



# PHOENIX



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# P H O E N I X

If phoenixes were not so rare, the Dragon Empire might be named the Phoenix Empire! As a symbol of immortal power, phoenixes are so much more than a symbol—they seem functionally immortal, though there may be years or decades or even centuries between some rebirths.

But depending on how you count, there are between two and four dragon icons and no phoenix icons. As you'll see in the Language and Names sidebar below, phoenixes can't talk, relying on nonverbal communication. Dragons talk, and dragons are powerful, ruthless, and extremely, extremely smart. Phoenixes are powerful, potentially occasionally ruthless, and not so smart. Not smart at all, really, compared to dragons, though there are a lot of PCs in most adventuring groups who can't compare to dragons either! Phoenixes are fiery elementals who may be just as intelligent as the average human, but who don't have to be intelligent or wise to survive—they end up surviving, more or less, no matter what silly situations they get themselves into.

Young phoenixes are followers. Ancient phoenixes are more often loners than leaders, but may still be loyal to causes the rest of the world has forgotten. Sometimes phoenixes serve great causes of the gods or icons of light. Sometimes they're just fiery beasts. And sometimes they're burning down all that's good and holy because that's what their best friends are into.

## L I G H T A N D D A R K P H O E N I X E S

The phoenix is associated with change, but it's not widely known that as fiery phoenixes go through their cycle of rebirths the birds themselves change, drawing in light and fire into their internal furnaces until they become rare creatures known as void phoenixes. Eventually the void phoenix ignites, becoming a solar phoenix and leaving the world to live high in the sky.

The life cycle (or rather the life-death-life-death-life cycle) of the phoenix is famous, even to uneducated peasants. It is commonly thought that phoenixes are immortal, and that may or may not be true. They can cheat death by self-immolating and being reborn.

## L O Y A L H E A R T S O F F I R E

Phoenixes value loyalty above all else. Once they decide to serve somebody, or give a promise, they follow through no matter what. If those that they serve display great loyalty to others, or a self-sacrificing nature, the phoenix may well form a bond for life. Some phoenixes serve those that they bond with long after the mortal has died: guarding an important site, delivering important messages to descendants, or carrying out missions generations after a scheme has been set in motion.

Generally this loyalty has a time limit. When a friend, master, or monarch dies, the phoenix *eventually* finds new loyalties. Rebirths burn away the old loyalties. But for some phoenixes, that's a long slow process. In human or even elven terms, a few phoenixes might be hanging on to philosophies or attachments that died in a previous-apocalypse-twice-removed.

## L A N G U A G E A N D N A M E S

Phoenixes are intelligent, but unable to speak humanoid languages. They are, however, amazingly expressive and able to communicate via gestures, meaningful looks, and a sort of projective empathy. Think of the old breed of animal heroes in television and movies before we just started letting the animals talk—heroes like Lassie and Flipper who somehow got their point across. Your player characters aren't likely to know phoenixes own names for themselves, but individual phoenixes that spend much time around humanoids tend to be given names that seem to suit them, at least until they've died a few times and moved on. (*Rob says: please don't blame ASH-the-younger for the Lassie and Flipper references.*)

Of course player character druids, and the High Druid herself, don't have this problem. Which means phoenixes can be a lot of fun for druid PCs who end up as the only people who can interpret the phoenixes' screams and caws: "What's that you say, Igni? The wizard needs to stop making terrible puns when she casts *fireball* or you're going to set her staff on fire?"

## A L T E R N A T I V E P S Y C H O L O G Y

Gamemastering is about finding story hooks where the world looked smooth. Phoenixes loyal to the PCs' enemies can burn the PCs plenty, but perhaps you'd like another angle.

Consider the possibility that a small number of phoenixes eventually go insane after too many deaths. If death is painful, but certain, it's possible that a few phoenixes will be out of their minds.

We'd treat this as a rare option because there are already enough insane monsters in the Dragon Empire. But it's a good option to keep around.

