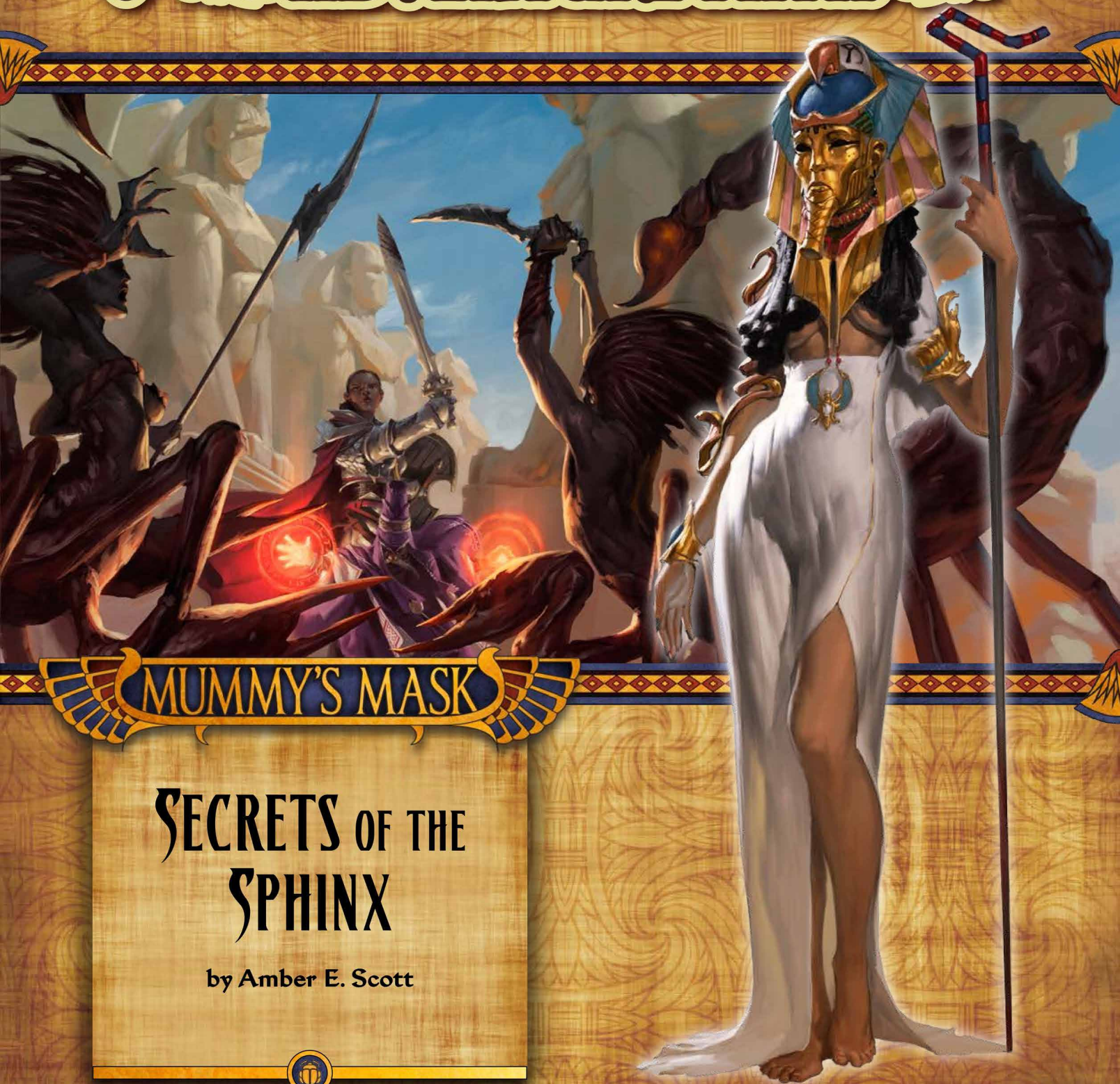


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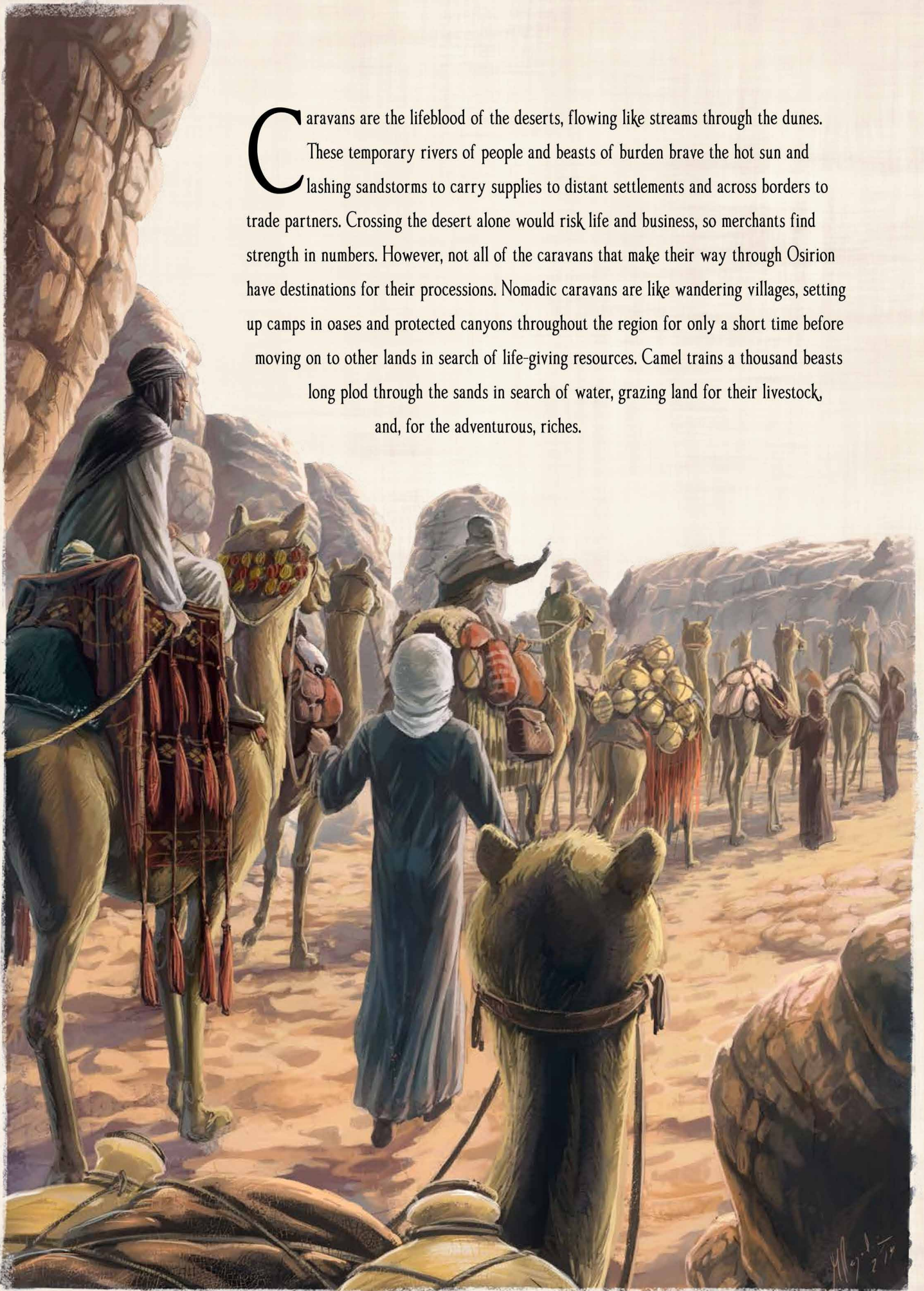
MUMMY'S MASK

SECRETS OF THE SPHINX

by Amber E. Scott



Caravans are the lifeblood of the deserts, flowing like streams through the dunes. These temporary rivers of people and beasts of burden brave the hot sun and lashing sandstorms to carry supplies to distant settlements and across borders to trade partners. Crossing the desert alone would risk life and business, so merchants find strength in numbers. However, not all of the caravans that make their way through Osirion have destinations for their processions. Nomadic caravans are like wandering villages, setting up camps in oases and protected canyons throughout the region for only a short time before moving on to other lands in search of life-giving resources. Camel trains a thousand beasts long plod through the sands in search of water, grazing land for their livestock, and, for the adventurous, riches.






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MUMMY'S MASK

ADVENTURE PATH  PART 4 OF 6

SECRETS OF THE SPHINX





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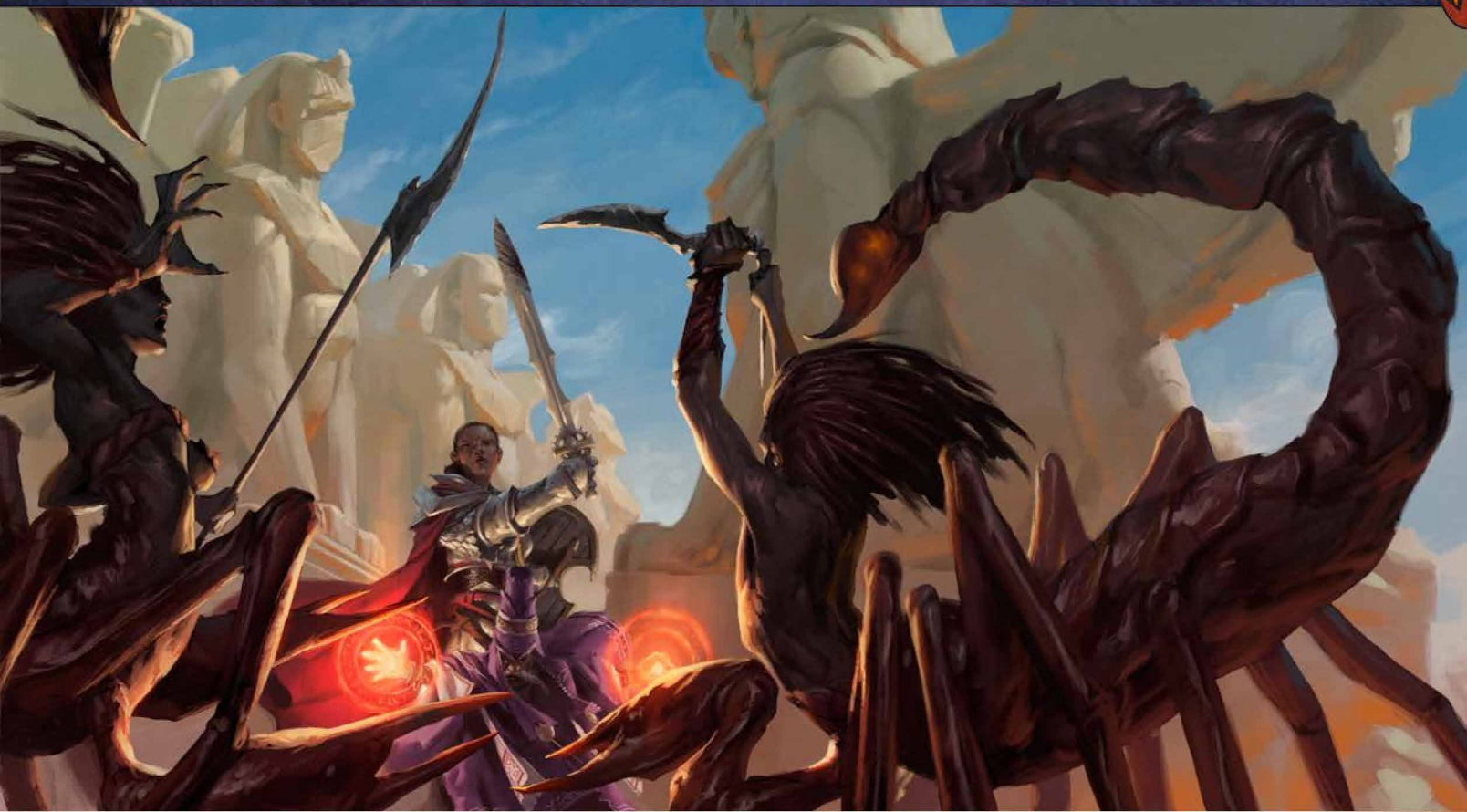


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CONFESSIONS OF A GUY WHO USES HIS MIDDLE INITIAL IN HIS SIGNATURE

My name is Greg, and I'm an AP addict.

Hi, Greg!

You may have seen my name before on an occasional Paizo product. It usually appears as with my middle initial "A" in it. Why the "A," you ask? Well, that's a good question. It just so happens that there's an actor named Greg Vaughan (same spelling and everything); he's a month younger than me and is from my neck of the woods, having grown up just down the interstate from me. He's also been an underwear model and at least once replaced Fabio as the spokesman for I Can't Believe It's Not Butter! (and maybe still is, I can't say that I've kept track). Anyway, obviously the physical resemblance is uncanny as well (I kid, I kid). But unless I want to be mistaken for a

super-successful, handsome-as-the-devil, butter-peddling, underwear-modeling star of stage and television, I figured I'd better do something to distinguish myself. I'm trying to remember why I wanted to do that now. But there it is, the most frequently asked question I ever get.

Back to my addiction, though. It's true that I've written in every AP that Paizo has produced after Shattered City. No seriously, look in all of them. I'm there, like a stubborn rash or that weird neighbor peeking over your fence that you just can't get rid of and even bought the house next to you again after you moved just because you have all the fake-butter groupies and are a member of the Mankini-of-the-Month Club. Yes, that's a thing; no, I don't know anything about it. As I was saying, I am in all of them.

So as you can see, I have a problem. In fact, the streak has gotten so long that it has almost become a dare between me and the good folks at Paizo as to who would flinch first. I've thought about retyping the first three chapters of *Fifty Shades of Grey* in Pig Latin and throwing in a few stat blocks as my turnover just to see if they'd break first, but decided maybe that wasn't the best idea after all. You're welcome. Besides, I figure Nick Logue will get around to it anyway with his Hook Mountain ogres (zing!).

I've had this *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly* standoff going on with Paizo and the other Greg Vaughan (I consider the underwear guy to be "The Ugly," though YMMV), for a full 7 years. Quite simply something had to give, and it turns out it was me.

Some of you may already know this, but for those of you who don't and are still awake, I'll explain my reasons for ending "The Streak" as I call it, or "The Time of Troubles" as I think I heard James Jacobs mutter under his breath once. Somewhere along the road of life, I asked myself what else a guy with a wife, three kids, a career in insurance claims, a sweet writing gig, and a hobby as a butter salesman impersonator needs in his life. Why, medical school, of course! So I applied to the University of Oklahoma's College of Medicine, paid some hefty bribes, stalked a few members of the applicant review board, gave out some free fake butter samples, threatened to pose on campus every day in underwear, and somehow miraculously got accepted. I also received a court order against wearing anything less than a full ghillie suit within a thousand feet of campus, but that's another matter.

I started in the Fall of 2012 and actually managed to complete the first year while writing an AP adventure for *Reign of Winter* and one for *Wrath of the Righteous* (though James had mercy on me and teamed up with me on the latter—thanks James!), but I finally had to admit that I simply wasn't smart and/or talented enough to keep this up for long. I think I probably named half-a-dozen villains in my latest AP turnovers after assorted enteric bacteria before they were thankfully caught by the pens of James and Rob, and I don't think the professor in my Blood-Hematopoiesis-Lymphopoiesis course was amused when she asked what the number one cause of death has been among adults in the Western Hemisphere, and I said, "Orcs, if you don't count Casmaron." It was starting to get to me.

I was fortunate to be able to sit down with James, Rob, Wes, Adam, and a bunch of the other guys and gals of Paizo this last summer and talk to them about my future in writing for them. They knew I was in school and had been very supportive, and their attitude did not change. They understood the conflicting demands upon my time and recognized that I had to prioritize my family and school. In fact, they couldn't have been more gracious in their support and encouragement.

ON THE COVER

This month's cover brings us the eponymous leader of the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh, whom the PCs will finally confront as they seek the stolen body of the architect Chisisek inside the ancient halls of the Sightless Sphinx. The cult has been a thorn in the PCs' side since the beginning—but defeating the Forgotten Pharaoh may not be the victory the PCs were hoping for.



So here I sit as the Mummy's Mask Adventure Path makes its run with nary an adventure in it to call my own. For many of you that might be a relief, a chance for new blood to break into the APs or even (and I shudder at the thought) to let Richard Pett begin to catch up to me in the number of AP adventures written. But for me, at least, it's the end of an era, and I'm not ashamed to say I'm a little bit sad. I'm going to miss the old streak and the unbearable pressure of it weighing down on me every day. Okay, maybe not that, but you know what I mean.

However, in the immortal words of Hubert J. Farnsworth, "Good news, everyone!" Though my streak of writing AP adventures officially ends with *The Midnight Isles*, my streak of appearing in APs for Paizo will continue, as Rob asked me to pen a foreword and Adam said I could wash his car and "stuff." Sort of like a methadone clinic for my AP addiction. So I get to appear in *Mummy's Mask*, as well as in *Adventure Paths* to follow, if in a reduced capacity, and hopefully in a few years when some classes and clinical rotations are out of the way, I'll be able to take up the adventure pen once more. Yeah, the streak isn't quite the same without writing the adventures, but honestly I'll take what I can get. I owe everyone at Paizo a big "Thank you!" and I owe one to all of you as well.

Whether I've deserved to or not (debatable, I know), I've gotten to share each and every Adventure Path with you since *Age of Worms*. I've put so much of my own home game, ideas, and characters in them over the years that I feel like I've had a chance to sit at the table and roll the bones with each of you to some extent, and that's a big deal to me. I've made friends with people I never would have met and gotten to talk to them about this shared hobby, and in the final tally, I think that's what it's been all about.

So to all of you who have patiently endured The Streak all this time—thanks! It wouldn't have been the same without you.

Greg A. Vaughan
Pathfinder Adventure Path Addict



MUMMY'S MASK

SECRETS OF THE SPHINX

PART 1: DEEPER INTO THE DUNES

PAGE 8

The PCs once more enter the Parched Dunes, searching the desert for the Sightless Sphinx—the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh's secret base, where the cult has taken the stolen body of the architect Chisisek.

PART 2: PRIDE OF THE DISPOSSESSED

PAGE 16

The PCs encounter a pride of displaced maftets who offer to show them the way to the Sightless Sphinx if they reclaim an ancient shrine of Sekhmet from a band of evil genies.

PART 3: IN THE SHADOW OF THE SIGHTLESS SPHINX

PAGE 24

The PCs enter the Sightless Sphinx, where the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh is battling a maftet cult of Areshkagal, the demon lord of riddles, for control of the Sphinx. The PCs must face both cults before battling their way to the Forgotten Pharaoh herself to reclaim Chisisek's body.

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

"Secrets of the Sphinx" is designed for four characters and uses the medium XP track.

10 The PCs begin this adventure at 10th level.

11 The PCs should be 11th level by the time they enter the halls of the Sightless Sphinx.

12 The PCs should reach 12th level while exploring the Sightless Sphinx, and before facing the Forgotten Pharaoh.

The PCs should be 13th level by the end of the adventure.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Centuries ago, cultists of Areshkagal, the demon lord of greed, portals, and riddles, built a temple to their demonic patron in the desert wastes of Osirion. Mimicking Areshkagal's own form, the temple was constructed as a colossal statue of a six-legged, faceless sphinx that became known as the Sightless Sphinx. The cult inhabited the Sphinx for many decades, but a band of templars devoted to Sarenrae breached the temple's defenses 150 years ago to eradicate the cult. The beleaguered cultists even summoned a powerful glabrezu ally named Ninureset to help defend the Sphinx, but they were defeated. All of the cultists were slain, and the glabrezu was banished back to the Abyss. Their work done, the paladins left, leaving the Sightless Sphinx empty and abandoned.

Decades later, a tribe of maftets settled near the Sightless Sphinx. Obeying their racial imperative to guard sites of importance, the maftets established their camp in the shadow of the Sightless Sphinx but never dared enter the structure. The elder maftets sensed the ruins' foul history, and the tribe knew better than to take a chance at stirring up old evils. Eventually, however, some of the younger members of the tribe grew curious, and in recent months, a group led by a charismatic maftet named Userib eventually found a way into the Sphinx.

But as the maftet elders had warned, evil still lingered within the Sightless Sphinx. For the first time in 150 years, living creatures had set foot inside the Sphinx, and Areshkagal herself sensed the presence of the young maftets in her ancient temple. Once more, Areshkagal sent the glabrezu Ninureset to the Sightless Sphinx, charging him to make up for his earlier failure by rebuilding her cult. As Userib and his companions explored the Sphinx's empty rooms, a portal appeared before them and Ninureset stepped through, accompanied by a wash of Abyssal energy. This profane energy amplified the chaotic, somewhat selfish natures of the maftets, and when Ninureset offered them power and guidance, Userib and most of his companions gave into temptation and swore their fealty to Areshkagal. Only one of the maftets was able to resist the lure of the glabrezu's power and fled the Sphinx.

The maftet who returned to camp gave her elders a garbled version of events. Some of the maftet elders were wary of the glabrezu's power, but others were committed to rescuing their lost tribespeople and called for the tribe's strongest warriors to assault the temple. Before the maftets could take action, however, Userib and those maftets loyal to him emerged from the Sphinx with their new demonic allies. Maftet fought maftet in the skies above the Sightless Sphinx until the original members of the tribe, recognizing themselves outnumbered and outmatched, retreated to avoid losing any more of their number. The maftets abandoned their ancestral home,

fleeing to an old ruin in the Parched Dunes where they established a makeshift camp.

More recently, a Nethysian priestess named Serethet discovered the *heart of Hakotep*, which contained another piece of the soul of Hakotep I—his *ib*, the seat of his emotion, thought, and will—beneath Azghaad's Spire in Sothis. Hakotep's *ib* possessed Serethet, replacing the cleric's consciousness with his own. After spending millennia neither alive nor dead, Hakotep finally had a body, but with the pieces of his soul still separated, the ancient pharaoh did not know the location of his flying tomb, which still held his *ba* and his body. Now calling himself the Forgotten Pharaoh, Hakotep formed a cult devoted to finding and reuniting the lost fragments of his soul so he could return to life and resume his rule over his ancient kingdom.

During her researches in the Nethysian archives, Serethet had learned of the Sightless Sphinx, and with access to her memories, the Forgotten Pharaoh decided the ancient temple would be the perfect base for her cult while her followers searched for the *Mask of the Forgotten Pharaoh* and Hakotep's tomb. To ensure success, the Forgotten Pharaoh secured the services of girtablilu mercenaries to help defend the cult's new headquarters. But when the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh entered the Sightless Sphinx, its members found it already inhabited by Userib's new cult of Areshkagal.

The two cults immediately clashed—the Forgotten Pharaoh, in her hubris, could not conceive of yielding a site in what should be her own kingdom. In an early conflict, the maftets kidnapped several cultists of the Forgotten Pharaoh and sacrificed them to summon several vlocks and shadow demons to reinforce their numbers. The maftets also captured an ornate lacquered chest containing the royal thraie larva stolen by the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh.

Ninureset met the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh head-on in combat and only narrowly escaped death at the hands of a skilled group of girtablilu mercenaries. Since then, the glabrezu has been more circumspect in his interactions with the cult. Using his *veilability*, Ninureset has infiltrated the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh to sow discord among its members. The demon even tricked one of the Forgotten Pharaoh's lieutenants into wishing for great strength, then twisted the *wish* and transformed the cultist into a hideous half-crocodile monstrosity with stone arms.

Now the two cabals maintain an uneasy ceasefire, punctuated by the occasional skirmish when the cultists run into each other. Userib plans to capture more Forgotten Pharaoh cultists to sacrifice, hoping to eventually destroy the cult and return Areshkagal to glory in the region. The Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh, meanwhile, continues to push against the maftets, scheming on how to destroy the Areshkagal cultists and their demon allies while the Forgotten Pharaoh continues her search for the *Mask of the Forgotten Pharaoh* and Hakotep's tomb.

PART I: DEEPER INTO THE DUNES

After defeating the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh at Chisisek's tomb in the previous adventure, the PCs learned that the cult stole the architect's body and took it to a place called the Sightless Sphinx. If the PCs rescued the gynosphinx Tetisurah, she knows the approximate area where the Sphinx can be found—the Parched Dunes north of Chisisek's tomb—but not its exact location. To find the Sightless Sphinx and finally defeat the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh, the PCs will have to scour the desert.

The first part of this adventure continues the PCs' exploration of the Parched Dunes begun in "Shifting Sands," this time in the northern reaches of the region. As in the previous adventure, this sandbox-style hex-crawl uses the exploration rules detailed on pages 154–159 of *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Campaign* (also available online at paizo.com/prd). You should familiarize yourself with these rules before running this section, as well the rules on desert terrain on pages 430–431 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*. Temperatures in the Parched Dunes fluctuate between very hot (above 90° F) and severe heat (above 110° F) during the day. The *Core Rulebook* also details rules for heat dangers, starvation, and thirst, though at this point in their careers, the PCs are likely to be able to easily overcome such problems with spells such as *create water* and *endure elements*, and the focus in this part of the adventure should be on exploration and adventure, not bookkeeping and resource tracking.

The PCs can track their exploration on a piece of hex paper, such as the blank sheet of hex paper provided in the *Mummy's Mask Player's Guide*, but it would be best to continue using the same hex map from the previous adventure. The direction and speed of the PCs' exploration is left to the them; not every hex contains an encounter or treasure, but there's no way to know whether a hex will prove valuable without exploring it first!

Story Awards: Award the PCs 100 XP for each hex they fully explore.

HEX TERRAIN TYPES

The vast majority of hexes within the northern Parched Dunes are considered desert terrain—this includes areas of dunes, rocky plains, and sand flats. Badlands hexes are also desert, but they contain difficult terrain elements. To the northeast are hexes that incorporate hill and mountain terrain. All of the hexes in the Parched Dunes are considered trackless. If more than one terrain type is present in a hex, treat it as if it were a hex of the dominant terrain type.

Travel time through the Parched Dunes is determined by the slowest member of the party, but assuming a base speed of 30 feet, it takes 8 hours to travel through a desert, hill, or mountain hex. It takes 2 days to explore a desert hex, 1 day to explore a hill hex, and 3 days to explore a mountain hex.

RANDOM HAZARDS AND WANDERING MONSTERS

As the PCs explore the northern Parched Dunes, you can liven things up with random encounters. Roll once per day (or once per hex, if the PCs enter multiple hexes in a single day) on the random encounters table on page 155 of *Ultimate Campaign*. If the result is a hazard, you can use the sample hazards on page 159 of *Ultimate Campaign*. Other possible hazards include dry quicksand (*Core Rulebook* 427) and duststorms (*Core Rulebook* 438). If the result is a monster, you can randomly generate it using the table on page 83 of this book, page 324 of the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, or the Osirian Desert table on page 53 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Osirion, Legacy of Pharaohs*.

NORTHERN PARCHED DUNES LOCATIONS

The following section presents specific, planned encounters the PCs might come across as they explore the Parched Dunes. Unless otherwise noted, the PCs must explore a hex to encounter the creature or location there; simply traveling through a hex does not trigger the encounter. Assuming that the PCs continue their explorations from Chisisek's Tomb, they should start in that hex, on the western side of the Parched Dunes, about halfway up the map.

A. THE SLAIN SCOUT (CR 9)

A sunbaked corpse lies half-buried in a sand dune. The body's upper torso resembles that of a human man, but it's joined to the body and curling tail of a giant scorpion.

Creature: A second figure, equally parched and withered but much more animated, crouches over the corpse, tearing off strips of flesh and stuffing them greedily into its mouth, slurping and chomping with disgusting glee. The corpse is that of a girtablilu, one of the mercenaries from the Sightless Sphinx (area J). He was out scouting when he ran afoul of a baykok. After stalking its prey across the sands, the baykok killed the girtablilu and is now settling down to feed on the corpse and devour the girtablilu's soul. The baykok snarls and attacks the moment it notices the PCs.

