it's a habit that helps me relieve stress.

Quote. I don't just swing my axe like a dumb ox, I have the great skill of knowing when NOT to swing my axe.

Gundak has no intention of being hostile towards the heroes, in fact he realises that they could be of help fighting the Felhide. The minotaur explains to the party the families are fighting for an object given by Mogis, and that the family that has the object by the end of the week will be granted a boon by the god himself. Gundak knows the object is powerful and grants fighting abilities to whoever has it, and he wants it to himself. He lies by claiming the object is just a useless relic, or if caught in the lie, that is only usable by minotaurs from the five warring families.

What he does say truthfully is that he was wounded by a small Felhide party that his scouting group found. That Felhide party defeated Gundak's familiymates and has Mogis's object. He asks for the heroes to help, offering whatever he thinks the party likes more: Friendship with his family, claiming that once he has the object the fighting will stop, or payment upon recuperating the object and coming back with it to the Goldust main camp.

If the heroes agree then Gundak leads them to the Felhide camp, the heroes can also decide to not trust Gundak and leave him to die, in that case they must succeed in a DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check or arrive at the camp with 2 levels of exhaustion.

FELHIDE CAMP

This is not the main camp of the Felhide family, but a small scouting party. There are 6 **minotaurs** going about, but some of them are wounded due to the recent fight with the Goldust. A character must succeed in a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice which 3 minotaurs are at half health.

The camp is nothing but a campfire surrounded by sleeping bags, however the grass surrounding it is tall enough to grant advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks for creatures that are Medium size or smaller.

None of the minotaurs in the Felhide camp has any inclination to start a conversation with strangers, and as soon as they spot trespassers they fight them.

After searching the camp, it is obvious the object Gundak talked about is not with this group. The heroes can find out it was given to the Felhide family leader by interrogating a Felhide member. A successful DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check around the camp also reveals tracks of other minotaurs in this camp.



DEVELOPMENT

After the Felhide camp has been dealt with, either by force or subtlety, another minotaur party approaches: they are from the Mocid family and led by **Nalke** (they/them, chaotic neutral, **minotaur**). If the heroes killed or captured the Felhide they gain 5 renown with the Mocid family. The Mocid group is made up of 5 **minotaurs** but they aren't as hostile as the Felhide. In fact, if the party shows they don't want to fight the Mocid they explain to the heroes what is going on in the Plains of Strife. Mogis wants a powerful artifact, but is making the minotaur families fight each other for the glory of presenting it to him. During this competition no one can leave the plains, or they will get smitten by powerful red lightning. Nalke doesn't like this at all, since this fighting has been destroying the plains and they're worried the Felhide leader, Dakun will be a problem for all of Theros if he keeps the artifact.

NALKE

Chaotic neutral minotaur

Nalke is not a typical family leader. They have no love for Mogis and his bloodthirsty games, Nalke loves the plains and wishes to see them bloom. Together with their clan Nalke has already planted dozens of flower fields across Phoberos, and they won't see them trampled for the amusement of Mogis.

Motivation. There's more to life than battling and eating, I take joy on planting a barren field and see it gain color over the years. I want to do that for all of Phoberos.

Mannerism. You can find a lot about a person from their smell, so I have the habit of sniffing anyone I just met. I can also advise the best flowers to improve one's overall scent.

Quote. Mogis would like us to turn into mindless war machines, so let's not, just to spite him.

The party can now decide to play into the bloody game themselves, or ask to help the Mocid. They can also help Goldust if Gundak is still with them.

Milestone: At the end of this scene all heroes reach level 6. Remember to unlock the third stage of any Elpis mask pieces they possess.

SCENE 2 — THE REAL GAME BEGINS

The characters must now face the different minotaur families. They can fight them for the artifact, or form alliances to knock down the most powerful families — all is fair.

WHAT TO DO

This adventure now takes a sandbox approach. The characters have an objective and the whole area of the Plains of Strife to try and achieve it. Scene 3 starts as soon as three in-game days have passed, independent of the characters having the *red fragment* with them or not. The characters are free to fight, ally with or betray any of the minotaur families they encounter. If players don't know what to do, the suggested actions table gives some ideas. Either roll randomly on the table or simply pick one or more suggested actions per in-game day.

The heroes are magically prevented from leaving the plains before Mogis arrives. All living creatures that try to leave the plains are smitten by red lightning. If they find the mask fragment, they're still stuck and would do well to keep their prize hidden from the other fighters.

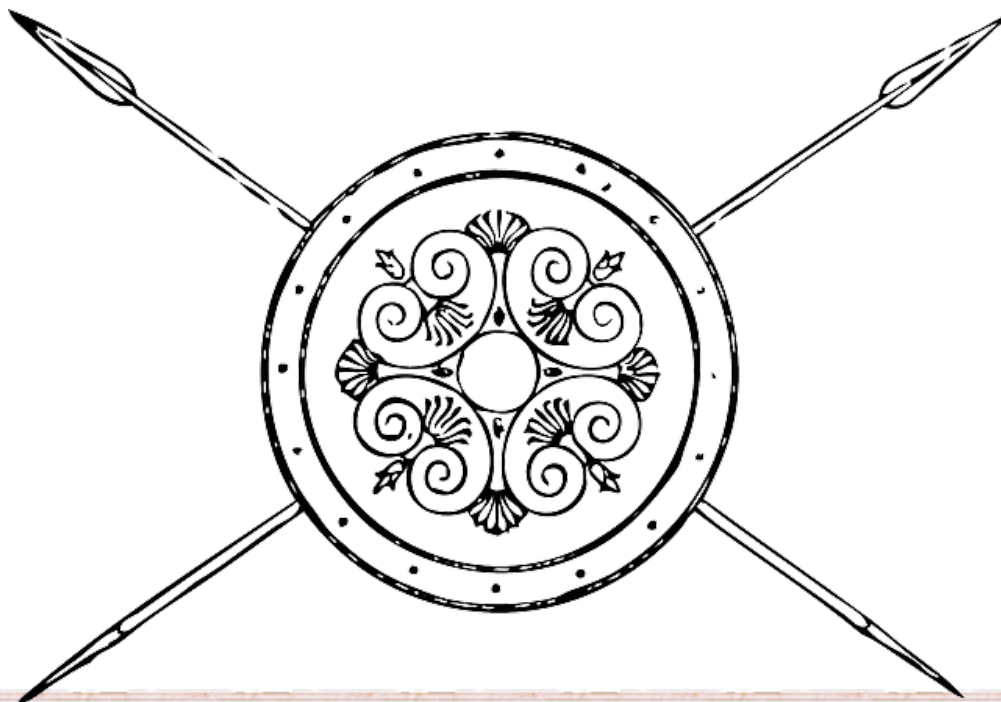
The DM should roll in the random events table once per day, at the beginning of the day. However you can choose to do more or fewer random events according to what the heroes have planned for the day.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS TABLE

| 1D10 | ACTION |
|------|---|
| 1 | Create a box of lead, thick enough so that if the fragment is deposited inside it cannot be tracked through a <i>locate object</i> spell. |
| 2 | Discover about a family's traditions, gaining insight on how to increase renown with them. |
| 3 | Give (maybe false) information about the fragment's location to a family, forcing them to fight another one. |
| 4 | Hunt down and eliminate a family's small scouting groups, debilitating their information gathering. |
| 5 | Discover the current number of warriors a family has. |
| 6 | Pinpoint the current location of a family's main camp. |
| 7 | Prepare for a fight, placing traps and resting. |
| 8 | Create small underground hideouts, to use whenever necessary. |
| 9 | Learn more about a specific minotaur, to gain insight on how to gain their trust or force them to fight a different minotaur. |
| 10 | Learn where the Mocid's flower fields are, discovering the best camping spots in Phoberos. |

RANDOM EVENTS TABLE

| 1D20 | RANDOM EVENT |
|------|--|
| 1 | The sun is especially hot today, everyone has disadvantage on Constitution saving throws. |
| 2 | Today is the day Bloodhorn members fix and repaint their fur with new blood, they'll spend the day all together in the main camp doing exactly that. |
| 3 | A fire starts near the heroes' camp, they must pack and run away quickly! Or find a way to calm down the fire in these dried grass plains. |
| 4 | The Thouhoov are organizing a race today. |
| 5 | Today is a calm day, and nothing special seems to happen. |
| 6 | Unbeknownst to the heroes, the fragment switches families. |
| 7 | One Goldust scout starts following the party. |
| 8 | Two Goldust and a group of four Thouhoov minotaurs meet in the plains, immediately starting to argue with each other. |
| 9 | Three battle-tired Felhide (all at half hit points) are resting. |
| 10 | The heroes encounter a mural, painted by a Bloodhorn member, depicting a wicked woman terrorizing the plains. |
| 11 | Someone poisoned the Mocid's water, today everyone in the family has the poisoned condition. |
| 12 | The heroes are ambushed by a group of three Felhide. |
| 13 | Three Goldust try to leave the plains, getting hit by the red lightning Mogis warned about. |
| 14 | A riot occurs in the Thouhoov main camp, the family leader has been challenged by a younger warrior and the race is today. |
| 15 | Four Mocid scouts cross paths with the characters. |
| 16 | A Felhide scouting pair seems to have fallen into a pit trap, died and left their supplies free for the taking. |
| 17 | A heavy fog settles on the plains today, all Perception checks relying on sight have disadvantage. |
| 18 | The Felhide family leader has been wounded in battle and has disadvantage on all attacks today. |
| 19 | Today is the Mocid's flower festival! They all gather at their main camp and show off decorations they made with the flowers. |
| 20 | The leader of the Mocid family has fallen ill and has one level of exhaustion today. |



DEVELOPMENT

The three days are up and whether the heroes are ready for it or not, Mogis comes to the Plains of Strife, looking to be presented with the *red mask fragment* by a worthy warrior.

SCENE 3 — MOGIS COMES

Mogis comes to the plains, expecting the fragment to be presented to him. Whoever has the artifact must avoid the last ditch efforts of the other groups and present it to Mogis.

THE GOD OF SLAUGHTER AT THE PLAINS OF STRIFE

Mogis appears in a central area of the plains, waiting for his followers to come to him.

As dawn breaks and the first rays of sunlight reach the tired grass of the plains, a thundering sound echoes throughout the area. Mogis appears in the middle of the plains, causing all the air around him to crackle and spark. This electrifying tension is felt by all warriors, and they prepare for one last fight.

All families were waiting for this moment, and start converging on Mogis, and most of them don't do so peacefully. Whoever has the fragment must be quick, because all the other families will hunt them down. All but the Mocid, who are very keen on having the heroes take the fragment far away from the plains.

FINAL BATTLE

If the characters didn't grab a hold of the fragment yet this is their last chance to do so. Dakun, leader of the Felhide is the one who has the fragment in this case, and is moving quickly with only one other minotaur so that he can receive Mogis' boon. The heroes can intercept the pair and try to take the *red fragment* from Dakun, but beware, because he has attuned himself to the fragment and is currently using it. See *Appendix I* for details on the mask's power.

If the characters already are in possession of the fragment and Dakun is still alive he tries to ambush them, together with three other Felhide minotaurs.

In both situations the characters can ask for help from allies they have made during their stay in the plains, and any family with a renown score of +3 or higher automatically helps the characters to gain or keep the fragment.

Milestone: The heroes reach level 7.



CONCLUSION

It is time to present the fragment to Mogis, however the god of slaughter is not happy that people he didn't invite to his game are here.

AS PART OF THE ADVENTURE PATH

In a fit of rage typical of him, Mogis smites the heroes with his powerful lightning and kills them. The damage is enough to instantly kill them, without the need for death saving throws. Make sure all players realize they died.

Kruphix and Klothis catch the heroes' souls before they reach the underworld, immediately starting *Kruphix's Revelation*. If the heroes had the fragment before death, they keep it.

AS A ONE-SHOT ADVENTURE

If the party has the fragment they can choose to present it to Mogis or to keep it for themselves. By presenting the fragment to Mogis, the god of slaughter is impressed with the heroes. He allows them to keep the artifact, and promises to help them in the future if they need it, as long as they fight in his name.

Choosing not to give the fragment to Mogis invokes the ire of the god, but before he can do anything about it Kruphix whisks the heroes away to Meletis. The god thanks the heroes for standing up to Mogis and allows them to keep the artifact, but warns them they have made an enemy of the god of slaughter.





SYNOPSIS

In Theros, nothing passes under the notice of Kruphix, eldest of the immortals and god of horizons. The god of prophecy is concerned by the threat Calisto poses to the orderly procession of events, as is his mirror counterpart Klothys, goddess of fate. The two gods drag the adventurers into the surreal dreamscape of Nyx to attempt to influence their actions, and grant a worthy troupe a piece of the Elpis mask, should they prove compliant.

In keeping with **green mana's** principles of growth, scale and sheer unapproachable power, the characters are toyed with by entities bearing agendas so expansive as to defy understanding.

Kruphix' Revelation is intended for 4-5 characters starting at level 7. The adventure's progression will take them through level 8, and finally level 9.

ADVENTURE HOOK

This adventure begins with the adventurers being pulled from their bodily selves into astral forms able to traverse the skies of Nyx. If you're playing the full *Masks of Theros*

adventure path, it happens immediately following *Mogis' Game*. In this instance, at the moment the characters' souls would pass into the underworld, they are dragged instead into the spiritual realm of Nyx by divine fiat. Otherwise, you should start this adventure whilst the characters are asleep, resting or meditating, leaving their physical bodies behind. In both instances, they arrive in Nyx fully refreshed and at full health, as if they had just completed a long rest.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

This adventure takes place in the starfields of Nyx, a paranormal realm of dreams and the subconscious which exists coterminous to Theros. Nyx is both a literal and figurative interpretation of the night sky, and is the domain of the gods. Nyx is accessible on rare occasions through dreams and nightmares, which is how Kruphix reaches out to the adventurers in this instance.