# HERALDS OF ROYALTY, SERVANTS OF ICONS

Monarchs and would-be monarchs find the phoenix hard to resist. Glorious life followed by majestic rebirth? Yes, we'll have some of that. Most every icon that has claimed any type of rulership has claimed the phoenix as its emblem at some point. Phoenixes do not mind. In fact, they like being associated with monarchs, emperors, and icons who boss aspects of existence. Flattery isn't stupid if it's appropriate, and most phoenixes think their relationship with monarchs is both entirely deserved and a blessing to the monarchs.

**Archmage:** It is said that one of the past Archmages had a phoenix as a familiar. If you wish, that may have continued into the current age, in which case the Archmage has placed a strong claim on the phoenixes' elemental allegiance. Certainly solar phoenixes serve the Archmage in the overworld. You might say that they serve as the Archmage's spies, but that would be crass, since they're glowing brighter than the sun and everyone knows what they're up to.

**Crusader:** At present, at least until your campaign takes wing, no phoenixes serve the Crusader. Maybe they know something the rest of the world doesn't. Or maybe the Crusader's attachment to the dark gods gets in the way of the flatteries that phoenixes need to feel wanted. As you'll see, phoenixes don't care much for the Diabolist either. In the war between the Diabolist and the Crusader, the phoenixes fly elsewhere.

**Diabolist:** If there's a phoenix who willingly serves the Diabolist, that's *new* bad news. Phoenixes dislike the Diabolist's chaotic whims and venomous disregard for her subjects. Phoenixes serve some of the icons, but they're no one's minions. The Diabolist can't hide her contempt for underlings long enough to earn a phoenix's loyalty.

Fortunately for GMs who enjoy intricate plots, this doesn't mean that there are no phoenixes serving servants of the Diabolist. It works like this: take a perfectly respectable and powerful magician who earns the friendship and loyalty of a phoenix. Now corrupt that magician via the Diabolist's demonic wiles. The phoenix is now in a quandary, and loyalty to the original friend sometimes wins out, at least as long as it takes for the foolish magician to die once or twice. The phoenix can handle dying a couple times and is guaranteed to come back to life more often, so eventually it's going to be free of the entanglement.

**Dwarf King & Elf Queen:** Phoenix devices appear on the shields of many dwarf clans, and the banners of many elf armies. The Dwarf King plays up the phoenixes' molten origins. The Elf Queen loves the phoenixes' magical rebirths. In past ages when dwarves and elves went to war against each other, phoenixes loyal to the two sides fought flame to feather overhead. Most of those battles have long since been sorted out, but there might be a phoenix or two harboring an old grudge long after all but the longest-lived elf or dwarf from the original battles has perished.

**High Druid:** The High Druid is particularly fond of these elemental beasts and does what she can to keep them attached to the land instead of ignoring it for the overworld.

Outsiders expect druids to have mixed feelings about phoenixes because while they are majestic beasts, they tend to set trees and sometimes entire forests on fire. Druids and other followers of the High Druid understand that wood is meant to burn. Phoenixes, unlike, say, demons and human pyromancers, are part of the natural cycle in which things that can burn, do. Forests burned by phoenixes grow back quickly, and strong.

Druids and rangers who have phoenix animal companions are looked upon with awe by their compatriots. Phoenixes as animal companions? Yes, possible! But of course it'll be a newly hatched phoenix, not yet come into its full powers. Use the eagle stats, and have the phoenix deal fire damage.

This could certainly play into a character's One Unique Thing, in which case the phoenix might grow into more power later in the PC's career.

**Lich King:** The phoenix used to be associated with the Wizard King. That dread icon's return to power as the Lich King may darkly reflect the phoenixes' ability to return from death. Phoenixes who serve the returned Lich King usually burn with a blue flame, rather than the red-and-yellow flames that the majestic creatures normally exhibit.

Some people fear that void phoenixes are by definition associated with the Lich King because of their association with negative energy. It's not true. As far as we know.

**Orc Lord:** The Orc Lord likes his phoenixes raw and hastily devoured, and that's a problem, since they often flare back to life. If your campaign's Orc Lord is somehow a regal and imposing figure, the ability to attract a phoenix or two would be a litmus test. But in the type of campaign world we normally present, phoenixes and the Orc Lord are opposed if they're involved at all.