BAYKOK

CR 9

XP 6,400

hp 97 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 35)

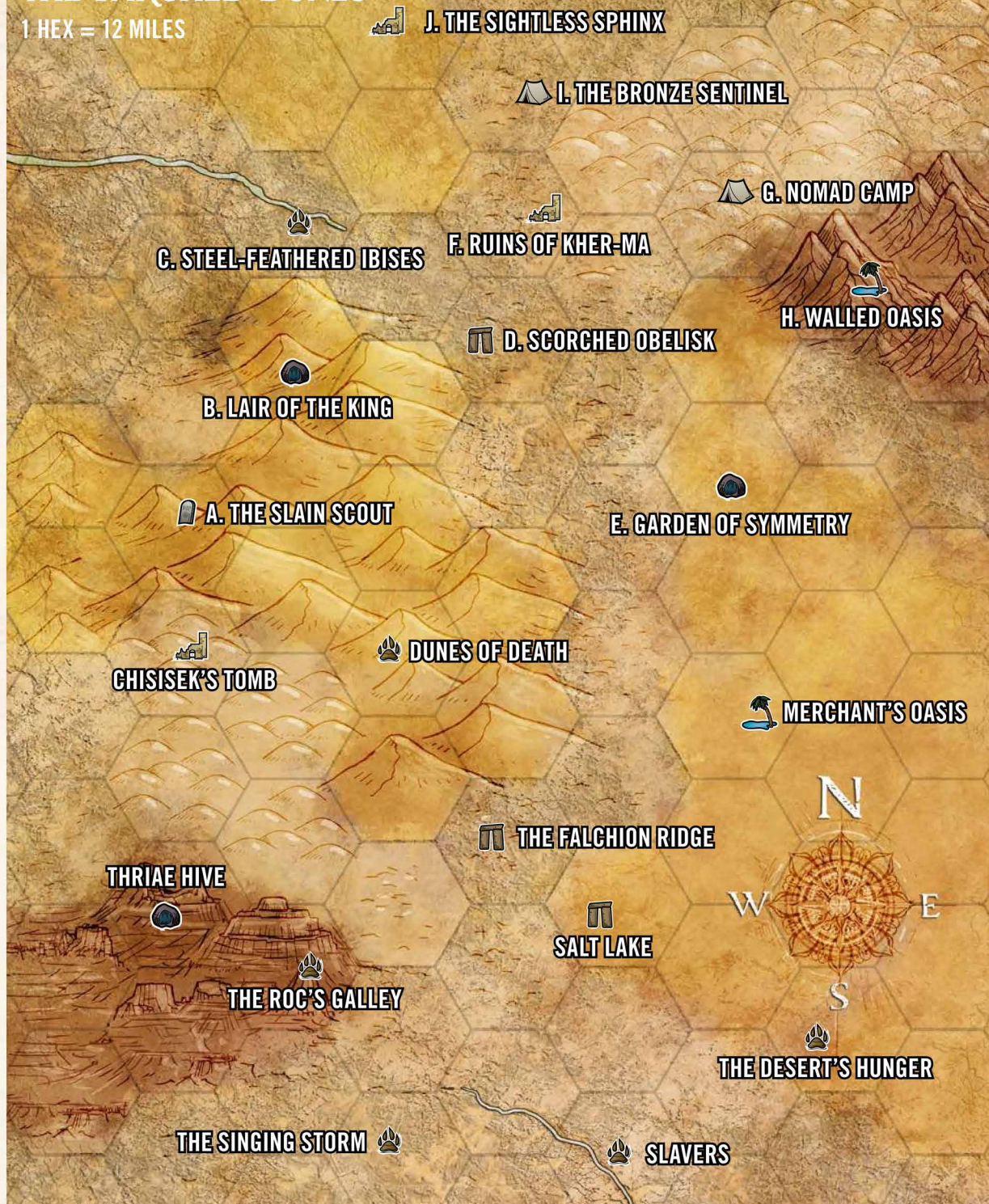
TACTICS

During Combat The baykok opens combat with its dread howl, trying to paralyze as many opponents as possible. It then takes to the air and unleashes a barrage of arrows at multiple targets, again trying to keep as many foes paralyzed as it can.

Morale The baykok fights until destroyed to protect its kill.

THE PARCHED DUNES

1 HEX = 12 MILES



	BADLANDS		DUNES		HILLS		CAMP		DEAD BODY		LAIR		LANDMARK
	ROCKY PLAINS		SAND FLATS		MONSTER		OASIS		RUIN				

FINDING THE SIGHTLESS SPHINX WITH MAGIC

The PCs might try to use magic to locate the Sightless Sphinx, but the unique magical wards placed on the Sphinx by the cult of Areshkagal years ago shield it from detection by means such as *find the path* or *legend lore*. However, if the PCs learn about the girtablilu mercenaries serving the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh, they can circumvent the wards by using *find the path* to search for “the girtablilu camp” or “the mercenary camp.” Similarly, if the PCs interrogate any of the cultists and learn the name and a detailed description of one of the prominent cult members, the PCs might be able to use *locate creature* to narrow down the location of the Sphinx when they are within the spell’s range.



Treasure: In addition to the baykok’s +1 *composite longbow*, the girtablilu corpse carries a few items of value: a *scorpion tail whip* (see page 63), a *composite longbow* (+2 Strength), a quiver with 20 arrows and two +1 *arrows*, a small pouch containing 43 gp, and a decorative golden amulet engraved with a spiraling scorpion’s tail (worth 85 gp).

Development: The girtablilu, whose name was Dakuri, was the nephew of the mercenary leader Rubila (see area K12). Dakuri was a fine scout and the girtablilus anxiously await his return. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check allows a PC to recall the burial customs of the girtablilu. To respect the body, the PCs should cover it with sand and place a stone engraved with a simple rune over the body. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check knows that the amulet Dakuri wears is a personal effect that his family would likely appreciate having returned.

B. LAIR OF THE KING (CR 11)

The facade of a once-grand temple extends from a rocky slope among the dunes. The slender gold columns and cupola of the temple suggest the image of an elegant gilded cage. Patches of bare rock show through where the gold leaf has flaked away, however, and cracked steps worn from the passage of countless feet show the temple’s age. Desert sand lies thickly on the temple’s balustrades, but the steps seem freshly swept.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check recognizes the structure as a temple of Sarenrae. With a successful DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check, a PC can identify small religious glyphs carved on the pillars indicating that the temple’s residents deconsecrated the temple in a formal ceremony, probably as part of moving to another holy site. In such a ceremony, the temple relics would have been removed, along with any items of value that could be of use at the new site.

Use the map on page 12 for this location.

Creature: A broad-shouldered human man with sun-darkened skin, white hair, and a dignified bearing is exploring the temple, and approaches the PCs if they enter. He introduces himself as Zaid Faad, an explorer of many years who specializes in investigating old temples. Faad seems interested in the PCs’ adventures but says he has already claimed this temple for his own and he “can’t possibly allow others to come tromping in, knocking into walls and tracking sand all over the place” until he’s finished his research. He assures them, “It shouldn’t be more than a month or so now. Do come back then—I’m sure you’ll be interested in my notes.”

In truth, Faad is neither a human nor an explorer; he is one of the five humanoid forms of a royal naga named Zereletan who lairs within the temple. Though he considers it beneath him, Zereletan takes on his humanoid forms in an effort to discourage the curious instead of resorting to more violent methods. If the PCs demand to investigate the temple or threaten “Zaid Faad,” the naga resumes his normal appearance, rearing up in a terrifying display above the PCs. Zereletan orders the PCs out of his temple, warning them that he has the patience of a mountain but the ferocity of the burning sun itself, and says, “If it comes to violence, I will not be the one to bleed out upon the desert sands.”

If the PCs try to deal diplomatically with the naga, they discover Zereletan is a proud and noble creature. He often unintentionally insults those with whom he speaks, noting that his “alternate forms serve to chase away those with duller senses than nagas” and how he “rightfully claims this treasure as one of the few beings cultured and intelligent enough to appreciate it.” He seems baffled by any offense the PCs take and quickly grows irritated with any of their attempts to convince him that they are his equals (much less his superiors). If the PCs act deferential and flatter the naga, however, he becomes much more congenial toward them.

Zereletan’s initial attitude is unfriendly; if made friendly with a successful DC 29 Diplomacy check, Zereletan asks the PCs to do him a small service. Several days ago, the naga was bathing in a nearby river (area C) when his crown slipped off one of his heads and was lost in the fine silt. If the PCs return with his crown, Zereletan will give them a fine prize from his personal hoard, “worthy of those who serve nobility.”

If the PCs choose to fight Zereletan or persist in their “uncultured” behavior, the naga demands once again that they leave and retreats into the temple, meeting any further incursions with violence.

ZERELETAN

CR 11

XP 12,800

Male royal naga (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 198)

hp 133

TACTICS

Before Combat Zereletan casts *mage armor* before approaching the PCs.

During Combat Zereletan activates his deafening gaze and casts *blink* on the first round of combat. On subsequent rounds, he switches to his blinding gaze and casts spells at those unaffected by his dual gaze. If forced into melee combat, he first targets melee fighters first with multiple bites.

Morale Although arrogant, Zereletan has no desire to die for his treasure hoard. If reduced to fewer than 30 hit points, he casts *invisibility* and flees the temple.

Treasure: Zereletan keeps his treasure hoard in a tiny secret compartment behind the temple's altar (Perception DC 20 to locate). The eight art pieces in the hoard—statues, paintings, pottery, and the like—are worth between 900 and 1,200 gp individually (8,000 gp altogether). In addition, there is a strange triangular piece of iron with a gold feather engraved along each surface. A *detect magic* spell reveals the object's moderate evocation aura; a successful DC 25 Spellcraft check reveals that the object is a power source for an automaton or construct of some sort (the *bronze sentinel* at area I).

Development: If the PCs find Zereletan's crown at area C and return it to the naga, he offers them gold and gems or an art object (including the *bronze sentinel*'s power source) worth 3,000 gp in total from his hoard.

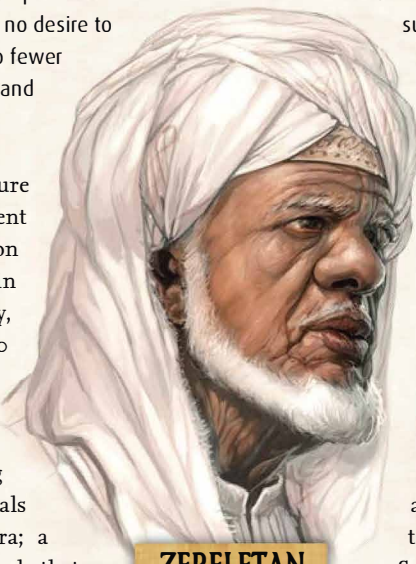
Story Award: If the PCs strike a deal with Zereletan and return his crown, award them XP as if they had defeated the naga in combat.

C. STEEL-FEATHERED IBISES (CR 12)

The desert sands run right to the edge of a narrow, winding river. The opposite riverbank is rockier, and a few thin reeds grow here and there along the banks. Though narrow, the river seems cool and deep and swirls by at a lazy pace. Clouds of humming insects hover above the surface of the water.

The headwaters of the Scarab River wind through the Parched Dunes in this hex.

Creatures: A flock of large, long-legged ibises with steely gray feathers cluster near the reeds, ruffling their feathers whenever the insects draw too near. The "ibises" are actually an Osirian strain of stymphalidies, and can be identified as such with a successful DC 18 Knowledge (arcana) check. The territorial and ravenous birds attack the moment the PCs come within 40 feet of the flock.



ZERELETAN

STYMPHALIDIES (4)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 94 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 257)

TACTICS

During Combat The stymphalidies use their glare attacks to attempt to blind attackers. The stymphalidies then fling wing razors at approaching combatants before charging into melee.

Morale If two or more stymphalidies are slain, any survivors attempt to flee.

Treasure: The PCs can search the river for Zereletan's lost crown (see area B) once the stymphalidies are defeated. Searching the river takes 1d3 hours and requires a DC 25 Perception check. With a successful check, the PCs find a small golden circlet dotted with teardrop-shaped diamonds, sized for the naga's main head. The crown is worth 350 gp.

D. SCORCHED OBELISK (CR 10)

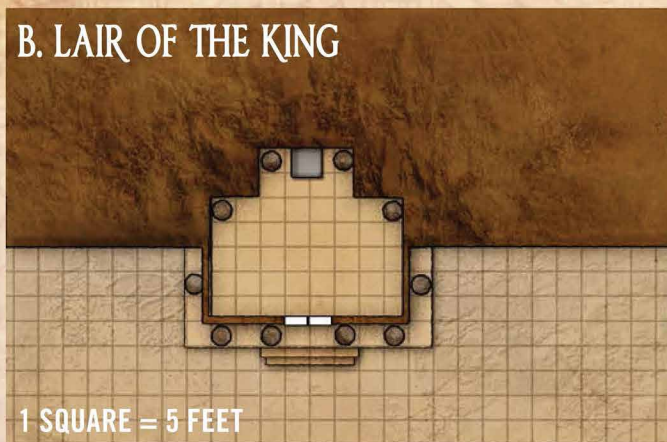
PCs entering this hex automatically discover this location. In addition, a PC in an adjacent hex who spends 1 hour studying this hex from afar can attempt a DC 10 Survival check to discover this location.

An obelisk of black stone stands alone on the rocky desert plain. No markings adorn its perfectly smooth sides. At the base of the obelisk lies a still humanoid form. Its skin is charred black and flaking from its bones, and the tattered remains of its clothes flutter in the gentle breeze.

The obelisk is nearly 30 feet tall, and once marked a long-forgotten border of Ancient Osirion. The stone from which the obelisk is made has the unusual property of conducting and storing electricity, which the Ancient Osirians used to defend this border. The corpse is that of a human trader named Marik who became separated from his caravan and sought shelter from a recent desert storm in the shadow of the obelisk, only to be incinerated by a lightning strike, which also charged the obelisk with electricity.

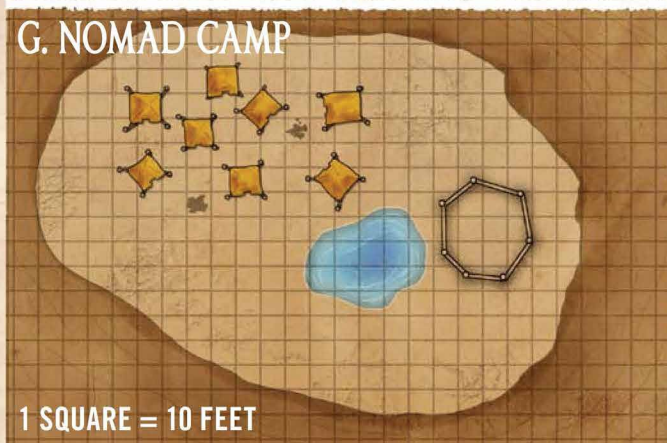
Trap: A creature who touches the obelisk with bare skin or a metal weapon triggers a release of the stored electricity in a manner akin to a trap—lightning arcs out from the obelisk in all directions. The obelisk can be detected and disabled as a normal magic trap. If the PCs successfully disable the trap, they realize that the energy stored within the obelisk can be used to temporarily charge metal melee weapons with magical electricity. There is enough electricity within the obelisk to give up to three weapons the *shock* special ability for 1 week. Alternatively, the energy can be used to charge a single weapon, giving it the *shocking burst* special ability.

B. LAIR OF THE KING



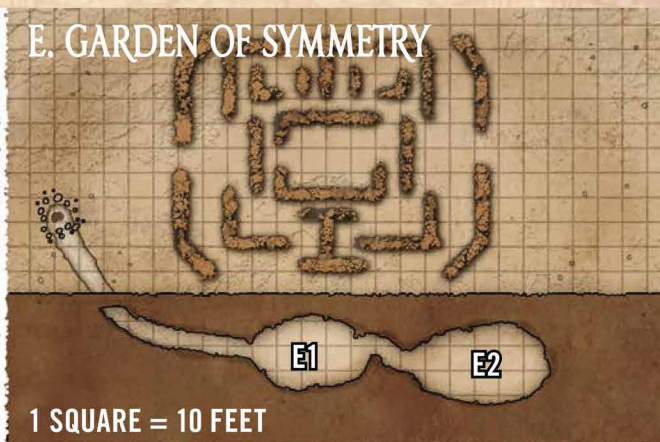
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

G. NOMAD CAMP



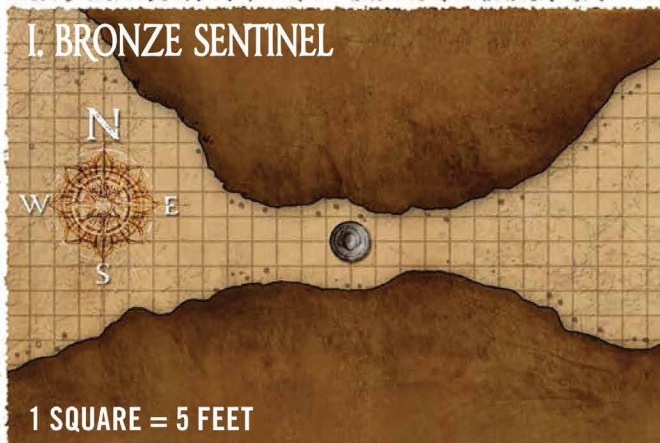
1 SQUARE = 10 FEET

E. GARDEN OF SYMMETRY



1 SQUARE = 10 FEET

I. BRONZE SENTINEL



1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

for 1 week. Triggering the trap or charging weapons depletes the obelisk of energy; it only resets after being struck by lightning in a naturally occurring desert storm.

SCORCHED OBELISK

CR 10

XP 9,600

Type magic; Perception DC 31; Disable Device DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** special; **Bypass** special

Effect spell effect (*chain lightning*, up to 13 bolts at separate targets, 13d6 electricity damage, Reflex DC 24 half for primary bolt, Reflex DC 22 half for secondary bolts); multiple targets (up to 13 targets, all of which must be within 30 ft. of primary target)

Story Award: If the PCs disable the obelisk and use it to charge their weapons, award them the full XP value for the trap.

E. GARDEN OF SYMMETRY (CR 11)

From a distance, a long line of pale rocks set appear to be some sort of low wall or perhaps trail markers. Nearer, though, the rocks become part of an elaborate design traced out on the ground.

Each rock is roughly the size of a human head, polished and shaped until the rocks are almost identical. The pale gray color of the stones gives them the disquieting appearance of skulls.

The rocks form a geometric pattern over 100 feet across, though it's impossible to gain a complete view of the design from the ground. Use the map above for this location.

Creatures: These rocks were carefully shaped, polished, and individually placed by a young blue dragon named Keferuzagra. The dragon's obsessive nature led him to create this elaborate rock garden; the symmetry and order of the lines soothe the dragon and he often spends hours gliding over the pattern and meditating on its perfection. When the PCs approach, there is a 20% chance that Keferuzagra is flying above the rock garden; the dragon's coloring blends into the sky and he flies several hundred feet in the air, imposing a –10 circumstance penalty on Perception checks to spot him. Keferuzagra keeps an eye on the PCs to see what they do. If creatures move within 30 feet of the garden or take to the air, the dragon attacks, fearing that the intruders will disturb his creation—and thinking they might make a tasty dinner. If Keferuzagra is not in the air, he is coiled in his lair beneath the garden (area E1).

Keferuzagra also uses a clay golem to guard the garden. The golem stands in the center of the garden. If any creatures approach within 30 feet of the garden, the clay golem moves to intercept them. If Keferuzagra is in his lair, he emerges 2 rounds later to join the fight, alerted by the sounds of combat. Together the dragon and golem make for a formidable combat, but the PCs can use the terrain to their advantage, as both foes go to great lengths to avoid disturbing the rock garden.

CLAY GOLEM CR 10

XP 9,600

hp 101 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 159)

TACTICS

During Combat The clay golem attacks any intruders who come within 20 feet of the garden. It has been explicitly ordered to not disturb the garden under any circumstances, and does not pursue opponents across the rocks. If intruders move more than 60 feet away from the garden, the golem ceases to pursue them.

Morale The golem fights until destroyed.

KEFERUZAGRA CR 9

XP 6,400

Male young blue dragon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 94)

hp 95

TACTICS

During Combat Keferuzagra has a pathological fear of disturbing his rock garden and refuses to engage in melee with enemies who stand among the rocks (though he continues to fight from the air). He also refrains from using his breath weapon if doing so would scorch the rocks.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 25 hit points, Keferuzagra takes wing and shouts down at the PCs to leave his territory with their lives. If they press the attack, he uses his desert thirst ability before flying away at top speed to hide in the desert, returning 6 hours later to take stock of his lair.

E1. Keferuzagra's Lair

The entrance to Keferuzagra's lair lies in a low pile of boulders west of the garden, as the dragon doesn't want to risk disturbing his carefully crafted patterns. The entrance is well concealed, but it can be found with a successful DC 25 Perception check (the DC drops to 15 if the PCs see Keferuzagra emerge from the sands). A 10-foot-wide passage, lined with smoothly polished rocks, leads to an egg-shaped chamber beneath the desert.

Sand fills the bowl of this subterranean chamber, providing a soft and shifting surface to walk upon. A heatless flame burns in a blue glass lantern hanging from the ceiling, filling the room with a pale azure glow. On the other side of the chamber, another dark passage stretches away.

Keferuzagra sleeps in this chamber; he keeps his hoard in the treasure chamber at the end of the passage on the other end of the room.

Treasure: An iron bracket inside the blue lantern burns with a *continual flame*. The bracket can be removed, allowing it to be placed within a lantern.

E2. Keferuzagra's Hoard (CR 9)

Shining gold glitters in the depths of this chamber. Heavy gold statues depicting dragons in flight rise from the sandy floor of the room. A silver box sits atop a narrow stone pedestal. An iron chest sits at the far end of the chamber, almost entirely engulfed in sand.

Trap: The iron chest is unlocked but is warded with a trap that targets every creature in the room with arcs of electricity when the chest is opened.

SHOCKING CHEST TRAP CR 9

XP 6,400

Type magic; Perception DC 26; Disable Device DC 26

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Duration** 1d6 rounds; **Reset** none

Effect spell effect (*shocking grasp*, Atk +10 ranged touch, 4d6 electricity damage); multiple targets (all targets in area E2)

Treasure: Six large gold statues of dragons stand in various poses in the room. Although impressive at first glance, they are just gilded wood, worth only 150 gp each and weighing 70 pounds each. The box on the pedestal is a silver-and-jade jewelry box (worth 125 gp) holding 10 rough-cut emeralds worth 50 gp each. The iron chest contains 186 pp, 3,380 gp, and 4,000 sp. In addition, a yellow leather quiver decorated with the holy symbol of Sarenrae—an *efficient quiver*—hangs from a peg on the wall.

F. RUINS OF KHER-MA

This area is detailed in Part 2.

G. NOMAD CAMP (CR 10)

Campfire smoke curls up from this rocky dell, which contains several small, dun-colored tents. A handful of camels and mules stand nearby in a makeshift pen of wooden stakes and hemp ropes. A small pool of water ripples between the tents and livestock pen.

Use the map on page 12 for this encounter.

Creatures: A tribe of desert nomads has set up camp in this hex. These nomads make their living crisscrossing the desert, hunting wild animals and preserving the hides, teeth, claws, and certain salable organs for trade,

MUMMY'S MASK

as well as combing through ruins for trinkets and bits of pottery to sell. In all, there are 22 nomads in the camp, including their leader, a tall, dark-skinned woman named Naheeba. The nomads are cautious, but they make their livings trading with strangers, so the moment they spot the PCs, a cry of “Naheeba!” goes up around the camp. Naheeba emerges from one of the tents and greets the PCs in both Taldane and Osiriani. She is a friendly woman who wears a brightly colored tunic over loose linen trousers. She knows a smattering of many languages and tries to put people at ease by inserting slang phrases from other cultures in her conversation.

If the PCs are interested in trading with the nomads, Naheeba is willing to do so. While most of the nomads’ trade goods are of little use to adventurers, they do have a few exceptional items available for sale (see *Treasure*, below). If the PCs are interested in purchasing mounts, Naheeba explains that the nomads need all the animals they have. If the PCs succeed at a DC 25 Diplomacy check, Naheeba agrees to sell either a mule or a camel at double its normal price. If the PCs succeed at a DC 30 Diplomacy check, Naheeba agrees to sell at most one mule and one camel at 150% of the normal cost.

If the PCs ask the nomads for information or seek to share the nomads’ camp for the night, Naheeba welcomes them to spend the night, but the nomads are more reticent with information. Everything in the desert is valuable, after all. Naheeba invites the PCs to join the nomads for a meal so that they can get to know each other and decide whether they wish to share information. During the meal, the nomads invite the PCs to tell stories, sing songs, or otherwise entertain the camp. In exchange, the nomads entertain the PCs with their own tales of Ancient Osirion and with some local dances that feature a great deal of spinning. If the PCs provide entertainment and succeed at a DC 20 Perform check, the nomads become much more friendly and agree to share information.

Though the nomads don’t know the location of the Sightless Sphinx, they did encounter a displaced maftet tribe several weeks ago. One of the maftets mentioned previously living “in the shadow of the Sphinx.” The nomads can direct the PCs to the maftet camp in the ruins of Kher-Ma (area F), and can warn the PCs of the dangerous stymphalidies that gather near the river at area C. In addition, they know of the scorched obelisk in area D, but they superstitiously avoid it and know nothing of its abilities.

If the PCs make camp with the nomads, they are awakened in the middle of the night by screams and sounds

of panic, as a pair of powerful bulettes tears up through the ground in search of dinner. The quick movements of the fleeing nomads attract the bulettes’ attention, and each bulette has a 50% chance each round of veering off to chase down and attack the nearest nomad. A PC can redirect a bulette’s attention toward the PCs instead of the nomads by dealing at least 10 points of damage to the creature in a single attack, by succeeding at a DC 19 Bluff check to attract the bulette’s attention, or by using an ability that compels an enemy to attack, such as a cavalier’s challenge.

The nomads are no match for the bulettes and scatter immediately to flee in various directions. Naheeba is woefully outmatched, but she considers it her duty to try to distract the bulettes and protect her people. She attacks and makes as much of a distraction as she can, potentially leading the bulettes into range of the PCs’ attacks.



NAHEEBA

NAHEEBA **CR 5**
XP 1,600

Traveling merchant (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 285)

hp 31

TACTICS

During Combat Naheeba has no wish to fight, but she takes up arms to protect her people if necessary.

Morale Naheeba fights to the death to defend her people.

NOMADS (21) **CR 1**
XP 400 each

Vagabond (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 291)

hp 15 each

ADVANCED BULETTES (2) **CR 8**
XP 4,800 each

hp 100 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 39, 294)

TACTICS

During Combat A bulette makes a leap attack against the nearest nomad within range of its charge. If no nomads are in range, the bulettes either leap on the nearest PC or take a double move action toward the nearest nomad.

Morale A bulette burrows into the sand and flees if reduced to fewer than 25 hit points.

Treasure: Among the wares carried by the nomads are the following (their prices are in parentheses): a +2 *khopesh* of ancient Osirian design, its blade decorated with hieroglyphs of birds (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment* 30; 8,320 gp); six +1 *frost bolts* (166 gp each); a *dusty rose ioun stone* (5,000 gp); an *iron spike of safe passage* (*Ultimate Equipment* 306; 2,000 gp); four hot weather outfits (*Ultimate Equipment* 89; 8 gp each); and

25 feet of “fine silk cord” (actually a piece of spider’s silk rope, unfamiliar to the nomads, *Ultimate Equipment* 73; 1 gp).

If the PCs slay the bulettes and at least half the nomads survive, the grateful Naheeba offers the PCs her personal treasure, an *eye of Horus amulet* (see page 62).

H. WALLED OASIS

This area is detailed in Part 2.

I. BRONZE SENTINEL (CR 10)

Finding this ravine while exploring the hex requires a successful DC 25 Perception check, or a successful DC 20 Survival check to notice the tracks of the cultists going into the ravine. Use the map on page 12 for this location.

A narrow ravine dips down beneath the level of the sands. Loose chips of red shale cover the ground, and variegated streaks of crimson and purple ripple across the walls of the ravine. What looks like a large humanoid figure or statue of burnished metal stands in the center of the ravine, reflecting the light of the sun overhead. Silence hangs over the depression.

Hundreds of years ago, a small cabal of arcane researchers built an outpost and laboratory in this area. The outpost has long since collapsed and been reduced to dust, but one of the researchers’ creations remains. The statue in the center of the ravine is actually a magical automaton called the *bronze sentinel*. It is 15 feet tall, made of magically treated bronze, and crafted in the shape of a muscular man with an impassive countenance, wearing a silver headband resembling two serpents twined together.

The sentinel is magical, and a *detect magic* spell reveals the object’s moderate evocation and transmutation aura. A PC who succeeds at a DC 34 Spellcraft check can identify the sentinel as some sort of automaton bears similarities to golems and other constructs.

With a successful DC 25 Perception check, a PC can find a secret 2-foot-square hatch in the statue’s back. Opening the hatch reveals an inner chamber, large enough for a Medium humanoid to sit inside, containing a number of pedals and levers. The pedals and levers are stiff and immobile. A PC in the inner chamber who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check notices two triangular holes in the sentinel’s control panel; with a successful DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check, a character realizes that two components are missing from the sentinel. Without these components, the sentinel remains deactivated and nothing short of a *miracle* or *wish* can restore it. One of these components is in the hoard of the royal naga Zereletan in area B, while the other may be found in the shrine of Sekhmet in the walled oasis (area Hg).

Creatures: A group of cultists serving the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh has also discovered the sentinel and have set up camp here while investigating the strange

statue. These wardens have been sent out to scout the desert surrounding the Sightless Sphinx for anyone—such as the PCs—who might get too close to the cult’s headquarters. Three of the cultists are examining the statue curiously while one member of the band stands on the edge of the ravine above, keeping watch for threats. The cultists immediately attack any strangers.

WARDENS OF THE FORGOTTEN PHARAOH (4)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

Human fighter 5/ranger 2

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; Senses Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+6 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 shield)

hp 73 each (7d10+30)

Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +0 (+1 vs. fear)

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 scimitar +13/+8 (1d6+7/18–20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow
+9/+4 (1d8+3/x3)



BRONZE SENTINEL

Special Attacks combat style (archery), favored enemy (humans +2), weapon training (heavy blades +1)

TACTICS

During Combat The cultists use Stealth to hide behind cover before firing *flaming arrows* at opponents. Once opponents are within 60 feet, a cultist drops her bow and draws her scimitar and shield, charging into melee to take advantage of her Opening Volley feat and make Power Attacks.

Morale The cultists are fanatically devoted to the Forgotten Pharaoh and fight to the death, which triggers their Troth of the Forgotten Pharaoh feat, destroying their bodies. If a cultist is knocked unconscious or her capture seems inevitable, her Troth of the Forgotten Pharaoh feat activates as an immediate action to prevent capture.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 13, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 21

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Opening Volley^{uc}, Point-Blank Shot, Power Attack, Toughness, Troth of the Forgotten Pharaoh (see page 17), Weapon Focus (scimitar), Weapon Specialization (scimitar)

Skills Climb +6, Knowledge (nature) +5, Knowledge (religion) +2, Linguistics +1, Perception +9, Stealth +8, Survival +9

Languages Ancient Osiriani, Common, Osiriani

SQ armor training 1, track +1, wild empathy +3

Combat Gear +1 *flaming arrows* (8), *potion of cure moderate wounds*; **Other Gear** +1 *scale mail*, mwk light wooden quickdraw shield^{ue}, +1 *scimitar*, mwk composite longbow (+3 Str) with 12 arrows, gilt wooden funerary mask (worth 25 gp), 4 gp

Treasure: If the PCs recover both of the *bronze sentinel's* missing components and insert them into their proper receptacles, the sentinel's eyes glow green and the eyes of the serpents around its brow glow yellow. Silver runes form a glowing triangle of arcane sigils on its chest. All of the controls in the sentinel's inner chamber move easily, and the *bronze sentinel* becomes fully functional. The *bronze sentinel* is a modified, variant *apparatus of the crab*. Unlike an *apparatus of the crab*, the sentinel cannot swim, and instead of pincers and feeler, it has arms and hands. See page 62 for full details of the *bronze sentinel*.