Kruphix is the god of horizons and time. He oversees oracles and prophecy, symbolising not only the vast unapproachable unknown, but also the unlimited potential of human endeavour. Distant and enigmatic, the god of horizons acts for reasons that defy mortal understanding.

Klothys is the Goddess of Fate and Destiny. She weaves the world into order, and ensures that the constants of Theros are not uprooted by extraplanar anomalies. Passionate and powerful, Klothys will not abide any mortal subversion of godly power.

The Ainoe mask (unknown to Calisto) warps the weave of fate and has already begun to cause disturbances in the flow of causality across Theros. Prophecies have begun to show false results, and many fatebound creatures who came into contact with the maskbearer have had their destinies prematurely ended by the sinister powers of the mask, sending the careful workings of fate into utter disarray.

Both Kruphix and Klothys have a vested interest in seeing the mask removed from dangerous hands as quickly as possible, but the disruptive influence of the masks prevents them from forcing any mortal into this path. The two gods have conspired in a rare confluence, hoping to overcome the powers of the Ainoe mask by convincing the adventurers to slay the maskbearer of their own free will.

SCENE 1 — JOURNEY INTO NYX

In this encounter, the characters awaken in Nyx, the starlike otherworld which exists parallel to Theros.

THE STARFIELDS

Nyx presents to mortal eyes as an endless violet skyscape dotted with distant stars. Monsters wrought from shadow and starlight stalk the vast expanse, and occasionally glimmers of the mortal world flicker in and out of sight like half-remembered dreams. Nyx should be intimidating in its scale, and the characters should be made to feel very small by comparison to anything they encounter here.

The first sensation that you remember is falling, tumbling through the darkness into an abyss of twinkling stars and violet clouds. Are you awake? Are you dreaming? As you slowly regain your faculties, your form stabilises into a ghostly reflection of your body, a golden thread trailing away from you into nothingness.

Movement. A traveler in Nyx can move simply by thinking about moving. This ability is governed by a creature's empathy and sensitivity to supernatural forces, though distance does not mean the same thing in Nyx as it does in the waking world. In combat, a creature's walking speed is 3 times its Wisdom score.

Size and Scale. All nyxborn creatures are one size category larger than their entries in the *Monster Manual*, to reflect the tendency of nightmares and dreams to seem larger than life, and to play into green mana's theme of gigantic creatures.

Nyxborn. All terrain features and creatures formed from the starfields of Nyx are coloured in the same hazy, translucent purple, dotted with starlight. All creatures formed from the starfield of Nyx are celestials, regardless of the creature type listed in their stat block.

THE WAKING WORLD

Playing this adventure outside of the *Masks of Theros* adventure path requires some additional preparations.

The characters appear in this chapter with a luminous golden thread extending from their backs, which fades to invisibility after one foot. These threads attach their Nyx forms to their bodies in the real world. If such a creature dies in Nyx, their soul travels down the cord and reappears inside their body in the real world. If the cord is cut — something that happens only when an effect specifically states that it does — their soul and body are separated, killing them instantly.

Characters who are banished to the waking world over the course of this module have been spared the indignity of the underworld, and should probably be thankful. Nevertheless, if a character is awoken early, they might find themselves sitting out the rest of the adventure watching the rest of the characters sleep. To avoid this, you can either allow said characters to return to slumber and re-enter the dream or you can have the character occupied by some other means — perhaps the sleeping forms of dreambound characters are threatened by a physical attack, and characters in the waking world must defend their helpless allies as best they can until the party is reunited.

NYX WEAVERS

The appearance of the characters in Nyx attracts the hostile attention of its denizens.

No sooner have you adjusted to your surroundings than the peace of the night sky is disrupted by an otherworldly scuttling. The lights whirl and dim, as all around you eight-legged phantasms drop towards you from above and below, fangs laced with iridescent venom.

The fate spinners are native creatures to Nyx, and seek to erase the "mistake" the characters represent to their minds. The spinners have the statistics of **phase spiders** and one spider appears for each character. The spiders are aggressive and territorial, but display only animal intelligence and no real grasp of tactics. As Nyxborn creatures, the spiders may always use their Web Walker ability as if they were surrounded by webs in every direction, which should allow them to crawl around, over and under the characters in an unsettling manner.



DEVELOPMENT

When at least two spiders have been defeated, proceed to *Tumultuous Visions*.

SCENE 2 — TUMULTUOUS VISIONS

Kruxphix appears to the characters, and plunges them into a sequence of nightmarish possibilities.

"Enough."

The word reverberates through the cosmos, shattering your spiderlike assailants and reworking the stars into an image etched from the edge of divinity. How does one describe a horizon? A waterfall of unbounded potential. The sum of all possible futures, and of none. Uncounted hands, each reaching to the future to grasp a glimpse of what is yet to come. Intelligence defying description, and behind that intelligence — power. Pure, seething power. The energy of a thousand transcendent stars, each an eye which peers into your soul and finds it wanting.

The god in the stars speaks again, in myriad discordant voices.

"You must see," the god says, "Your journey transcends time and fate. You may beg us for rest once, but choose your moment wisely."

The starfield transforms into Kruxphix' first vision, depicting the forging of the masks. This vision shows the characters how the Elpis and Ainoe masks were created, and by whom.

This scene presents several dangerous encounters. Give the players a token: once during this chapter they may return it to you, and Kruxphix will pause time long enough for them to take a short rest.

THE FORGING OF THE MASKS

The characters appear in a reworked Nyx landscape, featuring the familiar endless starfield and a distant forge where the memory of Erebus toils to create the masks. The characters appear roughly 300 feet away from the forge. Make sure you read or paraphrase the scene below carefully, as it requires a vital clue that destroying the masks weakens Erebus, which becomes very relevant in Chapter 5.

The stars once again flurry, dissolving into the image of an otherworldly forge in the near distance, sparks flying from a hammer wielded by a figure veiled in tangible grief. With each hammer blow, the metal bends and buckles, sparks hurtling towards you, growing into blazing spheres of astral flame. You see the figure bury one mask, and break the other into five pieces. Then, the vision shifts and shimmers as if fate itself is diverging. In one, a great lion brings the masks to the sun, who destroys them in radiant light. As this happens, the original smith falls to the ground and dissipates in wisps of shadow.

COMPLEX TRAP — FORGEFIRES

(Level 5-10, deadly threat)

Trigger. This trap activates as soon as the characters appear in the scene and it remains active until a character gets within 10 feet of the forge.

Initiative. The trap acts on initiative count 20 and initiative count 10.

Active Elements. Sparks fall at the onlookers like shooting stars, even as Erebus' grief threatens to overwhelm them with a flood of tears.

Sparks of Creation (Initiative 20). Each creature in a 40-foot-radius sphere centered on each point chosen by the dungeon master must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 11 (2d10) radiant damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Flood of Grief (Initiative 10). A wave of loss pulses forth from the distant forge. This sense of loss and grief crashes through the skies of Nyx like a tidal wave of emotion — creatures must succeed on a DC15 Charisma saving throw or be pushed 60 feet away from the forge. Living creatures that fail the saving throw also weep uncontrollably for the duration of this encounter.

This trap ends either when the characters reach the forge of Erebos, or if the characters flee away from the manifestation, in which case skip the following explanation. Either way, proceed to *The War to Come*.

Finally close enough to see through the clouds of sparks, you reach the ghostly forge to find yourself face to face with Death. A young death, for certain. Death raw from suffering, a death not yet numbed to the flood of mortals that will pass into its gentle care. The figure before you is a god, a god of mortality defined not by loss, but by the memory of life. Erebos, god of death and the underworld, labours over his craft, pouring his magic into the two masks that lie before him.

The voice of Kruphix whispers in your ear. "Masks forged from grief, empowered by memory. Erebos mourns. The masks are powerful tools, and in the wrong hands they will bring ruin."

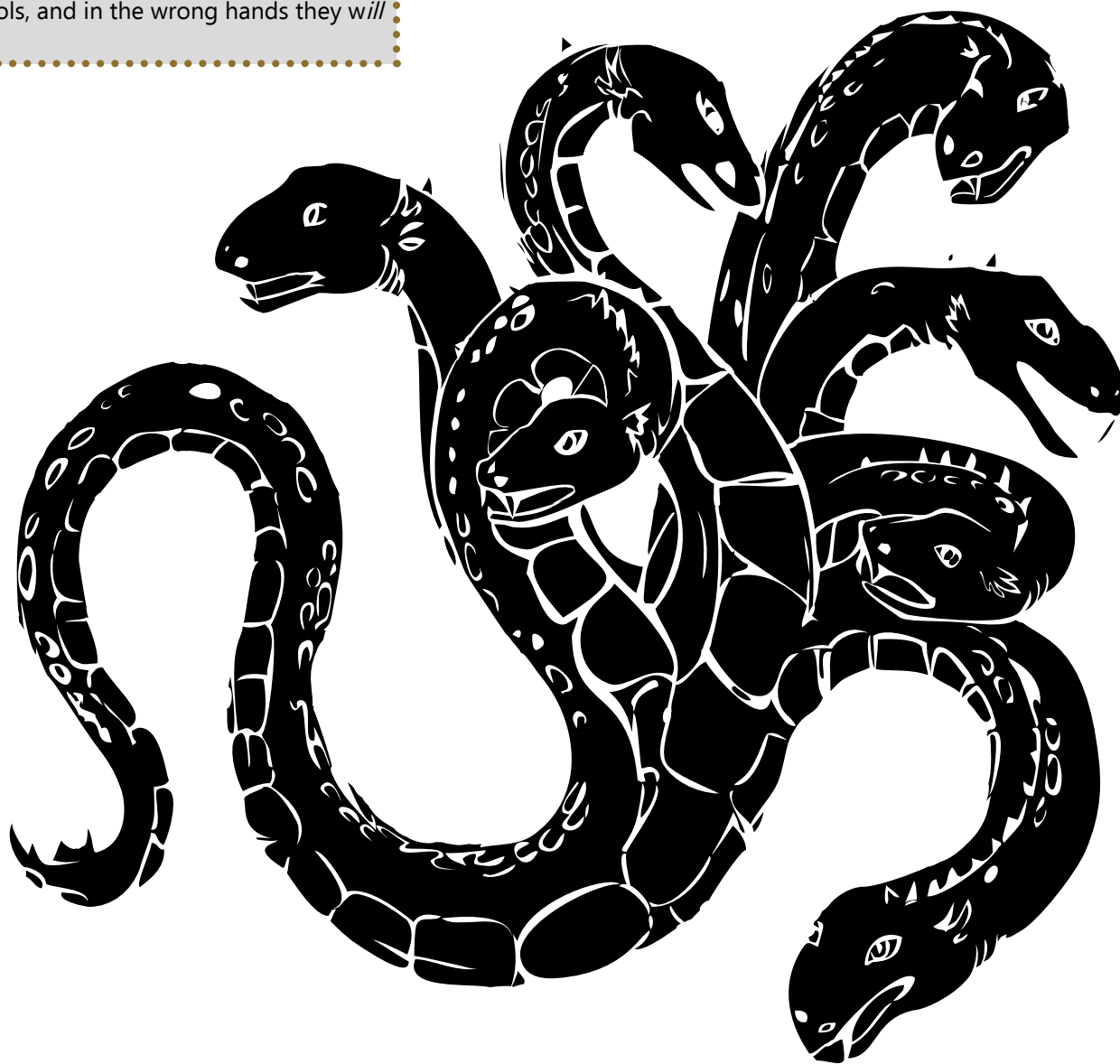
THE WAR TO COME

The characters appear in a reworked Nyx landscape, showing a possible future in which Calisto is allowed to go unchallenged.

The night sky liquifies above and beneath you, dripping into a flood of potential futures. War erupts across Theros. Soldiers march across the sky, which rips apart underneath them. Snakelike heads form from the clouds, each wearing a weeping mask, surrounding you on all sides.

"Hope," the voice of Kruphix echoes from all sides. "Hope and Doom as her weapons."

The adventurers are attacked by the **Nyxborn Hydra** (see *Appendix II*), which harries them from all sides, playing with its food. The hydra has five heads, and each head screams of disasters which will befall Theros should Calisto be allowed to roam free with her mask, such as monsters rampaging uncontrolled across the landscape.



The starborn hydra screams one last time as it falls in on itself, collapsing into nonexistence. Angry red murmurs billow through the recesses of Nyx, unseen fires blossoming with divine rage.

The voice of Kruphix whispers in your ear. "If the masks are not controlled, they will destroy us all"

When the Nyxborn hydra is destroyed, proceed to *Destiny Unravalled*.

DESTINY UNRAVELLED

The characters appear in yet another Nyxscape, this one authored by Klothys, Goddess of Fate.

Threads spring into being all around you, a fantastic tapestry of golden lines, each touching on another and creating a web of fate that holds the world together.

The criss-crossing patterns, so carefully arranged, form three faces. Wrinkled and cruel. Young and carefree. Strong and proud. A webwork of destinies, each carefully and intricately placed to tell the story of creation from its first moments to the end of days.

For a moment, the vision is perfect, but then the faces frown, deep furrows appearing in the weft. Golden threads reach out to snatch you, shadowy faces appearing all around.

"Fate" a deep voice echoes from all sides. "Unravalled."

COMPLEX TRAP — WEB OF FATE

(Level 5-10, dangerous threat)

Trigger. This trap activates as soon as the characters appear in the scene and it remains active until all enemies are destroyed.

Initiative. The trap acts on initiative count 20, initiative count 10 and initiative count 5.

Active Elements. Strands of webbing entangle creatures. Shadowy masks appear from nowhere. Entangled creatures begin to slowly fade out of existence.

Snarled Fates (Initiative 20). Each creature must succeed on a DC14 Dexterity saving throw or become grappled by wandering luminous threads of fate. A creature which ends its turn grappled by Snarled Fates becomes restrained instead. A creature can use an action to attempt a DC14 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to escape the grapple.