**Priestess:** Loyalty, especially to bright or at least glorious causes? Resurrection or its equivalent as a way of life after life? Some say that the Priestess is the icon that phoenixes have been waiting for. A few make their home in strange flaming nests built atop the Cathedral. Others act as last-resort messengers, delivering scroll cases or messages to servants who are otherwise not contactable by magic or mundane messengers.

But given the Priestess' apparent advantages in attracting friends among the phoenixes, there aren't that many life-birds near the Cathedral. The Priestess herself doesn't use phoenix imagery in her vestments, and it may be that she's not oriented toward the type of flattery that more worldly icons have no trouble with. Phoenixes want to be lauded, not greeted as obvious members of a celestial team.

**Dragon icons not much involved with phoenixes:** The Emperor, the Great Gold Wyrms, and the Three all either take dragons as their standards or are dragons themselves. If there's one thing dragons are pretty sure they don't need, it's phoenix feathers clogging the works. In Rob's campaign, legends from a previous age tell the stories of the Phoenix Emperor, who got confused about who his real allies were, and the (now) amusing ways he was burnt. Would the current Emperor make the same mistake?

A shadowy icon probably not much involved with phoenixes: No one would expect the Prince of Shadows to use phoenixes as part of a scam. So, right. . . . Tell the players that phoenixes hate the Prince of Shadows and would never be involved with him.

## FLAMEBIRD PHOENIX

*In this early phase of its existence, the phoenix has quick life-death cycles. Scant days from death, or just a few days removed from birth, they act a bit like flighty teenagers, growing too quickly to keep themselves entirely under control. Unlike human teenagers, they're not dangerous to themselves. . . .*

Double-strength 3rd level wrecker [ELEMENTAL]

Initiative: +11

Vulnerability: cold

**Fly-by flaming talons +8 vs. AC**—16 damage, and 5 ongoing fire damage

*Natural even hit or miss:* The phoenix may move again this turn as a free action if it has already made a flying move on its turn.

*Miss:* The flamebird phoenix can use a *flaming screech* attack as a quick action, either this turn, or on its next turn.

*[Usually special trigger, but also possible as a standard action]*

**C: Flaming screech +8 vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies)**—5 fire damage, and 5 ongoing fire damage

*Flight:* The flamebird phoenix can fly extremely well.

*Flaming wings:* The flamebird phoenix deals 4 fire damage to each enemy that ends its turn engaged with the phoenix.

*Resist fire 16+:* When a fire attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 16+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage.

*Spectacular effects:* When the phoenix is dealt a critical hit, it must roll an easy save (6+). If the save fails, the phoenix drops to 0 hit points; see the *reborn in fire* ability below!

*Reborn in fire:* Whenever the phoenix drops to 0 hit points, roll a d20 and add the escalation die. For each time this phoenix has rolled its *reborn in fire* ability earlier this battle, subtract 10 from the roll. For example, a phoenix making its second *reborn in fire* roll (because its first roll ended up being 20+!) when the escalation die is 6 would roll the d20 and subtract 4.

**20+:** The flamebird phoenix is immediately reborn, healing to 40 hit points, and keeps fighting!

**15–19:** The phoenix is reborn in fire, but vaults into the overworld, removed from the battle. On the other hand, it's not done with the PCs! Add the phoenix to an upcoming battle by surprise, adding it as an additional monster not accounted for by the usual encounter-building calculations.

**8–14:** The flamebird phoenix is reborn in fire but wants nothing more to do with this battle. It makes the following attack, but when the attack is over it shoots off into the overworld so quickly that it's a teleport effect, and does not return to the battle, nor to the adventure.

**Conflagration of rebirth +9 vs. PD (every nearby enemy)**—10 fire damage

**7 or less:** The phoenix flares back to life somewhere nearby in a few hours, days, months, or years. Probably not relevant to the PCs unless they or the phoenix bear a special grudge.