I. THE SIGHTLESS SPHINX

This area is detailed in Part 3.

PART 2: PRIDE OF THE DISPOSSESSED

The tribe of maftets who once lived “in the shadow of the Sightless Sphinx” has inhabited the Parched Dunes for generations. After being driven from the Sightless Sphinx by the Areshkagal-worshipping maftets under the leadership of Userib, the remainder of the tribe took up residence among the fallen walls of a ruined village called Kher-Ma. Though the site has been picked over countless

times by explorers and tomb robbers, its sense of antiquity remains, and the maftets feel comfortable in the ruins.

In the mountains to the east of Kher-Ma stands an outpost that contains a shrine to Sekhmet, the Ancient Osirian goddess of war and healing. The maftets would like to receive Sekhmet's blessing at the shrine, believing it would help them reclaim their former home and heal the rift in their tribe, but the outpost's current residents—a group of efreets—aggressively defend their territory and repelled the maftets when they attempted to visit the shrine.

F. RUINS OF KHER-MA (CR 12)

Broken rock walls offer scant shade from the burning desert sun, but cloth sheets painted with triangles and yellow and blue stripes stretch between the crumbling walls, affording some shelter. Here and there, the walls remain intact enough to suggest the frame of a building, but the ruins otherwise appear ravaged by time. Still, the ruins show some signs of habitation. Wooden barrels topped with white marble lids stand in a shady area next to a wall. On the outskirts of the ruins, wooden racks hold stretched and drying animal hides. The hum of conversation drifts on the dry breeze.

Creatures: A pride of 13 maftets is all that remains of the tribe that once dwelled near the Sightless Sphinx. Having recently suffered such terrible losses, the maftets are wary of strangers. Two adults always stand guard on the outskirts of the ruins; the other seven adults of the tribe remain inside the ruins with the tribe's four children. The guards look like 7-foot-tall, dark-skinned humans with the lower limbs of lions and gold-feathered wings stretching from their backs. The guards challenge anyone who approaches, demanding to know their business with the tribe.

If the PCs wish to talk or ask to trade or purchase supplies, the maftets require the characters to lay down their weapons as a show of good faith. Because of the recent troubles that have plagued the tribe, reluctance or attempts at negotiation on the part of the PCs stokes the fire of the maftets' suspicion, making them hostile. A successful DC 25 Diplomacy check is required for the PCs to convince the maftets they are not hostile and should be allowed to keep their weapons for safety's sake. A request to speak to the leader of the tribe is likewise met with suspicion, but the maftets agree to bring their leader out for negotiations if the PCs lay down their weapons first.

If the PCs make any mention of the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh or the Sightless Sphinx, the maftets order the PCs to wait where they are. One maftet remains on guard while the other leaves to fetch their leader, Erayu. See Meeting Erayu on page 17 for details of this encounter.

If the PCs are accompanied by the gynosphinx Tetisurah, they gain a +5 circumstance bonus on any Diplomacy checks to befriend the maftets.

If the PCs attack, they find themselves facing almost the entire pride of angry maftets—all the adults save Erayu. Though quick to defend their home, the maftets are not cold-blooded murderers. They first try to reduce a PC to unconsciousness before ordering the rest to leave. If the PCs attempt to negotiate during combat, the maftets are willing to call off hostilities but insist only one PC remain to talk while the rest must retreat at least 100 feet away.

MAFTETS (8)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 68 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 188)

TACTICS

During Combat The maftets are practiced warriors and immediately take to the sky, then use their runic tattoos to activate *cat's grace* and *magic weapon* as a standard action. The maftets break into two groups of four, and each group targets a single opponent with raptor dives. Each group then arranges its members into a diamond-shaped formation around its target to gain flanking bonuses, focusing attacks until the group's target is unconscious or dead.

Morale If three or more maftets are slain, the rest take wing and retreat into the ruins to fetch their young and any supplies they can grab before fleeing.

Meeting Erayu (CR 10)

The pride's current leader, a maftet elder named Erayu, oversees the rearing of the young maftets, teaching them geography, desert survival, and their people's history. Over the years, Erayu has helped defend the tribe against bulettes, giant scorpions, sandstorms, and other threats, and the maftets have survived and even flourished. When Userib led his group of young maftets into the Sightless Sphinx, it came as a great shock to the tribe, especially to Erayu. This was a challenge unlike any the maftet leader had faced before. Erayu instinctively knew that the Sphinx was an evil place, but he could not bring himself to abandon Userib and the others to their grim fate. But before he could formulate a solid plan for extricating the lost ones, Userib and the demon-worshipping maftets emerged and attacked their former tribespeople. After a pitched battle in which several maftets died, the tribe was forced to withdraw.

Creatures: Assuming the PCs make peaceful contact with the maftets, Erayu emerges from the ruins to speak with them. Erayu is an aged maftet; his hair is white, his fur is streaked with gray, and his wing feathers are tipped with white, but he still carries himself with an inner strength. Erayu is cautious, but willing to talk to the PCs. He keeps two guards with him at all times and is alert for any signs of aggression on the PCs' part. Erayu is an even-tempered but protective maftet. The safety of his pride comes first, and any interactions with the PCs always lead back to the well-being of his people. Erayu has the habit of growling

NEW FEAT

Many cultists of the Forgotten Pharaoh take part in a painful ritual in which they carve the cartouche of Hakotep into their flesh to demonstrate their devotion to the cult. This ritual takes the form of a new feat.

TROTH OF THE FORGOTTEN PHARAOH

You've pledged your body to the Forgotten Pharaoh, and are willing to sacrifice yourself to keep his secrets even in death.

Prerequisite: Must be a member of the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh.

Benefit: Upon taking this feat, you undergo a ritual wherein the cartouche of Pharaoh Hakotep I is carved into your flesh (typically on the chest or back), and then embellished with painful crimson and other tattoos. The ritual takes 1 hour to complete, and you take 3 points of damage from the wound (see *Special*, below). Upon completion of the ritual, you gain the feat's benefits.

As an immediate action, or when you die, you can cause white-hot fire to burst from the tattooed cartouche on your flesh, immolating your body in a bright flash and instantly reducing it to ash. If you are still alive, you are immediately slain. Spells such as *raise dead* or *speak with dead* cannot be used on your remains, but your equipment is unaffected.

As the fire consumes you, fiery snakes whip out of your body in a 5-foot-radius burst, dealing 1d6 points of fire damage + 1 point per character level. Creatures in the area can attempt a Reflex save to negate the damage (DC 10 + 1/2 your character level + your Constitution modifier). In addition, creatures within a 10-foot burst must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 your character level + your Constitution modifier) or be blinded for 1 round. Blind or sightless creatures are unaffected by this blinding effect.

Special: You permanently lose 3 hit points when you take this feat. This damage can be healed only with a *miracle* or *wish* spell, but doing so causes you to lose all benefits of this feat.

softly when he thinks, a trait that can be off-putting to those he negotiates with. When he learns the PCs are seeking the Sightless Sphinx, Erayu thinks hard before replying.

"Until recently, my people lived in the shadow of the Sightless Sphinx. Circumstances drove us from our homes, which have now fallen into the clutches of evil. I am loath to direct you to the Sphinx without knowing more about you. Not only is it a place of danger, but you could unknowingly do great harm. I regret I cannot say more until I am reassured of your abilities. Would you be willing to provide a service to us in exchange for information on the Sightless Sphinx?"

MUMMY'S MASK

RUINS OF KHER-MA

N thorp

Corruption -4; **Crime** -5; **Economy** -4; **Law** -3; **Lore** -2;
Society -4

Qualities insular

Danger -10

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government autocracy

Population 13 (9 adult maftets, 4 children)

Notable NPCs

Pride Leader Erayu (N male old maftet fighter 4)

Shaman Sibri (N female maftet oracle 3)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 50 gp; **Purchase Limit** 500 gp; **Spellcasting** 1st

Minor Items +1 banded mail, *potion of cure moderate wounds*; **Medium Items** —; **Major Items** —



If the PCs seem open to the idea, Erayu continues.

"We chose to settle in these ruins because my people are most comfortable in ancient places, but also because a nearby outpost—though otherwise too new to be of interest to us—holds a shrine to Sekhmet, our patron of battle.

"Upon settling here, we journeyed to the outpost to make our offerings to the Lady of Slaughter, but as we approached, monstrous creatures emerged from the outpost to drive us back." Erayu scratches the sand at his feet and spits to the side. "Red-skinned humanoids with curving horns sprouting from their brows and fire in their hearts. They attacked without warning, and we were forced to retreat before we lost even more from our pride. I dare not risk all of us in a direct assault. Perhaps you could investigate the outpost and clear a path for us to the shrine of Sekhmet? With Sekhmet's blessing, I would feel confident in showing you the way to the Sightless Sphinx."

Erayu does not know what manner of creatures guarded the outpost, but he can describe them as 12-foot-tall, red-skinned humanoids with horns. They carried falchions and heat radiated from their bodies. Upon hearing Erayu's description, a PC who succeeds at a DC 23 Knowledge (planes) check can identify the creatures as efreet. If the PCs agree to visit the outpost and defeat the efreet within, Erayu gives them directions to the walled oasis (area H), which he describes as a solidly built outpost that has weathered years of abandonment well.

ERAYU

CR 10

XP 9,600

Male old maftet fighter 4 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 188)

N Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 14, flat-footed 21 (+7 armor, +4 Dex, +3 natural, +1 shield)

hp 105 (12 HD; 8d10+4d10+39)

Fort +9, **Ref** +13, **Will** +9 (+1 vs. fear)

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (poor)

Melee *scimitar of the striking wing* +17/+12/+7 (1d6+8/18-20),
mwk scimitar +16/+11 (1d6+6/18-20)

Special Attacks paired weapons, raptor dive

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +9)

Constant—*mage armor*

3/day—*magic weapon*

1/day—*cat's grace*, *protection from evil*

TACTICS

Before Combat Before meeting the PCs, Erayu casts *protection from evil* on himself.

During Combat Erayu casts *magic weapon* on his off-hand scimitar and takes flight. Once in the air, he raptor dives at the most heavily armored enemy, trying to take down powerful warriors before they can do too much damage.

Morale Erayu fights to the death to defend his pride.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 18, **Con** 16, **Int** 14, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 30

Feats Combat Reflexes⁸, Double Slice, Improved Two-Weapon

Fighting, Lightning Reflexes, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon Rend, Weapon Focus (scimitar), Weapon Specialization (scimitar), Wingover

Skills Diplomacy +10, Fly +10, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (history) +12, Knowledge (local) +8, Perception +16, Stealth +18, Survival +10

Languages Ancient Osiriani, Common, Osiriani, Sphinx

SQ armor training 1, runic tattoos

Gear +1 *breastplate*, *scimitar of the striking wing* (+2 *scimitar*, see page 63), mwk scimitar, 170 gp

MAFTETS (2)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 68 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 188)

Development: If the PCs return to the ruins of Kher-Ma with the outpost cleared of the efreet and their allies and the shrine of Sekhmet accessible to the maftets, Erayu thanks them for their help.

"You have indeed proven your worth. It takes strength and purpose to survive the Parched Dunes, and I see now that you have both. I thank you, and I will help you in your quest."

Erayu ruffles his wings and leans forward to tell his story. "We lived for many generations in the shadow of the Sightless Sphinx, guarding and preserving it, though never entering it, for

ancient evil lingered within its crumbling walls. But several of our younger kin, led by a rash youth named Userib, decided to explore the Sphinx. Of the dozen who ventured within, only one returned, her face white with fear. She told us that Userib had awakened the evil within the Sphinx and that it had corrupted him and the others. Her words held truth, for before we could initiate a rescue, Userib and his followers attacked. Many of my tribe fell under their assault, leaving us no choice but to abandon the Sphinx.”

A solemn look spreads over Erayu’s face. “I could say that in our weakened condition, and with the children to consider, we could not expect to win the day in an attack on the Sphinx. This would be true. But it is also true that our own kin still reside within the Sphinx. Can they be saved and returned to the pride? I do not know. I cannot imagine facing those we have raised from birth and making the decision to end their lives. You are strong and I believe you are worthy souls. We shall direct you to the Sightless Sphinx. May Sekhmet grant you power in battle, and Thoth give you the wisdom to do what is necessary.”

Erayu gives the PCs directions to the Sightless Sphinx (area J), though he can’t spare any of his maftets to accompany the PCs.

Story Award: Award the PCs 9,600 XP for learning the location of the Sightless Sphinx from the maftets.

H. WALLED OASIS (CR VARIES)

A successful DC 30 Perception check is required to discover this outpost while exploring the hex. If the PCs are following the directions of the maftets, they can find this location automatically.

Weathered stone walls, still solid despite obvious years of wear, stand strong and tall among the desert mountain peaks. The tips of green palm fronds just show over the top of the walls, suggesting a courtyard within, and a three-story circular tower rises from one corner of the compound. An air of emptiness hangs over the outpost.

This outpost was built around an oasis in a secluded valley where the peaks of the Pillars of the Sun extend into the Parched Dunes. The oasis still remains viable, and this guaranteed access to water, along with the good condition of the structures, makes the outpost a valuable site that has been fought over repeatedly. The stone masonry walls of the compound are 3 feet thick and stand 15 feet tall.

Currently, a fierce noble efreeti named Kixexa and her small band of genies control the outpost. Kixexa’s company

includes two efreeti allies and a shaitan named Picasí. Kixexa and Picasí have been friends for decades and the efreet take orders from either genie. In addition, Picasí managed to make peaceful contact with a desert drake named Kjef-kadeq, who now serves as a guardian for the outpost in exchange for a portion of the genies’ treasure. Kixexa’s long-term goals involve gathering sufficient resources to return to the Plane of Fire and secure a small domain, but in the short term, she is content to maintain her position here while scouring the desert for treasure-laden ruins.

One efreeti in human form always stands guard on the battlements (area H5) above the provisionary, patrolling the walls of the outpost once every hour. If the efreeti spots anyone approaching the compound, it calls down a warning to the drake in area H2. If intruders get within 100 feet of the outpost, the efreeti encircles them in a *wall of fire* to deter any closer approach.

If the lookout alerts the compound, the second efreeti in area H4 joins him on the battlements. The lazy desert drake

Kjef-kadeq remains in the courtyard, waiting to see whether the efreet really need his assistance. Only after the efreet call for aid several times does the drake stir itself, joining the combat 1d4 rounds later, letting out a terrific roar to alert the rest of the inhabitants.

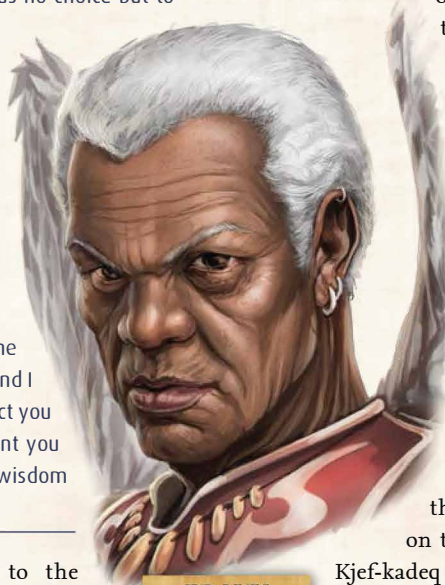
H1. Front Gate

A 7-foot-tall gate of 2-inch-thick wood stands in the middle of the south wall. The gate is locked and the lock is rusted shut (hardness 5, hp 20, break DC 25, Disable Device DC 40); the genies fly over or stone glide through the walls. Climbing the walls requires a successful DC 20 Climb check.

H2. Courtyard Oasis (CR 8)

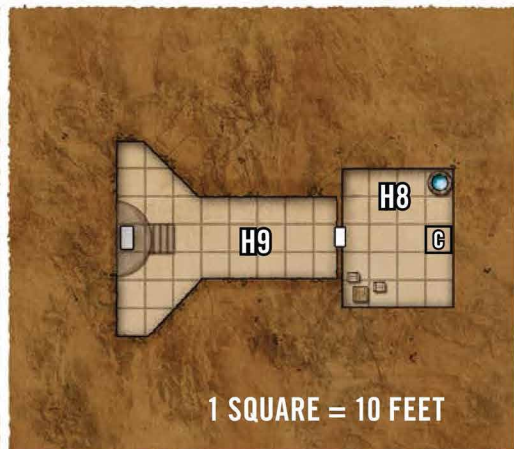
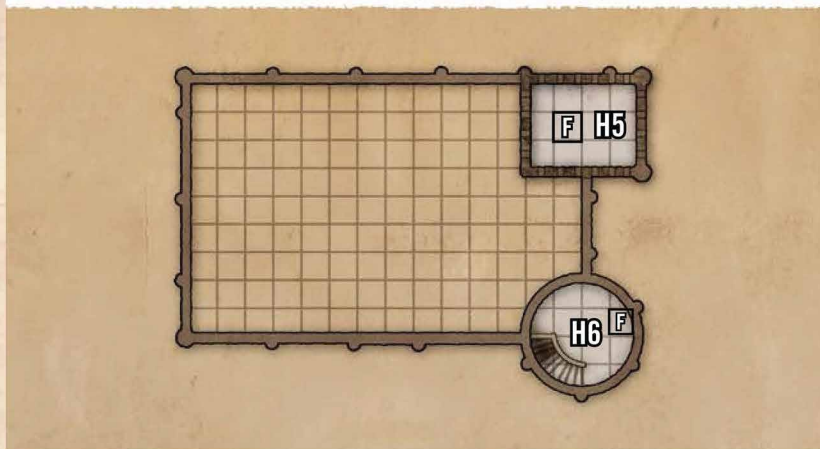
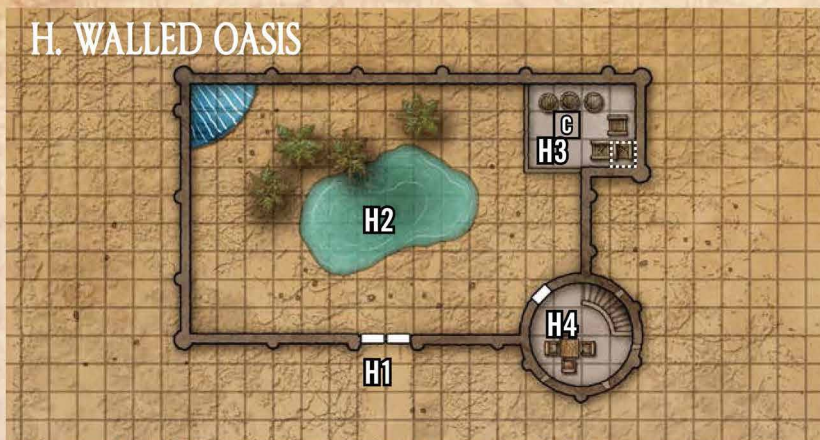
A placid pond sits in the center of the courtyard, surrounded by several lush green palm trees and piles of bleached bones. Sun-warmed sand fills the rest of the courtyard. In the northwest corner, a stretch of blue-and-white striped canvas casts a patch of shade over a couple of wooden chairs beneath it. A rectangular building sits in the northeast corner, and a circular tower rises over the southeast corner.

Creature: The desert drake Kjef-kadeq spends most of its time here baking in the sun. It leaves the outpost at night to hunt—the remains of its prey lie scattered around the edge of the oasis. Kjef-kadeq eagerly attacks anyone other than its allies who enter the compound, but it is lazy,



ERAYU

H. WALLED OASIS



and it waits 1d4 rounds before responding to calls for aid from the efreeti lookouts.

KJEF-KADEQ CR 8

XP 4,800

Desert drake (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 105)

hp 103

TACTICS

During Combat Kjef-kadeq tries to catch as many enemies as possible with its sandstorm breath in the first round of combat (even if an efreeti is the area of effect, but not if two of them are). It then moves to attack the enemy who seems the most badly wounded from its breath, attacking with bite and tail slap. If Kjef-kadeq falls to below 40 hit points, it rises into the air and attempts to stay out of melee, exclusively using its breath weapon.

Morale If reduced to 20 hit points or fewer, Kjef-kadeq abandons its allies and attempts to fly away.

Treasure: Kjef-kadeq has buried its treasure beneath the sand in the courtyard. A successful DC 30 Perception check or DC 20 Survival check reveals a slightly grainier patch of sand in the courtyard, indicating the area has been dug up and smoothed down again. Buried beneath

this patch of sand is a +1 *khopesh* (*Ultimate Equipment* 30), a *water elemental gem* (which Kixexa wanted to destroy and the drake managed to salvage), a string of amber beads (worth 400 gp), a silver circlet set with a pearl (worth 250 gp), and 2,000 gp in loose coins in a wooden chest.

Development: If the PCs engage in combat in the courtyard, the efreeti in area H4 can attempt a DC 20 Perception check to hear the battle; if successful, it joins in on the following round. The DC reflects the thick stone walls of the tower and its distance from the battle.

H3. Provisionary (CR 10)

The thick stone walls and floor of this chamber keep the room cool even beneath the midday sun. Wax-sealed clay vessels line one wall, and a stack of crates sits in a corner. A few droning flies bumble around in the dark room, and the smell of rancid oil lingers in the air. A wooden ladder climbs up to a trap door in the ceiling.

This provisionary holds old supplies, most of which are unnecessary to the outpost's current denizens. The clay vessels were used to make olive oil and the spoiled remains of the oil coats the inside of the vessels. The crates hold

bundles of arrows, candles, linen sheets, and tools, and a few desiccated bits of dried rations. The trap door in the ceiling leads to area **H5**.

Trap: The crates in the corner conceal a second trap door in the floor, which the PCs can discover with a successful DC 15 Perception check. The shaitan Picasi has made the rooms below (areas **H8** and **H9**) her domain, and as she can stone glide through the floor, she's locked the trap door (hardness 5, hp 15, break DC 18, Disable Device DC 25) and repaired an old trap in the walls that shoots razor-tipped arrows at anyone opening the door.

BURST OF ARROWS TRAP CR 10 XP 9,600

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** repair

Effect Atk +20 ranged (8d6); multiple targets (all targets in a 20-ft. radius)

Treasure: A successful DC 20 Perception check reveals three +2 arrows tucked within one of the arrow bundles in the crates.

H4. Tower Main Floor (CR 10)

Arrow slits in the wall of this round chamber reveal slivers of the desert outside. In the center of the room, four cane-back chairs surround a table. A curved stone staircase along one wall leads to a trap door in the ceiling.

A wooden box underneath the table holds dusty tin plates, mugs, and cutlery. The trap door in the ceiling leads to area **H6** and is barred from the other side (hardness 5, hp 15, break DC 25).

Creature: One efreeti resides in this room, unless the compound has been alerted and it has joined its allies elsewhere. The efreeti attacks any intruders who enter the tower.

EFREETI CR 8 XP 4,800

hp 95 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 140)

TACTICS

During Combat The efreeti casts *wall of fire* to separate opponents as much as possible and *scorching ray* to wear them down (watching for signs of fire resistance). In melee, the efreeti uses its falchion, taking 5-foot steps whenever possible to force enemies to provoke attacks of opportunity as they move to attack the efreeti. The efreet are used to fighting in tandem and anticipate each other's moves if working together.

Morale If reduced to 30 or fewer hit points, the efreeti casts *gaseous form* and retreats to area **H6** to regroup.

Trap: To prevent intruders from accessing her chamber above, Kixexa granted a *wish* to the desert drake Kjekadeq to create a magic trap on the trap door to area **H6**. Attempting to open or even touching the trap door triggers the trap and launches a fireball into the center of the room, where it explodes, filling the entire room with flame. When necessary, the genies use a hidden switch to bypass the trap.

FIREBALL TRAP CR 8 XP 4,800

Type magic; **Perception** DC 28; **Disable Device** DC 28

EFFECTS

Trigger touch (*alarm*); **Reset** none; **Bypass** hidden switch (Perception DC 25 to locate)

Effect spell effect (*fireball*, 10d6 fire damage, Reflex DC 19 half); multiple targets (all targets in a 20-ft.-radius burst)

Treasure: A wax-sealed tin casket in the box beneath the table contains pungent spice that still maintains its potency (worth 75 gp).

H5. Battlements (CR 8)

A crenellated stone wall edges this roof, though cutouts allow access to the top of the compound's walls. Blowing sand has scoured the edges of the defensive wall into smoothness, and fine grit coats the roof, making footsteps crunch. A wooden trap door sits near the center of the roof.

The trap door leads to area **H3** below.

Creature: One efreeti spends most of its time on this roof, which gives it an excellent view of the surrounding desert. The efreeti normally takes human form while on lookout duty, and makes a circuit of the compound's walls once every hour. The efreeti engages anyone approaching the outpost (see area **H**). Its tactics in combat are identical to those of the efreeti in area **H4**.

EFREETI CR 8 XP 4,800

hp 95 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 140)

H6. Chamber of Flame (CR 11)

Sheets of roaring flame form a circular chamber of sorts, with a ceiling of crackling fire overhead and a floor of sluggishly moving lava. More lava flows down a curving staircase of dark stone along one flaming wall. To the north, a huge pile of cushions lies upon a stone platform above the lava floor. Heat radiates from every surface, and the air is sharp with the tang of sulfur and ash.

All of the flames and furnishings in this chamber are *permanent images* created by the room's occupant. Beneath the

MUMMY'S MASK

illusions are bare stone walls marked with graffiti carved by bored guards and a simple wooden table. The illusions also conceal a trap door in the floor that leads to area **H4**. The stairs are normal stone stairs leading up to a trap door in the ceiling that opens into area **H7**. Both trap doors are barred from this side, but the bars can be easily removed from within this room. Anyone interacting with the illusions can attempt a DC 20 Will save to disbelieve them. Because this room has no windows, the outpost's defenders retreat here if necessary during an assault on the compound.

Creature: The leader of the genies at the outpost is a noble efreeti, a malikah named Kixexa. She spends most of her time in this chamber, which she has claimed as her personal quarters, working on her plans and maps of the desert. Kixexa values the strategic location of the compound highly and she immediately attacks intruders. Like many efreet, Kixexa has an inflated sense of self-worth and an arrogant confidence, but her intelligence keeps her from being too cocky. She curtly orders intruders away even as she unleashes *fireballs* in their faces. She maintains a terse, focused silence during combat, speaking only after particularly effective attacks or when an enemy falls: "As you can see, you are outmatched. Flee now and you may escape with your lives." Kixexa is content to let survivors flee from battle, but only after demonstrating her power by killing one or two opponents.

KIXEXA	CR 11
XP 12,800	
Female advanced noble efreeti (<i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary</i> 140, 294)	
LE Large outsider (extraplanar, fire)	
Init +9; Senses darkvision 60 ft., <i>detect magic</i> ; Perception +20	
DEFENSE	
AC 25, touch 15, flat-footed 19 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +10 natural, -1 size)	
hp 149 (13d10+78)	
Fort +10, Ref +13, Will +14	
Immune fire	
Weaknesses vulnerable to cold	
OFFENSE	
Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft. (perfect)	
Melee 2 slams +20 (2d6+8 plus 1d6 fire)	
Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.	
Special Attacks change size (DC 16), heat (1d6 fire)	
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th; concentration +19)	
Constant— <i>detect magic</i>	
At will— <i>plane shift</i> (willing targets to elemental planes, Astral Plane, or Material Plane only), <i>produce flame</i> , <i>pyrotechnics</i> (DC 16), <i>scorching ray</i>	
3/day—quicken <i>fireball</i> (DC 17), <i>heat metal</i> (DC 16), <i>invisibility</i> , quickened <i>scorching ray</i> , <i>wall of fire</i> (DC 18)	
1/day—grant up to 3 <i>wishes</i> (to non-genies only), <i>gaseous form</i> , <i>greater invisibility</i> , <i>permanent image</i> (DC 20), <i>pyroclastic storm</i> (as <i>ice storm</i> , with fire instead of cold damage)	

TACTICS

During Combat Kixexa casts *greater invisibility* on herself right away and fills the room with quickened *fireballs* and *scorching rays* in quick succession. When she has expended her *fireballs*, Kixexa launches quickened *scorching rays* at those who seem most injured by the fire while targeting others with her area effect spell-like abilities. Kixexa prefers to fight with her magic, but she attacks with her slam attack in melee if she has no other choice.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 50 hit points, Kixexa casts *gaseous form* and attempts to flee, joining Picasi in area **H9**.

STATISTICS

Str 27, **Dex** 21, **Con** 22, **Int** 16, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +22; **CMD** 38

Feats Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative^B, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Iron Will, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*fireball*), Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*scorching ray*)

Skills Bluff +20, Craft (traps) +18, Disguise +16, Fly +20, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (geography) +12, Knowledge (planes) +12, Perception +20, Sense Motive +20, Spellcraft +19, Stealth +17

Languages Aquan, Auran, Common, Draconic, Ignan, Osirian, Terran; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ change shape (humanoid or giant; *alter self* or *giant form I*)

Treasure: Kixexa wears jewelry worth a total of 1,000 gp. In addition, a brass strongbox engraved with flames and set with a false ruby in its lid sits beneath the table. The strongbox is unlocked. It contains a handful of old coins from various kingdoms, a few chips of semiprecious stones, a small length of brass chain, a key, and other sundries, worth 25 gp in all. These items were claimed during the group's expeditions and weren't valuable enough on their own to keep for trade, but nonetheless caught Kixexa's eye. The key opens the chest in area **H9**.