Shadow Masks (Initiative 10). A mask made of shadow that is otherwise identical to the Ainoe mask appears within 30 feet of a random character. A mask has AC 12 and 1 hit point. To decide how many masks might be hit by an area of effect spell such as fireball, see the DMG, Chapter 8: *Running the Game, Adjudicating Areas of Effect*. A creature which starts its turn within 30 feet of an Ainoe mask takes 3 (1d6) psychic damage for each one, as the mask cackles.

Destiny Leech (Initiative 5). Creatures grappled or restrained by Snarled Fates must succeed on a DC 10 Charisma saving throw or temporarily suppress either a Personality Trait, Flaw, Bond or Ideal. The victim forgets they ever possessed the suppressed trait. If a creature loses all their Personality Traits, Flaws, etc., they vanish from the adventure and appear in the Underworld at the start of Chapter 5 under the effects of a *feeblemind* spell. As a creature loses their traits, they grow slowly paler and more transparent. A suppressed trait can be restored by a *remove curse* spell or similar magic.

Dynamic Elements:

Mask Multiplication. The number of masks which appear due to the Shadow Masks feature doubles each turn.

Sympathetic Negation. Creatures holding a fragment of the Elpis mask are immune to damage from Shadow Masks.

Nyx is a plane drawn entirely from humanoid dreams and nightmares. The darkest and brightest of human imaginings call it home, which makes it a place of dark and terrible splendour. However, the lessons it contains are surreal and frightening — whilst Nyx is the accidental byproduct of humanoid thought, it is not a place designed for mortals to live in. Nyx should be confusing and intimidating, and immense world of unthinkable danger and kaleidoscopic.

Milestone: The characters reach level 8 when they destroy 30 masks. Remember to unlock the fourth stage of any Elpis pieces the characters possess.

As you destroy another shadow mask, a flurry of them bursts outwards in a storm, cawing and fluttering like a swarm of ravens. The world turns black, drowned in a sea of laughing masks.

The voice of Kruphix whispers in your ear. "The masks threaten the weave of destiny. They cannot be allowed to rest in the hands of those who would abuse them."

KALISTO RAMPANT

The skies change ever faster, stars whirling around the characters in a dizzying orbit.

Stars blaze around you, churning in a whirlpool of celestial fire that harries and hounds you ever inwards. A silent shadow falls across your vision, as a gigantic hand reaches down from the light, blinding and burning. The starlight simulacrum bears a burning mask, white fire billowing from it.

"A foe of cosmic ambition," the voice of Kruphix echoes from all sides, "will rip open the gates of death."

The adventurers are attacked by a **fire elemental** which bears the appearance of Calisto, with the following changes:

- ◇ The fire elemental is gargantuan in size
- ◇ It deals radiant damage instead of fire damage in all cases
- ◇ The elemental takes 20 necrotic damage at the start of any round in which it is wholly or partially within the radius of magical darkness
- ◇ It has resistance to all damage types except necrotic and cold

When and if the characters destroy the Calisto elemental, proceed to scene 3.

The light grows ever brighter, increasing until there is nothing but pure white brilliance all around you.

The voice of Kruphix whispers in your ear. "Only the light of the sun, in shadow, will hold her back."

SCENE 3 — FATE AND DESTINY

Klothys and Kruphix, having run the characters through an overwhelming gauntlet designed to confuse and intimidate, confront the characters with a choice.

When the darkness clears, you find yourselves once more in the calm skies of Nyx. Stars twinkle overhead, and it almost seems serene, despite your recent trauma.

Two entities form to either side of you. On one side, the vast emptiness of Kruphix, god of possibility. His many arms each hold a notion of how the world could be. On the other, the three faces of Klothys, goddess of fate, her three faces exemplifying how the world is in truth. Both tower above you, staring down with starlit eyes.

"The woman Calisto must die", shrieks Klothys, and her words are like knives through your skull, piercing with the dreadful finality of a goddess who knows the measure of your destiny. "You will reclaim the Ainoe mask and slay her. She is too dangerous to let live."

"She is a danger", drones Kruphix, his words laced with cautious wisdom. "A danger to Theros, and her meddling has disrupted the flow of possibility. The Ainoe mask hides her from our gaze. I ask that you do not slay her, but work to temper her impulses — *I foresee she will yet be of use to you.*"

THE FUTURE DIVIDED

The two gods have reached an impasse about how to deal with Calisto and the threat she poses.

Klothys is sure that the best path for Theros is Calisto's death. She has read the threads of destiny and has determined that if Calisto were to die, Theros will be certain to survive in its present form and the Ainoe mask will return to safe hands, though it may have missed the chance to evolve into something better.

Kruphix is bent on ensuring that Calisto survives. Calisto's life offers the greatest scope for possibility — perhaps she will repent her ways and work great good in the world as a result of intervention. Either way, Kruphix would see her full potential to its conclusion, and is resistant to the idea of her journey being cut short.

TO BARGAIN WITH INEVITABILITY

The gods are absolutely at odds with each other, and neither Kruphix nor Klothys is prepared to give ground. Each is certain in the necessity of Calisto being neutralized, but the one thing they are unable to truly control is mortal choice and belief — thus, they each attempt to bend, bribe and bully the adventurers into ascribing to their way of thought.

The gods will only accept a unanimous choice from all present, and keep the characters held up under their steely gazes until they come to an agreement (a little like a celestial jury).

The two gods are absolutely prepared to keep the group trapped in timeless stasis, and refuse to countenance releasing anyone until a resolution has been reached.

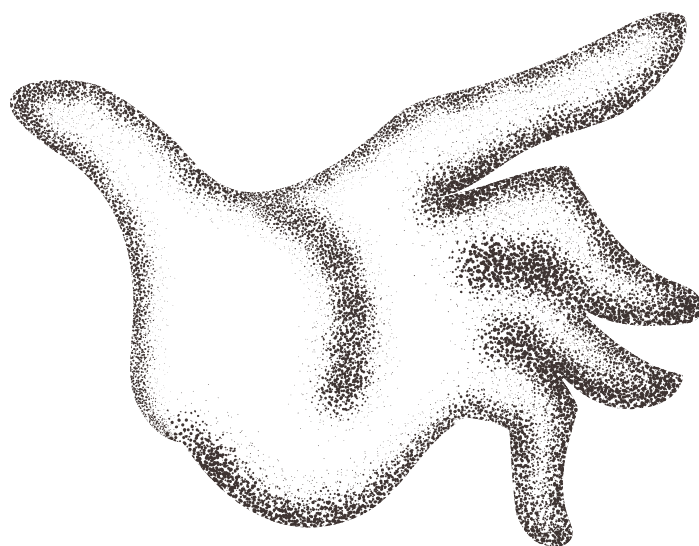
To choose Klothys, the characters must swear to the goddess that they will kill Calisto in the process of retrieving the mask. As a gesture of benediction, she bestows on them a *Blessing of Fate*, which grants the benefits of the Lucky feat to every recipient. This blessing lasts until Calisto is slain, after which it expires.

To choose Kruphix, the characters must swear to the god that they will not kill Calisto in the process of retrieving the mask. As a mark of good will, he grants the characters a *Blessing of Unbound Potential*, which allows each character to increase their highest ability score by 2.

Once a resolution has been reached, the gods reach into the past to retrieve a fragment of the Elpis mask.

"It is decided then," Kruphix intones, as the stars part beneath you, revealing a whirling vortex of darkness, "we shall deliver you to where you need to be."

The astral dimension begins to ripple and tear, ripping itself away from you as your mind tumbles into the void.



EVADING THE CHOICE

Canny adventurers might work out that the easiest way to escape making a choice is to send themselves back to the material plane with a spell like *banishment*, or by taking enough damage that their Nyxborn form fails and they wake up in the real world. This enrages both Klothys AND Kruphix, who are suddenly united in a singular crusade to make the characters' lives a misery, all thought of Calisto put aside in the name of their shared vendetta. If you're following the *Masks of Theros* adventure path, and the characters are already dead, *banishment* sends them to the Underworld as their current home-plane.

Until the characters absolve themselves of this sin and make reparations to one or both of the offended gods, their luck turns sour. Whenever an afflicted character rolls a 1 before modifiers on an ability check or attack roll, the attempt results in some unfortunate (and highly unlikely) stroke of poor chance, such as hurling a sword into the face of a sidekick or setting their own shoes on fire.

Further to this, evading any choice prevents the characters from gathering the Elpis mask fragment, necessitating reparations to the offended gods, something which is likely to be incredibly laborious.

DEVELOPMENT

Milestone: The characters advance to level 9.

Once the characters have finished their negotiations with the gods, proceed to *Into the Underworld*.

INTO THE UNDERWORLD

Klothys and Kruphix (regardless of which path the characters choose) release the characters from Nyx.

If you are playing this adventure as part of the *Masks of Theros* adventure path, the adventurers are deposited in the Underworld, where they are reunited with their deceased physical forms. Otherwise, return them to their bodies in the physical world.





SYNOPSIS

The heroes awaken in the underworld. They've died at the hands of Mogis, which rather complicates their quest. Fortunately (or not), Calisto is already in the underworld seeking the black piece of the Elpis mask. The characters may pursue peace with her and brave the dangers of the underworld together, or confront her to take the Ainoe mask.

The characters must navigate the underworld, where they are hindered and aided by old enemies and friends. After a fight with Kunoros, Hound of Athreos, they finally arrive at the temple where Erebos hid the last piece of the Elpis mask. They must fight Heliod's Champion before they can claim their prize and, with any luck, return to the land of the living.

Heliod's Wrath follows **black mana's** themes of necromancy, revenge, and endings. When describing scenes, invoke a perpetual sense of gloom: the underworld is all shadows without sunlight.

This adventure is intended for 4-5 characters starting at level 9. The adventure's progression takes them through level 10, and then 11 right before the final confrontation.

ADVENTURE HOOK

If you're running *Heliod's Wrath* as part of *Masks of Theros*, well done! Nearly there, just keep going. Kruphix drops them in the underworld at the end of Chapter 4 so no need for adjustments. The characters might be a little shocked at their recent demise, but that just raises the stakes — maybe they can find the Elpis piece and a way out.

If you're running *Heliod's Wrath* as a stand-alone adventure, add a short prelude where the characters are summoned to the great metropolis of Meletis. Aleixo, one of the Twelve, tells them of a warlord named Calisto. She is a former lieutenant of Xenagos, and descended into the underworld to steal an artifact of great power. The heroes must stop her and retrieve the artifact for the Twelve, lest another claimant to Xenagos' power try again. Aleixo gives them a potion that grants them entry into Erebos' realm.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The underworld — at least the part the characters find themselves in — is a dark and twisted mirror of Meletis. Characters familiar with Meletis gain advantage on ability checks to navigate the maze once they realize this.

As part of *Masks of Theros*, this adventure reintroduces several NPCs the characters encountered earlier who may engage in **friendly** or **unfriendly** actions. The DM decides which based on the characters' relationship and previous treatment of these NPCs. If you're running this as a stand-alone adventure, roll a d100: 1-50 means friendly and 51-100 means unfriendly.

SCENE 1 — CALISTO REVEALED

The characters arrive in the underworld and come face to face with Calisto. They can strike a deal with her to retrieve the Elpis mask together, or fight the warlady and her minotaur retinue.

DARK MELETIS

The characters find themselves unceremoniously arriving in the underworld. They arrive fully refreshed and at full health, as if they had just completed a long rest. Read or paraphrase the following text:

You stand on a road paved with bone, a row of ruined houses to your right and a river to your left. The wind howls and cries despite being perfectly still. The air feels both too thin and too thick. Shadows cloak the world, twisting and turning in the corner of your eye. No sun adorns the sky. You look again at the river — its waters are unfathomably black, yet something about it seems familiar...

A DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) or Wisdom (Survival) check reveals the river as the Kheir which runs through Meletis. Once the characters know this, and realize they're in a dark mirror of Meletis, any familiar with the living city gain advantage on Wisdom (Survival) checks to navigate. This underworld version of Meletis is twisted and strange. Houses are made of skulls and bones. Avenues vanish in the air, down into boiling rivers, or simply end in walls.

CALISTO

Before the characters can properly get their bearings, ask the players to make a Wisdom (Perception) check against Calisto's Dexterity (Stealth). Remember she tests at disadvantage due to her armor. Success means they hear footsteps and hooves approaching, and can prepare for an

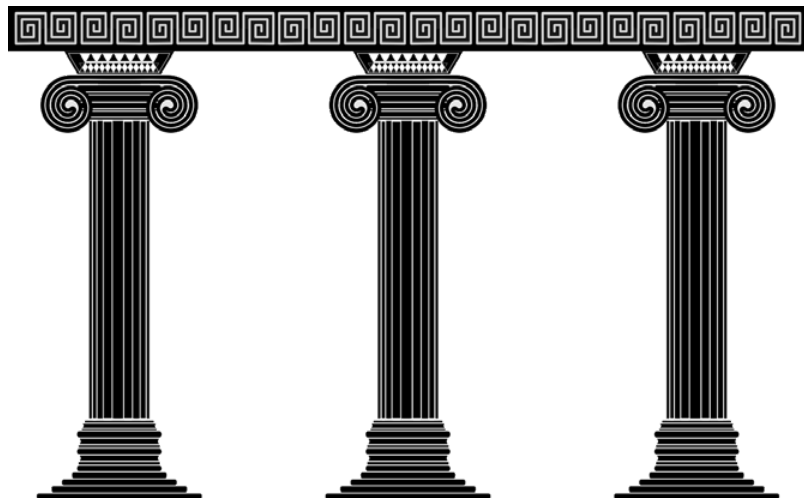
imminent arrival. Failure means Calisto and her minotaurs catch them unawares, emerging from the ruins to surround the heroes on three sides with the river to their back. Read or paraphrase the following text:

The warlady Calisto emerges from the ruined buildings. She's clad in splint armor, and armed with a battleaxe of black metal. She wears a smaller axe on her belt. The Ainoe mask obscures her features, and her dark hair falls down her back in a thick braid. Three minotaurs follow her.