### Nastier Special

*Fire eater:* If a fire attack against the flamebird phoenix fails to beat its resistance, then instead of taking damage the flamebird phoenix heals that amount instead.

AC 19

PD 15

MD 15

HP 78

## RESURGENT PHOENIX

*Years or decades or centuries older and wiser, and more likely to have found an interesting cause to attach themselves to.*

Large 5th level leader [ELEMENTAL]

Initiative: +13

Vulnerability: cold

**Fly-by flaming talons +10 vs. AC**—25 damage, and 10 ongoing fire damage

*Natural even hit or miss:* The phoenix may move again this turn as a free action if it has already made a flying move on its turn.

*Miss:* The resurgent phoenix can use a *victory screech* attack as a quick action, either this turn, or on its next turn.

*[Usually special trigger, but also possible as a standard action]*

**C: Victory screech +10 vs. MD (1d3 nearby or far away enemies)**—10 psychic damage, and the resurgent phoenix and its allies can add +1 to their attacks until the start of the resurgent phoenix's next turn; the bonus is cumulative if more than one *victory screech* attack hits.

**Ignition +10 vs. PD (the creature that triggered the attack)**—8 fire damage and 8 ongoing fire damage

*Limited use:* 1/battle, as an interrupt action when an enemy makes a melee attack against the phoenix.

*Flight:* The resurgent phoenix can fly as well or better than anything you've seen airborne.

*Flaming wings:* The resurgent phoenix deals 7 fire damage to each enemy that ends its turn engaged with the phoenix.

*Resist fire 16+:* When a fire attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 16+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage.

*Spectacular effects:* When the phoenix is dealt a critical hit, it must roll an easy save (6+). If the save fails, the phoenix drops to 0 hit points; see the *reborn in fire* ability below!

*Reborn in fire:* Whenever the phoenix drops to 0 hit points, roll a d20 and add the escalation die. For each time this phoenix has rolled its *reborn in fire* ability earlier this battle, subtract 10 from the roll. For example, a phoenix making its second *reborn in fire* roll (because its first roll ended up being 20+!) when the escalation die is 6 would roll the d20 and subtract 4.

**20+:** The resurgent phoenix is immediately reborn, healing to 70 hit points and keeps fighting!

**15–19:** The phoenix is reborn in fire, but vaults into the overworld, removed from the battle. On the other hand, it's not done with the PCs! Add the phoenix to an upcoming battle by surprise, adding it as an additional monster not accounted for by the usual encounter-building calculations.

**8–14:** The resurgent phoenix is reborn in fire but wants nothing more to do with this battle. It makes the following attack, but when the attack is over it shoots off into the overworld so quickly that it's a teleport effect, and does not return to the battle, nor to the adventure.

**Conflagration of rebirth +11 vs. PD (every nearby enemy)—15 fire damage**

**7 or less:** The phoenix flares back to life somewhere nearby in a few hours, days, months, or years. Probably not relevant to the PCs unless they or the phoenix bear a special grudge.

**AC 20**

**PD 17**

**MD 17**

**HP 124**

## VOID PHOENIX

*The phoenix has drawn all its heat into itself in order to ready itself for the next stage of its life cycle. Silver and purple turns out to be an excellent look for the bird.*

*Large 8th level spoiler [ELEMENTAL]*

Initiative: +16

**Fly-by talons +13 vs. AC—60 damage, and 10 ongoing negative energy damage (hard save ends, 16+)**

*Natural even hit or miss:* The phoenix may move again this turn as a quick action if it has already made a flying move on its turn.

*Miss:* The void phoenix can use a *void calling* attack as a quick action, either this turn, or on its next turn.

*[Usually special trigger, but also possible as a standard action] C:*

**Void calling +13 vs. PD (1d3 nearby or far away enemies in a group)—35 negative energy damage**

*Natural even hit:* Target is dazed (save ends). Target takes 10 negative energy damage each time it fails the save.

*Flight:* The void phoenix can fly amazingly well for a creature that is turning itself spiritually inside out.