The strongbox also holds six maps of the Parched Dunes, crated by Kixexa based on reports from her efreeti allies and Picasi. Drawn on fine parchment in colored ink, the maps are both gorgeous works of art and accurate representations of the region. The maps grant a +5 competence bonus on any Survival checks to navigate within the Parched Dunes. While the Sightless Sphinx does not appear on the maps, they do detail the locations of an abandoned temple of Sarenrae (the Lair of the King, area **B**), the obelisk in area **D**, and the Garden of Symmetry (area **E**), though they contain no clues as to what those locations are. In total, the beautifully drawn maps are worth 600 gp.

H7. Unused Tower Room

A layer of sand on the floor here gives the impression that no one has used this room for some time. Arrow slits in the circular

wall afford a complete view of both the courtyard and the desert outside. A wooden trap door, half obscured by sand, lies in the floor.

Kixexa and her allies have had no need to use this room, so they barred the trap door, which leads to area **H6**, from the other side (hardness 5, hp 15, break DC 25), cutting off this room as an access point. The PCs may be able to enter the tower this way via magical means (such as using *gaseous form* to pass through the arrow slits), but breaking through the trap door almost certainly alerts Kixexa in area **H6**.

H8. Subterranean Storeroom (CR 9)

The scent of cool water rises from a low stone circle in one corner of this room, and a stack of wooden crates stands in the opposite corner. A stone door stands in the west wall.

This chamber held stores for the outpost's defenders in the event of a siege. The provisions once stored in the crates turned to dust years ago, but the well in the corner taps into the same underground reservoir as the oasis in the courtyard, and the water is still fresh.

Creature: Once Picasi claimed these rooms as hers, she returned to the Plane of Earth and bartered for the services of a greater earth elemental. The elemental remains in this room, guarding it from intruders.

GREATER EARTH ELEMENTAL

CR 9

XP 6,400

hp 136 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 123)

TACTICS

During Combat On the first round of combat, the elemental stomps heavily on the ground to warn Picasi in area **H9** of intruders. The elemental stays away from the well but otherwise uses its earth glide ability to move into the floor and walls and strike from there, gaining cover while it is partially melded into the rock. It pummels anyone in reach but focuses on individuals approaching the door to area **H9**.

Morale If the elemental falls to 25 hit points or fewer, it sinks into the ground and waits for a day before resurfacing to look for Picasi and have her return it to the Plane of Earth.

H9. Shrine of Sekhmet (CR 10)

A tall warrior with the head of a snarling lioness and wearing a long red dress looks out from the far wall of this long chamber, seemingly poised to step out of the wall. The golden light of flickering torches casts shadows over the finely carved image, almost giving it the appearance of life. The carving stands beneath a stone arch inscribed with hieroglyphs. A small altar emblazoned with seven crossed arrows sits on a raised semicircular dais beneath the arch.

The hieroglyphs on the arch are in Ancient Osiriani, and read, "Lady of Slaughter, Mistress of Red Linen, Mistress of Life, She-Who-Makes-the-Mighty-Tremble, hear our battle cry. Unfurl your banner beneath the sun and we shall follow your steps in the sand to victory." With a successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check, a character identifies the lioness-headed woman on the wall as Sekhmet, the Ancient Osirian goddess of fire, healing, vengeance, and war; the titles in the arch's inscription refer to her as well.

Two everburning torches illuminate the room.

Creature: The shaitan Picasi lives in this chamber. Although Picasi is not a worshiper of Sekhmet, the goddess's strength and warlike nature appeal to her and the stone walls and sandy floor make this chamber feel like home. If warned of intruders by the earth elemental in area **H8**,



KIXEXA

MUMMY'S MASK

Picasi melds into the wall with *meld into stone* to hide and wait for a good ambush opportunity. Picasi is a determined opponent but has a more temperamental personality than her friend Kixexa. The shaitan attacks relentlessly and taunts her opponents about their weaknesses, pointing out every missed attack and laughing at their failures: "Who are you to think you can resist the strength of the mountains and the power of the earthquake?"

PICASI

CR 10

XP 9,600

Female shaitan monk 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 143)

LN Large outsider (earth, extraplanar)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; **Perception** +20

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 16, flat-footed 23

(+3 Dex, +1 monk, +3 Wis, +10 natural, -1 size)

hp 127 (15 HD; 9d10+6d8+51)

Fort +14, **Ref** +11, **Will** +14; +2 vs. enchantments

Defensive Abilities evasion; **DR** 10/adamantine (120 points); **Immune** disease, electricity

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., burrow 60 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee flurry of blows +19/+19/+14/+9 (2d6+7/19-20)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks earth mastery, flurry of blows, metalmorph, stone curse (DC 21), stunning fist (8/day, DC 16)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +15)

At will—*meld into stone*, *plane shift* (willing targets to elemental planes, Astral Plane, or Material Plane only), *soften earth and stone*, *stone shape*, *veil* (DC 19; self only)

3/day—quicken *glitterdust* (DC 15), *stoneskin*, *rusting grasp*, *stone tell*, *wall of stone*

1/day—*transmute mud to rock* (DC 18), *transmute rock to mud* (DC 18)

TACTICS

Before Combat Picasi uses *meld into stone* to merge with a wall or the floor and then casts *stoneskin* on herself.

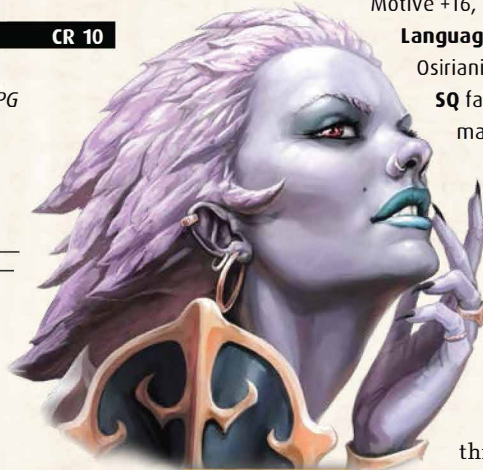
During Combat Picasi bull rushes the closest target to her hiding place, attempting to drive the target into a wall and trap it with her stone curse ability. Otherwise, she lashes out with a flurry of blows at anyone within reach. If pressed, she uses *wall of stone* to seal away some of her opponents.

Morale If reduced to 30 hit points or fewer, Picasi burrows into the sandy floor and attempts to escape.

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 16, **Con** 17, **Int** 14, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +23 (+27 bull rush); **CMD** 38 (40 vs. bull rush)



PICASI

Feats Awesome Blow, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Gorgon's Fist, Greater Bull Rush, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (unarmed strike), Improved Initiative^B, Improved Unarmed Strike, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (glitterdust), Scorpion Style, Stunning Fist

Skills Acrobatics +20 (+30 when jumping), Appraise +14, Bluff +15, Climb +27, Craft (gemcutting) +14, Knowledge (engineering) +14, Linguistics +3, Perception +20, Sense Motive +16, Spellcraft +14, Stealth +17

Languages Aquan, Auran, Common, Ignan, Osiriani, Terran; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ fast movement, high jump, ki pool (6 points, magic), maneuver training, slow fall 30 ft., stone glide

Gear *potions of cure serious wounds* (3)

Treasure: Kixexa has secured most of the treasure that her group has found in the desert in a vault on the Plane of Fire. However, the efreeti malikah has not yet transported their latest haul, which remains in this chamber in an iron chest bound in brass bands with a lock shaped like a grinning efreeti. A successful DC 30 Disable Device is required to open the chest (Kixexa in area

H6 has the key). The chest contains a *necklace of fireballs type III*, a set of six silver cups engraved with river scenes (worth 450 gp as a set), a heavy gold ring set with chips of lapis lazuli (worth 185 gp), 15 pp, and 280 gp. The chest also holds a triangular iron bar engraved along each side with a stylized silver eye. A *detect magic* spell reveals the object's faint transmutation aura; with a successful DC 20 Spellcraft check, a character identifies the object as a control rod containing the sentience and programmed responses for a type of automaton or construct (the *bronze sentinel* at area I).

Development: If Kixexa flees from battle in area **H6**, she retreats here and drinks all of Picasi's *potions of cure serious wounds* to bring herself back to fighting strength.

PART 3: IN THE SHADOW OF THE SIGHTLESS SPHINX

The Sightless Sphinx is a colossal statue of a six-legged, faceless sphinx that represents Areshkagal, the demon lord of greed, portals, and riddles. The Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh recently attempted to seize the Sphinx to use as a base of operations, and is still struggling with the complex's previous inhabitants, a group of Areshkagal-worshipping mafkets, for control of the structure.

J. ENVIRONS OF THE SIGHTLESS SPHINX

The girtablilu mercenaries allied with the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh have set up a perimeter around the

Sightless Sphinx. While the main force resides inside the Sphinx and works with the cultists there, a small group camps outside the Sphinx, patrolling the perimeter and serving as a first line of outer defense.

The girtablilus are fierce and ruthless mercenaries who attack without hesitation when the perimeter is breached. The PCs may attempt to gain access to the Sphinx through stealth, but the girtablilus are alert and perceptive, and the unusual properties of the Sphinx make magical attempts to enter the structure difficult (see area **K** for details). Use the map on page 32 for the following encounters.

J1. Avenue of Sphinxes (CR 12)

A wide avenue leads up to a colossal statue of a seated sphinx. Though the sphinx's sloped shoulders, powerful leonine body, and clawed limbs were skillfully crafted, its face is an obliterated and jagged mass of stone. The scouring force of erosion seems absent here; a deliberate rawness has been infused in the degraded face, a tormented, almost malicious devastation that gives the still figure an ominous aura. Huge paving stones might once have formed a path to the statue, but now a carpet of sand blows across the broken slabs. Two rows of smaller sphinx statues, their faces flat and featureless, blindly gaze at each other across the avenue from atop stone pedestals. A ring of heavy stone blocks encircles the large sphinx beyond the avenue, a rough perimeter marred by frequent gaps and missing stones.

The sphinx statues lining the avenue are approximately 15 feet tall. The stone blocks ringing the Sightless Sphinx are of various sizes, but they average 30 feet in length and 10 feet tall.

Creatures: A strong contingent of girtablilu mercenaries always wards the direct approach to the Sightless Sphinx. Three girtablilus remain on guard beyond the stone ring, trading shifts with the girtablilus at area **J5**. The girtablilus stay out of direct line of sight behind the stone blocks, waiting for intruders to trigger the steel scorpion traps buried beneath the sand (see Traps, below) before attacking.

GIRTABLILUS (3) CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 105 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 130)

TACTICS

During Combat The girtablilus are skilled and calculating warriors. They focus their attacks on melee fighters who deal significant damage or on spellcasters whose spells affect the girtablilus. In the first round of combat, two girtablilus cast *summon nature's ally* to conjure giant scorpion reinforcements, while the third strikes a gong to alert the cultists and girtablilus in areas **J2** and **J5**.

Morale If two of the girtablilus at this location are killed, the survivor retreats to area **J5**.

Traps: The girtablilus have buried three steel scorpion traps in the sandy area between the stone blocks beyond the avenue of sphinxes. Similar to an oversized bear trap, a steel scorpion trap looks like an upside-down metal scorpion. When stepped upon, the sharpened legs of the scorpion snap closed around the triggering creature's ankle, hindering its movement. At the same time, a hinged arm like a stinger flips up, injecting the victim with scorpion venom.

STEEL SCORPION TRAPS (3)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect sharp jaws spring shut around the creature's ankle (3d6 damage); stinger (Atk +15 melee [1d4 damage plus Large scorpion venom]); Reflex DC 20 negates; the creature's base speed is halved (or the creature is held immobile if the trap is attached to a solid object); the creature can escape with a successful DC 20 Disable Device check, DC 22 Escape Artist check, or DC 26 Strength check.

Development: If a defender rings the gong, the sound alerts the cultists in area **J2**, who prepare for battle but allow the girtablilus to handle the intruders—that's what they were hired for, after all. A single warden of the Forgotten Pharaoh crawls along the wall to spy on the combat, and returns to alert his companions if the PCs clearly have the upper hand (and to report on any obvious PC tactics).

J2. Bone Forest (CR 11)

A grove of strange palm trees stretch toward the sky to the south of the Sphinx. Their bleached-white, chalky trunks support bladelike fronds of dull ivory, as if some giant hand set curved and serrated bones atop the trees. A gentle breeze blows, but the grove remains immobile as the Sphinx beside it.

Cultists of Areshkagal built these bone trees hundreds of years ago, though their reasons for doing so remain a mystery. A successful DC 24 Knowledge (arcana) check reveals that the tree trunks are magically shaped stone and the palm fronds are actually crafted from sphinx bones. Three small canvas tents sit in the shade cast by the bone forest.

Creatures: Six cultists of the Forgotten Pharaoh—three wardens and three zealots—are stationed in the grove to help maintain the perimeter. One of the warden crouches atop the ring wall surrounding the Sightless Sphinx and uses ranged attacks against intruders; the others fight from within the bone forest, using the trees for cover whenever possible.

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WARDENS OF THE FORGOTTEN PHARAOH (3) CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 73 each (see page 15)

TACTICS

During Combat The cultists take cover behind trees or stone blocks and fire *flaming arrows* at opponents. If at least two zealots are slain, the surviving wardens drop their bows and charge into melee to take advantage of their Opening Volley feat.

Morale The stalking cultists fight to the death, triggering their Troth of the Forgotten Pharaoh feat.

ZEALOTS OF THE FORGOTTEN PHARAOH (3) CR 6

XP 2,400 each

Human barbarian (elemental kin) 7 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 78)

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; Senses Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+7 armor, +3 Dex, -2 rage)

hp 76 each (7d12+25)

Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +5

Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge; DR 1/—; Resist electricity 3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *longspear* +14/+9 (1d8+8/×3) or
mwk warhammer +13/+8 (1d8+7/×3)

Ranged mwk javelin +11 (1d6+5)

Special Attacks elemental fury (+2 rounds), rage (17 rounds/day), rage powers (energy resistance^{APG} [electricity], lesser elemental rage^{APG} [electricity], quick reflexes)

TACTICS

During Combat The zealots fly into a rage on the first round of combat, charging the nearest foes with their longspear. Once in melee, they activate their lesser elemental rage power and make Power Attacks every round, regardless of the accuracy of their attacks. If an opponent gets within the reach of a zealot's longspear, the zealot drops his spear and attacks with his warhammer.

Morale Devoted to the Forgotten Pharaoh, the zealots fight to the death, triggering their Troth of the Forgotten Pharaoh feat.

STATISTICS

Str 20, Dex 16, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Base Atk +7; CMB +12; CMD 23

Feats Cleave, Great Fortitude, Power Attack, Troth of the Forgotten Pharaoh (see page 17), Weapon Focus (longspear)

Skills Acrobatics +10, Climb +12, Intimidate +9, Perception +11, Survival +11

Languages Common, Osiriani

SQ fast movement

Combat Gear *potions of cure moderate wounds* (2); **Other**

Gear +1 *breastplate*, +1 *longspear*, mwk javelins (3), mwk warhammer, gilt wooden funerary mask (worth 25 gp), 5 gp

J3. Rear Guard (CR 10)

A pavilion tent, its canvas walls painted in swirling red and gold designs, stands near the southwestern corner of the sphinx. East of the small camp, a barricade of stone blocks forms a defensible blind.

Creatures: A single girtablilu mercenary guards the rear perimeter around the Sphinx, accompanied by a giant dust scorpion native to the Parched Dunes. If trouble occurs, the girtablilu sounds a gong to alert its allies in areas J1 and J2 and uses its vermin empathy to order the dust scorpion to attack.

DUST SCORPION CR 8

XP 4,800

Deadfall scorpion (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 237)

hp 95

GIRTABLILU CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 105 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 130)

TACTICS

During Combat The girtablilu focuses on holding off invaders until help arrives.

Morale The girtablilu fights to the death.

Development: If a defender rings the gong, the sound alerts the cultists in area J2, who prepare for battle but allow the girtablilus to handle the intruders alone—that's what they were hired for, after all. A single warden of the Forgotten Pharaoh crawls along the wall to spy on the combat, and returns to alert his companions if the PCs clearly have the upper hand (and to report on any obvious PCs tactics). The gong also alerts the girtablilus in area J1, who send two of their members to help defend the area.

J4. Scaffold Lookout (CR 10)

A wooden scaffold stands against the curved haunch of the sphinx. A spyglass with a shaded lens and a small brass gong are mounted on a wide platform at the top of the scaffold, supported by angled beams.

Creatures: Two girtablilus are always posted atop the scaffolding, using the spyglass to watch for intruders. If the lookouts notice a potential threat, they strike the gong to alert the camp.

GIRTABLILUS (2) CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 105 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 130)



TACTICS

During Combat The girtablilus use *summon nature's ally* to conjure giant scorpions to help them fend off intruders.

Morale The girtablilus fight to the death.

J5. The Shadow of the Sphinx (CR 12)

A vast, dark shadow stretches across the sand north and east of the sphinx. Based on the position of the sun overhead, the monolithic statue should cast a shadow in a completely different area, one that is fully illuminated in sunlight. Even more strangely, the patch of darkness remains constant as the sun moves across the sky. Four pavilion tents painted with red and gold swirls sit within the shadow.

Before being driven from the area, the maftet tribe lived “in the shadow of the Sightless Sphinx,” and the description is quite literal. Centuries ago, the cultists of Areshkagal who erected the Sphinx thinned the boundaries between the Material Plane and the Shadow Plane in this area, creating a magical portal that allowed creatures to easily travel between the two planes. During the battle with the templars

of Sarenrae, the portal was destroyed, but the resulting magical backlash locked the shadow of the Sightless Sphinx in place, creating this area of permanent shade that never moves, regardless of the sun’s position in the sky. As a result, this area remains pleasant and cool, even in the blazing heat of afternoon. After the maftets left, the girtablilus set up camp in the same spot.

Creatures: Three girtablilu mercenaries relax in the camp, preparing meals and sleeping when off-duty. The mercenaries’ second-in-command, Orchamus, remains in this area too, receiving reports and planning defense strategies. Orchamus and his mercenaries hold this area if an alarm is sounded, knowing that survivors from besieged areas will regroup in the shadow.

Orchamus is a levelheaded and intelligent fighter and tactician, acting as a calming counterpart to the hot-tempered mercenary leader, Rubila, who commands the mercenaries inside the Sphinx. Orchamus’s focus is on honoring the contract the girtablilus have with the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh. Even if obviously outnumbered and overpowered, he orders his remaining mercenaries to attack. In battle, he issues commands in a strong voice,

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periodically addressing his enemies with exhortations to leave: "You are forcing me to execute my orders. Turn back lest we both lose warriors. Nothing within can be so valuable as to warrant this loss of life."

If the PCs request or demand negotiations, Orchamus is willing to temporarily suspend violence. He allows the PCs only a minute or 2 to make their case, though, before resuming the battle. Years of experience have taught Orchamus the value of reputation and reliability, even in the face of death, and no amount of persuasion or bribery can convince the girtablilu to abandon the contract.

The girtablilus care deeply for their culture and tradition, however, and one topic that can sway Orchamus is knowledge of the dead girtablilu, Dakuri, whose body lies in area A. After Dakuri went missing, Orchamus tried to find him, but the scout's skill in covering his tracks foiled even Orchamus's best efforts. Orchamus has been deeply disturbed ever since Dakuri's disappearance, especially considering the young scout is Rubila's nephew. If the PCs bring up their discovery of Dakuri's body, Orchamus tries to hide his interest in their

claim, but a PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Sense Motive check senses the girtablilu's curiosity. If the PCs describe their findings and offer to return Dakuri's scorpion tail amulet, they can attempt a DC 31 Diplomacy check. If the PCs respectfully buried Dakuri's body according to girtablilu custom and inform Orchamus of their actions, the DC of the Diplomacy check is reduced to 26. If the check is successful, Orchamus agrees to let the PCs enter the Sightless Sphinx without further interference from his troops, and suggests that the PCs return Dakuri's amulet to his aunt Rubila, the mercenaries' commander. Orchamus cannot, however, promise that Rubila, who is notoriously aggressive, will honor the deal.

GIRTABLILUS (3)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 105 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 130)

TACTICS

During Combat The girtablilus obey Orchamus's instructions unquestioningly.

Morale The mercenaries fight to the death.

ORCHAMUS

CR 9

XP 6,400

Male girtablilu ranger 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 130)

LN Large monstrous humanoid

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft.;

Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 14, flat-footed 19 (+2 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +8 natural, -1 size)

hp 116 (11d10+56)

Fort +10, **Ref** +13, **Will** +10

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee mwk bardiche^{UE}

+18/+13/+8 (1d10+10/19-20) or

2 claws +17 (1d6+7 plus grab),

sting +17 (1d6+7 plus poison)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with bardiche)

Special Attacks constrict (1d6+7), favored enemy (monstrous humanoids +2), poison

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +11)

1/day—*summon nature's ally V* (1d3 giant scorpions)

TACTICS

During Combat Orchamus orders the girtablilus under his command to engage foes in melee while he attacks at a distance



ORCHAMUS

with his bardiche. If opponents get within the reach of his weapon, he instead uses his natural attacks.

Morale Honor is paramount to Orchamus, and he fights to the death to uphold his contract.

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 18, **Con** 20, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +19 (+23 grapple); **CMD** 34 (46 vs. trip)

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Mobility, Vital Strike

Skills Climb +19, Craft (cloth) +9, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (nature) +8, Perception +16, Sense Motive +6, Stealth +18, Survival +14

Languages Common, Girtablilu, Osiriani

SQ scorpion empathy +11, track +1, undersized weapons, wild empathy +2

Combat Gear *restorative ointment*; **Other Gear** leather armor, mwk bardiche^{UE}, ivory dagger pendant (worth 25 gp), 52 gp

Story Award: If the PCs successfully negotiate with Orchamus to enter the Sightless Sphinx, award them 20,800 XP, as if they had defeated the girtablilus in combat.

J6. The Arms of the Sphinx (CR 10)

A broad path leads between the outstretched forelimbs of the giant statue, one of which has collapsed into a towering heap of rubble. At this close proximity, the sphinx looms like a mountain above, its featureless visage staring blindly out into the desert. A set of double doors, made of the same dun-colored sandstone as the sphinx itself, are carved into the sphinx's chest. Inlaid hieroglyphs of ivory and lapis lazuli on the doors catch what little light makes its way into the shadowed avenue.

The doors are sealed with an *arcane lock* (hardness 8, hp 60, break DC 38; Disable Device DC 50) and are trapped.

If the PCs search the collapsed left front leg of the Sphinx, a successful DC 25 Perception check enables them to find a secret door in the rubble that leads to area K30.

Trap: Any attempt to open the double doors triggers the trapped glyphs on the doors. The Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh lost three members to the trap before Serethet herself arrived and deciphered the meaning of the glyphs and how to open the doors.

A character who succeeds at a DC 15 Perception check notices that the inlaid hieroglyphs are loosely set in the doors. The hieroglyphs act as "buttons" to open the doors, provided the correct combination is known. The hieroglyphs are Ancient Osiriani representations of Golarion's solar system. Anyone who reads Ancient Osiriani or who succeeds at a DC 30 Linguistics check (DC 20 if the character speaks contemporary Osiriani) can attempt a DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (nature) check to identify the 12 planets: Aballon, Castrovel,

Golarion, Akiton, Verces, the Diaspora, Eox, Triaxus, Liavara, Bretheda, Apostae, and Aucturn.

A character who succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (planes) or Knowledge (religion) check recognizes the Sightless Sphinx as a representation of Areshkagal, the demon lord of greed, portals, and riddles. Once the hieroglyphics representing the planets and Areshkagal have been identified, a character can work out which buttons to press to open the door by attempting a DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (planes) check to know which planets are associated with Areshkagal's areas of concern. On a success, a character knows that Eox represents greed, Castrovel represents portals, and Aucturn represents riddles. Pressing the hieroglyphs representing those three planets bypasses the trap and opens the doors.

Pressing the wrong hieroglyphs or attempting to break down the doors triggers the trap. In this case, any creatures standing between the forelegs of the sphinx suffer a hallucination of the faceless head of the sphinx toppling forward to crush and bury them under tons of rock. A successful DC 23 Will save identifies the vision as a hallucination; otherwise, an affected creature must succeed at a DC 23 Fortitude save or die of fright.

A rogue who succeeds at a DC 34 Disable Device check can disable the trap, but the doors remain sealed.

COLLAPSING SPHINX TRAP

CR 10

XP 9,600

Type magic; Perception DC 34; Disable Device DC 34

EFFECTS

Trigger touch (*alarm*); **Reset** automatic; **Bypass** see above

Effect spell effect (*weird*, death, Fort DC 23 for 3d6 points of damage, 1d4 points of Strength damage, and stunned for 1 round); Will DC 23 negates; multiple targets (all creatures in the area between the Sightless Sphinx's forelimbs).

K. SIGHTLESS SPHINX

The imposing statue of the Sightless Sphinx is over 600 feet long and rises almost 200 feet high. The Sphinx's walls are made of 2-foot-thick stone blocks. The blocks are not mortared in place, but have been formed so smoothly and laid together so perfectly that they have almost fused together over the years from the weight of the structure.

When the original cult of Areshkagal inhabited the Sphinx, the cultists performed a number of bloody and corrupt rituals to their demonic patron. In exchange, the Sphinx was imbued with protective wards that have only now begun to wear thin. In general, the Sphinx's outer walls block any sort of teleportation or dimensional travel spells, including *dimension door*, *etherealness*, *teleport*, and similar spells. They also block any divination spells attempting to locate the Sphinx or anything inside it, including *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *find the path*, *le gend lore*,

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locate creature, *scrying*, or similar spells. These spells work normally inside the Sightless Sphinx, but their effects cannot pass through the structure's outer walls.

With these wards in place, the front doors are the most obvious way into the Sphinx's interior, but the PCs may be able to find other routes. In addition, the protective barrier has worn thin in some spots. Anyone within 30 feet of the Sphinx can attempt a DC 30 Spellcraft check to note a weak spot where teleportation and scrying are possible. These weak spots change constantly, however, and further attempts at scrying or teleportation, even in the same area, require new Spellcraft checks.

If the PCs have acquired the *bronze sentinel* (see area I), they might choose to bring it inside the Sphinx, though it must squeeze through many of the Sphinx's doorways. The *bronze sentinel* also interacts with some areas of the Sphinx in specific ways. The effects of these interactions are noted in the descriptions of the individual rooms.

Once inside the Sightless Sphinx, the PCs face danger from all sides. Near the front and on the upper level, the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh holds sway. In the rear section, the maftet cult of Areshkagal and its glabrezu ally Ninureset control the halls. Between the two is a contested zone full of skirmishes and subterfuge. The PCs can find some assistance in the form of a long-dead paladin of Sarenrae whose spirit lingers in the ruin, as well as an ancient vault beneath the Sphinx that still holds weapons of power.

Unless otherwise noted, the ceilings within the Sphinx are 20 feet tall and the rooms and corridors are dark. The doors are stone and usually unlocked (hardness 8, hp 60, break DC 28).

K1. Entrance Hall (CR 12)

A grand entrance hall stretches forth beyond the double doors. Flames flicker atop ten-foot-tall stone pillars marked with graven eyes, filling the hall with rippling shadows. Though an aura of ancient stillness hangs in the room, the smooth stone floor shows no dust or marks of age. Woven reed curtains cover the walls to the north and south. In the center of the room, a white stone statue of a six-legged, faceless sphinx with dragon wings and a viper tail, its face a reflection of the jagged visage outside, faces the front doors from atop a stone pedestal.

The flames atop the two pillars are *continual flames*. A successful DC 15 Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (planes) check reveals that the statue is a likeness of Areshkagal, the demon lord of greed, portals, and riddles.

Creatures: The Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh always leaves two of its disciples, along with two girtablilu mercenaries, in this hall as guards. The guards stand in the alcoves behind the woven reed curtains on either side of the hall, watching through the slits in the reed curtains.

When any unknown creatures enter the hall, the cultists and mercenaries step past the curtains and attack.

DISCIPLES OF THE FORGOTTEN PHARAOH (2)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

Human monk 9

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; Senses Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 21, flat-footed 15 (+2 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 monk, +1 Wis)

hp 95 each (9d8+51)

Fort +11, Ref +12, Will +10; +2 vs. enchantments

Defensive Abilities improved evasion; Immune disease

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft.

Melee +1 *unarmed strike* +12/+7 (1d10+5) or
+1 *flurry of blows* +13/+13/+8/+8 (1d10+5)

Ranged mwk light crossbow +12 (1d8/19–20)

Special Attacks flurry of blows, stunning fist (9/day, DC 15)

TACTICS

Before Combat The disciples drink their *potions of bear's endurance*, *cat's grace*, and *shield of faith* before combat.

During Combat The disciples begin by firing bolts from their crossbows, then move into melee to make the best use of their flurry of blows, using Stunning Fist to incapacitate opponents.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 50 hit points, the disciples shout warnings to the guards in area K3. The fanatical disciples fight to the death, triggering their Troth of the Forgotten Pharaoh feat.

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 20, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Base Atk +6; CMB +13; CMD 31

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Gorgon's Fist, Improved

Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Scorpion Style, Step Up, Stunning Fist, Toughness, Troth of the Forgotten Pharaoh (see page 17), Weapon Focus (unarmed strike)

Skills Acrobatics +17 (+38 when jumping), Climb +16, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (religion) +7, Linguistics +1, Perception +13, Stealth +17

Languages Ancient Osiriani, Common, Osiriani

SQ fast movement, high jump, ki pool (5 points, cold iron/magic), maneuver training, slow fall 40 ft., wholeness of body (9 hit points)

Combat Gear *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of cat's grace*, *potion of shield of faith*; **Other Gear** mwk light crossbow with 10 bolts, *amulet of mighty fists* +1, *belt of giant strength* +2, *cloak of resistance* +1, gilt wooden funerary mask (worth 25 gp), 40 gp

GIRTABLILUS (2)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 105 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 130)

TACTICS

During Combat The girtablilus try to flank the most accessible target, focusing their attacks on that foe until their enemy is dead.