The **minotaurs** are **Gundak** (he/him, chaotic neutral), **Nalke** (they/them, chaotic neutral) and **Dakun** (he/his, chaotic evil) if they died in Chapter 3, the latter using regular minotaur stats post mortem. They snarl, brandishing weapons and are clearly keen for a fight if **unfriendly**. If any of the minotaurs are **friendly**, however, they're stand-offish and aid the characters if they want to negotiate peace with Calisto — granting advantage on any Wisdom (Insight), Charisma (Deception) and Charisma (Persuasion) checks to this purpose.

Calisto does not immediately attack — the underworld is as foreign and hostile to her as to the characters, and she realizes there's strength in numbers. If the characters attack though, combat immediately ensues. Calisto is a tough opponent made even more terrifying by the power of the Ainoe mask. The **minotaurs** are bound to her service with necrotic magic. If the characters slay a minotaur, it rises after one round as a **minotaur skeleton**. If a minotaur skeleton is slain in turn, the DM rolls a d6 on their initiative every turn — it rises again on a 5 or 6. Only when Calisto is defeated does this necromantic effect stop.

The characters can also pursue a truce with Calisto. Her proposal is to journey through the underworld together and retrieve the black piece of the Elpis mask. The characters may then hand over their own pieces of the Elpis mask and Calisto will generously let them leave — or join her army, their choice. The players may make a DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check to pursue different terms. Calisto refuses to hand over the Ainoe mask, but she might lie and tell them they can have the Elpis mask. Terms she might honestly agree to is breaking up the Elpis mask between them (Calisto favors the red and green pieces), or promising not to attack Meletis until she has conquered all other poleis.



CALISTO

Neutral evil human warlady

Calisto (she/her, chaotic evil, see Appendix II for stats) grew up among nomadic humans in the badlands of Phoberos. It was a hard life, but the people made do. Xenagos' attack was simply one more hardship in a long list. Calisto, always more ambitious than her lowly circumstances allowed though, joined the planeswalker's army. For years she dutifully served at Xenagos' side, rising the army ranks even as he rose to godhood — and then Xenagos died. Oh well. She's over it now. Calisto has reinvented herself, and hitched her star firmly to her own wagon. She saw how Xenagos did it and how he failed — and she's determined to do better.

Calisto carries herself with an ease born of great confidence. She leans lazily against buildings. She doesn't walk, but moves with a leonine grace. Her laughter comes easily and loudly. In the end, though, Calisto is very much an eye-on-the-prize kind of gal. Attempts to flirt with her are well-received and reciprocated, but won't stop her from betraying the characters when the time comes. Until then, the warlady freely trades banter as they travel dark Meletis and isn't secretive about her past.

Motivation. Calisto has some lingering fondness of Eftalia, who was her lover before she turned good. She despises the Plains of Phoberos where she grew up, as they serve as a sharp reminder of her life before she gained power. In the end though, Calisto's heart is cold. She never met anyone she wouldn't betray, if it came down to it. Power is her only lasting motivator.

Mannerism. Calisto's movements are either economical and precise, wasting no iota of energy, or calculated to show off her confidence as prowess.

Quote. "All the world is mine to take."

DEVELOPMENT

Milestone: Dealing with Calisto, in whatever fashion, raises the characters to level 10. Remember to unlock the fifth stage of any Elpis pieces the characters possess.

The characters continue on through the underworld alone, or with Calisto and her minotaurs. Ask them where they want to go. The last Elpis piece is hidden in the old temple of Ephara — the same spot where the Ainoe mask was in living Meletis. If the characters guess this, they may try to go there. Otherwise, Calisto suggests the (new) temple of Ephara. Proceed with Scene 2 accordingly.

SCENE 2 — DARK MELETIS

The characters must navigate the maze of Dark Meletis to reach their stated destination — hopefully, the Hall of Justice and, from there, the old temple of Ephara. This is a sandbox scene, and the characters come across a number of encounters based on a Wisdom (Survival) check. You can pick and choose from the encounters listed, or roll a d4 to see what the characters stumble upon.

| WISDOM (SURVIVAL) | NR. OF ENCOUNTERS |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 0-10 | 4 |
| 10-20 | 3 |
| 20-25 | 2 |
| 25-30 | 1 |
| 30+ | none |

| ROLL 1D4 | ENCOUNTER |
|----------|------------------|
| 1 | The Child |
| 2 | The Drowned |
| 3 | Gangs of Meletis |
| 4 | Temple of Ephara |

This scene aims to invoke a feeling of gloom, as well as a guilt over all the people the characters tread on to get to this point. Be mindful of your players' comfort.

If Calisto is with the characters as a temporary ally, she uses one *disintegrate* granted by the Ainoe mask if circumstances are dire. She saves the second one for an eventual showdown with the characters. Her minotaurs fight to the fullest and resurrect after they're slain as described earlier.

THE CHILD

The characters encounter a small child on the streets of Dark Meletis. Read or paraphrase the following text:

You see a child of some six years of age, huddled in a thin coat and sitting against the bleached bone of a ruined building. She holds out her hand to passersby in a pleading gesture. They ignore her.

A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the child bears a striking resemblance to Xene from the Theater of Diaphon. She is in fact Xene's great great aunt.

The characters can ignore the child and walk on without penalty.

If they stop to ask what's wrong, however, the child says her name is Hadra and she's so very cold. She offers to tell a character their future in exchange for a little warmth. If a character agrees, Hadra takes their hand and leeches 1d6 from their maximum hit points until they leave the Underworld. She then whispers something in their ear which the character remembers at just the right time. Give the player a token which they can return to you for a reroll with advantage on any one roll. Hadra only reads one character's future.

THE DROWNED

The characters cross a bridge and, unless the player specifically says they don't look at the water, the first of them sees the Drowned. Read or paraphrase the following text:

You cross the bridge over the Kheir. The water below is dark and mesmerizing. You stop to stare, and time loses all meaning as you see faces. People float under the water's dark surface, looking up at you. They call and beckon for you to join them.

The player must succeed at a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw, or jump off the bridge to join the Drowned. Despite the name, they're not only drowning victims but also people who dedicated their life to the water. If **Phoebe** or **Argon** died in Chapter 2, they're among the drowned calling to the character — add a cumulative +2 to the DC for either of them. The other characters may attempt to stop their companion by grappling and dragging the character off the bridge, or by succeeding at two shove attacks. The beckoning effect ends one round after the character is off the bridge.

If the character jumps into the water, the Drowned immediately pull them under. The player may try another Wisdom saving throw at the same difficulty as before. If they succeed, the character resists and the normal suffocation rules apply. If they don't succeed, the character doesn't struggle nor hold their breath as the Drowned pull them under. Breaking free, or pulling the character away from the Drowned, requires a DC 20 Strength check. If Phoebe or Argon are among the Drowned and **friendly**, this Strength roll gains advantage. If they're among the Drowned and **unfriendly** it suffers disadvantage.

Once the characters are aware of the danger, crossing the bridge without looking at the Drowned requires a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw. Inadvertently looking at the Drowned starts the same impulse as before.

GANGS OF MELETIS

Dark Meletis is governed by twelve gangs, each founded on a motley of intersecting principles to protect and enrich their own. Read or paraphrase the following text:

You see two groups of undead standing on opposite ends of the street. A few are clearly undead — you see a skeleton naga, a burning floating skull, and an ephemeral creature among them — but most just look like people. Scared people, whipping themselves into a frenzy on the coattails of their fear. The two groups are shouting taunts and insults at each other. You can tell violence is about to break out.

If **Aleixo** died in Chapter 1, ask the players to roll a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) test to spot Aleixo in one group.

The characters have a couple of options here.

The characters can let the groups come to blows. It's the easiest option and grants them advantage on a DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check to sneak past. It's also selfish and immoral — these people are scared and desperate for a way out without losing face — but that's neither here nor there. Failing the check, however, draws the characters into the fight. The characters must now face off against a **bone naga**, **flameskull**, and **banshee**.

The characters can also speak up and negotiate a stand-off between the two groups. They can threaten the groups into a temporary truce with a DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation) check, tell a convincing lie that gets them to stand down with a DC 15 Charisma (Deception) check, or negotiate a lasting peace with a DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check. Any check gains advantage if Aleixo is **friendly** towards them, or disadvantage if Aleixo is **unfriendly**. The DM can further adjust the check DCs by -2 for good roleplaying.

If they do negotiate a lasting peace, Aleixo (or the bone naga, if Aleixo yet lives) gives them a *ring of jumping*.

TEMPLE OF EPHARA

The characters arrive at the temple of Ephara — the new one, on the Street of Gods. Read or paraphrase the following:

You enter the temple of Ephara. Grand and magnificent, it stands much as it does in Meletis proper. You catch flashes of ghosts floating down the hallways, lost white shades amid the bleached bone stone. A sense of peace has settled here, though it is melancholy and forlorn.

The **ghosts** are priests and supplicants, going about their service to Ephara. They're not dangerous or aggressive, unless the characters harass them. If the characters do start trouble, 1d4 ghosts descend on them in one round, and another 1d4 ghosts follow the round after.

If the characters followed Calisto's directions to the new temple, the Elpis mask fragment isn't here. If they take a moment to visit the statue of Ephara, which in living Meletis held the white Elpis piece, they may pray to receive the goddess' benediction, which restores 2d8 hit points.

THE HALL OF JUSTICE

The characters arrive at the Hall of Justice that, even in the underworld, stands atop the old temple of Ephara. Read or paraphrase the following text:

You enter the Hall of Justice. The walls outside are painted in runes — not magical, you think, but rather a claim of territory. A handsome young man approaches.

"Hello," he says in a voice of silk and honey, "My name is Bathor. Have you come to make a donation?" He makes you shiver in all the right ways.

The characters may make a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice the man's sharp fangs — he is a **vampire spawn**. A DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) test reveals two more vampire spawn hiding nearby. The trio were once husbands to a grand vampire lord, but they've since overthrown him in a bloody divorce. They claim the building as their domain, requiring a tithe of blood from all who seek to enter. Their names are Bathor, Michael, and Wilhelm.

The characters can turn back, and the vampires won't pursue them. They can also pay the tithe to enter, losing 1d6 hit points along with blood poured discreetly into a cup. Trying to gain entry without making a donation requires a DC 20 Charisma (Deception), Charisma (Intimidation), or Charisma (Persuasion) check. Otherwise, combat is the only remaining option. If that happens, the vampires flee rather than fight to the death.

Characters can flirt with the vampires, who are happy to engage in a short tryst. Whether that's just kisses or something more, the vampires would like to drink the character's blood from the vein. If the character consents, they gain a level of Exhaustion and a point of Inspiration. If the character refuses, the vampire politely backs off.

OLD TEMPLE OF EPHARA

The characters enter the old temple of Ephara below the Hall of Justice. The last piece of the Elpis mask lies here, but first they must make it past Erebos' guardian Kunoros. Read or paraphrase the following text:

You descend into the old temple of Ephara. You've been here before, in Meletis, when the temple was nothing but underground ruins. You see it now in its full glory, towering pillars holding a high roof. A dark, cold light filters in through the windows. A large three-headed hound guards the bottom of the stairs.

The characters may try to sneak past **Kunoros** (large hound, lawful neutral, see *Appendix II* for stats). They can also try to talk it into letting them pass with a DC 25 Charisma (Persuasion) check. Intimidation and lies don't work against the hound. This roll gains advantage if the characters promise to leave both masks with Kunoros in the underworld once they're done. Otherwise, they must slay the hound before they can enter.

DEVELOPMENT

The characters gain access to the temple and proceed to Scene 3.

Milestone: The characters meet another milestone once they're past Kunoros, and rise to level 11.



SCENE 3 — THE TEMPLE OF EPHARA

The characters reached the old temple of Ephara. They find the *black mask piece* where they found the Ainoe mask in the living world — on the statue of Ephara. Unbeknownst to them, Heliod sent his Champion, Eftalia, to retrieve both masks and she, having snuck past Kunoros, waits for them here.

EXPLORING THE TEMPLE

In all likelihood, the characters will recognize the symmetry with the *white mask piece* and head straight for the statue of Ephara. In this case, roll once on the table below to see what they encounter on their path. If they tarry or explore, roll twice instead.

| ROLL 1D6 | ENCOUNTER |
|----------|--|
| 1 | Cries echo melancholy through the halls. Roll a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or take 1d4 psychic damage. |
| 2 | A ghost takes offense at you entering their territory. It attacks for two rounds, then dissipates. |
| 3 | You hear the voice of Xene the playwright as they foretell the rise and fall of Calisto. The Ainoe mask regains all <i>disintegrate</i> charges as if after a long rest. |
| 4 | You wander aimlessly through never-ending curving hallways. Suffer 1 psychic damage which you mistake for hunger. |
| 5 | You come across a faceless statue offering a bright red potion in an outstretched hand. If the character exchanges the potion for an offering, it's a <i>potion of greater healing</i> . If they simply take it, it becomes a <i>potion of poison</i> instead. |
| 6 | You come to a high-domed room, its roof painted with beautiful pastoral scenes. Succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw to gain Inspiration. |

THE STATUE OF EPHARA

The characters find the last piece of the Elpis mask, but must first confront **Eftalia** (she/her, lawful neutral, see *Appendix II* for stats). Read or paraphrase the following text:

You come to the inner sanctum and the statue of Ephara. She looks exactly as she did in living Meletis, and shines with a radiant light. You bask in the light as its warmth dispels the eternal cold of the dead. Where the living statue wore the Ainoe mask, this statue wears the black Elpis piece.

As you enter the room, you see Eftalia enter from a hall on the opposite side.

"My friends," the Champion of Heliod says. "It appears we are here for the same divine purpose! Let me have the mask and I will guide you back to the world of the living."

Eftalia speaks true, but fails to mention a few key details. Heliod tasked her to bring both masks to him, and he intends to use them to finally diminish, or even destroy, Erebus. The Champion sees no need to hide this information — how could Heliod's divine judgment ever be wrong — so all the characters need to do is ask the right questions to get the full story.