*Void aura:* Enemies that end their turns engaged with the void phoenix must attempt an easy save (6+). If the save fails, they're dazed until the end of their next turn.

*Resist fire and negative energy 16+:* When a fire attack or negative energy attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 16+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage.

*Spectacular effects:* When the phoenix is dealt a critical hit, it must roll an easy save (6+). If the save fails, the phoenix drops to 0 hit points; see the *reborn in void* ability below!

*Reborn in void:* Whenever the phoenix drops to 0 hit points, roll a d20 and add the escalation die. For each time this void phoenix has rolled its *reborn in void* ability earlier this battle, subtract 10 from the roll. For example, a void phoenix making its second *reborn in void* roll (because its first roll ended up being 20+!) when the escalation die is 6 would roll the d20 and subtract 4.

**20+:** The void phoenix is immediately reborn, healing to 120 hit points above staggered and keeps fighting!

**15–19:** The void phoenix is reborn in a blast of cold and fire and negative energy, but vaults into the overworld, removed from the battle. On the other hand, it's not done with the PCs! Add the phoenix to an upcoming battle by surprise, adding it as an additional monster not accounted for by the usual encounter-building calculations. Add a level if you feel like it, because it's *angry*.

**8–14:** The void phoenix is reborn in a blast of negative energy but wants nothing more to do with this battle. It makes the following attack, but when the attack is over it shoots off into the overworld so quickly that it's a teleport effect, and does not return to the battle, nor to the adventure.

**Void rebirth +13 vs. PD (every nearby enemy)—35 fire and negative energy damage**

**7 or less:** The phoenix flares back to life somewhere nearby in a few hours, days, months, or years. Probably not relevant to the PCs unless they or the phoenix bear a special grudge.

**AC 23**

**PD 18**

**MD 22**

**HP 230**

## SOLAR PHOENIX

*The greatest phoenixes tend to leave the world below and soar in the overworld until duty or pleasure calls them below.*

*Large 12th level caster [ELEMENTAL]*

Initiative: +20

**Fly-by talons +17 vs. AC—140 damage, and 20 ongoing fire damage (hard save ends, 16+)**

*Natural even hit or miss:* The phoenix may move again this turn as a quick action if it has already made a flying move on its turn.

*Miss:* The solar phoenix can use a *solar wind* attack as a quick action, either this turn, or on its next turn.

*[Usually special trigger, but also possible as a standard action]*

**Solar wind +17 vs. PD (1d4 nearby or far away enemies)—70 fire damage, or 120 fire damage if used as a standard action.**

*Natural even hit or miss:* The solar phoenix teleports to a point nearby or far away.

*Flight:* The solar phoenix flies like the sun unleashed.

*Flaming wings:* The solar phoenix deals 20 fire damage to each enemy that ends its turn engaged with the phoenix.



**Resist fire 16+:** When a fire attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 16+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage.

**Spectacular effects:** When the solar phoenix is dealt a critical hit, it must roll an easy save (6+). If the save fails, the phoenix drops to 0 hit points; see the *reborn in fire* ability below!

**Reborn in fire:** Whenever the phoenix drops to 0 hit points, roll a d20 and add the escalation die. For each time this phoenix has rolled its *reborn in fire* ability earlier this battle, subtract 10 from the roll. For example, a phoenix making its second *reborn in fire* roll (because its first roll ended up being 20+!) when the escalation die is 6 would roll the d20 and subtract 4.

**20+:** The solar phoenix is immediately reborn, healing to 400 hit points and keeps fighting!

**15–19:** The phoenix is reborn in fire, but vaults into the overworld, removed from the battle. On the other hand, it's not done with the PCs! Add the phoenix to an upcoming battle by surprise, adding it as an additional monster not accounted for by the usual encounter-building calculations.

**8–14:** The solar phoenix is reborn in fire but wants nothing more to do with this battle. It makes the following attack, but when the attack is over it shoots off into the overworld so quickly that it's a teleport effect, and does not return to the battle, nor to the adventure.