Morale The girtablilus fights to the death.

K2. Chamber of Eyes (CR 8)

The ceiling of this roofless room is open to a larger chamber that surrounds it, leaving a large gap between the top of the walls and the ceiling of the larger chamber. On either side of the room, a graven eye stares at its twin on the opposite wall. A carved image of a ferociously snarling six-legged sphinx with dragon wings decorates the door at the far end of the room, carved so realistically it seems ready to leap off the door at any moment.

The walls surrounding this chamber are 10 feet tall. The gap between the walls and the ceiling of area **K3** is 5 feet high.

Trap: Anyone passing between the graven eyes at their level (3 feet up the wall) triggers a trap that summons fiendish hieracosphinxes into the room to attack intruders. Those who succeed at a DC 30 Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (planes) check know that the faithful were required to kneel before this particular image of the demon lord Areshkagal, and approach the door on their hands and knees. Worshipers of Areshkagal know this automatically.

FIENDISH SPHINX TRAP

CR 8

XP 4,800

Type magic; Perception DC 32; Disable Device DC 32

EFFECTS

Trigger visual (*true seeing*); **Reset** automatic (10 minutes)

Effect spell effect (*summon monster VII*, summons 1d4+1 fiendish hieracosphinxes for 13 rounds)

FIENDISH HIERACOSPHEXES (1d4+1)

CR —

hp 60 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 253, 290)

Development: If the cultists in area **K1** shouted a warning, the disciples in area **K3** are standing on the platforms overlooking this hall, and fire their crossbows at intruders fighting the summoned sphinxes.

K3. Redoubt (CR 10)

This U-shaped chamber wraps around the smaller room protruding into the area from the east. Short stairs on either side of the roofless room lead to small platforms overlooking the enclosed area. A single flame flickers from the top of an unmarked stone pillar against the western wall.

MOVING ENCOUNTERS

As the PCs explore the Sightless Sphinx, they may encounter several denizens who can move more freely throughout the complex, including the shadow demon Sargota in area **K15**, the oracular Forgotten Pharaoh cultist Thmei in area **K16**, the maftet cultists of Areshkagal in area **K26**, and the half-fiend divine guardian gynosphinx Areshkhesbed in area **K39**.

These inhabitants are presented in the locations where they are most likely to be encountered, but you should feel free to move them around and have them encounter the PCs elsewhere in the Sphinx and at any time. Use these encounters at dramatically appropriate moments, but be careful not to overwhelm the PCs by adding them to combats already in progress, as any one of these encounters can turn an easy fight into a difficult one or turn a difficult fight into one that leaves dead characters on the ground.



A *continual flame* burns atop the pillar.

Creatures: Two disciples of the Forgotten Pharaoh stand guard in this room.

DISCIPLES OF THE FORGOTTEN PHARAOH (2)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 95 each (see page 30)

TACTICS

During Combat The disciples fire their crossbows at a single PC until engaged in melee combat, at which point they fight back to back.

Morale The disciples fight to the death, triggering their Troth of the Forgotten Pharaoh feat.

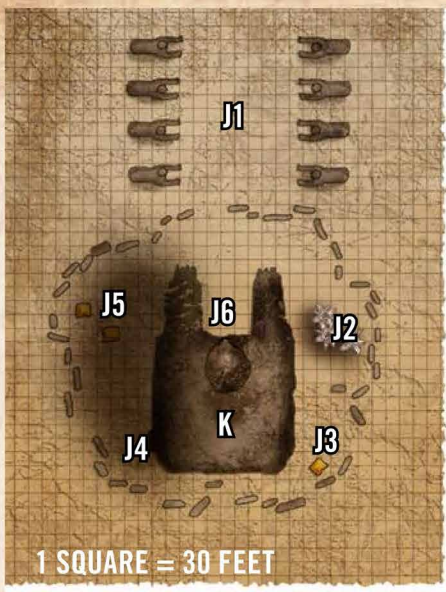
Development: If alerted by the cultists in area **K1**, the disciples take positions on the platforms overlooking area **K2** while the two girtablilu mercenaries from area **K4** stand by the pillar, ready to attack intruders that make it into this room. The girtablilus also emerge from area **K4** if they hear the sounds of combat in this room.

K4. Armory (CR 10)

A clay lamp atop a wooden table lights this room. Against the wall stand weapon racks holding only a few warped and rusted blades. Rotten quivers hang from spikes driven into the wall. Two small wooden casks sealed with wax stand beneath the quivers. The smashed remains of a third cask lie in a puddle of oil.

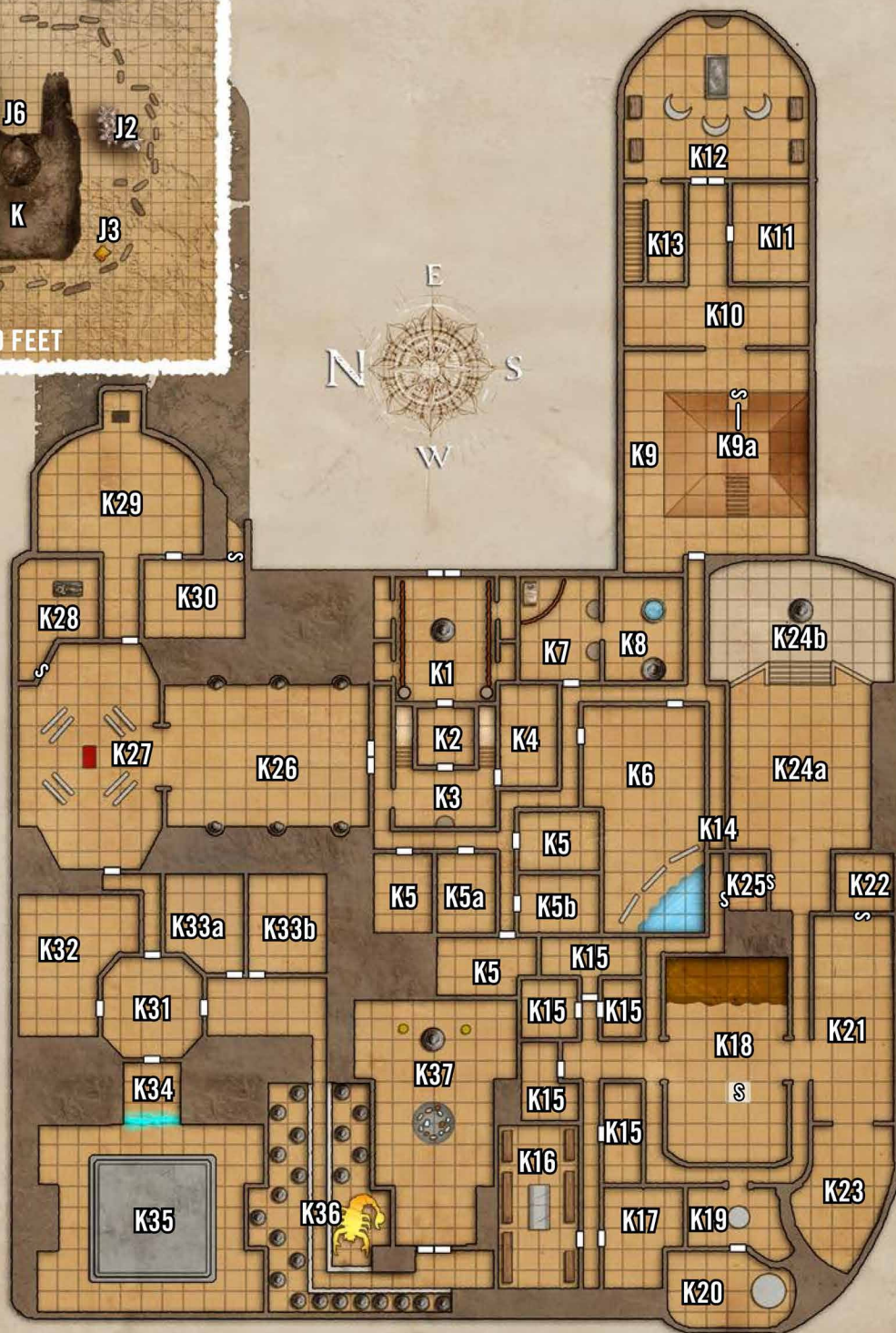
Creatures: Two girtablilu mercenaries rest in this room, unless they're alerted by the cultists in areas **K1** or **K3**, in which case they move into area **K3** to assist.

MUMMY'S MASK



K, SIGHTLESS SPHINX

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET



GIRTABLILUS (2)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 105 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 130)

Treasure: The cultists split one cask open to see what it contained, and discovered it held lamp oil for igniting flaming arrows. They left the other two intact in case they were needed. Both casks contain 4 pints of lamp oil, but a successful DC 20 Perception check reveals a ruby worth 250 gp in one cask that a cultist hid here many decades ago.

K5. Cultists' Quarters (CR 8 or 10)

This small room contains four wooden cots with legs carved to resemble lions' paws. A padded neck rest and a thin cotton sheet rest atop each cot. Above each cot, a niche cut in the wall serves as a shallow shelf, and is adorned with a carved figure of a snarling sphinx looking out into the room. Four wicker stools sit in a corner of the room next to a small wooden chest.

The cultists of the Forgotten Pharaoh have taken over these rooms as their own.

Creatures: Two wardens of the Forgotten Pharaoh rest in area **K5a**, and two zealots rest in area **K5b**. If battle is joined with the cultists in one room, the sounds of combat alert the cultists in the adjoining room, who join the combat in 1d3 rounds. All of the cultists fight to the death, triggering their Troth of the Forgotten Pharaoh feat.

WARDENS OF THE FORGOTTEN PHARAOH (2)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 73 each (see page 15)

ZEALOTS OF THE FORGOTTEN PHARAOH (2)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 76 each (see page 26)

Treasure: The chest in each room contains cultists' clothes, valueless personal items, and 4d6 gp. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check can find a spare gilt funerary mask (worth 25 gp) under a cot in area **K5a** and a *potion of invisibility* hidden behind a loose brick in area **K5b**.

K6. Hot Spring (CR 11)

Clouds of steam fill this room, and rivulets of water drip down the rough stone walls. In the southwest corner of the room, carved stone seats ring a rippling pool of water—the source of the humid mist coiling through the air. A lump of rock rises above the waterline in the center of the pool, its silhouette disturbingly organic, as if a great beast were poised to erupt from the water. On the wall behind the pool, carvings of clawed tentacles reach up from the mist.

A natural hot spring has been tapped to feed the pool in this room.

Creatures: Two girtablilu mercenaries relax here, sweating out their stresses before returning to duty. But the mercenaries are not alone. Years ago, the cult of Areshkagal summoned a guardian from this pool to help protect the Sphinx—a fiendish mihstu. When the last cultists died, the mihstu returned to the pool and has been dormant ever since. If any blood is shed in this room, the act of violence awakens the guardian, which bursts forth from the pool and attacks anyone not devoted to the worship of Areshkagal. The mihstu has *detect good* as a constant spell-like ability, and targets good-aligned creatures first.

GIRTABLILUS (2)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 105 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 130)

GUARDIAN OF ARESHKAGAL

CR 9

XP 6,400

CE fiendish mihstu (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 190, 292)

hp 92

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th, concentration +9)

Constant—*detect good*

TACTICS

During Combat The guardian attacks good-aligned creatures first; it uses its smite good ability on such a foe before attempting to grapple and pin its victim in its deadly embrace.

Morale The guardian fights to the death.

Treasure: The cult of Areshkagal threw valuable items into the pool as offerings to the guardian when it was originally summoned. Almost all have deteriorated away in the water, but a platinum circlet set with a brilliant oval diamond (worth 1,150 gp in total) still lies intact within the hot spring. In addition, one of the mercenaries wears a gold armband shaped like a serpent with emerald chips for eyes, worth 245 gp in total.

K7. Sanctum of the Stone Warrior (CR 10)

White and green flagstones cover the floor of this opulent chamber in an interlocking pattern. Tiles of semiprecious stone decorate the north wall in an elaborate mosaic depicting a ferocious lion devouring a multi-headed serpent. A fine linen curtain curves around the northeastern corner of the room; the form of a large bed shows through the delicate fabric. On either side of a curtained archway leading south, green flames burn atop white stone pillars that reach almost to the ceiling.

A successful DC 25 Perception check allows a PC to notice a small vent cunningly concealed above the bed. The vent

connects to area **K1** and allows anyone in this room to hear what transpires in the entrance hall. The flames atop the pillars are *continual flames*.

These are the quarters of the leader of the cultists on the main level of the Sightless Sphinx—a man named Rathos—but he now spends most of his time in the chamber of scrying next door (area **K8**).

Creatures: Rathos has posted two disciples of the Forgotten Pharaoh here as guards. He leaves them to face any intruders alone.

DISCIPLES OF THE FORGOTTEN PHARAOH (2) **CR 8**
XP 4,800 each
hp 95 each (see page 30)

K8. Chamber of Scrying (CR 12)

A glowing pool occupies the center of this chamber, illuminating the room with a rippling green light reminiscent of being underwater. Silk pillows cover a raised dais next to the well. On the western side of the room, a white stone statue of a six-legged, faceless sphinx gazes unseeingly toward the well.

The high priests of Areshkagal used the pool in this chamber to spy on other rooms of the Sightless Sphinx containing specific white stone statues of Areshkagal. The pool has a strong divination aura (caster level 20th). If a character identifies the powers of the pool with *detect magic* and a successful DC 35 Spellcraft check, the pool can be used to view the entrance hall (area **K1**) with *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, centered on the statue of Areshkagal there. Alternatively, a PC can attempt a DC 25 Use Magic Device check to blindly activate the pool. Once activated, the pool displays an image of the area for up to 20 minutes. After activation, the pool must recharge for 1 hour before it can be used again.

The Forgotten Pharaoh deciphered the nature of the scrying pool and statue and instructed Rathos (see below) on their use, but neither is aware that the Sightless Sphinx contains other such scrying devices, which allow the maftet Userib in area **K37** and his glabrezu ally Ninureset to monitor the cult's activities by spying through the statue in this chamber.

Creature: An unfortunate man named Rathos inhabits this room. Formerly the Forgotten Pharaoh's second-in-command, Rathos was demoted when he ran afoul of the glabrezu Ninureset. The glabrezu offered a wish to Rathos, who foolishly wished to be the strongest warrior for a hundred miles. Ninureset granted the wish by transforming Rathos into a pain-wracked mockery of a strong warrior—a crocodile-headed monstrosity with massive stone arms. Although Rathos used to make regular patrols of this level, his transformation has left him in

constant agony, and he rarely stirs from this chamber, leaving the defense of the Sightless Sphinx's entrance in the hands of cultists and the girtablilu mercenaries.

If the PCs do nothing to hide their movement through area **K1**, Rathos becomes aware of their presence through the vent in area **K7**. He activates the scrying pool to watch the PCs fight there, taking note of their tactics and advising his guards in area **K7** accordingly. He then retreats to this chamber to wait for the intruders, and attacks them as soon as they enter, roaring in rage and pain.

RATHOS **CR 12**
XP 19,200
Male broken soul human fighter 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 24)
NE Medium humanoid (human)
Init +2; **Senses** Perception +9

DEFENSE
AC 27, touch 13, flat-footed 24 (+10 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural)
hp 150 (11d10+85)
Fort +15, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1 (+3 vs. fear)
Defensive Abilities bravery +3; **DR** 5/—; **Resist** acid 5, cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5, sonic 5

OFFENSE
Speed 20 ft.
Melee +1 bite +22 (1d8+11), 2 +1 slams +22 (2d6+11/19–20) or torturous touch +17 touch (2d6 plus 1d6 Dex damage and convulsions)
Special Attacks agonized wail (DC 19), baleful gaze (DC 19), torturous touch (DC 19), weapon training (natural +2, heavy blades +1)

TACTICS
Before Combat Rathos drinks a *potion of greater magic fang* before combat.
During Combat Rathos begins combat by unleashing his agonizing wail. He wades into melee combat making Power Attacks with his stone fists, focusing his attacks on opponents who fall victim to his baleful gaze.
Morale Rathos fights to the death, if only to end his shameful and tortured existence, which triggers his Troth of the Forgotten Pharaoh feat.

STATISTICS
Str 22, **Dex** 14, **Con** 22, **Int** 10, **Wis** 6, **Cha** 6
Base Atk +11; **CMB** +17 (+19 sunder); **CMD** 30 (32 vs. sunder)
Feats Critical Focus, Diehard[®], Dodge, Endurance[®], Great Fortitude[®], Greater Weapon Focus (bite), Greater Weapon Focus (slam), Improved Critical (slam), Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Toughness[®], Troth of the Forgotten Pharaoh (see page 17), Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (slam), Weapon Specialization (bite), Weapon Specialization (slam)
Skills Climb +17, Intimidate +20, Perception +9; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Intimidate

Languages Common, Osiriani

SQ armor training 3, twisted wish

Combat Gear *potions of greater magic fang* (2); **Other Gear** +2 half-plate, belt of physical might +2 (Str, Con), 100 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Twisted Wish (Su) Rathos is the victim of a glabrezu's twisted wish. The wish transformed him into a crocodile-headed monstrosity wracked with pain, granting him the broken soul template and natural bite and slam attacks. In addition, it grants him a +4 racial bonus to the saving throw DCs of his special attacks.

K9. The Pyramid Within (CR 12)

This large chamber appears to have been hollowed out of the sphinx's right front leg and paw. A small pyramid stands near the center of the room. Steep stairs climb the pyramid's western face to reach its flattened top. The pyramid abuts the southern wall of the chamber, creating a corridor around the pyramid to the north. Balls of green fire at each corner of the pyramid illuminate the room.

The pyramid is 20 feet tall, and the ceiling curves almost 50 feet overhead. The pyramid's stairs are steep enough to be considered difficult terrain. The balls of green fire at the pyramid's corners are *continual flames*.

Creatures: Two girtablilu mercenaries stand guard here, backed by two wardens of the Forgotten Pharaoh positioned atop the pyramid. Both mercenaries and cultists fight to the death.

GIRTABLILUS (2)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 105 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 130)

WARDENS OF THE FORGOTTEN PHARAOH (2)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 73 each (see page 15)

TACTICS

During Combat The wardens fire *flaming arrows* at opponents, switching to melee weapons only if intruders reach the top of the pyramid.

Morale The wardens fight to the death, triggering their Troth of the Forgotten Pharaoh feat.

Treasure: A successful DC 20 Perception check reveals a secret door in the pyramid's eastern face. The door leads to a small chamber (area **K9a**) where a cultist of the Forgotten Pharaoh has stored a few valuables in a woven reed basket, consisting of a *golembane scarab* in the shape of a scarab beetle with inlaid carnelian wings, two pearls worth 100 gp each, and a pouch containing 85 gp.

K10. Hall of Sekhmet (CR 10)

Great rents mar the walls at either end of this chamber. Shards of stone jut from the walls like jagged blades, somehow hurled with enough force to sink inches into the solid stone walls. Two flickering images hover in the sides of the room, one of a golden lioness, the other of a fierce, lion-headed woman wearing a blood-soaked dress. In the space of a heartbeat, the images morph from one form to the other and back again.

In addition to their demonic patron, the original cultists of Areshkagal also venerated Sekhmet, the Ancient Osirian goddess of fire, vengeance, and war. Statues of the warrior goddess once stood at either end of the hall, but disgusted with the evil actions of the cult, Sekhmet destroyed her own statues.

The echoes of her fury linger in this



RATHOS

hall as illusory manifestations of the goddess and a curse. Any living creature that enters the room must succeed at a DC 22 Will save or fall victim to Sekhmet's curse. Those afflicted by the curse momentarily feel as if large claws are raking their bodies, and take a -4 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, and weapon damage rolls until the curse is removed. Once a creature is afflicted by the curse, it cannot be affected again until the curse is removed.

With a successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check, a character identifies the shifting images as representations of Sekhmet. The PCs might remember the prayer to Sekhmet written on the wall of her shrine in area Hg; a PC who worships Sekhmet and succeeds at a DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check also recalls the prayer. If a character recites the prayer in this chamber, the illusory figures resolve into two stable images: a lioness and a lion-headed woman. Both figures roar their approval before vanishing. The room's curse is removed from any PC or ally afflicted by it, and each PC and ally receives Sekhmet's blessing, gaining a +2 sacred bonus on attack rolls, saving throws, and weapon damage rolls for the next 24 hours. Thereafter, neither the curse nor the blessing manifests in this chamber.

Creatures: Two disciples of the Forgotten Pharaoh patrol the hallway beyond this area. They wait for intruders to pass through the cursed area before attacking.

DISCIPLES OF THE FORGOTTEN PHARAOH (2) CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 95 each (see page 30)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Sekhmet's Curse The cultists have already fallen victim to Sekhmet's curse and take a -4 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, and weapon damage rolls.

K11. Mad Painter's Cell (CR 13)

The dust of centuries lies heavily over everything in this room. Three bare wooden easels stand angled toward each other. A small table nearby holds the remains of several dried-up paint pots and a few wooden brush handles, their bristles eaten away by time. The moaning whisper of the wind seems to fill the room.

Creature: This room was once the studio of a cultist of Areshkagal named Ausetitha, an elven artist whose fanaticism led her to create great works of art in her demonic patron's name. As Ausetitha's skill and madness grew, Areshkagal rewarded the troubled artist with a profane gift, granting her the ability to paint the secrets within an individual. Her fellow cultists grew wary of her power, and when she revealed her greatest work—a painting that revealed the hidden truth within the soul of whoever beheld it—their distrust proved fatal, and they slew Ausetitha and destroyed her paintings. Ausetitha's spirit still lingers in her studio, however, and

when she senses the heartbeats of any living creatures entering this chamber, she wakes and springs through the southern wall, shrieking madly and ready to kill.

AUSETITHA CR 13

XP 25,600

Banshee (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 41)

hp 161

TACTICS

During Combat Ausetitha begins combat with her wail, and then targets the nearest foe with her touch attack.

Morale Ausetitha chases down her enemies throughout the Sightless Sphinx, following them through the walls if necessary to slay them all. She fights until destroyed.

Treasure: One of the paint pots on the table contains *marvelous pigments* that have survived through the centuries.

K12. The Silver Forge (CR 12)

A silver bonfire burns within a wide rectangular pit in this chamber, giving off a considerable amount of heat and shedding dim white light that reflects off of polished shields affixed to the vaulted ceiling. Stone workbenches form a half-circle around the pit next to long stone troughs. A brick kiln sits on the far side of the pit. Against the walls, more tables hold various tools and implements.

The original cultists of Areshkagal constructed this *everburning forge* to craft their own armaments, armor, and other items to use in the temple's defense. A complex enchantment created the forge, which is fixed permanently in place and has no effect other than to provide a continually hot but smokeless forge. The cultists fired pottery in the kiln, and crafted magic items at the workstations against the walls. The ceiling is 30 feet high in this chamber.

Creatures: The girtablilu leader Rubila has claimed this room as her personal quarters and command center, where she organizes mercenary and receives reports on the ongoing skirmishes with the maftet cultists of Areshkagal and their demon allies. Two girtablilu mercenaries are also present here. The guards shout a warning and prepare to attack the moment anyone other than a cultist of the Forgotten Pharaoh or a girtablilu enters the room.

The PCs can temporarily stave off an attack either by disguising themselves as cultists of the Forgotten Pharaoh or by immediately displaying Dakuri's scorpion tail amulet (found in area A). Either method works for only a short time, just long enough for Rubila to spot the disguises or for her to gruffly demand what the PCs mean by displaying the amulet: "My nephew would never give up his sigil willingly. Whether he gave it to you freely or you stole it from his corpse after slaying him, speak quickly before I sheathe my sword in your bodies."

The PCs can attempt to influence Rubila however they wish, but the girtablilu is difficult to sway. Like the rest of her mercenaries, she places a great deal of stock in her reputation. She also highly values honor and the glory of combat. The PCs will have the most success by giving examples of their own honor, such as how they treated Dakuri's body, and by trying to persuade Rubila that the girtablilus' reputation will suffer if word gets out that they served an evil cult.

Rubila begins the negotiation with an initial attitude of hostile. With a successful DC 27 Diplomacy check, a character changes her attitude to unfriendly, or to indifferent if the result is 32 or higher. The PCs take a -5 penalty on this check to reflect Rubila's stubbornness, pride, and reliance on reputation. The PCs gain a +5 bonus on this Diplomacy check if they make a convincing argument regarding their own honor or return Dakuri's amulet to Rubila. They gain an additional +5 bonus if they argue that the mercenaries' reputation could be harmed by their agreement with the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh.

If the PCs change Rubila's attitude to indifferent, they can make further requests of her, such as asking her to withdraw her mercenaries and leave the Forgotten Pharaoh cultists on their own, by attempting an additional DC 17 Diplomacy check, modified as appropriate.

If the PCs somehow make Rubila friendly or helpful, she might even agree to assist in the fight against the glabrezu or the Forgotten Pharaoh, but she will not risk her people in the combat unless the odds are more or less even—to do otherwise would be dishonorable in her eyes. She also will not help the PCs in lesser battles. "Can't you handle such enemies on your own?" she asks disdainfully. "What sort of warrior needs allies for such a small skirmish?"

If negotiations fail, Rubila and her guards immediately attack, ignoring further pleas for parley.

GIRTABLILUS (2) CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 105 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 130)

RUBILA CR 12

XP 19,200

Female girtablilu rogue 8
(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 130)

N Large monstrous humanoid

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft.; Perception +20

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 15, flat-footed 21 (+4 armor, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +8 natural, -1 size)

hp 163 (18 HD; 10d10+8d8+72)

Fort +9, **Ref** +18, **Will** +11

Defensive Abilities evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee +2 *short sword* +22/+17/+12/+7 (1d6+8/17-20), 2 claws +15 (1d6+3 plus grab), sting +15 (1d6+3 plus poison)

Ranged mwk dagger +21 (1d4+6/19-20)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (1d6+5), poison (DC 19), sneak attack +4d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +12)

1/day—*summon nature's ally V* (1d3 giant scorpions)

TACTICS

During Combat Rubila flanks with the other mercenaries to make sneak attacks. If unable to flank, she uses Greater Feint to make sneak attacks.



RUBILA

Morale Rubila fights to the death to uphold her contract and her reputation.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 21, **Con** 18, **Int** 13, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +16; **CMB** +23 (+27 grapple); **CMD** 39 (51 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Expertise, Dodge, Greater Feint, Improved Critical (short sword), Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +16, Bluff +23, Climb +18, Craft (traps) +9, Diplomacy +23, Disable Device +20, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +10, Knowledge (history) +6, Perception +20, Sense Motive +23, Stealth +26, Survival +15

Languages Common, Girtablilu, Osiriani

SQ rogue talents (combat trick, finesse rogue, honeyed words^{APG}, surprise attack), scorpion empathy +10, trapfinding +4, undersized weapons

Combat Gear *potions of cure serious wounds* (2), *potions of spider climb* (3); **Other Gear** +2 leather armor, +2 short sword, mwk daggers (4), 272 gp

Treasure: Among the mundane tools on the tables are two sets of masterwork artisan's tools, one for armorsmithing and one for weaponsmithing.

K13. Stone Stairs

A stone staircase leads upward at a steep angle.

These stairs climb up to the Sphinx's upper level, ending in a long passage that leads to the head of the Sightless Sphinx (area K40).

K14. Blocked Hallway

A stone wall bars further passage down this long hallway. Curiously, the stone doesn't match the sandstone used to build the rest of the Sphinx, and judging by its smooth surface, the wall must have been placed here deliberately.

Clerics accompanying the Sarenite templars who cleansed the Sphinx 150 years ago sealed off key areas of the temple with *walls of stone* while the paladins eradicated the cultists. The Areshkagal-worshipping maftets and the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh have removed the other *walls of stone*, but left this one in place to reduce the number of fronts the cults must fight on.

A character can identify the wall as a magical *wall of stone* with a successful DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check. The only way through the 2-inch-thick wall is to batter it down (hardness 8, hp 30, break DC 24).

In the corridor beyond the wall is a secret door that leads into area K25; it can be found with a successful DC 25 Perception check once the wall has been breached.

K15. Shadowy Rooms (CR 11)

This small room contains four bare wooden cots with legs carved to resemble lions' paws. Above each cot, a niche cut in the wall serves as a shallow shelf, adorned with a carved figure of a snarling sphinx looking out into the room.

These rooms once provided quarters for the Areshkagal cultists who lived within the Sightless Sphinx. Separated from the rest of the rooms in the Sphinx by the stone block in area K14, these rooms lie empty and abandoned—with the exception of a single shadowy explorer.

Creature: The maftet cult of Areshkagal has been concentrating its efforts against the cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh, but a shadow demon named Sargota has taken it upon itself to explore the ruined areas of the Sightless Sphinx. The demon hopes to prove itself to Ninureset by bringing back valuable information and perhaps a prisoner to sacrifice. The PCs can encounter Sargota in any of these rooms, but if they don't immediately detect the demon, it sizes up their power and decides they are too much for it to handle at once. Instead, Sargota follows them, keeping to the shadows, striking at a time when they are weak or already dealing with an enemy, such as the mud elementals in area K18.