What Eftalia doesn't know, or never cared enough to think about, is that without Erebus to guard the gates of the underworld all the dead would return and overrun the living. The characters received a vision about this in *The Forging of the Masks* in Chapter 4, and they might put the clues together now. If the characters speculate that destroying the masks weakens Erebus, who is supposed to keep the dead in the Underworld, just go ahead and confirm their worries. Otherwise, make sure to tell the players — don't spring the destruction of the world on them unawares — and ask if they would like to 1) have one of the characters know without a roll, 2) roll for it with a DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check, or 3) have the characters not know and let things unfold.

From here, the characters have a couple of options.

SURRENDER THE MASKS

If the heroes defeated Calisto in Scene 1, they can give Eftalia the Ainoe mask and their pieces of the Elpis mask. The Champion prays to Heliod to open a portal to the land of the living and departs. The portal remains open long enough for the characters to follow. If they do so, they find themselves restored to life by Heliod's grace! However, they find no trace of Eftalia on the other side — she already moved on.

BETRAY CALISTO, SURRENDER THE ELPIS MASK

If the characters struck a truce with Calisto, they can still hand over their pieces of the Elpis mask. Eftalia then turns on Calisto to take the Ainoe mask. If the characters aid the Champion, Calisto loses. If the characters don't interfere,

roll 2d10: if either is 11+ the Champion wins and opens a portal as above. Otherwise Calisto ekes out a victory against all odds. Calisto is not happy with the characters' betrayal, but is badly injured from her fight. She flees, leaving the pieces of the Elpis mask behind.

FIGHT HELIOD'S CHAMPION

The characters refuse to give their mask to the Champion, and Calisto — if she's with them — absolutely does the same. The only outcome here is combat. If Calisto is with the characters her minotaurs fight earnestly, but she herself holds back just a bit — making sure never to be on the receiving end of Eftalia's strikes (she knows the Champion very well and can predict some of her moves) and keeping one *disintegrate* in reserve.

The characters can make a break for the black Elpis piece before combat starts. This requires a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check against Eftalia. If the characters received Aleixo's Ring of Jumping in Scene 2, instead of a foot race they could make a single leap to the statue of Ephara.

After the Champion is defeated, Calisto makes a play for the Elpis mask. If the characters stand to best her though, she tries to flee with the Ainoe mask.

DEVELOPMENT

That's the end of it — either the characters have one or both masks, or they missed their chance.

If they struck a bargain with Kunoros to return the masks, they are magically bound to keep it or slay the hound. Otherwise, they are free to leave the temple. If they befriended the vampires in the Hall of Justice above, that trio even knows a shortcut to living Meletis. Otherwise, the characters have any remaining encounters from Scene 2 as they try to find a gate to the land of the living.

BUT ARE THEY DEAD?

Erebos has the power to restore the heroes to life, and might do so under certain conditions. One of his servants meets the characters at the gate to the living world with an offer. Erebos sends his faithful hound if Kunoros still lives, otherwise he sends a ghost.

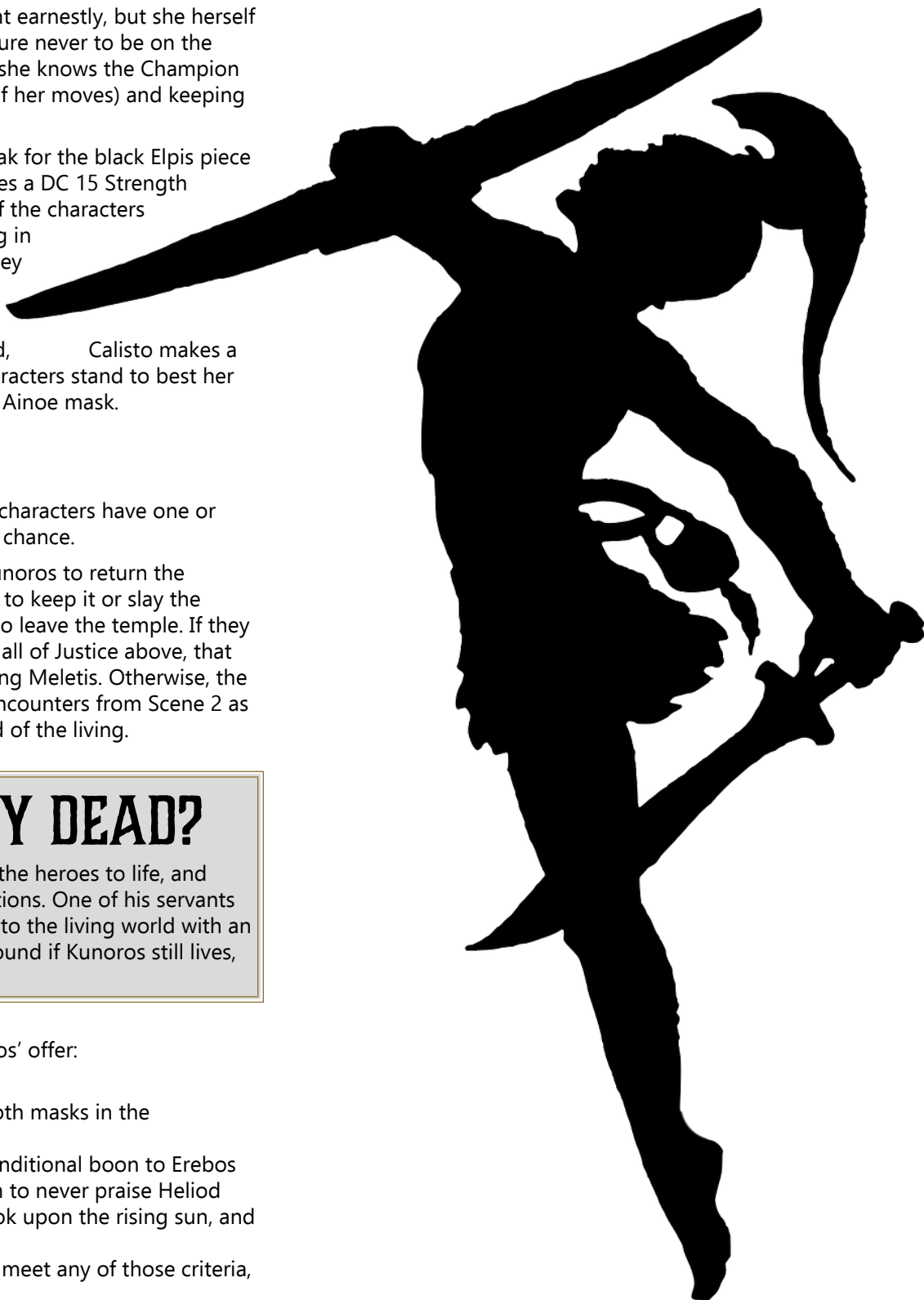
These are the conditions of Erebos' offer:

- ◇ Kunoros is not slain
- ◇ The characters must leave both masks in the underworld
- ◇ The character swear an unconditional boon to Erebos
- ◇ The characters swear an oath to never praise Heliod
- ◇ The characters may never look upon the rising sun, and this one is non-negotiable

If the characters can't or won't meet any of those criteria,

the messenger happily relays, Erebos has one final offer. They may enter the world of the living if one of them remains in the underworld. This sacrifice must be voluntary, and the DM can really play this up — surely, the ghost coaxes, one life is a small price to pay to save Meletis.

There is no way to return to life without Erebos' blessing. The heroes' only other option is remaining in the underworld, or seeking out one of the rumored secret exits, to travel back to the world of the living, without Erebos' blessing, as a returned.



CONCLUSION: RETURN TO MELETIS

The characters return to living Meletis, triumphantly or defeated. What happens next depends on the outcome of the confrontation in Scene 3. Read or paraphrase the following text, substituting Aleixo with Perisophia (*MOoT*) if she died in Scene 1:

You enter Meletis through the great gate. The Kheir runs fresh and full of life. People line the streets, watching you anxiously as you march down the avenue and up to the seat of the Twelve.

Aleixo/Perisophia awaits you in the agora. "Did you find the Elpis mask?" she asks.

THE CHARACTERS HAVE BOTH MASKS

Aleixo, or Perisophia, requests the Elpis mask, and can also keep the Ainoe mask safe. The Twelve seal the former in a secret vault in Meletis, and send a rider out to bury the Ainoe mask at the end of the world. This could easily be a continued adventure for the characters after they enjoy their just reward.

Rewards: The Twelve throw a grand festival and parade in the characters' honor. The characters gain a Noble lifestyle, including a grand villa and lands, paid into perpetuity by the city of Meletis. The characters are revered as heroes and may nominate themselves for seats on the Twelve, without the 10+ years of public service usually required.

THE CHARACTERS LEFT BOTH MASKS IN THE UNDERWORLD

Aleixo, or Perisophia, is pleased the danger is dealt with, but some of the Twelve are decidedly not. In addition to safeguarding the masks from prospective threats, they had half an eye on the masks' offensive powers. Still, Calisto is no longer a threat and the characters earned their reward.

Rewards: The Twelve throw a grand parade in the characters' honor. The characters gain a Noble lifestyle, including a grand villa and lands, paid into perpetuity by the city of Meletis. The God of Death is also grateful to the characters — the next time one of them dies, he immediately restores that hero to life. Erebus only grants this favor once.

THE CHARACTERS HAVE THE ELPIS MASK, BUT CALISTO HAS THE AINOE MASK

Aleixo, or Perisophia, thanks the characters, and asks them to continue serving Meletis. Calisto still assembles an army and attacks one of the poleis. Whatever happens next lies beyond the scope of *Masks of Theros*, but as bearers of the Elpis mask the characters are best suited to stop her. This should kick off another grand adventure. The characters may also decline any further heroics, take their reward and retire.

Rewards: The characters gain a Noble lifestyle, including a grand villa and lands, paid into perpetuity by the city of Meletis. Unfortunately, impending war leaves no time for celebrations. The characters may nominate themselves for seats on the Twelve, without the 10+ years of public service usually required, if they promise to fight Calisto on Meletis' behalf.

HELIOD'S REVENGE

The characters earned Heliod's ire if they killed Eftalia in Scene 3. If they return to Meletis with either mask, the Twelve's gratitude protects the characters and Heliod cannot act against them so long as they remain in the polis. The deity does still pursue them outside Meletis. He's a fickle god and easily distracted, but the characters should expect radiant heroes harrying them at the worst moments.

THE CHARACTERS GAVE BOTH MASKS TO EFTALIA

Erebus is stripped of his power. The gates of the underworld open and returned flood the lands. Whatever happens next lies beyond the scope of *Masks of Theros*, but is probably bad. Unless the characters confess to Aleixo, or Perisophia, that they are responsible, they are still hailed as heroes for defeating Calisto. If they do confess, they are banished from Meletis until they close the underworld gates again — this should prove an epic adventure.

Rewards: None if the characters admit they're responsible for Erebus' diminishing. Otherwise, the Twelve throw a grand festival and parade in the characters' honor. The characters gain a Noble lifestyle, including a grand villa and lands, paid into perpetuity by the city of Meletis. The characters are revered as heroes and may nominate themselves for seats on the Twelve, without the 10+ years of public service usually required. While they reap their rewards, the returned slowly fill the lands.



APPENDIX I: THE MASKS OF THEROS

The mask of Ainoe is a single piece, the mask of Elpis exists as five broken fragments. You can find their full descriptions and powers here.

There is no mortal way on Theros to destroy the masks — Erebos tried, and he ended up burying the Ainoe mask and breaking the Elpis mask in five pieces. Having said that, the PCs might devise a way beyond the scope of *Masks of Theros*, like planeswalking it to Ravnica and seeing what options they have there. Keep in mind that unless they specifically find a way to return the power Erebos invested in the masks, this leaves the god of death greatly weakened.

THE ELPIS MASK

Each Elpis mask piece has five stages, growing in power as its wearer does. Short of persuading a crafting deity to repair the mask, there is no way to put the five pieces together again — and Erebos would likely want a word if any did. The mask pieces are made of marble with colored veins of mana.

| CHARACTER LEVEL | MASK STAGE |
|-----------------|------------|
| 1-3 | 1 |
| 4-5 | 2 |
| 6-7 | 3 |
| 8-9 | 4 |
| 10-11 | 5 |
| 12+ | unknown |

THE WHITE FRAGMENT

Wondrous item, legendary. Requires attunement.

A fragment of a full-face mask, made of marble with colored veins of mana. It feels warm to the touch, as if it's been lying in the sun.

STAGE 1

When you wear the mask, you gain darkvision up to 60 feet. When you speak the command phrase, "my light in the darkness," you cause the mask to glow with a cool, pale light and emanate the *daylight* spell.

Once per day, you may choose to have the daylight generated by the mask reveal invisible creatures and objects. This effect lasts for one minute.

STAGE 2

Once per day, when you speak the command phrase "my strength amidst dismay," you gain 2d8 temporary hit points.

STAGE 3

By speaking the command phrase "my divine strength" you can cast *counterspell* up to 3 times each day, as if casting the spell at 3rd level and using Charisma as your spellcasting ability. When you successfully counter a spell, that spell's caster gains temporary hit points equal to the level of the spell.

STAGE 4

Twice per day, when you speak the command phrase "my strength amidst dismay," you heal 4d8+4 hit points.

STAGE 5

When you cast *counterspell* using the mask fragment, treat it as if cast using a 5th level spell slot.

THE BLUE FRAGMENT

Wondrous item, legendary. Requires attunement by a spellcaster.

A fragment of a full-face mask, made of marble with colored veins of mana. The inside of the mask is turquoise, and it smells of the wide open ocean.

The powers of the mask increase with the prowess of its wearer.

STAGE 1

As an action, you can summon an **homunculus** in an unoccupied space within 30 feet of you that you can see. It remains for 1 hour and follows your commands. You can't use this feature again until you finish a short rest.