**Conflagration of rebirth +17 vs. PD (every nearby enemy)—90 fire damage**

**7 or less:** The phoenix flares back to life somewhere nearby in a few hours, days, months, or years. Probably not relevant to the PCs unless they or the phoenix bear a special grudge. But who are we kidding? This is a solar phoenix. It has its own agenda, and the PCs just got onto the agenda, one way or another.

AC 27  
PD 24  
MD 24

HP 640

## PHOENIXES AND TREASURE

Phoenixes don't care about treasure, but sometimes guard treasure on behalf of others. A phoenix's nest might contain a magic item that they are keeping out of circulation, or a heirloom that they intend to deliver to its intended recipient when the time is right.

Phoenixes themselves might be considered treasure. Their tears have healing properties, as do their feathers. The following items could be gifted to an adventurer by a phoenix or by the agent of an icon for whom phoenix's work . . . or unscrupulous adventurers might kill a phoenix in order to obtain the raw materials for such an item.

## PHOENIX TEARS (CHAMPION TIER POTION)

These potions can't be found for sale, but occasionally servants of the Priestess might be given one of these rare potions as a reward for their loyalty.

**Consumable item:** When you drink this potion or have it poured upon your wounds, heal using a recovery and end any ongoing effects on you. If you are staggered when you drink this potion the recovery is a free recovery, if you are not staggered when you drink this potion you gain resist fire 16+ until the end of the battle.

## PHOENIX CLOAK (EPIC TIER)

One of these red and yellow feathered cloaks hangs at the entrance to the Cathedral in Santa Cora in a glass case, guarded by a phoenix that waits the birth of the saint destined to wear it.

**Always:** +1 PD (adventurer); +2 PD (champion); +3 PD (epic).

**Always:** Resist fire 16+.

**Daily:** When you are staggered; teleport as a quick action and spend up to 1d3 recoveries.

## PHOENIX EGGS

Which came first, the phoenix or the egg? Phoenixes nest, but they don't seem to use their nests as egg-crèches like lesser birds. The High Druid's people, and the Dwarf King's people, say that the youngest phoenixes erupt from volcanos or lava flows. But there's a chance that those younglings are actually hatching from eggs concealed in the magma.

Phoenix eggs exist. They're magnificent. They're huge. Inside the egg, the phoenix appears to blossom and be reborn in fire hundreds or thousands of times. The surface of the eggs looks like molten rock and will melt rock and set other materials on fire. Phoenix eggs are fantastically durable, but they can be destroyed, sort of. See the *rebirth in fire* ability of the creatures statted out above for the type of thing that happens when you attempt to destroy a phoenix egg. You may succeed, up to a point, but the eggs are usually as likely to return as the adult birds.

In fact, it's mostly likely that the eggs are the adult birds, in a sense. In our campaign, a phoenix that is ready to move between the early life stages enters the egg for a time, like a caterpillar in a cocoon, flaming and rebirthing until it finally erupts from the shell.

If you're using the idea that phoenixes sometimes go insane from too many deaths, perhaps returning to the egg is a method of recovering sanity.

**Treasure or not:** Phoenix eggs aren't precisely treasure, but everyone wants to be around them. They're lucky. It's not that they're thought to be lucky. They really are lucky. Interpret that as you like for NPCs and the icons. For player characters, establishing a base around a phoenix egg, or managing to stay



near one regularly, should be good for some precious advantage, like an incremental advance or occasional rerolls of icon relationship dice.

Of course, phoenix eggs may attract unwanted attention. There's the irony that everyone loves a phoenix egg, but the full birds, once hatched, may turn out to be aligned with your enemies!

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

**A Darker Dawn**—One day the sun just doesn't rise, its place in the sky taken by wheeling phoenixes. The cloud of phoenixes provides insufficient light, and the world is growing colder. The icons are busy preventing an eternal winter, but the adventurers are in a position to travel into the overworld to investigate the missing sun.