SARGOTA

CR 11

XP 12,800

Advanced shadow demon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 67)

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar, incorporeal)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +27

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 20, flat-footed 15 (+5 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 119 (14d10+42)

Fort +7, **Ref** +13, **Will** +11

Defensive Abilities incorporeal; **DR** 10/cold iron or good;

Immune cold, electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, fire 10; **SR** 22

Weaknesses sunlight powerlessness

OFFENSE

Speed fly 40 ft. (perfect)

Melee bite +18 touch (2d6 plus 1d6 cold), 2 claws +18 touch (1d8 plus 1d6 cold)

Special Attacks pounce

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +15)

At will—*deeper darkness*, *fear* (DC 19), *greater teleport* (self only), *telekinesis* (DC 20)

3/day—*shadow conjuration* (DC 19), *shadow evocation* (DC 20)

1/day—*magic jar* (DC 20), summon (level 3, 1 shadow demon 50%)

TACTICS

During Combat If it gets the chance, Sargota attempts to possess one of the PCs with *magic jar* to make use of a physical body. If unsuccessful or prevented from possessing

an opponent, Sargota lashes out with its incorporeal touch attacks and spell-like abilities.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 60 hit points, Sargota attempts to flee. The Sightless Sphinx's wards, however, prevent it from using *greater teleport*, so it flees through the walls back to the maftet-held areas of the Sphinx.

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 18, **Con** 17, **Int** 14, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +14; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 34

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Improved Natural Attack (claw), Mobility

Skills Acrobatics +21, Bluff +22, Fly +29, Knowledge (local) +19, Knowledge (planes) +19, Perception +27, Sense Motive +19, Stealth +21

Languages Abyssal, Common; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ shadow blend, sprint

K16. Scriptorium (CR 12)

Remarkably well preserved wooden racks line the walls of this room, but the scrolls slotted into the racks have fared less well over the years. Most are little more than bundles of brittle papyrus barely held together by rotted ribbons. Here and there, however, an intact scroll or carved scroll case juts out from the smoothly curved racks. In the center of the room, warped and withered chairs surround a flat stone table.

The cult of Areshkagal stored its written works and copied holy texts in this chamber, though most have suffered from the ravages of time.

Creature: A Forgotten Pharaoh cultist and oracle named Thmei has been exploring the Sphinx in her spare time. These unexplored areas intrigue the oracle, and she has been using her spirit walk ability to access them.

Have Thmei attempt a Perception check as the PCs' approach this room. If she detects them, she drinks one of her *potions of invisibility* and resolves to follow them to learn more about their purpose here. Thmei hopes that if she is able to destroy the PCs, the Forgotten Pharaoh might make her a personal lieutenant and bring her upstairs, where she will no longer have to serve Rathos, whom the oracle considers to be idiotic and embarrassing. If she remains undetected, Thmei waits for a time when the PCs are resting or have divided their numbers before she attacks. She prefers not to join a combat in progress, wary of having to face both the PCs and another creature if things go poorly for her. However, if the PCs detect Thmei and she has no other choice, she attacks, even if the situation is not as favorable to her as she would like.

THMEI

CR 12

XP 19,200

Female human oracle 13 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 42)

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +7; **Senses** Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 18, flat-footed 24 (+8 armor, +4 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural)

hp 111 (13d8+49)

Fort +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +11

Immune disease, sickened condition

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *ghost touch spear* +10/+5 (1d8+1/x3)

Oracle Spells Known (CL 13th; concentration +18)



MUMMY'S MASK

- 6th (4/day)—*antilife shell*, *greater heroism*, *harm* (DC 21), *mass cure moderate wounds*
- 5th (7/day)—*flame strike* (DC 20), *greater command* (DC 20), *mass cure light wounds*, *slay living* (DC 20), *telekinesis* (DC 20)
- 4th (7/day)—*cure critical wounds*, *divine power*, *freedom of movement*, *order's wrath* (DC 19), *poison* (DC 19), *spiritual ally*^{APG}
- 3rd (7/day)—*bestow curse* (DC 18), *borrow fortune*^{APG}, *cure serious wounds*, *heroism*, *inflict serious wounds* (DC 18), *searing light*
- 2nd (7/day)—*aid*, *bull's strength*, *cure moderate wounds*, *death knell* (DC 17), *hold person* (DC 17), *silence* (DC 17), *spiritual weapon*
- 1st (8/day)—*command* (DC 16), *cure light wounds*, *divine favor*, *inflict light wounds* (DC 16), *obscuring mist*, *shield of faith*, *unseen servant*
- 0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 15), *create water*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *light*, *mending*, *purify food and drink*, *read magic*, *resistance*

Mystery ancestor^{UM}

TACTICS

Before Combat Thmei casts *shield of faith* and keeps her spirit shield active while exploring the Sphinx.

During Combat Thmei casts *antilife shell* to keep melee attackers at bay, then summons her ancestral weapon. She casts *spiritual ally* to aid her in combat, and continues to cast damaging spells such as *harm* and *poison* from the safety of her *antilife shell*. She targets tight groups of enemies with *flame strike* or *order's wrath*. If forced into melee combat, Thmei casts *divine power* and *greater heroism* on herself and attacks opponents with *slay living* or *inflict serious wounds*.

Morale Unwilling to return to Rathos defeated, Thmei fights to the death, triggering her Troth of the Forgotten Pharaoh feat.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 27

Feats Agile Maneuvers, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Toughness, Troth of the Forgotten Pharaoh (see page 17)

Skills Diplomacy +9, Heal +8, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Linguistics +6, Perception +9, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +16, Stealth +16

Languages Ancient Osiriani, Common, Kelish, Osiriani

SQ oracle's curse (wasting), revelations (ancestral weapon [+1 *ghost touch*, 13 minutes/day], spirit shield [+6 AC, 50% ranged miss chance, 13 hours/day], spirit walk [13 rounds, 1/day], storm of souls [6d8, Fort half DC 21, 2/day])

Combat Gear *potions of invisibility* (2); **Other Gear** *amulet of natural armor* +2, *belt of physical might* +2 (Dex, Con), *cloak of resistance* +2, *headband of alluring charisma* +2, platinum bracelet (worth 300 gp), gilt wooden funerary mask (worth 25 gp), 75 gp

Treasure: The scroll racks hold four intact magic scrolls: a *scroll of ball lightning* (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 204), a *scroll of mass bear's endurance*, a *scroll of waves of fatigue* in a bone scroll case worth 75 gp, and a *scroll of word of chaos* in an ivory scroll case inlaid with turquoise worth 220 gp.

In addition to her personal effects, Thmei carries a ceramic tile marked with the image of an armored warrior. This tile is one of the keys that opens the hidden vault in area K18.

K17. High Scribe's Quarters

A withered heap of wood and tattered cloth in the corner of this chamber is all that remains of a bed. Wooden frames hang on the walls, holding brittle and faded sheets of papyrus that seem on the verge of crumbling away.

The Areshkagal cult's keeper of records occupied this room. The scrolls on the walls depict brightly painted scenes of battle against different Osirian creatures, including a swarm of asps, a crocodile, a giant scorpion, and a stone golem.

Treasure: The high scribe used alchemical means to preserve the scrolls on her wall, but time has worn away that protection. Touching or moving the scrolls causes them to collapse into dust, but a *make whole* spell or the application of *unguent of timelessness* restores the scrolls to their original form. If restored, the scrolls are worth 500 gp each to an art collector or historian.

K18. Mud Baths (CR 13)

A rich, earthy smell pervades the tendrils of steam that drift through the air in this room. The eastern wall of this long chamber is a sunken pit of reddish mud. Lazy currents ripple through the mud, with an occasional slow-forming bubble rising to the surface. Three stone carvings protrude from the wall behind the mud pit at evenly spaced intervals above square recesses about the size of a human hand. Tiny hieroglyphs decorate each carving.

Only the highest-ranking priests of Areshkagal were permitted to relax in this warm mud bath. Fed by the same underground hot spring as the pool in area K6, the 3-foot-deep mud baths are rich in minerals and soothing to the skin.

A slab in the floor in the center of the chamber leads to a hidden vault beneath the Sightless Sphinx, but a successful DC 30 Perception check is necessary to notice the secret portal. However, opening the slab requires the placement of three specific tiles in the recesses beneath the stone carvings on the eastern wall. One tile depicts a ferocious sphinx, one depicts an armored warrior-cultist, and one depicts a coiling serpent, but the tiles have been scattered

throughout the Sightless Sphinx. The sphinx tile lies in Userib's treasure trove in area **K37**. The Forgotten Pharaoh's oracular lieutenant, Thmei, found the warrior tile in her explorations and carries it with her (see area **K16**). The serpent tile was placed in a secret compartment behind the sacrificial altar in the Grand Temple (area **K24b**).

Each of the carvings on the east wall displays the same hieroglyphs—prayers to the demon lord Areshkagal—but a successful DC 20 Perception check allows a PC to notice that one small hieroglyph is different on each carving. The left carving displays the hieroglyph for “four,” the center carving the hieroglyph for “two,” and the right carving has no hieroglyph at all in that space. These hieroglyphs are clues to the proper placement of the tiles to open the hidden vault. The hieroglyphs on the carvings refer to the number of legs in each tile—four for the sphinx, two for the warrior, and none for the serpent.

Creatures: The high priests of Areshkagal bound a pair of elder mud elementals to the bath to guard the stone carvings on the wall. Any living creature that enters the mud baths without invoking Areshkagal in a specific prayer rouses the mud elementals, as does placing the tiles in the wrong spaces.

If the PCs use the *bronze sentinel* to enter the mud baths, the elementals do not attack, as the *sentinel* is not a living creature, but they still attack if the tiles are placed in the wrong order, even if the *bronze sentinel* placed the tiles.

ELDER MUD ELEMENTALS (2)

CR 13

XP 12,800 each

hp 152 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 121)

TACTICS

During Combat The mud elementals attack any creatures within the mud baths first before moving to the nearest creatures in the room. Bound to this chamber, the mud elementals do not pursue enemies outside this room.

Morale The mud elementals fight to the death.

Treasure: As in the hot spring, cultists of Areshkagal occasionally threw offerings into the mud bath here. One of these offerings, a *mythopoeic sphinx* (see page 63) can be discovered deep beneath the mud with a successful DC 30 Perception check.

Development: If the PCs find all three tiles and place them in their correct recesses, the stone slab concealing the entrance to the hidden vault opens with a grinding of stone on stone. A cloud of dust and dried mud rises from the floor as a 10-foot-square slab of stone in the center of the room drops several inches and slides to the side, revealing a set of stone stairs leading down to area **K38**.

Opening the secret entrance alerts the half-fiend divine guardian gynosphinx Areshkhesbed in area **K39**, who has placed an *alarm* on the slab.

K19. Antechamber

A round stone disk hovers two feet off of the sandy floor in the center of this room. A golden glow radiates from beneath the disk, giving it the appearance of floating on a luminous cloud. The image of a snarling sphinx stretches its engraved wings across a stone door in the western wall. Beneath the sphinx's outstretched wings, hordes of tiny, twisted demons are carved upon the door.

Both the floating disk and the stone door have moderate transmutation auras. The glow beneath the disk sheds dim light in the room. The door contains no handles or other visible mechanisms to open it and weighs over 1,600 pounds. If a living creature weighing at least 100 pounds stands on the floating disk, the door slides upward into the wall and reveals the chamber beyond (area **K20**). When the creature steps off the platform, the door closes again. The only other way through the door is by breaking it (hardness 8, 60 hp, break DC 28) or lifting it with brute force, which requires a minimum Strength score of 26.

K20. Chamber of the Invisible Step (CR 11)

A round stone platform sits in the center of this room, its edge traced with graceful runes etched in silver. A bas-relief of a female head wearing a pharaoh's headdress, its blank face emblazoned with a spiky rune, decorates the wall opposite the platform. The lower third of each wall is inlaid with countless clear crystals, forming a rough and dazzling perimeter around the room. A stone door exits the room to the east.

This chamber provided a means for the cultists of Areshkagal to teleport into or out of the Sightless Sphinx. The platform here is exempt from the Sphinx's protective wards that block extradimensional travel and has a strong conjuration aura. Anyone standing on the platform can use dimensional travel spells such as *dimension door*, *teleport*, and *greater teleport* normally. Up to six Medium creatures or one Large creature can stand on the platform at once.

The carving on the wall represents Areshkagal, as does the rune on the carving's face; recognizing either requires a successful DC 15 Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (planes) check. The cultists used the bas-relief as a memory touchstone, allowing them to accurately picture this room when teleporting in.

The stone door to area **K19** cannot be opened from this side. Cultists returning to the Sphinx using *teleport* had to do so at designated times, when another cultist would be available to stand on the floating disk in the antechamber to open the door. The PCs can use this chamber to teleport out of the Sphinx and return to a city to resupply or heal, but they must leave someone behind to open the door if they

wish to come back via this route (they may of course destroy the door or find some other way around this limitation).

Creature: A large clay statue of a cat-headed humanoid stands in the northeast corner of the room. Such variant clay golems, called panthereons, were popular guardians during Osirion's First Age. The original cultists of Areshkagal placed this panthereon here to guard against incursions into the sphinx via teleportation. The panthereon attacks any creature entering the room, whether through the door to area **K19** or the teleportation platform, unless the creature strongly presents an unholy symbol of Areshkagal. The panthereon pursues intruders throughout the Sightless Sphinx, and fights until destroyed.

PANTHEREON GOLEM **CR 11**
XP 12,800
hp 118 (see page 88)

K21. Old Battleground

The signs of an ancient battle still linger in this room. Shards of brittle bone lie scattered among bits of masonry hacked from the walls, and dried splashes of blood mar the walls. In the middle of the floor, loose stones have been arranged in a pattern that resembles the holy symbol of Sarenrae.

Cultists of Areshkagal retreating from the battle in the Grand Temple fled to this room, but Sarenrae's paladins cut them down before they could reach the safety of the adjoining siege room (area **K22**). A successful DC 25 Perception check reveals a secret door to area **K22** hidden in the east wall.

K22. Siege Room (CR 8)

This small chamber has the look of a redoubt or fortified retreat. Two narrow wicker-framed beds, their bedding long since rotted away, stand against the walls. The shelves lining the walls likely once held numerous supplies, but are now buried beneath a thick layer of dust. A tarnished metal box sits next to one of the beds.

When the templars of Sarenrae cleansed this area of the temple, they discovered the secret door and used the chamber beyond to stockpile supplies for an extended battle.

Trap: A cleric accompanying the templars placed a ward on the door that remains to this day, triggering a *holy word* spell if the door is opened.

HOLY WORD TRAP **CR 8**
XP 4,800
Type magic; **Perception** DC 32; **Disable Device** DC 32
EFFECTS
Trigger touch; **Reset** none

Effect spell effect (*holy word* [caster level 13th], Will DC 20 partial); multiple targets (all nongood creatures in a 40-ft.-radius spread centered on the door)

Treasure: The tarnished silver box is marked with the holy symbol of Sarenrae and contains three *+1 holy bolts*, a *scroll of raise dead*, a *wand of cure moderate wounds* with 20 charges, and 6 flasks of holy water. If cleaned up, the silver box itself is worth 250 gp.

K23. Spirit of the Past (CR 12)

Although this chamber bears battle scars, it is in better condition than others in this area. Some effort has been made to clear the floor of debris, though dust still blankets much of the room. A silver holy symbol of Sarenrae, almost entirely obscured by tarnish, hangs on one wall. Beneath it, several rusted longswords lie in a fan, their blades pointed outward.

Creature: During the battle between the Sarenites and the cultists of Areshkagal, a powerful paladin died in this room, slain by the glabrezu demon Ninureset. Lady Sophronia presented a shifting array of masculine and feminine qualities in daily life, but adopted a priestess's raiments when performing holy duties to honor Sarenrae. She was a talented and well-respected warrior among the templars, and her death was greatly mourned. Since her death, Sophronia's spirit has lingered in this area, wandering the empty halls of the Sightless Sphinx in search of the demon who killed her, but unable to find him. She exists in a cloudy mental state, lost in reveries of glorious deeds and old battles, mingled with painful memories of her death, and takes little notice of present events within the Sphinx.

If the PCs fight any of the evil creatures in this area of the Sphinx, such as the shadow demon in area **K15** or the spectres in area **K24a**, Sophronia reveals herself to the group. She appears as she did in life, though translucent and ghostly: a muscular figure with long black hair, dressed in shining plate and wearing a fluttering tabard of Sarenrae that constantly furls and unfurls in an invisible wind.

Lady Sophronia congratulates the PCs on their actions and commends them for their bravery. She is happy to talk about her life as a paladin and the assault on the Sightless Sphinx, but she tends to lose her focus and drift away mid-sentence, only to return a moment later with apologies and explanation: "Please forgive me. I exist now without time and direction, and I've forgotten what it's like to live from one moment to the next. My existence is one long moment now, an endless search for a powerful demonic enemy who forever eludes justice. I can only wait until the Dawnflower deems me ready, when she shall bring me to her glory." As she speaks with the PCs, Lady Sophronia asks them about their quest and their faiths, showing particular interest in

PCs who worship Sarenrae, and using *zone of truth* to verify the group's answers.

Sophronia's starting attitude is indifferent. If the PCs impress her with a successful DC 26 Diplomacy check to make her helpful, she chooses to ally with them. Sophronia can offer little in the way of direct assistance to the PCs, as her movement is limited to the rooms in which she fought and died—areas **K18** through **K24**—but if the PCs engage any evil creatures in those rooms, Sophronia can manifest and assist in the battle. She also knows much about demons and cults and can help the PCs with her Knowledge skills. Lady Sophronia also volunteers her healing abilities to the PCs if needed, and offers to keep watch over the PCs while they rest, making this chamber a safe retreat in the otherwise dangerous Sightless Sphinx.

If the PCs inform Lady Sophronia that the cult of Areshkagal is on the rise once more, or that Ninureset is present inside the Sightless Sphinx, she flares in furious anger. Her apparition takes on a red tint and appears lit from behind as if by flames. "My greatest fear has come to pass. This, then, is why I have remained here all this time. I always thought my talents would be needed again. The cult must not be allowed to rise. With your assistance, perhaps I can make another strike against this nest of vipers corrupting the land." Although she cannot leave the area of her death to personally face Ninureset, Lady Sophronia offers to imbue one of the PCs' weapons with divine power using her divine endowment ability.

LADY SOPHRONIA

CR 12

XP 19,200

Human ghost paladin of Sarenrae 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 144)

LG Medium undead (augmented humanoid, human, incorporeal)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +23

Aura courage (10 ft.), justice (10 ft.), resolve (10 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 17, flat-footed 26 (+10 armor, +6 deflection, +1 Dex)

hp 153 (11d10+88)

Fort +19, **Ref** +10, **Will** +15

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, incorporeal, rejuvenation; **Immune** charm, disease, fear, undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee +1 *ghost touch* longsword +20/+15/+10 (1d8+7/19-20) or corrupting touch +12 (12d6, Fort DC 21 half)

Special Attacks champion of the Dawnflower, channel positive energy (DC 21, 6d6), divine endowment, smite evil 4/day (+6 attack, +11 damage), telekinesis (DC 21)

Paladin Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +17)

At will—*detect evil*

Paladin Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +14)

3rd—*holy whisper*^{APG} (DC 19), *prayer*

2nd—*paladin's sacrifice*^{APG}, *weapon of awe*^{APG}, *zone of truth* (DC 18)

1st—*bless weapon*, *divine favor*, *lesser restoration*, *rally point*^{APG}

TACTICS

During Combat Lady Sophronia casts spells to assist her allies and uses her smite evil ability to attack evil foes with her *ghost touch longsword*. Against living evil creatures, she uses her corrupting touch as well.

Morale Lady Sophronia fights to defeat evil until she's destroyed, though she rejuvenates 2d4 days later.

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 12, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 22

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 28

Feats Alignment Channel (evil), Blind-Fight, Channel Smite, Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword)



LADY SOPHRONIA

MUMMY'S MASK

Skills Diplomacy +18, Fly +4, Heal +14, Knowledge (planes) +11, Knowledge (religion) +14, Perception +23, Sense Motive +14, Stealth +4

Languages Celestial, Common, Osiriani

SQ divine bond (weapon +3, 2/day), lay on hands 11/day (5d6), mercies (cursed, diseased, sickened)

Gear +1 *ghost touch* full plate, +1 *ghost touch* longsword, silver holy symbol of Sarenrae

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Champion of the Dawnflower (Su) Lady Sophronia's devotion to Sarenrae empowers her attacks. She adds her Charisma modifier as a bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls made with a *ghost touch* weapon. This bonus on attack rolls stacks with the bonus gained from her smite evil ability.

Divine Endowment (Su) Lady Sophronia can touch a weapon to imbue it with a measure of divine power. The weapon then sheds light as a torch, gains an additional +1 enhancement bonus (to a maximum of +5), and gains the *holy* weapon special ability. These effects end if the weapon leaves the Sightless Sphinx or if Lady Sophronia is permanently destroyed or put to rest. While a weapon is infused with this power, Lady Sophronia loses the use of her divine bond class feature.

Rejuvenation (Su) Lady Sophronia persists as a ghost so long as the glabrezu Ninureset is alive. If Ninureset is killed or banished back to the Abyss, Lady Sophronia is put to rest and her soul passes on to the afterlife.

Treasure: The eight longswords on the ground represent Lady Sophronia's fallen comrades. Rusted and ancient, they have no monetary value. If Lady Sophronia is put to rest, she leaves behind her +1 *ghost touch* full plate and +1 *ghost touch* longsword. Her silver holy symbol hangs on the wall.

Story Award: If the PCs befriend Lady Sophronia and slay Ninureset, thereby putting the paladin to rest, reward them XP as if they had defeated her in combat.

K24a. Grand Temple (CR 12)

Dust and fine sand cover the floor of this grand hall, as if decades, maybe even centuries, had passed since any living creature set foot here. Sconces carved into the stone walls hold the withered stems of ancient torches, their blackened heads cold and crumbling. Here and there, yellow bones molder among the drifts of sand.

At the far end of the hall, a narrow staircase leads up to a raised platform. The front of the platform displays hideous images of lion-headed figures, ferocious sphinxes, and horned demons tearing screaming mortals apart. A white stone statue of a faceless demonic sphinx with six legs glares down from atop the dais. The sphinx's wide dragon wings spread to either side, forming two flat altars stained with the blood of countless sacrifices. On the curved wall behind the sphinx, the fragmented remains of thirteen humanoid skeletons have been pinned upside-down against the

wall with rusty metal spikes. A tarnished oval mirror hangs flat against the wall above the middle skeleton.

A pitched battle between the paladins of Sarenrae and the cultists of Areshkagal took place here. After the dead had been counted, the templars took away their fallen and consecrated them properly, but they left the cultists' bodies here to rot.

A PC who succeeds at a successful DC 25 Perception check discovers a secret door in the north wall just past the entrance. The door leads to area **K25**. The ceiling is 50 feet high in this chamber.

Creatures: The angry spirits of three dead cultists linger in the room as spectres, hiding in the walls until living creatures enter the room. The spectres have been here a long time and are desperate for the warmth of the living.

ADVANCED SPECTRES (4)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 68 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 256, 294)

TACTICS

During Combat The spectres target individuals wearing holy symbols or other identifiers of Sarenrae first. If no one wears such symbols, the spectres scatter, each attacking separate targets.

Morale The spectres fight until destroyed.

K24b. Sacrificial Altar

The dais at the eastern end of the Grand Temple rises 5 feet above the floor of the rest of the chamber. The stone sphinx statue atop the dais represents Areshkagal, which a character recognizes with a successful DC 15 Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (planes) check.

The outspread wings of the sphinx form an altar where the cultists of Areshkagal made living sacrifices to their demonic patron. The partial skeletons spiked to the wall behind the altar are the aged remains of the cult's sacrificial victims.

The statue and the bronze mirror behind it are part of the Sightless Sphinx's scrying network. The mirror has a strong divination aura (caster level 20th). If activated, the mirror can be used to view the Chamber of the Sky (area **K37**), where Userib now dwells. The statue and mirror here have not been used in over a hundred years, and since the current occupants of the Sightless Sphinx have not explored the Grand Temple, neither Userib nor his demonic ally Ninureset realize that these objects can be used to look into their headquarters. See area **K8** for full details on using the scrying chambers and statues.

Treasure: The templars of Sarenrae missed a secret cache here when they cleared the temple and eradicated the cult. A PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Perception check discovers a secret panel in the floor behind the sphinx

statue. The compartment beneath holds a *bag of holding type II* containing a *+1 greatsword*, a *potion of displacement*, a *potion of fly*, a *potion of rage*, and a square ceramic tile painted with the image of a coiled snake. This tile is one of the keys that opens the hidden vault in area **K18**.

K25. Observation Post

Horizontal slits in the eastern wall of this small chamber allow a view into the grand hall beyond. A layer of dust on the floor indicates that no one has likely used this observation post for many years.

Initiates of the cult of Areshkagal who were not yet considered worthy to actually participate in ceremonies in the Grand Temple were allowed to observe the cult's rituals from this room, where they also provided additional security against interruption. The secret doors in the north and south walls are easily visible from within this room.

K26. Hall of the Dead (CR 13+)

A wide hall stretches from a pair of stone double doors to the south to an oversized archway to the north. Engraved sigils of eyes, suns, swords, and water birds mark the large stone blocks that pave the floor. Six alcoves line the hall, three on each side. Within each alcove stands an upright stone sarcophagus carved in the likeness of a human man, his arms crossed over his chest. Thin, foul-smelling smoke emanates from the eyes of the sarcophagi, creating a dank haze in the room.

The first sarcophagus to the southeast stands open and empty; a small pile of charred bones lie heaped on the floor in front of it. A PC who succeeds at a DC 23 Knowledge (planes) check can identify the foul-smelling smoke issuing from the sarcophagi as a characteristic of the extraplanar undead creatures known as bodaks. The ceiling is 30 feet high in this chamber.

Creatures: Through horrific torture and exposure to the supernatural evil of Areshkagal, the cultists of Areshkagal transformed six captured innocents into bodak guardians and sealed the undead within the sarcophagi lining the walls. If a living creature steps anywhere within the 30-foot-square space in front of a sarcophagus, the lid of the sarcophagus flies open, releasing the bodak within to attack. This leaves a 10-foot-wide corridor down the center of the chamber where creatures can safely pass through the room without releasing the trapped bodaks.

When Userib and the maftets first entered the Sphinx, they accidentally released the first bodak near the door. Userib quickly realized that proximity triggered the release of the undead, so after burning the corpse of the

creature, the maftets moved straight down the center of the room and into the next chamber, leaving the five remaining bodaks still trapped in their sarcophagi.

If the PCs realize how to release the bodaks from their sarcophagi, they can gain a strong advantage against the undead by taking care to release only one bodak at a time. Clever PCs may even attempt to ambush unwitting opponents by maneuvering them into releasing the bodaks, though the undead make no distinction between the PCs and their enemies once released. Note, however, that the maftet cultists and their allies know of the bodaks and avoid releasing them if possible. In addition, the PCs have no way of knowing that every bodak that dies here strengthens the zombie lord Heqet in area **K28**, and thus their bravery (or greed) may come back to haunt them in the near future.

BODAKS (5)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 85 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 48)

TACTICS

During Combat A bodak uses its death gaze to try to slay any enemies it sees. Once in melee, it attacks the nearest creature with its slam attacks.

Morale The tormented, rage-filled bodaks fight until destroyed.

Development: This chamber lies between the territories claimed by the cult of Areshkagal and the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh, and the two cults have clashed here on numerous occasions.

Creatures: Two maftet cultists of Areshkagal are under orders to cause as much damage as possible to the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh and any other potential threats they find inside the Sightless Sphinx. The maftets have defaced their runic tattoos with ritualistic scars and dyed the fur on the lower halves of their bodies blue in honor of their demonic patron. Red dye streaks their wings, as if their trailing feathers had been dipped in fresh blood. The maftets burst through the archway from area **K27** at an opportune moment, such as when the PCs are fighting the bodaks. If any Forgotten Pharaoh cultists (or PCs disguising themselves as cultists) are present, one of the maftets focuses its attacks on the cultists while the other attacks the PCs.

CULTISTS OF ARESHKAGAL (2)

CR 9

XP 6,400 each

Maftet rogue 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 188)

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +18

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 16, flat-footed 17 (+4 armor, +6 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 113 each (14 HD; 8d10+6d8+42)

Fort +7, **Ref** +17, **Will** +9

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge

MUMMY'S MASK

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (poor)

Melee +1 scimitars +17/+17/+12/+12/+7 (1d6+6/15-20)

Special Attacks paired weapons, raptor dive, sneak attack +3d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +9)

Constant—*mage armor*

3/day—*magic weapon*

1/day—*cat's grace*, *protection from evil*

Rogue Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th, concentration +7)

3/day—*ray of frost*

2/day—*vanish*^{APG}

TACTICS

Before Combat The maftets cast *magic weapon* on their scimitars before combat, and cast *vanish* just before entering the room.

During Combat The maftets take advantage of the high ceiling to make raptor dives coupled with sneak attacks. The cultists attempt to flank with another to continue making sneak attacks, keeping to the air as much as possible.