STAGE 2

After finishing a short rest, you recover spell slots with a combined level equal to half your spellcaster level (rounded up). You can't use this feature again until you finish a long rest.

STAGE 3

As an action, you increase your Intelligence score by 2 for 1 minute or until you fall unconscious. You can't use this feature again until you finish a long rest.

STAGE 4

When a creature within 30 feet of you is the target of a spell that requires a saving throw, you can use your reaction to give the target advantage on the saving throw. You can use this feature a number of times equal to your Intelligence modifier (a minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

STAGE 5

As a bonus action, you magically restrain a creature within 5 feet of you that you can see. At the end of the target's turn, it can attempt a Strength saving throw against your spell save DC to break the restraints. You can use this feature a number of times equal to your Intelligence modifier (a minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

BUT WE DON'T HAVE A WIZARD

Keeping with the principles of blue mana, the blue Elpis piece works best for a spellcaster who gains spells through study and preparation: a wizard or artificer. If your group has neither, discuss what you want to do. Maybe you're fine accepting that not all magic items work for all people, and it's still a win just to keep the mask away from Calisto. Or maybe you prefer to say the mask enhances "spellcasting ability" rather than specifically Intelligence. Whatever works for you.

THE RED FRAGMENT

Wondrous item, legendary. Requires attunement.

A fragment of a full-face mask, made of marble with colored veins of mana. If pressed tightly to one's ear it is possible to hear battlecries from ages past.

STAGE 1

Everytime you use an attack action you can perform one extra attack.

STAGE 2

As a bonus action you can activate the mask, this grants you advantage on all attacks performed that turn. The fragment can be activated 3 times per long rest.

STAGE 3

While wearing the mask your Dexterity and Strength scores increase by 1.

STAGE 4

Everytime you perform a critical hit you can roll one extra weapon die, and add the result to the total damage.

STAGE 5

As an action you can activate the fragment's fire aura. By doing so the mask releases powerful flames, wrapping around you and firing up your reflexes. Your attacks deal an extra 7 (2d6) fire damage. The fire also causes everyone close to you to take 2d12 fire damage (5ft. radius). The aura lasts for 5 minutes and can only be activated once per long rest.

THE GREEN FRAGMENT

Wondrous item, legendary. Requires attunement.

A fragment of a full-face mask, made of marble with colored veins of mana. It smells like verdant forests and feels somehow *alive*.

When you wear the mask, any shadows you cast bear the starlit mark of Nyx.

When you speak the command phrase, “unbound potential” you gain a benefit defined below depending on which Stage the mask has reached. This effect lasts for 1 minute. You must finish a long rest before using this feature again.

STAGE 1

Your Strength score increases to 24. Your size increases by one category.

STAGE 2

Your Strength score increases to 26. Your size increases by one category.

STAGE 3

Your Strength score increases to 28. Your size increases by two categories (e.g. from Medium to Huge).

STAGE 4

Your Strength score increases to 30. Your size increases by two categories. You have resistance to bludgeoning, piercing & slashing damage.

STAGE 5

Your Strength score increases to 30. Your size increases by two steps. You have immunity to bludgeoning, piercing & slashing damage. You deal double damage to objects and structures.

THE BLACK FRAGMENT

Wondrous item, legendary. Requires attunement.

A fragment of a full-face mask, made of marble with colored veins of mana. The inside holds tiny silver runes. Translating the runes requires a DC 15 Intelligence check and tells the tale of Erebos and Elpis.

STAGE 1

You can cast the *spare the dying* and *chill touch* cantrips, even if you're not a spellcaster. Your spellcasting ability for *chill touch* is Intelligence.

STAGE 2

If an attack would reduce you to 0 hit points, you immediately stabilize and return with one hit point. This ability is usable once per short rest.

STAGE 3

You gain Proficiency on Intelligence saving throws. If you're already proficient, double your Proficiency bonus.

STAGE 4

Your first attack each of your turns deals an extra 2d6 necrotic damage. You gain hit points equal to half this extra damage.

STAGE 5

You may summon a **wraith** in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of you. The wraith acts on its own initiative. You can give it commands by using a bonus action, otherwise it defends itself. The wraith remains for an hour or until slain — whichever comes first. You may use this ability once per long rest.

THE AINOE MASK

Wondrous item, artifact. Requires attunement.

A mask wrought from luminescent white stone only quarried in the underworld. Anyone who touches the Ainoe mask must succeed on a DC 13 Charisma saving throw or be overtaken by memories of their most tragic, devastating moment (invoking the Paralysed condition) for one turn. Characters who are immune to the Frightened condition are also immune to this effect.

- ◇ **Damnation:** The mask consumes the soul of any creature or person who dies within one mile of you. Their soul does not journey to the underworld and, thus, they cannot return to life by any means.
- ◇ **Disintegrate (2/long rest):** You cast *disintegrate* as a 6th level spell with a DC 16 saving throw.
- ◇ **Dread Servant (1/long rest):** As a Reaction, when you kill a living creature, you grasp their soul before the mask consumes it. That creature becomes a *wraith* under your control. After 24 hours, their soul is consumed by the mask (see Damnation).
- ◇ **Enervate (1/long rest):** As an action, you call a creature's life force out of its body and use it to sustain yourself. A creature of your choice, within 20 feet of you and that you can see, makes a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. The creature takes 36 (8d8) necrotic damage on a failed save and half as much on a success. You gain temporary hit points equal to the damage dealt.

APPENDIX II: ANTAGONISTS

This appendix presents creatures and enemies unique to *Masks of Theros*.

BRINE GIANT

Huge giant, neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (scale mail)

Hit Points 162 (12d12 + 84)

Speed 40 ft., swim 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 23 (+6) | 17 (+3) | 25 (+7) | 12 (+1) | 17 (+3) | 15 (+2) |

Saving Throws Str +10, Con +11

Skills Athletics +10, Perception +7

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages Common, Giant

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Amphibious. The giant can breathe air and water.

Innate Spellcasting. The giant's innate spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

- ◇ At will: *blur*, *chill touch* (see "Actions" below)
- ◇ 1/day each: *control water*, *misty step*

ACTIONS

Spiked Greatclub. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 24 (4d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, taking 33 (6d10) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Chill Touch (Cantrip). *Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, range 120 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 18 (4d8) necrotic damage, and the target can't regain hit points until the start of the giant's next turn. If the target is undead, it also has disadvantage on attack rolls against the giant until the end of its next turn.

CALISTO, SCOURGE OF THEROS

Humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 19 (plate +1)

Hit Points 170 (20d8 + 80)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 20 (+5) | 16 (+3) | 18 (+4) | 14 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 18 (+4) |

Saving Throws Strength +9, Dexterity +7, Constitution +8, Wisdom +6

Damage Resistances Bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Skills Athletics +9, Deception +8, Intimidation +8, Perception +6, Performance +8, Stealth +7

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Leonin, Minotaur

Challenge 12 (8,400 xp)



Soul Warden. Calisto's battleaxe, Soul Warden, is enchanted to deal an extra 13 (3d8) necrotic damage on a hit. This is already included in her attacks. The axe's damage counts as magical for the purpose of overcoming resistance/immunity.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Calisto fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Calisto makes three attacks of her choice.

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) or 10 (1d10 + 5) slashing damage (two-handed), plus 13 (3d8) necrotic damage.

Thrown Axe. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage plus 13 (3d8) poison damage. A struck target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned. The poison lasts until it is removed by the *lesser restoration* spell or similar magic.

REACTIONS

Parry. Calisto adds +6 to her AC against one melee attack that would hit her. She must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Calisto can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Calisto regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Battleaxe. Calisto makes one battleaxe attack.

Ground Smash (Costs 2 Actions). Calisto hits the ground with a fist. Each creature within 10 feet must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or take 10 (2d4 + 5) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone.

Shadow Walk. Calisto disappears and reappears in a shadow within 40 ft.

DAKUN

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 102 (12d10 + 36)

Speed 40 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +7, Con +6

Skills Athletics +7, Insight +6, Intimidation +7, Perception +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Charge. If Dakun moves at least 10 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a gore attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 9 (2d8) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 10 ft. away and knocked prone.

Labyrinthine Recall. Dakun can perfectly recall any path it has traveled.

Spellcasting. Dakun is a 4th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). Dakun has the following spells prepared:

- ◇ Cantrips (at will): *create bonfire*, *green-flame blade*, *toll the dead*
- ◇ 1st level (4 slots): *cause fear*, *hellish rebuke*
- ◇ 2nd level (3 slots): *crown of madness*, *shatter*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Dakun makes two attacks, one with its greataxe and one gore.

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 18 (2d12 + 4) slashing damage

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage

DAYBREAK CHIMERA

Daybreak chimeras are radiant creatures. Their winged, leonine bodies are a glorious pure white, as are the wings that spread majestically from their backs. The golden-brown eyes in each of their three heads — horned lion, unicorn, and eagle — shine with intelligence. Daybreak chimeras are often found in the service of order and civilisation, standing as staunch guardians of holy places.

Large monstrosity, lawful neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 68 (8d10 + 24)

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 17 (+3) | 11 (+0) | 17 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 11 (+0) |

Saving Throws Str +5, Wis +4

Skills Perception +4

Damage Immunities Radiant

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Common

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The chimera makes two attacks: one with its claws and one with either its bite or its horns. When its fire breath is available, it can use the breath in place of its bite.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Horns. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d12 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Fire Breath (Recharge 6). The unicorn head exhales blazing white light in a 15 foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) radiant damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

EFTALIA, CHAMPION OF HELIOD

Eftalia has devoted her life to the service of the sun god. For more information on Eftalia, see *Appendix III: Meletis*.

Medium humanoid (leonin), lawful neutral

Armor Class 17 (half plate)

Hit Points 144 (17d8 + 68)

Speed 35 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 20 (+5) | 15 (+2) | 18 (+4) | 13 (+1) | 14 (+2) | 17 (+3) |

Saving Throws Str +10, Wis +7, Cha +8

Skills Athletics +10, Intimidation +8, Perception +7, Religion +6

Damage Immunities radiant

Damage Resistances fire, lightning, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from non-magical attacks

Condition Immunities frightened, prone, paralysed, stunned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages Common, Leonin

Challenge 15 (11,000 XP)

Celestial Ally (3/day). Eftalia summons a White creature to fight alongside her. Only one of these choices can be in the material plane at any time. Choose from:

- ◇ 1 x celestial lion (**felidar**, GGtR)
- ◇ 1 x **daybreak chimera** (Appendix II)

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Eftalia fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

Claws. Eftalia's unarmed attacks deal 7 (1d4+5) piercing damage.

Daunting Roar (1/short rest). As a bonus action, Eftalia lets out a menacing roar. Creatures of her choice within 10 feet of her that can hear her must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of her until the end of her next turn.

Radiant Mantle (1/day). As a bonus action, Eftalia invokes an aura of blazing sunlight which lasts for one minute and has the following effects.

Creatures who look directly at the aura must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be Blinded until the end of their next turn. Creatures who attack Eftalia without looking directly at her make attack rolls with disadvantage.

The aura sheds bright light for ten feet, and dim light for a further twenty feet. If the aura overlaps with non-magical darkness or with an area of darkness created by a spell of 3rd level or lower, the spell that created the darkness is dispelled.

Missiles that pass through the aura burn up. Subtract 10 points from the damage of non-magical ranged attacks.

Eftalia regenerates 20 hit points at the start of her turn.

Spellcasting. Eftalia is a 9th level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following cleric spells prepared.

- ◇ Cantrips (at will): *guidance, light, word of radiance* (XGtE)
- ◇ 1st level (4 slots): *bane, healing word, shield of faith*
- ◇ 2nd level (3 slots): *continual flame, silence, spiritual weapon*
- ◇ 3rd level (3 slots): *daylight, dispel magic, spirit guardians*
- ◇ 4th level (3 slots): *banishment, death ward*, freedom of movement*
- ◇ 5th level (1 slot): *raise dead*

* cast before start of combat

Sun God's Glory (Mythic trait; recharges after a short or long rest). If Eftalia is reduced to 0 hit points, her body is suffused and animated by the light of the sun god. She does not die or fall unconscious. Instead she regains 100 hit points. All creatures within 20 feet of her when she uses Sun God's Glory must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until the end of their next turn.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Eftalia makes three attacks with her spear.

Spear. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12* to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (1d6 + 7) magical piercing damage/11 (1d8 + 7) when wielded with both hands, + 7 (2d6) radiant damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Eftalia can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Eftalia regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Attack. Eftalia makes one attack with her spear.

Cantrip. Eftalia casts a cantrip.

Move. Eftalia moves up to her speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

MYTHIC ACTIONS

For 10 minutes after Eftalia activates Sun God's Glory, she can choose to use the following Mythic Actions whenever she would ordinarily use a Legendary Action.

Strike True. Eftalia makes 2 spear attacks.

Heavenly Bolt (2 actions). Eftalia throws her spear in a straight line up to 30 feet. It deals 28 (8d6) radiant damage to every creature in its path, before returning to Eftalia's hand.

Eftalia's golden spear, Heliodora, is a magic weapon. She has +2 to attack and damage rolls made with it and the spear deals an additional 7 (2d6) radiant damage (all modifiers already included in her attack/damage calculations).

KUNOROS

Medium monstrosity, lawful neutral

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 161 (17d8 + 85)

Speed 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 21 (+5) | 10 (+0) | 21 (+5) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 16 (+3) |

Saving Throws Strength +9, Constitution +9

Skills Intimidation +7, Perception +4, Stealth +4, Survival +4

Damage Immunities fire

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages understands Common and Infernal, but can't speak them

Challenge 10 (5,900 xp)

Keen Hearing and Smell. Kunoros has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Smells Lies. Kunoros can smell when someone is lying to it.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Kunoros makes five attacks: three bites (one with each head) or its fire breath, and two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d4 + 5) slashing damage.