**Dark Omens**—Void phoenixes have been spotted from the lighthouse at Vigil, circling over the Isle of Omen. The last time that they did this was shortly before the return of the Orc Lord. The Seven Cities have assembled an official team to investigate, but every icon is keen to learn what this omen above Omen means before the others, and so each is sending an unofficial secret team. The adventurers are tapped to be on a plausibly deniable secret team for an icon that they have good relations with, and must discover what new threat or ally the phoenixes herald. The adventurers must contend with rival factions, the official team, the monsters of Omen, living dungeons, and whatever the new force arrived on Omen is.

**Doom of Fire**—The adventurers must travel to the Isle of Fire to retrieve a phoenix egg for the Archmage, who needs to scrape the egg for at least a week to get materials for a spell component. Not only does this dangerous journey involve crossing a portion of the deadly Iron Sea, but they must face the natural dangers of a volcano, and the supernatural creatures that live on the Isle of Fire. Of course, retrieving the egg is just the beginning, phoenix eggs are rare things indeed, they tend to melt transport ships, and the Lich King wants to get his boney hands on it.

**Inheritance of Fire**—One of the adventurers has inherited a legendary item, promised to them in a will by a distant relative. Unfortunately the distant relative had lent the item to an adventurer friend, who has recently died. The item is in a tomb, buried with its last wielder. The tomb is guarded by a phoenix who is willing to allow access to the tomb to the adventurers if they can prove that they are supposed to have the magic item, but legal documents won't sway the phoenix. . . . They must prove to it that they are self-sacrificing heroes who deserve to wield the legendary item.

**Phoenix Down**—The adventurers are contacted by an emissary of the Priestess. One of the phoenixes that chooses to nest on the Cathedral has been captured by a necromancer ally of the Orc Lord, who intends to eat its heart and gain its mystic powers. The Priestess has sent agents to save the phoenix, but each of her agents has been intercepted due to a mole in Santa Cora. The emissary wants the adventurers to free the phoenix, and track down the mole. If the PCs turn down the job, or don't quite entirely succeed, you're now free to hit them with orcs who flame into undead when slain the first time.

**Return of the Phoenix King**—The ogre magi want to resurrect their long-lost ruler, an icon of a previous age when ogres were civilized, and to this end they seek the adventurers help. The ogres promise *not to destroy a village* if the adventurers recover a scroll from a cave high on Cloudhome. The tomb is guarded by giants and their phoenix ally. The cave's guardians won't let the ogres near, but the adventurers might be able to trick their way past the guards.

**Talismancer's Tears**—Everybody knows that there is no such thing as a potion of resurrection, but the talismancer of Fullcatch Bay believes that there is a way to create one. He's almost certainly wrong, but is willing to pay the adventurers in healing potions and other one-use magic items if they bring him back a bottle of fresh phoenix tears. The adventurers could find a phoenix and attempt to make it cry, or they could steal a phoenix tear potion and claim that it is fresh.

**The Crown of Phoenix Claws**—A legendary item has recently been stolen from the Emperor, the *Crown of Phoenix Claws*. The adventurers wake up one morning to discover that the crown is in their possession, but the claws have been replaced with those from a non-magical bird. Imperial agents are searching the area for the crown, and if they find the adventurers with it they'll want to know what the adventurers have done with the irreplaceable and priceless claws. Is this all a ploy of the Prince of Shadows, and if so what does he really want?

**The Flaming Feather**—A pirate ship sailing out of Drakkenhall has been raiding all across the Iron Sea, and the bounty on the capture of the ship is high enough to tempt the adventurers on to the high sea themselves. The loyal crew of the ship *The Flaming Feather* are fearless, for their captain has the aid of a phoenix who provides the crew with phoenix tears to heal them. Will the adventurers capture the pirates and their ship, be captured, or join the jolly crew?

**War of the Wings**—In a past age the phoenixes were on the sides of both the dwarves and the elves, and while that conflict is far past the phoenixes that fought in the war are still around. A seemingly innocuous recent event that the adventurers were involved in has reignited the conflict, between the phoenixes at least. The adventurers, as the spark that started a battle between phoenixes, are prevailed upon to make peace between the battling fire birds.