Morale Zealous converts to Areshkagal's worship, the maftets fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 22, **Con** 16, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 33

Feats Bleeding Critical, Combat Reflexes^B, Critical Focus, Double Slice, Improved Critical (scimitar), Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (scimitar), Wingover

Skills Acrobatics +22, Disable Device +14, Fly +18, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (history) +9, Knowledge (local) +12, Knowledge (planes) +4, Knowledge (religion) +4, Perception +18, Stealth +27, Survival +12

Languages Abyssal, Common, Sphinx

SQ rogue talents (combat trick, major magic, minor magic), runic tattoos, trapfinding +3

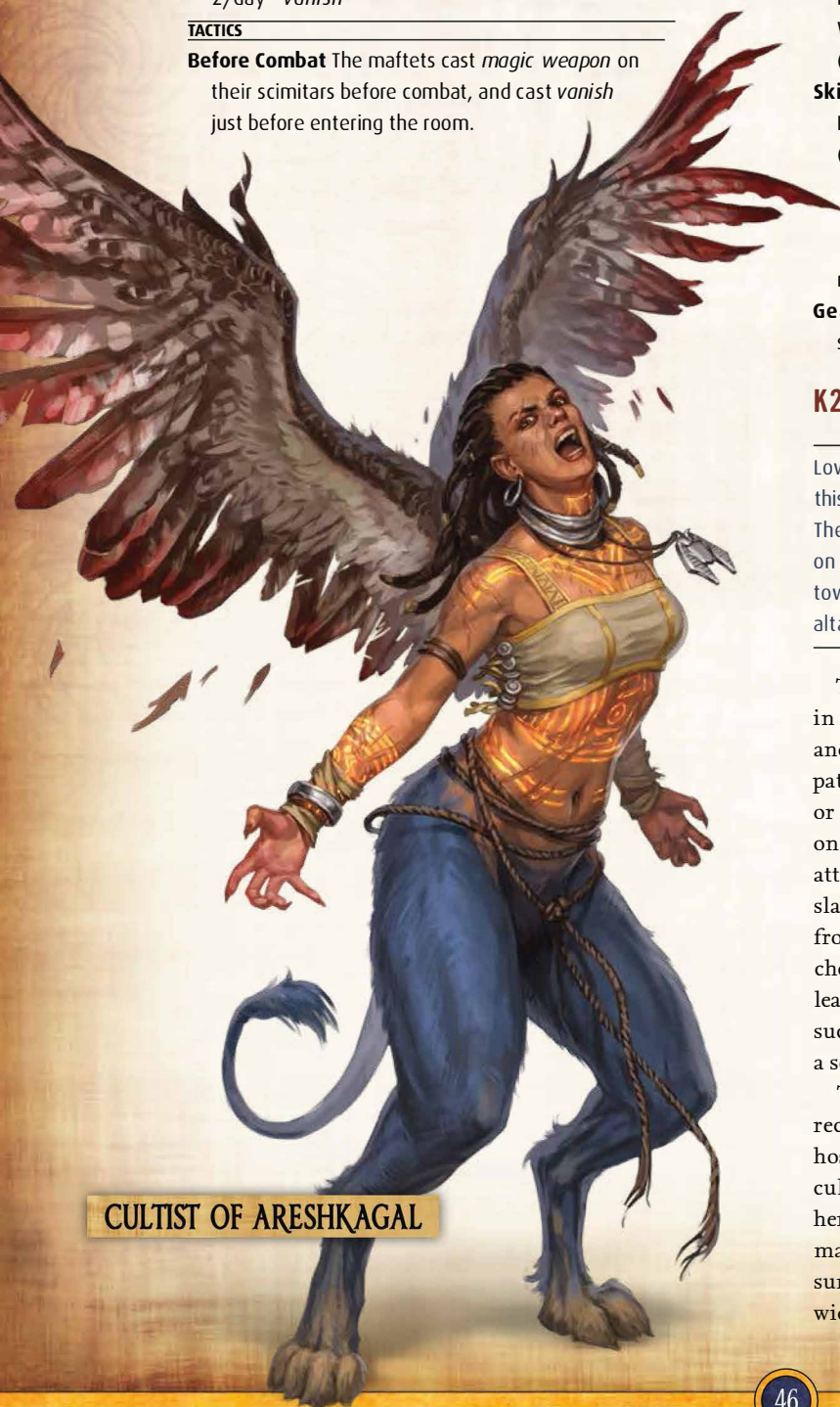
Gear mwk scimitars (2), *aegis of recovery*^{UE}, silver unholy symbol of Areshkagal

K27. Chamber of Ritual Purification (CR 11)

Low stone tables covered in brownish stains ring the center of this chamber, with piles of rusted chains heaped next to them. The tables surround a red stone altar. Obsidian chips embedded on each face of the altar form pointed runes that stab down toward the ground, and several black iron knives lie atop the altar in a puddle of fresh blood.

The cult of Areshkagal prepared their dead for burial in this room, which they also used to torture prisoners and engage in bloody rituals in honor of their demonic patron. A PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (planes) check recognizes Areshkagal's rune on the altar. Anyone investigating the stone tables can attempt a DC 10 Perception check to notice that two of the slabs bear fresh blood stains and deep score marks, as if from sharp blades. A PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Survival check finds a dried but relatively recent blood trail leading from the bloodstained table to the eastern door. A successful DC 25 Perception check reveals the presence of a secret door in the northeast wall.

The newly converted maftet cultists of Areshkagal recently resurrected the use of this chamber. When the hostilities initially began, the maftets captured two cultists of the Forgotten Pharaoh and brought them here. After torturing the cultists for information, the maftets gruesomely sacrificed them as part of a demon-summoning ritual, then scattered their bones far and wide in the desert.



CULTIST OF ARESHKAGAL

Creatures: The Forgotten Pharaoh cultists sacrificed in this room have returned as vengeful guecubus, forming undead bodies from the sand and stone of the Sightless Sphinx itself. The guecubus hide beneath the floor using their earth glide ability until their tremorsense detects movement in the room above. Remembering well their torture at the hands of the maftet cultists, the guecubus emerge from the floor to attack any living creatures in the room.

ADVANCED GUECUBUS (2)

CR 9

XP 6,400 each

hp 126 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 145, 290)

TACTICS

During Combat The guecubus cast *spike stones* to hinder opponents in the room, then each targets a single enemy with its melee attacks and misfortune ability.

Morale The guecubus fight until destroyed.

Treasure: The four black iron knives atop the altar, each a masterwork cold iron dagger, were used to torture and kill the Forgotten Pharaoh cultists. In addition, the cultists' bloodstained gilt wooden funerary masks (each worth 25 gp) lie discarded behind the altar.

Development: If all of the bodaks in area K26 have been destroyed, the zombie lord Heqet in the secret room (area K28) gains enough strength to burst through the secret door and attack the PCs as soon as they enter this room.

K28. The Relict's Tomb (CR 13)

A stone sarcophagus rests in the center of this room. Carved from pale sandstone, the sarcophagus depicts the figure of a woman holding a serpent in each hand. Though the figure's body has been carefully carved to appear young and voluptuous, her face is blank and featureless. Small stone plinths stand at the head and foot of the sarcophagus, each one holding a small golden box.

Creature: One of Areshkagal's most faithful cultists, a cleric named Heqet, was interred in this tomb, but she has not rested in her sarcophagus for some time. Shortly after her entombment, she rose as an undead zombie lord and now stands, silent and watchful, in this dark room. Heqet is magically bound to the bodaks in area K26 and can sense their movements and general condition. For each bodak that is destroyed, Heqet grows stronger. If all six bodaks are destroyed, Heqet becomes strong enough to break through the secret door to this chamber, which was not designed to open from this side. If Heqet can break through the door, she does so as soon as the PCs enter area K27. Otherwise, she waits here, and anyone who opens the door and enters the room faces her wrath.

HEQET

CR 13

XP 25,600

Female human zombie lord cleric of Areshkagal 13 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 286)

CE Medium undead

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +20

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 16, flat-footed 29 (+8 armor, +4 deflection, +2 Dex, +2 natural, +5 shield)

hp 154 (15d8+83)

Fort +14, **Ref** +11, **Will** +18

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +5; **DR** 5/slashing;

Immune undead traits; **Resist** electricity 20; **SR** 25

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee *rod of the viper* +17/+12 (1d8+6/19–20) or slam +14 (1d6+6)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 8/day (DC 21, 7d6), fury of the Abyss (+6, 7/day), scythe of evil (6 rounds, 2/day)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th; concentration +17) 7/day—lightning arc (1d6+6 electricity)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 13th; concentration +17)

7th—*blasphemy*⁰ (DC 21), *destruction* (DC 23)

6th—*chain lightning*⁰ (DC 20), *harm* (DC 22), *summon monster VI*

5th—*dispel good*⁰ (DC 19), *major curse*^{UM} (DC 21), *slay living* (DC 21), *spell resistance*

4th—*divine power*, *freedom of movement*, *inflict critical wounds* (DC 20), *spell immunity*, *spit venom*^{UM} (DC 18), *unholy blight*⁰ (DC 18)

3rd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 19), *gaseous form*⁰, *inflict serious wounds* (DC 19), *invisibility purge*, *magic vestment*, *wrathful mantle*^{APG}

2nd—*dread bolt*^{UM} (DC 16), *hold person* (DC 16), *resist energy*, *shard of chaos*^{UM} (DC 16), *silence* (DC 16), *wind wall*⁰

1st—*deathwatch*, *doom*⁰ (DC 17), *entropic shield*, *murderous command*^{UM} (DC 15), *ray of sickening*^{UM} (DC 17), *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 16), *detect magic*, *guidance*, *read magic*

D domain spell; **Domains** Air, Evil (Demon subdomain^{APG})

TACTICS

Before Combat Heqet can sense what the bodaks in area K26 experience and see through their eyes. As soon as they fall under attack, she casts *magic vestment* on her shield and *freedom of movement*. Based on the PCs' tactics, she also casts *resist energy* against a suitable energy type and *spell immunity* against appropriate spells (such as *holy smite*, *searing light*, and *undeath to death*). Once all of the bodaks have been destroyed or the PCs appear to be heading toward her tomb, Heqet casts *shield of faith*, *spell resistance*, and *wrathful mantle*.

During Combat Heqet casts *summon monster VI* just before breaking through the secret door (or on the first round of

MUMMY'S MASK

combat) to summon 1d3 babau allies. She immediately targets the nearest enemy (or anyone openly displaying the holy symbol of a good-aligned deity) with *destruction*, followed by her most powerful spells, including *blasphemy*, *chain lightning*, and *unholy blight*. If pressed into melee combat, Heqet casts *divine power* and transforms her *rod of the viper* into a serpent.

Morale Heqet fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** 10, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 30

Feats Combat Casting, Extra Channel, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Improved Channel, Improved Critical (heavy mace), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Spell Focus (necromancy), Toughness⁸, Weapon Focus (heavy mace)

Skills Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (planes) +8, Knowledge (religion) +8, Linguistics +4, Perception +20, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +16

Languages Abyssal, Common, Osiriani
SQ lost soul bond



Combat Gear *scroll of blade barrier*; **Other Gear** +2 breastplate, mwk heavy steel shield, *rod of the viper*, adamantite and platinum unholy symbol of Areshkagal (worth 500 gp)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Lost Soul Bond (Su) Heqet is magically bound to the bodaks in area K26 and can sense their presence and general condition as if she were casting a *status* spell. By concentrating, Heqet can see through the eyes of any of the bodaks. In addition, she is empowered whenever one of the bodaks is destroyed, gaining 10 temporary hit points, a +2 profane bonus to her Strength score, and a +1 profane bonus to her channel resistance. Currently, one of the bodaks has been destroyed (the bonuses she received from that bodak's destruction are already included in her statistics). If the other five bodaks are destroyed, she gains 50 additional temporary hit points, an additional +10 bonus to her Strength (giving her a +5 profane bonus on her melee attack rolls and damage rolls), and an additional +5 profane bonus to her channel resistance.

Treasure: The two golden boxes (each worth 250 gp) flanking Heqet's sarcophagus hold personal possessions that Heqet treasured in life and did not want to despoil with her own moldering corpse. The one at the head of the sarcophagus contains a headdress made of delicate gold chain links and set with a turquoise serpent over the brow, worth 2,800 gp. The box at the feet of the sarcophagus holds a pair of leather-soled slippers with gold chains that wrap up to the knees, worth 1,000 gp.

K29. Altar of Riddles (CR 9)

A short hallway leads into a wide, dark room. An elaborate mural of moons waxing and waning through their various phases dominates the curving wall at the far end of the chamber. A pitch-black altar decorated with curved black horns sits in an alcove in the middle of the mural. A low, keening wail echoes through the room.

The blood trail from area K27 leads into this room.

Creature: One of Userib's friends, a maffet named Ligash, was more reluctant than the others to enter the Sightless Sphinx, and he fell less under Ninureset's sway than his companions. Ligash longed to flee the Sphinx but saw no way to break ties with Userib's newly formed cult without losing his life. Instead, Ligash decided to play along with the others until an opportunity arose for escape. Unfortunately, he found himself trapped in the Chamber of Ritual Purification while Userib and the others, under the guidance of the glabrezu, hideously tortured two cultists of the Forgotten Pharaoh to death and sacrificed them to summon a host of monstrous fiends. The sight shattered Ligash's sanity, and suffering from schizophrenia (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 251),

the maftet now lurks in this room, hopelessly mad and shunned by his former companions.

When the maftets first swore allegiance to Areshkagal, they studied a series of ancient scrolls depicting the 23 Riddles of the Flesh, an interlocking series of puzzles that no mortal has ever been able to comprehend. In his madness, Ligash has become obsessed with the 23 Riddles, and he spends his time here gnawing on his own hands and crafting his own riddles in homage to Areshkagal.

When he spots the PCs, Ligash begins snarling out his homemade riddles (see the sidebar) and demands that the PCs answer them. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Sense Motive check gets the sense that Ligash is suffering from some sort of metal affliction. If the PCs successfully answer all three riddles, Ligash becomes quiet and docile to the point of catatonia. If the PCs do not or cannot answer them correctly, Ligash roars in frustration and attacks.

LIGASH

CR 9

XP 6,400

Cultist of Areshkagal (see page 45)

hp 113

TACTICS

During Combat On the first round of combat, Ligash must succeed at a DC 16 Will save or become confused for 1d6 rounds. If able to act normally, he attacks the closest opponent with all of his attacks, ignoring other combatants for the most part until his target is dead.

Morale The insane maftet fights to the death.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Schizophrenic (Ex) Ligash suffers from schizophrenia (*GameMastery Guide* 251). He takes a –4 penalty on all Wisdom and Charisma-based skill checks, cannot take 10 or take 20, and must succeed at a DC 16 Will save when in a stressful situation (such as combat) or become confused for 1d6 rounds.

Development: If the PCs want to try to cure Ligash of his insanity, they may do so, but it is a lengthy process unless powerful magic such as *greater restoration*, *heal*, *limited wish*, *miracle*, or *wish* is used. Otherwise, Ligash may attempt a DC 16 Will save to reduce the insanity's DC by 1 once per week. If the PCs return Ligash to Erayu and the maftet tribe, years of safety among his family in the sun may also restore some modicum of sanity and peace to the troubled maftet.

Story Award: If the PCs answer Ligash's riddles and render him docile, award them 6,400 XP, as if they had defeated the maftet in combat.

K30. Quartermaster's Chamber

The door to this room stands open. Bloody streaks smear the walls, and broken splinters of wood that may once have been furniture lie strewn about this chamber. The headless bodies

LIGASH'S RIDDLES

The insane maftet Ligash presents the PCs with the following three riddles, crafted in the twisted corridors of his deranged mind.

"The sky breathes against mountains tall, and makes their stony hearts to fall. Flame heats the mountains' broken domes and makes a window of their bones. What lies within the mountain's grave?"

Answer: Sand, or sand forged into glass.

"They have no weight, no shape, no size, yet all well know when they arise. Though wordless, tuneless, tongueless too, they sing a song of pain full true."

Answer: Screams.

"Four awls have I for punching through. Four knives have I for cutting true. Ten friends above and ten below, to grind up pieces of my foe. What am I?"

Answer: A lion, which has four canine teeth, four carnassial teeth, and approximately 20 more teeth in its mouth. (A successful DC 23 Knowledge [nature] check can provide the correct answer to this riddle.)



of half a dozen snakes, their carcasses torn and shredded, lie rotting in small, sad heaps around the room.

The insane maftet Ligash in area K29 has taken to catching, violently killing, and half-devouring harmless snakes that make their way into the Sphinx in this chamber.

With a successful DC 20 Perception check, a character discovers a secret door in the eastern wall of the room. The door once led to other chambers in the Sightless Sphinx's left front leg, but following the collapse of that portion of the structure, it now exits outside the Sphinx. Neither the cult of Areshkagal nor the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh is aware of the existence of the door, which can provide the PCs with the means to secretly enter and exit the Sphinx.

Treasure: A PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Perception check uncovers a sturdy bronze ring in the shape of a ram's head with two small rubies for eye. This *ring of the ram* was hidden in one of the old bedposts in the room and freed during Ligash's rampage.

K31. Crossroads

Four doors exit this octagonal room. A symbol is engraved in the wall above each doorway—a shield to the north, a skull to the east, an eye to the south, and a blank female face wearing a pharaoh's headdress to the west.

The symbols on the walls in this chamber identify the rooms beyond the doors. The shield represents the

armory (area **K32**), the skull symbolizes the Chamber of Ritual Purification (area **K27**), the eye indicates the way to the Chamber of the Sky (area **K37**), and the blank female face (Areshkagal's symbol) designates the Chamber of the Faceless Sphinx (area **K35**).

K32. Armory of the Faceless (CR 12)

Along the northern wall of this room, six wooden dummies sag and lean under the weight of the armor they carry. Eight steel helmets, each one carved with an elaborate golden face mask, hang on the eastern wall. The faceplates of the helmets are distorted and defaced, as if melted by acid or fire. Thick, sickly green vines twine throughout the room, and black feathers litter the floor. A foul stench hangs in the air, as if something recently died here.

The highest priests of the old cult of Areshkagal kept their personal armor in this room.

Creatures: A trio of vrocks summoned by the new cult chose this room as its lair. The vrock's spores are the source of both the vines and the foul smell here.

VROCKS (3) CR 9

XP 6,400 each

hp 112 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 69)

TACTICS

During Combat The vrock immediately cast *mirror image* before beginning a joint dance of ruin, in the hopes that the illusory doubles will give them time to complete the dance. Afterward, or if the dance is interrupted, the vrock screech in an attempt to stun as many enemies as possible, then cast *heroism* and release their spores before finally engaging opponents in melee.

Morale If one of the vrock is killed, the two survivors attempt to summon more vrock join the battle. If two of the original vrock are slain, the third flees to area **K35** to warn Ninureset.

Treasure: Neither the maftets nor the demons wear armor, and so the high priests' bounty remains here. Four of the suits of armor are ruined beyond repair, but the other two remain intact: a set of +1 *poison-resistant parade armor* (*Ultimate Equipment* 121, 13) plated with gold and inlaid with a bejeweled lotus flower, and +2 *silken ceremonial armor* (*Ultimate Equipment* 14) made of gold-trimmed white linen with a heavy torc set with lapis lazuli. Each of the eight helmets is worth 350 gp. A successful DC 20 Appraise check reveals that the helmets' melted faceplates were deliberately crafted, likely in honor of Areshkagal.

K33. Maftet Quarters (CR 12)

Piles of uncured furs and hides make crude pallets on the floor of this chamber, and dried blood and soot smears obscure the

walls. A rank smell hangs in the air, like that of a wet animal baking in the sun.

Creatures: The maftet cultists of Areshkagal have taken these chambers as their own. One maftet is currently resting in area **K33a** and two more rest in area **K33b**. If the PCs disturb any of the maftets, they scream a warning and attack. The other maftets next door join the combat on the following round. If two of the maftets are slain, the survivor attempts to flee to area **K37** to warn Userib and the others.

CULTISTS OF ARESHKAGAL (3)

CR 9

XP 6,400 each

hp 113 each (see page 45)

Treasure: A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check finds a semiprecious gemstone worth 50 gp and 3d10 gp in assorted coins amid the debris in each room.

K34. Hall of Lightning

A short corridor extends beyond the door, ending at a crackling sheet of lightning that blocks the end of the hallway. The smell of a summer storm fills the air, and the sizzling of the lightning makes normal conversation impossible near the barrier.

Ninureset created this lightning barrier by means of an unholy ritual. The barrier protects the glabrezu's lair but the demons can freely pass through it, as they are immune to electricity. Any creature walking through the barrier takes 14 points of electricity damage (Reflex DC 21 half); effects that protect against electricity damage work normally against the barrier. The barrier can be dispelled, suppressed, or destroyed with *dispel magic*, *mage's disjunction*, *antimagic field*, or similar effects (caster level 14th), but it is not a trap and cannot be disarmed.

If the PCs attempt to bring the *bronze sentinel* through the barrier, an enormous thunderclap booms through the hallway. All the electricity redirects through the sentinel's metal body and courses down into the earth, instantly destroying the barrier. Anyone inside the *bronze sentinel* is insulated from the attack and takes no damage, but the sentinel takes 84 points of damage, gains the broken condition, and is rendered immobile.

Development: The *bronze sentinel* can be repaired enough to make it move again by casting *make whole* and succeeding at a DC 24 Spellcraft check, but the item retains the broken condition. While broken, the *bronze sentinel* takes a -2 penalty on attack and damage rolls and its natural armor bonus is reduced to +5. Further repair of the *bronze sentinel* to remove the broken condition requires a *mending* or *make whole* spell with a minimum caster level of 19th.

K35. Chamber of the Faceless Sphinx (CR 13)

A wide square stone platform stands in the center of the room. Shallow stone steps lead up to the platform on each side of the square. A stone slab hangs from the ceiling on thick iron chains, mirroring the platform on the floor, but with a ball of green fire at each corner. Beyond, the massive stone head and shoulders of a sphinx protrude from the far wall. The carving stretches from floor to ceiling, and its face is a featureless mass of jagged edges and chipped stone. Life-sized carved images of kneeling supplicants on the walls ring the chamber, facing the sphinx.

This was the private temple and meditation chamber for the high priests of the old cult of Areshkagal, and lower-ranking priests and initiates were strictly forbidden from entering. The ceiling is 50 feet high in this room. The stone platform is 5 feet high; the slab of stone hangs 40 feet above. The balls of green fire are *continual flames*. The hanging slab is studded with invisible iron spikes. Once an elaborate trap, the slab was designed to drop on its chains, but rust and time have disabled the ancient mechanism. The sphinx carving on the far wall can be identified as Areshkagal with a successful DC 15 Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (planes) check.

Creature: The glabrezu Ninureset makes his lair here now, under the pitiless visage of his mistress Areshkagal. If the PCs use the *bronze sentinel* to bypass the lightning barrier in area K34, the noise instantly alerts Ninureset that the room has been breached.

If aware of the PCs, Ninureset uses *veil* to appear to appear as a relatively harmless human or friendly marid, perhaps posing as a prisoner of the cult. The glabrezu willingly talks with the PCs, spinning a sad tale of his imprisonment (using Bluff), and offering the PCs a *wish* in exchange for his freedom. This is a trick, of course, and if the PCs accept, Ninureset does everything he can to twist the *wish* in creative and destructive ways. If the PCs refuse to accept his *wish* or they see through his illusion, Ninureset tries to lure them up onto the platform where he can use his *reverse gravity* spell-like ability to deadly effect (see Tactics, below).

NINURESET

CR 13

XP 25,600

Glabrezu (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 61)

hp 186

TACTICS

Before Combat If Ninureset is aware of intruders, he casts *mirror image* before combat.

During Combat Ninureset waits on the far side of the platform and casts *chaos hammer* or *unholy blight* at tightly grouped foes and *confusion* on an obvious warrior. If any opponents set foot on the platform, he casts *reverse gravity* to cause them to “fall” into the invisible spikes on the slab above

(dealing 4d6 points of falling damage plus an additional 4d6 points of damage from the spikes). Once opponents reach him, the glabrezu makes melee attacks, saving *power word stun* for use against a particularly dangerous foe.

Morale Ninureset is bound to the Sightless Sphinx and knows he cannot escape, but if reduced to 45 hit points or fewer, he teleports to area K32 to rally the vlocks there. If all of the vlocks have been killed, he teleports to area K37 to join Userib.

Development: If the PCs slay Ninureset, the act puts the ghostly paladin Lady Sophronia (see area K23) to rest. Before passing on, her spirit briefly appears before the PCs and gives them a beatific smile before rising into the ceiling, engulfed in translucent flames.

K36. Hall of Honor (CR 13)

A golden glow emanates from the vaulted ceiling of this hall, giving the illusion of warm sunlight shining down. Low stone walls create a path through the center of the hall between ornate statues placed along the way. Carved from the same yellowish sandstone, the statues depict humanoid figures in regal dress, their expressions proud and haughty. Stone crowns and pharaonic headdresses sit upon their brows, and stone robes adorned with bits of jewelry that glitter in the light bedeck them. On the southern side of the hall stands an immense statue of a golden scorpion that appears to have been crushed. The scorpion's carapace has been cracked from some mighty blow, and its claws are twisted and shattered.

The walls that line the path are only 2-1/2 feet tall and provide cover, but they also impede progress; crossing one requires 2 squares of movement. The ceiling is 50 feet high in this chamber. The “sunlight” shining down from the ceiling is a *permanent image* that produces normal light in this chamber.

The 23 statues in the room, one for each of Areshkagal's riddles, depict influential priests of the demon lord's cult. Close examination reveals something subtly wrong about each statue. For example, one figure's eyes are oddly spaced, and the tip of a forked tail shows at the hem of another's robe. A few of the statues just seem subtly warped, with no such overt signs of wrongness.

The golden scorpion represents Areshkagal's hated sister, the demon lord Aldinach, which a character who succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (planes) check recognizes. The statue is actually the gilded carapace of an immense black scorpion. Areshkagal's cultists placed the scorpion's carcass here as a trophy in honor of Areshkagal and an insult toward Aldinach.

Creatures: Two maffet cultists patrol this hall, aided in their task by a shadow demon servitor of Areshkagal that hides itself in the shadows among the statues.

MUMMY'S MASK

CULTISTS OF ARESHKAGAL (2)

CR 9

XP 6,400 each

hp 113 each (see page 45)

SHADOW DEMON SERVITOR OF ARESHKAGAL

CR 11

XP 12,800

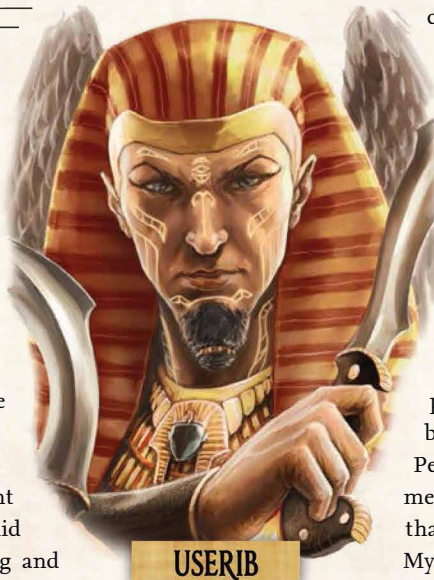
hp 119 (use the stats for Sargota on page 38)

TACTICS

During Combat The shadow demon flits in and out of the walls to disorient foes. It particularly enjoys popping up behind targets that are already engaged in melee with the maftet.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 30 hit points, the shadow demon attempts to flee to area **K35** to warn Ninureset.

Treasure: Most of the jewelry worn by the high priest statues is just colored glass, but a successful DC 25 Appraise check or DC 30 Perception check reveals that a ruby in one statue's bracelet is real and worth 150 gp. The golden giant scorpion is coated in a thin layer of solid gold. The carapace is over 30 feet long and weighs thousands of pounds, including 150 pounds of gold. The gold alone is worth 7,500 gp, but the gilded carapace would be worth up to 15,000 gp to a cultist of Aldinach or Areshkagal, or a collector of demonic relics.



USERIB

K37. Chamber of the Sky (CR 13)

The ceiling of this vast hall arches upward to a height of almost fifty feet. The ceiling has been painted dark blue, and tiny lights twinkle in the darkness like countless stars. Near the center of the room, pillows overflow from a shallow pit. A polished bronze shield lies atop a round stone table rising from the center of the pit. Beyond the pit, a white stone statue of a six-legged, faceless sphinx faces the room. On either side of the statue, long brass poles stretch from floor to ceiling.

A character who succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (planes) check recognizes that the sphinx statue is another representation of Areshkagal. The statue and the bronze shield on the table are part of the Sightless Sphinx's scrying network. The shield has a strong divination aura (caster level 20th). The shield is linked to the statue in the Chamber of Scrying (area **K8**), allowing Userib and Ninureset to spy on the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh and discern some of the cultists' movements. However, neither Userib nor Ninureset is aware that the mirror and statue in the Grand Temple (area **K24**) look into this room. See area **K8** for details on using the scrying chambers and statues.

The two bronze poles on either side of the statue are actually periscopes cunningly built into the Sightless Sphinx. The southern periscope can be turned to view south and west of the Sphinx, and the northern periscope looks to the north and east of the Sphinx.

The twinkling "stars" on the ceiling are a permanent *dancing lights* variant that illuminate the chamber in dim light.

Creatures: Userib, leader of the maftet cultists of Areshkagal, resides in this room with two maftet cultists as guards. The thoroughly corrupted and slightly maddened maftet reclines in the pillow pit, plotting his next attack on the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh. He lets out a mighty roar at the sight of intruders. "Why have you trespassed in our home? This place may seem abandoned, but our blood and our faith have reawakened it! Perhaps my old tribe sent you to retrieve me? Know this: I shall never return to that hollow pride of mewling weaklings. My new tribe is here, bought and paid for with my very soul. Join us in the worship of the Faceless Sphinx or you shall not live to tell others of this place!"

The PCs can try to negotiate with Userib, but the maftet's fanaticism and corruption make him almost impossible to deal with. His starting attitude is hostile, and a successful DC 27 Diplomacy check and a promise to listen to his doctrine of Areshkagal are required to alter his attitude. Userib can be stalled for several minutes as he proselytizes on the worship of the Faceless Sphinx and urges the PCs to pledge their lives to her faith. Userib means this literally—he wants the PCs to offer themselves as sacrifices to Areshkagal. A successful Bluff check is required to convince Userib that the PCs are willing to do so (Userib receives a +10 circumstance bonus on his Sense Motive check, given the unlikelihood of random strangers offering themselves up as sacrifices). If Userib suspects he is being misled or the PCs refuse or attempt to bring him back to his tribe by force, Userib attacks. Userib's full stat block appears in the NPC Gallery on page 60.