Fire Breath (Recharge 5-6). One of Kunoros' heads exhales fire in a 20 foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 17 (5d6) fire damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

NYXBORN HYDRA

Huge celestial (appears Gargantuan in Nyx), unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 172 (15d12 + 75)

Speed 60 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|-------------|--------|-------------|--------|--------|--------|
| 30 (+10) | 8 (-1) | 30 (+10) | 2 (-4) | 8 (-1) | 7 (-2) |

Skills Perception +5

Damage Immunities radiant, poison

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, slashing and piercing damage from nonmagical weapons

Damage Vulnerabilities psychic

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages -

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)



Nyxborn. The hydra is crafted from the stuff of dreams and gods. It uses its normal movement speed when traveling through Nyx as opposed to deriving that speed from an ability score. It is considered native to Nyx as its plane of existence for the purposes of spells such as *banishment*. When destroyed, it dissipates into clouds of starlight. The nyxborn hydra does not need to eat, sleep, breathe or rest.

Multiple Heads. The nyxborn hydra has five heads. While it has more than one head, the hydra has advantage on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, and knocked unconscious.

Whenever the hydra takes 25 or more damage in a single turn, one of its heads dies, exploding into starlight and dealing 7 (2d6) radiant damage in a 10 foot radius around it. If all its heads die, the hydra dies.

At the end of its turn, it grows two heads for each head that died since its last turn, unless it has taken psychic damage since its last turn. The hydra regains 10 hit points for each head regrown in this way.

Reactive Heads. For each head the hydra has beyond one, it gets an extra reaction that can be used only for opportunity attacks.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Nyxborn hydra makes as many bite attacks as it has heads.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 15 (1d10 + 10) piercing damage and 6 (2d6) radiant damage.

Penumbral Evisceration (Recharge 6). The Hydra makes as many bite attacks as it has heads at one target, attacking from every angle at once. The target cannot benefit from any cover or shield bonuses to their armor class against this attack, and the Hydra has advantage on all attack rolls made until the end of its turn. Until this ability recharges, the Hydra no longer deals radiant damage on its Bite attack and appears as a shadowy silhouette drinking in the light.

REVERENT ARMY GUARD

Meletis' Reverent Army are renowned for their cunning and ingenuity, turning any situation to their advantage. They also receive basic training in thaumaturgy.

Mythic Odysseys of Theros includes statistics for **Meletis hoplites**. However, the guards encountered in *Erebos' Grief* are not front line troops. For a challenge appropriate to the heroes' level, modify the **soldier** (GGtR) stat block as follows.

All members of the Reverent Army have the **Magic Initiate (Wizard)** feat. They know two cantrips and one first level spell.

They are 1st level spellcasters, and their spellcasting ability is Intelligence:

- ♦ **Cantrips (at will):** *booming blade* or *mage hand*, *shocking grasp*
- ♦ **1st level (1/day):** *shield*

APPENDIX III: MELETIS

The city of Meletis is offered as a home base for the characters: a place to (re-)visit and rest between adventures, where they can participate in downtime activities, make connections with NPCs, train, and upgrade equipment and supplies.

As suggested in *Erebos' Grief*, you can use all of these locations and characters to bring the city to life as characters explore it seeking information on the Ainoe Mask.

MELETIS

Large city, lawful good

Population: 250,000 , including surrounding farmland

Government: Democracy (led by Perisophia - lawful good)

Defense: Reverent Army, made up of 5,000 elite soldiers; citizen militia (any adult citizen can be called up to serve)

Terrain: Coastal plains; estuary of River Kheir

Commerce: Farming (sitra/barley), fishing, skilled trades (ceramics, textiles, etc.). Meletis is famous throughout Theros for its education, including the thaumaturgical and philosophical academy the Dekatia.

THE CITY ITSELF

Meletis is the polis of order, learning, magic and progress. It is wealthy and orderly, a safe place for the intellectual arts to flourish. The Twelve, councillors who represent the districts of the city, rule Meletis. The foremost amongst them is the philosopher Perisophia (see *MOOT*).

The city is planned on precise, orderly principles. The streets form geometric shapes, the buildings are designed to use space effectively and to compliment one another's shapes and layouts. Thaumaturges and architects calculate structures' proportions based on mathematical equations and new plans are debated vigorously before being enacted.

Bright, painted banners and friezes are common, and gold and blue frequently decorate the white, local stone. Wave motifs and the symbols and representations of Theros' many gods and heroes are common decorations.

THE PEOPLE OF MELETIS

Citizens of Meletis are greatly concerned with honor, order, and the will of the gods. They invoke the gods regularly in everyday speech, with phrases such as:

"By the red eye of Mogis!" — an expression of frustration or dismay at violence or death

"From my lips to the gods' ears" — a promise that what the speaker says is true, by inviting the gods to smite them if they lie

"By Heliod's bright spear" — an expression of surprise or wonderment

"With Erebos"/"By Erebos' side" — dead

The following notable citizens make useful contacts, allies, rivals or friends for player characters.

ALEXO

Human, she/her, lawful good

Affiliation: Council of Twelve.

Role: Responsible for ensuring the prophecy of Erebos' Grief comes to pass. Runs Meletis' Seventh Ward district.

Description: A short, bright-eyed woman in her fifties with light brown skin and curly grey hair. Dresses simply, except for her sky blue stole of office. She wears a *ring of jumping*, which is a family heirloom.

Roleplaying notes: Talks quickly and to the point. Has no time for flattery or "pretty" speech. Likes people who are competent and highly skilled.

Goals: Ensure the prophecy unfolds as it should: whatever dangers are involved, interfering with the gods' plan will be worse. Keep Meletis running smoothly, and ensure this high-level catastrophe affects her people as little as possible.

CHLORIS

Human, she/her, lawful good

Affiliation: N/A.

Role: Chloris sells wine and imported spirits in the agora.

Description: A stocky human woman with warm brown eyes and freckled olive skin.

Roleplaying notes: Chloris is talkative and generous. Her stall has something of a party atmosphere, as she is liberal with samples. She loves to listen to travelers' tales, especially epic stories of adventure.

Goals: Make a good income, treat customers and suppliers well, and make people happy.

DIO

Human, he/him, chaotic good

Affiliation: The Dekatia.

Role: Dio is a philosopher, inventor, and wizard and regards himself as the city's contrarian: there to provide an opposing viewpoint to just about any public stance taken by the Twelve.

Description: Dio is a pot-bellied man in his late seventies with leathery, sunburned skin, a long, white beard and several missing teeth. He's not convinced clothes are necessary for everyday life — after all, the young people are naked when they train their bodies in the Gymnasium, and he is training his mind at all times.

Roleplaying notes: Dio is loud, confident, and very proud of his wit and wisdom. It's extremely hard to interrupt him once he's in full flow. He assumes he's the cleverest person in any group and he is usually correct. He delights in setting verbal traps, tricking his opponents into agreeing with him or making fools of themselves. He loves to teach, and while it can be a frustrating experience artificers and wizards could learn a lot from him.

Goals: Make sure no idea goes unchallenged. Eat, drink, and be merry.

EFTALIA

Leonin, she/her, lawful neutral

Affiliation: Cult of Heliod.

Role: Eftalia is Heliod's Champion in Meletis. She is not part of the Reverent Army, but she fights alongside them to defend the polis, her golden spear flashing in the sun. She leads the sun god's worship at his great temple on the Street of Gods.

Most leonin don't consider the gods worthy of worship, having suffered greatly from their cruel choices. Eftalia, however, respects their strength. She follows them as a soldier follows a great commander. Her choice cost Eftalia her family and her pride name, but it's worth it: Heliod is powerful and glorious, and under his aegis, she will be too.

Description: Eftalia cuts a splendid figure. With bronze fur, a mane the color of spun gold, and golden plate armor to match, she looks like a ray of sunlight given flesh.

Roleplaying notes: Eftalia is proud, intelligent, and tough. She has worked hard for her status, throwing herself into danger and doing great deeds for her god, in return for her power and splendor. She respects others who make the same sacrifices she did, and who come from humble beginnings (her own parents were weavers). She disdains anyone who lets others face danger for them.

As Calisto's former lover, Eftalia is well aware of her ambition and lack of a conscience. She warns the characters how dangerous the Warlady is, if the opportunity arises.

Goals: See Heliod venerated as the most important god in Meletis — after all, he is the bright light of learning and

thought.

IRIS OF THE ISLES

Triton, she/her, chaotic neutral

Affiliation: N/A.

Role: Iris is a law unto herself. She dwells in her half-submerged grotto within the nearest isles of the Sea of Sirens, issuing prophecies and working strange magics that connect her to the gods and the dead.

Description: Iris is a slender woman with elaborately braided green hair, glistening blue skin, and a voice like the whisper of the tide.

Roleplaying notes: Iris is haughty and short-tempered. She does not tolerate disrespect, and she does not provide her services for free. She expects to be well-treated and well-paid for any assistance the city — or its heroes — needs. Iris likes people who are wise, quiet, and thoughtful. She might even consider teaching them some of her magic.

Goals: Be left alone. If that's not possible, exact vengeance for any transgression committed against her.

KLEITA

Human, she/her, lawful good

Affiliation: Gymnasium.

Role: Runs the gymnasium, convinces talented athletes to become trainers, and makes sure the city continues to fund the gymnasium's upkeep. Works closely with Drakon, because training for athletes and militia members overlap significantly.

Description: A tall, muscular, olive-skinned human woman with close-cropped blonde hair, Kleita has a loud voice and an even louder laugh. She dresses in light, comfortable clothes that show off her physique.

Roleplaying notes: Kleita is warm-hearted and trusting. She makes friends quickly and goes out of her way to help them.

Goals: Make sure the rest of the city sees the importance of the gymnasium: caring for one's gods-given body is an obligation.

LEANDER

Human, he/him, lawful good

Affiliation: Cult of Ephara.

Role: Leander is the high priest of Ephara. As part of his duties he provides healing services.

Description: Leander is a stooped, pale man in his seventies who walks with a strong, aspen-wood staff. He's lost most of his hair, but still has a close-trimmed, mostly black beard.

Roleplaying notes: Leander is kindly and patient. He enjoys a good debate about obscure points of history, law, or politics.

Goals: Advance the Cult of Ephara, and make sure the goddess is not overshadowed by the worship of Heliod.

MARLO, THE EXCUSE

Human, he/him, neutral evil

Affiliation: Himself.

Role: Marlo is one of the most infamous smugglers in Meletis. Not for his successes or even his failures, but because he once led his entire crew into an ambush by the Reverent Army, purely to impress a sergeant whose good opinion he craved. He is shunned by every other criminal on the docks. His 'name' in full is "Marlo, the Poor Excuse for a Man" but few people bother to say the whole thing.

Description: Marlo is a pink-cheeked, short-sighted man with thinning brown hair and a nervous grin.

Roleplaying notes: Merlo is obsequious and fawning, always looking for someone bigger and tougher than him to shelter behind.

Goals: Evade justice for his crimes for as long as possible.

PLATON

Human, he/him, neutral

Affiliation: Keranos' Children

Role: Leads Keranos' Children, taking tithes from all of the smugglers who work the Gold Cliffs and ensuring bribes get paid to the harbormaster to look the other way.

Description: Platon is a strapping man in his thirties with laughter lines around his eyes. He's weathered from years at sea, and his tanned skin is heavily tattooed with intricate designs of sea monsters. He is not a fan of shirts.

Roleplaying notes: Platon acts like he's everyone's friend, but in truth he doesn't trust anyone. He appreciates clever people with a few tricks up their sleeve. He may think of these wily scoundrels fondly but he'll still have his ruffians break their knees if they cross him or Keranos' Children. Platon is attracted to men, and will go out of his way to flirt with a pretty one though he backs off quickly if they don't reciprocate.

Goals: Make money, stay out of trouble. Platon is loyal to Meletis, both because he loves his city and because he recognises that war, or Calisto's tyranny, would be very bad for business.

XENE

Human, they/them, chaotic good

Affiliation: Theater of Diaphon.

Role: Xene runs the theater, arranging the festivals of comedy and tragedy that take place every few months. They are also an accomplished playwright.

Description: Xene is a striking, dark-skinned human with an aquiline nose, amber eyes, and gold facial jewellery that gleams in the sunlight.

Roleplaying notes: Xene commands attention wherever they go. They do nothing subtly or quietly. They use their position in the theater to say things others couldn't possibly get away with (except for Dio, who is a dear friend of theirs). They are witty, charming, and hard to refuse.

Goals: Meletis needs shaking up: it's a static, verging on stagnant, place. The story of Calisto's rise and fall will be all the more powerful if she comes close to victory before her defeat, and Xene is very willing to help that become a reality.

CITY LAYOUT

The following rough guide to Meletis will help you bring the city to life. The city is sliced into twelve wards, of roughly equal size, each overseen by one of the Council of Twelve. The Agora, in the city center, is not part of any district.

While characters don't need any training to advance in their classes, providing training grounds, thieves guilds, musical colleges, and such that they can join, provides a network of allies to call on and a richer roleplaying experience for downtime.

ALEXO'S ESTATE

Alexo's home is a walled compound composed of a small house and lush gardens full of tropical flowers, fountains and fish ponds. It sits on a low hill a little way north of the agora. The house is well-kept and quiet, a tranquil spot amidst the bustle of the city. Alexo lives alone, except for three servants, but the house could accommodate six residents and as many staff.

THE AGORA

Situated right in the center of Meletis, the Agora is the polis' marketplace, courthouse, and political arena. One day each week, trading ceases and the city's politicians debate, discuss, and pass laws — all in public, where anyone can watch them. The rest of the time, local goods and imports from all over Theros are traded here.

THE SIREN ISLES

The Siren Isles are the wild, untouched, islands outside of Meletis' sheltered bay. The isles are riddled with caves, most of them sunken, and many hold treasure from ships wrecked against the rocks. The druids, sorcerers, and sirens who make their homes here, away from the order and restrictions of Meletis, are the polis' guardians against the savage forces of nature.

THE DEKATIA

Located at the southern edge of the city, the Dekatia is a college and workshop for alchemists, artificers,

philosophers, and thaumaturges. Students come from all parts of Theros but priority is given to those born in Meletis, which is after all the most civilised polis in the world, or those who have done some great service for the city.

The inventions created and experiments conducted here are dangerous but powerful. Given the right materials, the scientists and scholars of the Workshop could make a machine that would challenge the gods.

THE GYMNASIUM & BATHHOUSE

This large complex of buildings on the western side of Meletis is home to the physical arts. The city's Reverent Army trains and parades here, with every citizen expected to train at least twice a month to support these professional soldiers. The gymnasium and the bathhouse attached to it are also important social hubs. People of all genders exercise here, and spend time relaxing afterwards. Organised sporting events, including wrestling, foot races, and discus and javelin throwing, take place regularly and attract competitors from all over the city.

THE STREET OF GODS

There are many temples to the gods in Meletis — one on almost every street. The greatest and finest sanctuaries, however, are on the Street of Gods.

This long street climbs a winding hill in the center of Meletis, just north of the Agora. Every building on the street is a shrine to a greater or lesser god. These are not simple, modest buildings: each temple forms its own complex, usually walled, with treasuries, gardens and huge plazas where sacrifices can be made as well as the actual temple, which is home to a grand, gorgeous statue of the god who dwells there, or a sacred representation such as a tree for Nylea, goddess of the hunt.

THE THEATER OF DIAPHON

Meletis is a city of order and civilisation and the Theater is a sanctioned space for the breaking of taboos. In fiction, you can say or do anything, express any thought, satirise any politician. The more outrageous the better, as long as it's also a good story. Festivals take place every three months, at the turning of the seasons, and new plays are performed at each one.

The theater is an excellent place for bards and other performers to hone their skills and show their talent to the world. It's also one of the best places in Meletis to socialize with people adventurers would otherwise not have access to, as everyone goes to the theater.

THE WHARF

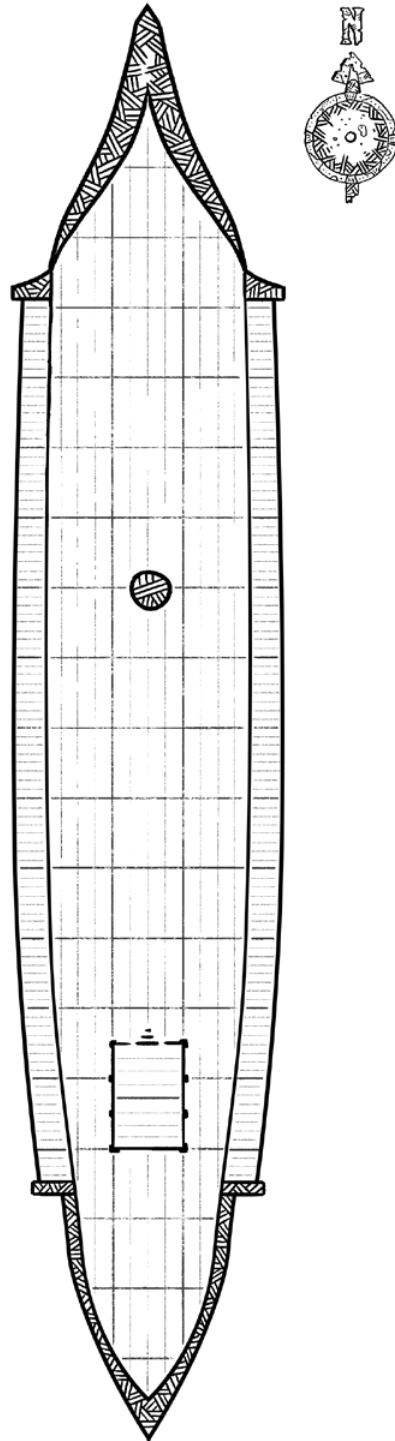
Crime within Meletis is low. The populace is generally well provided for, and apart from crimes of passion and occasional thefts from shops and traders, most people

in the polis lead law-abiding lives. The Wharf, taking up the entire south east side of the city along the bay, is the exception that proves the rule. Tariffs are high in Meletis: the city's great public works and program of growth and improvement are expensive, and have to be funded somehow. Amongst the legitimate crews who carouse in the district's taverns, and fit out their vessels at the ships chandlers, are a number of smugglers. Many of them belong to the brotherhood known as Keranos' Children, named after the god of storms.

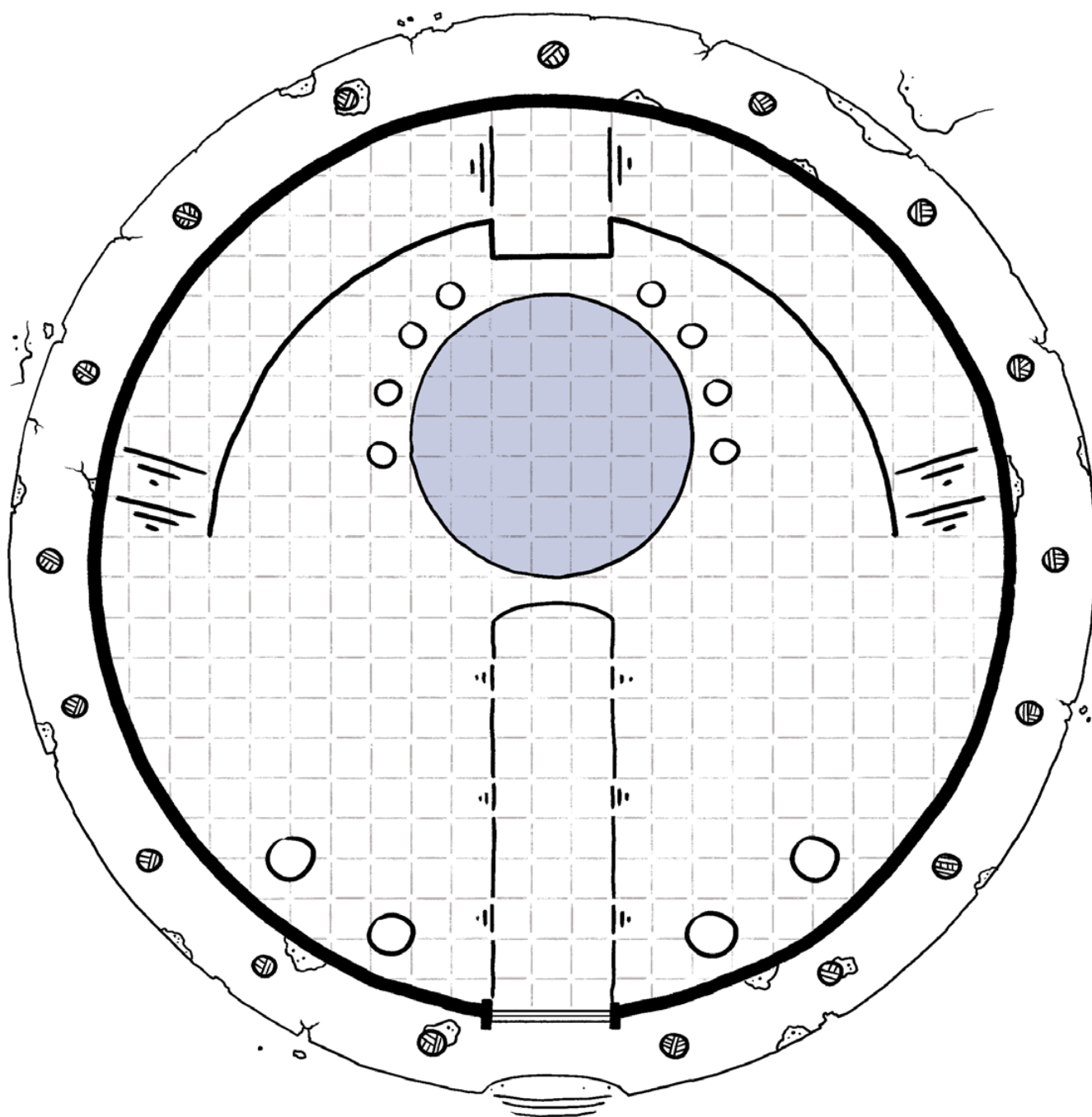
The Twelve knows about Keranos' Children and allows them to exist as long as they pay the proper bribes: they are mostly loyal to the city, and provide a useful navy in times of war.

APPENDIX IV: MAPS

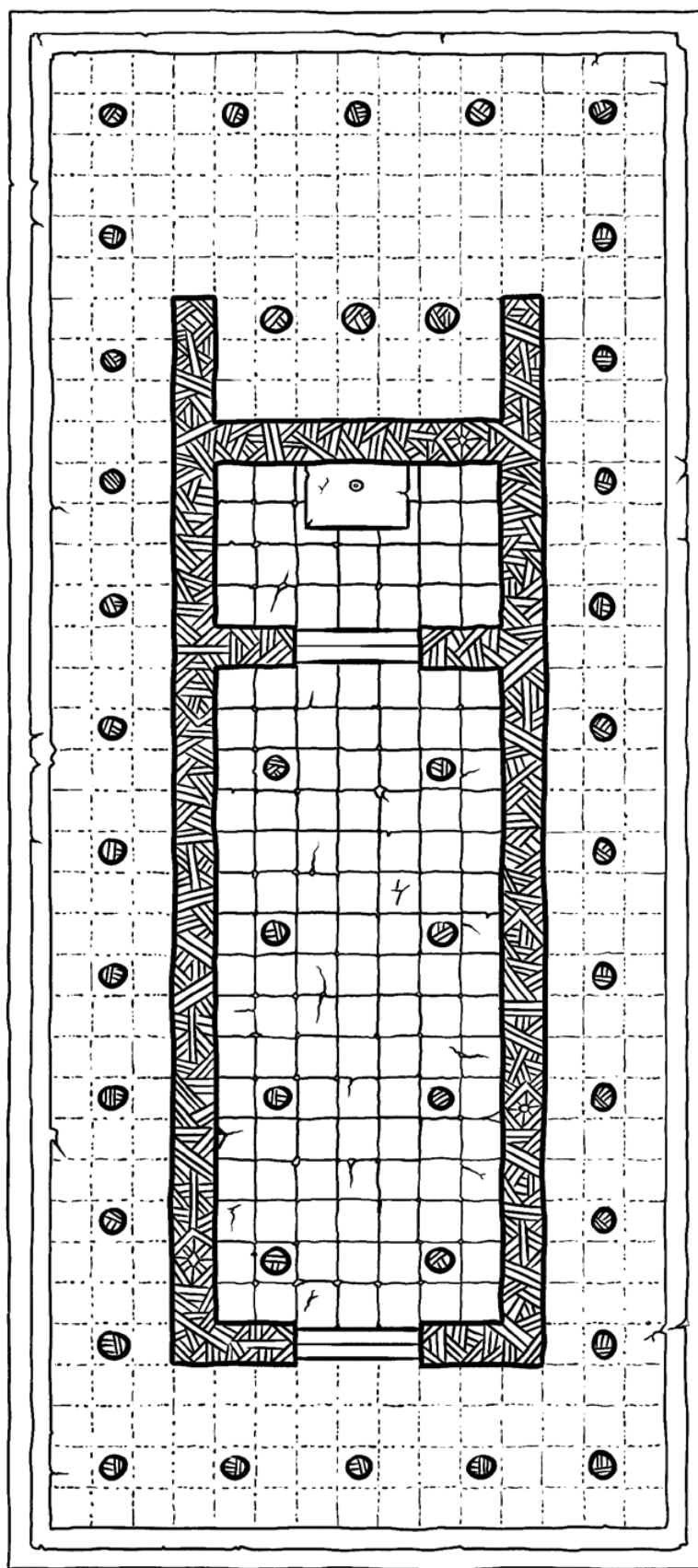
ETERNAL SEEKER



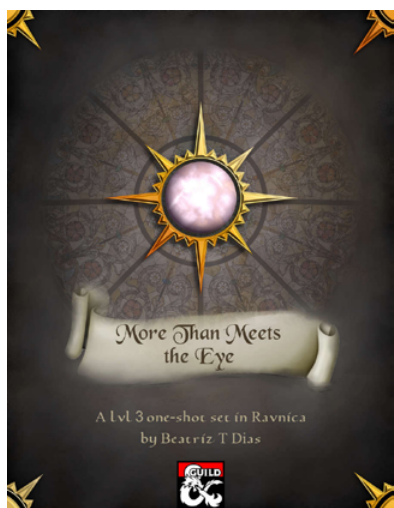
THASSA'S TEMPLE



TEMPLE OF TRIALS



BY THE SAME AUTHORS



Nimek Ghedir, an Orzhov cartel leader, desired some lands for building and exploration, but they were occupied by Gruul. So he harassed the Gruul until they fought back. In [More Than Meets The Eye](#), adventurers uncover Nimek's scheme, and choose whether to report it, side with him, or something else entirely.



[Ravnica Encounters](#) is a collection of random events that introduce the characters to interesting inhabitants of Ravnica, bring them into conflict with the guilds, and offer inspiration for adventure. The same encounter can confront the characters with friendly members of their own guild or mortal enemies from opposing factions.



[We Die Here](#) explores the lives and secrets of a small, isolated town. It was inspired by stories like *Twin Peaks*, Stephen King's *It*, and Netflix' *Dark*, where the town is as much a character in the story as its inhabitants. Isolated, turned inward, and more than a little creepy, the town is the monster in this tale. It rarely lets people go: characters are born and die here - and only if they're very lucky does the latter come as the natural end to a long life.



[RAVENLOFT GAZETTEER: KALIDNAY](#) is a 54 page campaign guide to a corrupt ecological hellscape of ash, bones and sand. Water is scarcer than gold. Iron is more precious than diamonds. Arcanists are feared and labelled Defilers - criminals to be hunted down without mercy. The sorcerer king Kalid-Ma sleeps endlessly under stone, and his advisor Thakok-An rules with an iron fist in his stead.