CULTISTS OF ARESHKAGAL (2)

CR 9

XP 6,400 each

hp 113 each (see page 45)

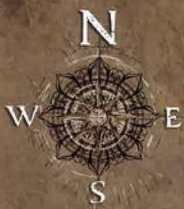
USERIB

CR 12

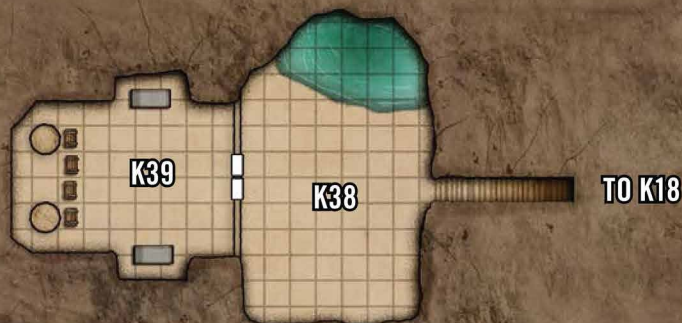
XP 19,200

hp 161 (see page 60)

K. SIGHTLESS SPHINX

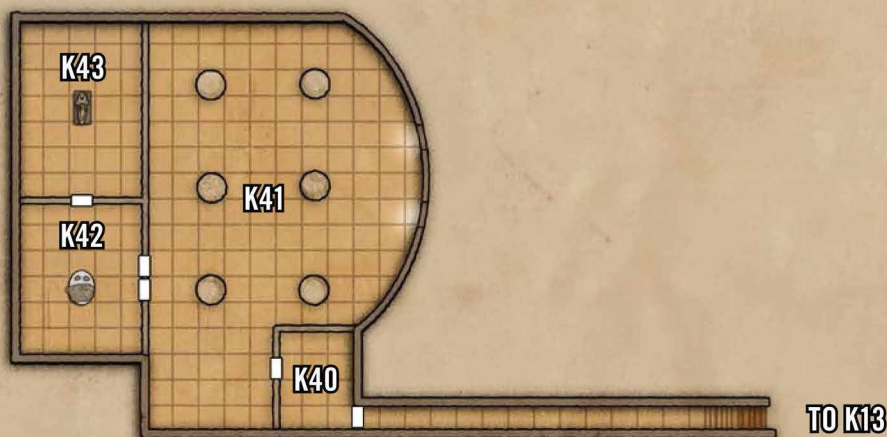


LOWER LEVEL



1 SQUARE = 10 FEET

UPPER LEVEL



Treasure: Scattered within the shallow pillow pit are the collected treasures the maftets have liberated from the Sightless Sphinx. These valuables include a wooden *wand of vision of hell* wound with silver thread (12 charges, *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic* 248), a silver bowl almost a foot in diameter engraved with hieroglyphs around its lip extolling Sekhmet's glory (worth 270 gp), a matching silver pitcher (worth 210 gp), and two pillowcases stuffed full of gold pieces (855 gp in total). In addition, a lacquered wooden box inlaid with topazes arranged in the shape of a rising sun (worth 120 gp) holds 150 pp and a pouch of six small sapphires that are worth 200 gp each. A PC who succeeds at a DC 10 Perception check discovers a ceramic tile depicting a roaring sphinx stuffed inside a pillow. This tile is one of the keys that opens the hidden vault in area K18.

Lastly, a large, embossed wooden chest holds the royal thraie larva that the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh stole from the thraie hive in the Parched Dunes (*Pathfinder Adventure Path #81: Shifting Sands* 42). Userib stole the chest from the cult, and though he has no idea what the larva is, he knows the Forgotten Pharaoh cultists value it, and so he keeps the chest here, hoping to eventually find some use for its contents.

K38. Vault Guardian (CR 10)

The stairs open up into a subterranean chamber with air as stale as a mummy's breath. The temperature is markedly cooler and more humid in this room than in the rest of Sphinx. A pool of water, perhaps formed from seepage from the mud baths above, glimmers against one wall. The floor is an expanse of damp sand. On the wall across from the stairs, large double doors provide an exit from the chamber.

The stairs beneath the secret entrance in area K18 descend 40 feet into this chamber.

Creature: During a short excursion to the headwaters of the Scarab River south of the Sightless Sphinx, the original cultists of Areshkagal encountered a large crocodile in the river. The cultists killed the beast, brought its carcass back to the Sightless Sphinx, and animated it as an undead guardian for their hidden vault. The mummified crocodile remains here to this day, attacking any creatures that enter this room.

GIANT MUMMIFIED CROCODILE

CR 10

XP 9,600

Mummified dire crocodile (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 196, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 51)

MUMMY'S MASK

NE Gargantuan undead (augmented animal)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +14

Aura frightful presence (30 ft., DC 21, 1d6 rounds)

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 6, flat-footed 25 (+19 natural, -4 size)

hp 126 (12d8+72)

Fort +13, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8

DR 5/—; **Immune** undead traits

Weaknesses vulnerable to sonic

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., swim 20 ft.; sprint

Melee bite +20 (4d6+15/19–20 plus grab), tail slap +15 (6d8+7)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attacks burst of vengeance, death roll (4d6+22 plus trip), dust stroke, swallow whole (4d6+15 damage, AC 19, 12 hp)

STATISTICS

Str 41, **Dex** 10, **Con** —, **Int** 1, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +28 (+32 grapple); **CMD** 38 (42 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite)^B, Improved Natural Attack (tail slap)^B, Iron Will, Run, Skill Focus (Perception), Skill Focus (Stealth), Toughness^B

Skills Perception +14, Stealth +4 (+12 in water), Swim +23

SQ blessing of Areshkagal

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blessing of Areshkagal (Su) When the crocodile was mummified, Areshkagal blessed the cult's creation, granting the mummified crocodile a +18 profane bonus to its Charisma score.

K39. Secret Vault (CR 12)

Squat idols sit in shadowed alcoves on either side of this room, and fist-sized gemstones glitter atop tattered velvet pillows on two pedestals against the far wall. Open chests spill forth gold coins that shimmer in the light of two silver-bracketed torches.

This chamber's door is warded by a *symbol of persuasion* (DC 23) that triggers when a creature passes through the door. The ceiling is 30 feet high in this chamber.

Creature: All of the wealth in this chamber lies beyond the crouching figure of a magnificent but terrifying sphinx. Its muscled form and six leonine legs are covered in midnight-blue fur, and two blood-red feathered wings sprout from its shoulders. In hideous contrast to its otherwise perfect body, the sphinx's face is a nearly featureless mask, with two gleaming red eyes and a slit of a maw containing rows of sharp black fangs. The spiky rune of Areshkagal glows in the center of the sphinx's chest.

The daughter of a nalfeshnee and a gynosphinx, the half-fiend sphinx Areshkhesbed was a faithful worshiper of Areshkagal for hundreds of years before the construction of the Sightless Sphinx. When the Sphinx was completed, Areshkhesbed made a pilgrimage to the temple and begged Areshkagal for the chance to serve the faith in some capacity. Areshkagal granted the sphinx's wish, transforming Areshkhesbed's body into a replica of the demon lord's own form and damning her to eternal life as a divine guardian of the Sightless Sphinx. She is bound to defend the Sightless Sphinx, and attacks any creatures that intrude into her domain.

If any of the PCs are charmed by her *symbol of persuasion*, Areshkhesbed suggests they focus their efforts on defeating the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh—a reasonable request, since the PCs are likely inclined to do that anyway. Once the threat of the Forgotten Pharaoh is removed, Areshkhesbed has no more use for the PCs, and treats them as she would any



ARESHKHESBED

SECRETS OF THE SPHINX

other intruder—she attempts to slay them and bathe in their blood.

If the gynosphinx Tetisurah is accompanying the PCs, she immediately attacks Areshkhesbed with a fierce roar, determined to destroy the abomination.

ARESHKHESBED

CR 12

XP 19,200

Female half-fiend divine guardian gynosphinx (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 171, 257; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 60)

CE Large outsider (air, chaotic, evil, native)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see *invisibility*; Perception +28

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 12, flat-footed 24 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, +12 natural, –1 size)

hp 138 (12d10+72); fast healing 5

Fort +15, **Ref** +11, **Will** +14

Defensive Abilities ability healing; **DR** 10/magic; **Immune** disease, mind-affecting effects, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 23

OFFENSE

Speed 80 ft., fly 160 ft. (perfect)

Melee bite +19 (1d8+8), 2 claws +19 (3d6+8/19–20)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks smite good 1/day (+7 attack and AC, +12 damage), pounce, rake (2 claws +19, 3d6+8/19–20)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +19)

Constant—*comprehend languages*, *detect magic*, *read magic*, see *invisibility*

At will—*dimension door* (within Sightless Sphinx only)

3/day—*alarm*, *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *darkness*, *knock*, *poison* (DC 21)

1/day—*arcane lock*, *augury*, *blasphemy* (DC 24), *commune*, *contagion* (DC 21), *desecrate*, *dismissal* (DC 22), *dispel magic*, *guards and wards* (DC 23), *hold portal*, *locate object*, *remove curse*, *legend lore*, *unholy blight* (DC 21)

1/week—any one of the following: *symbol of fear* (DC 23), *symbol of pain* (DC 22), *symbol of persuasion* (DC 23), *symbol of sleep* (DC 22), *symbol of stunning* (DC 24); all symbols last 1 week maximum

TACTICS

Before Combat Areshkhesbed places *alarms* on the doors in areas **K18** and **K38**, and a *symbol of persuasion* on the door to this chamber from area **K38**.

During Combat Areshkhesbed attacks intruders with her spell-like abilities, making use of *blasphemy*, *contagion*, *poison*, and *unholy blight*. If all else fails, the evil sphinx is more than happy to pounce upon her foes, smiting good and tearing them limb from limb with her claws and fanged bite.

Morale Bound for eternity to the Sightless Sphinx, Areshkhesbed has no choice but to fight to the death to defend the temple. However, if reduced to fewer than 35 hit points, the sphinx uses *dimension door* to retreat to another

room, where she waits for her fast healing ability to heal her before returning to attack intruders.

STATISTICS

Str 26, **Dex** 17, **Con** 20, **Int** 20, **Wis** 27, **Cha** 25

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 34 (42 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Natural Attack (claw), Iron Will, Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +18, Bluff +19, Diplomacy +19, Fly +24, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (planes) +17, Knowledge (religion) +17, Perception +28, Sense Motive +25, Spellcraft +17, Stealth +14

Languages Abyssal, Ancient Osiriani, Auran, Common, Draconic, Osiriani, Sphinx

SQ blessed life, divine swiftness, sacred site

Gear bracers of armor +3, headband of inspired wisdom +2

Treasure: The significant wealth of the cult of Areshkagal lies in this chamber. Each of the four statues in the alcoves depicts a different demon in a different medium: a brass babau (worth 125 gp), a silver marilith (worth 280 gp), a gold glabrezu (worth 450 gp), and a platinum balor (worth 1,800 gp). The gemstone atop one pedestal is an emerald worth 600 gp, and the other is a sapphire worth 900 gp. One chest contains a +2 *anarchic sickle* engraved with Areshkagal's rune and an *eagle cape* (*Ultimate Equipment* 266) made of soft goldensphinx wing-feathers atop a thin layer of 200 sp. The other three chests in the room hold a total of 6,450 gp. The two silver torches are everburning torches.

Development: As the divine guardian of the Sightless Sphinx, Areshkhesbed can view any area within the temple with *clairaudience/clairvoyance* and freely travel inside with *dimension door*. As a result, she may take it upon herself to seek out intruders and can encounter the PCs anywhere within the Sightless Sphinx.

K40. Guardroom

This small, featureless room possibly served as a guardpost, but is currently unoccupied. With the mercenary leader Rubila stationed in the Silver Forge below, the Forgotten Pharaoh saw no need to post additional guards here. The door to the west, however, is locked (hardness 8, hp 60, break DC 28, Disable Device DC 30). The closed door and thick walls muffle sound somewhat, but a successful DC 25 Perception check allows a PC to hear the sound of something large moving in the chamber beyond.

K41. Sphinx's Crown (CR 11)

A vast, echoing chamber forms the head of the Sightless Sphinx. Windows of transparent red crystal located where the Sphinx's eyes would be flood the room with crimson light. Six stone pillars stretch from floor to ceiling, covered in countless tiny hieroglyphs. Double doors fashioned in the shape of a perching

MUMMY'S MASK

falcon, its wings curving down to form each half of the door, gleaming gold against the western wall.

Creature: When the Forgotten Pharaoh hired the services of the girtablilu mercenaries, she also bargained for this enormous emperor scorpion to serve as a guardian. The girtablilu fed the scorpion a *potion of gaseous form* and used their scorpion empathy to guide the beast up the narrow stairs from area **K12** to this chamber. The scorpion attacks any creature other than a girtablilu or the Forgotten Pharaoh that enters the room. Any sounds of combat with the scorpion alert the Forgotten Pharaoh in area **K42** that her sanctum has been breached.

GIANT EMPEROR SCORPION **CR 11**
XP 9,600
hp 142 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 232)

Treasure: The gold on the double doors is just thin gold leaf, worth only 100 gp at most if stripped off the doors.

K42. Sanctum of the Forgotten Pharaoh (CR 14)

A raised, oval platform beneath a canopy of delicate golden feathers stands in the center of the room. Silk pillows and linen sheets lie in a crumpled heap upon the platform, and four silver orbs float at each corner of the bed, filling the room with soft light. The ceiling is painted with vivid murals of fearsome, blank-faced, six-legged sphinxes striding through the desert, crushing giant scorpions, devouring humanoids, and rutting with a staggering variety of creatures both mortal and demonic. A half-completed painting on the far wall depicts a winged pyramid flying over a city.

This chamber was the quarters of the high priest of the Sightless Sphinx, but the Forgotten Pharaoh has claimed it as her personal sanctum. The floating silver orbs are a permanent *dancing lights* variant.

Creatures: The former Nethysian priestess Serethet—possessed by the ib of Hakotep I and calling herself the Forgotten Pharaoh—waits in this chamber along with three cultists. She addresses the PCs as they enter, her voice echoing weirdly from behind her golden funerary mask, filling the room with a dual-toned voice that seems both masculine and feminine at the same time.

“You have been a thorn in the side of my faithful for too long. This ends here and now. You will give the mask to me and prostrate yourselves at my feet. The Forgotten Pharaoh will be forgotten no more! I live and breathe and shall not lie down again!”

Assuming the PCs refuse, the Forgotten Pharaoh orders her disciples to kill the PCs quickly. The Forgotten Pharaoh is fully detailed in the NPC Gallery on page 58.

DISCIPLES OF THE FORGOTTEN PHARAOH (3) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

hp 95 each (see page 30)

TACTICS

Before Combat The disciples drink their *potions of bear's endurance*, *cat's grace*, and *shield of faith* before combat.

During Combat At the Forgotten Pharaoh's direction, the cultists attempt to interfere with any spellcasters, making use of flurry of blows and Stunning Fist.

Morale The disciples fight to the death to defend the Forgotten Pharaoh, triggering their *Troth of the Forgotten Pharaoh* feat.

THE FORGOTTEN PHARAOH **CR 13**

XP 25,600

hp 179 (see page 58)

Development: When the Forgotten Pharaoh dies, Hakotep's ib abandons Serethet's body. The masked cult leader falls silently to the ground, the life drained from her body. Her golden funerary mask tumbles from her face, revealing her ordinary human features frozen in an expression that's equally defiant and terrified. From her open mouth slips a glowing, ethereal winged heart that soars up toward the ceiling and passes through it, vanishing from sight.

If one of the PCs is wearing the *Mask of the Forgotten Pharaoh* containing Hakotep's ka, that character feels a slight mental “tugging” as the winged heart soars away, as if something within the mask wants to join the heart in its flight. A PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check can identify the spectral winged heart as an ib, a piece of the soul in ancient Osirian tradition. Embodied in the heart, the ib was considered an individual's seat of emotion, thought, will, and intention. The PCs cannot interfere with the ib in any way; it is a representation of an intangible concept, not a physical item.

K43. Chisisek's Sarcophagus

A magnificent wooden sarcophagus lies atop a stone bier in this chamber. The coffin's lid is carved in the image of a human man in repose, stone carving tools clutched in his hands. A inlaid cartouche containing hieroglyphs of an owl inside a house is inscribed in carnelian and lapis lazuli on the figure's brow.

The Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh brought Chisisek's sarcophagus here after removing it from his tomb. Chisisek's mummified remains lie within the coffin. If Tetisurah is with the PCs, she can immediately confirm the architect's identity, as does the cartouche inscribed on the sarcophagus.

Story Award: Award the PCs 19,200 XP for recovering Chisisek's body.



CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

With the death of the Forgotten Pharaoh, Hakotep's ib is freed from Serthet's body and journeys to the Sky Pharaoh's flying pyramid to join with his ba. With two pieces of his soul reunited, Hakotep rises as an undead mummy lord and begins making plans to reclaim his throne. Even though they have defeated the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh, the PCs should be well aware that they have not seen the last of the Sky Pharaoh Hakotep, who may now pose an even greater threat than his cult did.

Once the PCs have secured the Sightless Sphinx, they have the time to tie up any remaining loose ends. If the PCs return to the ruins of Kher-Ma with news of the cult of Areshkagal's destruction, they earn the gratitude of the maftets. Erayu is pleased to learn that the maftets can return to the shadow of the Sightless Sphinx and begins making plans for the tribe's return, though he deeply mourns the deaths of Userib and the other maftets. As a reward for their assistance, Erayu presents the PCs with his *scimitar of the striking wing* (see page 63).

If the PCs managed to recover the royal thriae larva in area **K37** and return it to the thriae hive in the Parched Dunes (*Pathfinder Adventure Path #81: Shifting Sands* 42), the thriae are overjoyed and hail the PCs as heroes. The thriae seer Zizzira pledges the colony's assistance to the PCs, be it in combat or by offering them a safe place to rest and research between adventures. In addition, she gives them a *swarmling* (*Pathfinder Adventure Path #81* 59) as a token of her thanks.

Having recovered Chisisek's body, the PCs can also make plans to commune with the architect's spirit. His knowledge of Hakotep's pyramid and the technology used to create it will be instrumental in the PCs' quest. The information they gain from the deceased architect and what it means for them are just the first of many secrets the PCs will uncover in the next adventure, "The Slave Trenches of Hakotep."

Story Award: If the PCs find the royal thriae larva and return it to the thriae colony, award them an additional 12,800 XP.

THE FORGOTTEN PHARAOH

Serethet was a devoted cleric of Nethys until she was possessed by a piece of the Sky Pharaoh Hakotep's soul. Now calling herself the Forgotten Pharaoh, she is a person divided, with the impulses of an ancient pharaoh trapped in the body of the young priestess.



THE FORGOTTEN PHARAOH

CR 13

XP 25,600

Female ib-possessed human ex-cleric of Nethys 14

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; Senses Perception +19

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 19, flat-footed 25 (+4 armor, +5 deflection, +2 Dex, +2 insight, +4 shield)

hp 179 (14d8+113)

Fort +19, Ref +12, Will +18

DR 10/adamantine (140 points); Immune fear; Resist fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee +1 quarterstaff +17/+12 (1d6+4)

Ranged ray +16 touch (by spell)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 14th; concentration +19)

7th (3/day)—*prismatic spray* (DC 23)

6th (5/day)—*chain lightning* (DC 22), *greater heroism*

5th (7/day)—*cone of cold* (DC 21), *dominate person* (DC 20), *feeblemind* (DC 20)

4th (7/day)—*enervation*, *shout* (DC 20), *stoneskin*, *wall of fire*

3rd (7/day)—*fireball* (DC 19), *fly*, *slow* (DC 18), *vampiric touch*

2nd (7/day)—*false life*, *ghoul touch* (DC 17), *glitterdust* (DC 17), *mirror image*, *scorching ray*

1st (8/day)—*mage armor*, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 16), *shield*, *shocking grasp*

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *arcane mark*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *light*, *mending*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 15)

TACTICS

Before Combat The Forgotten Pharaoh casts *false life* and *mage armor* every day. When alerted to the approach of intruders, she casts *fly*, *greater heroism*, *shield*, and *stoneskin*.

During Combat The Forgotten Pharaoh casts *mirror image* on the first round of combat, then casts *haste* from her wand on her cultist guards. She continues with her most devastating spells, including *dominate person* cast on the strongest-looking warrior among her opponents, *prismatic spray*, *chain lightning*, and *cone of cold*. If an enemy spellcaster starts to cast a spell, she uses the *falcon crown* to fire a ray and attempt to interrupt the spell. In melee, the Forgotten Pharaoh uses her *armband of the golden serpent* to cast touch spells such as *vampiric touch* or *ghoul touch*.

Morale The Forgotten Pharaoh fights to the death to recover the piece of Hakotep's soul contained in the *Mask of the Forgotten Pharaoh*.

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 14, Con 19, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 20

Base Atk +10; CMB +12; CMD 35

Feats Combat Casting, Defensive Combat Training, Eschew Materials⁸, Improved Counterspell, Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Spell Focus (evocation), Toughness

Skills Fly +13, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (history) +14, Knowledge (religion) +14, Perception +19, Spellcraft +14

Languages Ancient Osiriani, Common, Osiriani

SQ ib of the pharaoh

Combat Gear *potions of cure serious wounds* (2), *wand of haste* (20 charges); **Other Gear** +1 quarterstaff, *armband of the golden serpent* (see page 62), *belt of physical might* +6 (Str, Con), *cloak of resistance* +2, *falcon crown* (see page 63), *ring of energy shroud*^{1E} (fire), assorted jewelry (worth 200 gp), diamond dust (worth 500 gp), gold funerary mask (worth 500 gp)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

ib of the Pharaoh (Su) The Forgotten Pharaoh is possessed by Hakotep's ib, and gains several unique abilities as a result. Hakotep's consciousness has overwhelmed Serethet's innate mental faculties, in effect transposing her Wisdom and Charisma scores, and though she has lost all of her cleric spells and class features, the Forgotten Pharaoh now casts spells as a 14th-level sorcerer and gains Eschew Materials as a bonus feat. In addition, the force of Hakotep's will grants the Forgotten Pharaoh a deflection bonus to her Armor Class equal to her Charisma modifier. As leader of the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh, she also has access to greater resources (equivalent to PC wealth).

The young girl named Serethet always knew that her destiny lay in the priesthood of Nethys. A native of Sothis, she was a curious child with a quick intellect and a gift for putting seemingly disparate pieces of information together. Her parents saved and scrimped in order to send her to a school in the city run by the priesthood, and there Serethet thrived.

When Serethet was 17, tragedy struck her family. Her mother died suddenly of a wasting disease and her father, in his grief, spent the family's savings on an elaborate

funeral for his deceased wife, leaving Serethet without the funds for her final year at seminary school. A friend in her class recommended that Serethet sign up for an expeditionary year—a sort of internship where instead of learning in a classroom, she could pay her tuition by serving on an archaeological dig for the church of Nethys. Desperate to stay in school, Serethet signed up for the expedition, though she was never an overly athletic individual.

Serethet proved to be an asset on the expedition, and her knowledge and intuition were a great help to its leaders. She made several valuable discoveries as the team excavated an ancient ruin in the Osirian desert, including uncovering a stone scarab engraved with arcane formulas developed by a researcher over 3,000 years in the past. Powerful emotions stirred within Serethet at the sight of the piece of Ancient Osirian history resting in her hands, of the knowledge that could have been lost forever now brought to light. She took her vows and entered the priesthood immediately upon returning to school.

Serethet rose quickly in the ranks of the priesthood. The expedition had awakened a fire within her, a passion to merge exploration and action with academia. She embarked on a number of expeditions over the next 10 years and made several important archaeological and historical discoveries, though it was the discoveries themselves that fascinated her, and she never sought fame or recognition for her work.

In retrospect, it seems inevitable that Serethet's curiosity would lead her into danger. Her years of experience lent the priest a confidence in her own abilities that sometimes led her to make reckless decisions. When Serethet first descended into the record rooms below Azghaad's Spire, she moved slowly, checking for forgotten traps and wards and examining items thoroughly before disturbing them. As she progressed without incident, however, Serethet grew bolder and failed to take every precaution she could. When she saw the *heart of Hakotep*, wonder and curiosity overwhelmed her. Without thinking, she picked up the relic and was instantly lost, possessed by a fragment of the soul of the Sky Pharaoh Hakotep I.

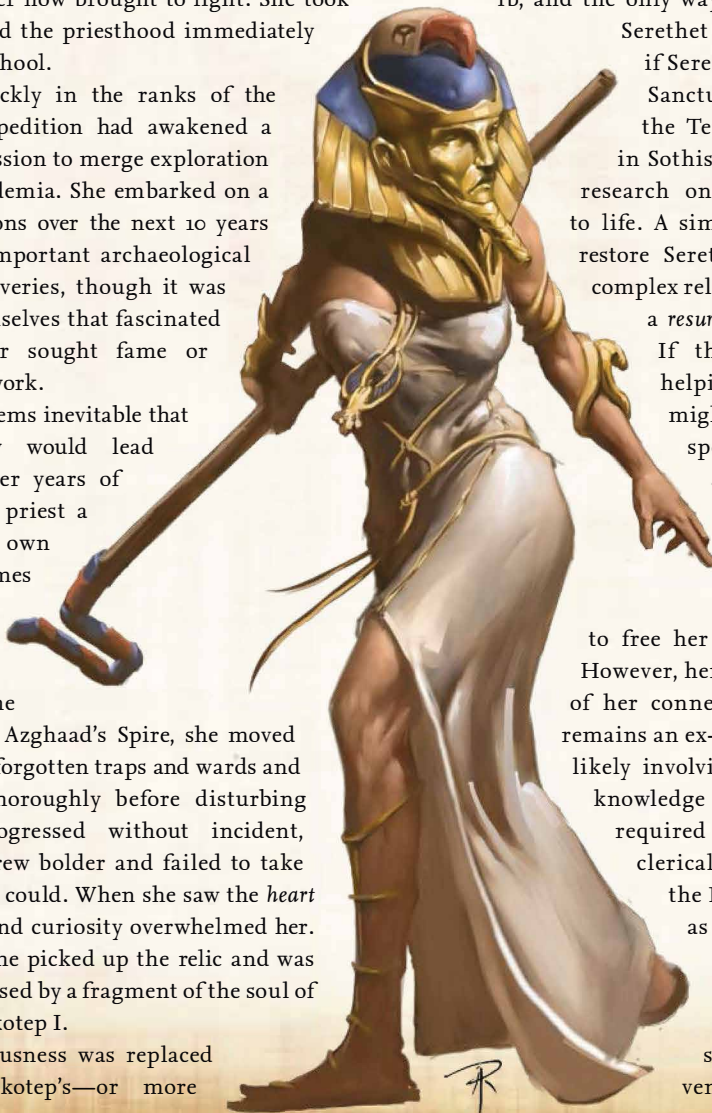
Serethet's consciousness was replaced with that of Hakotep's—or more

accurately, with his *ib*, the embodiment of his emotions, thoughts, will, and intent. Serethet became the Forgotten Pharaoh—neither Serethet nor Hakotep, but a confused amalgam of the priestess's memories and knowledge with the pharaoh's thoughts and desires. The Forgotten Pharaoh is clear on what she wants to do and why—find the *Mask of the Forgotten Pharaoh* and reunite the scattered fragments of Hakotep's soul so the Sky Pharaoh can return to life—but that knowledge is overlaid with confusing memories and misguided motivations. Sometimes she thinks of herself as Serethet, assisting a powerful force in her mind, and sometimes as Hakotep, making use of the vessel he now inhabits. In general, the Forgotten Pharaoh thinks of herself as the woman Serethet, but she could quickly change to Hakotep, especially in times of stress.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Serethet's true self is all but lost, replaced by Hakotep's *ib*, and the only way to separate Hakotep from Serethet is through death. However, if Serethet's body is brought to the Sanctuary of Nethys in Tephu or the Temple of the All-Seeing Eye in Sothis, the priests there can begin research on bringing the cleric back to life. A simple *raise dead* spell cannot restore Serethet's shattered soul, but a complex religious ritual culminating in a *resurrection* might be successful. If the PCs are interested in helping, the priests of Nethys might ask them to seek out specialized arcane reagents or a powerful magic item to be used in the ritual.

If Serethet is returned to life, she is grateful to the PCs for helping to free her from Hakotep's influence. However, her actions have left her bereft of her connection to her god, and she remains an ex-cleric. A quest of atonement, likely involving the recovery of ancient knowledge from a dangerous area, is required for Serethet to regain her clerical abilities. She may turn to the PCs for help in this endeavor as well, and might even ask to join the PCs on their excursion into Hakotep's pyramid to regain her status and seek her own vengeance on the Sky Pharaoh.



USERIB

Against all the wisdom of his tribe, Userib chose to lead a small group of followers into the taboo Sightless Sphinx. When he encountered the glabrezu Ninureset, the darkness within Userib's soul was amplified and corrupted, converting him to the worship of the demon lord Areshkagal.



USERIB

CR 12

XP 19,200

Male maftet cleric of Areshkagal 9 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 188)

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 18, flat-footed 20 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, +1 shield)

hp 161 (17 HD; 8d10+9d8+77)

Fort +11, **Ref** +14, **Will** +17

Resist electricity 10

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (poor)

Melee +1 sickle +18/+13/+8 (1d6+7/19-20), +1 sickle +18/+13/+8 (1d6+7/19-20)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 5/day (DC 16, 5d6), master's illusion, paired weapons, raptor dive

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +10)

Constant—*mage armor*

3/day—*magic weapon*

1/day—*cat's grace*, *protection from evil*

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +14)

8/day—sudden shift, wind blast

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +14)

5th—*false vision*^o, *flame strike* (DC 20), *slay living* (DC 20)

4th—*confusion*^o (DC 19), *cure critical wounds*, *divine power*, *unholy blight* (DC 19)

3rd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 18), *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*, *nondetection*^o, *prayer*

2nd—*dread bolt*^{um} (DC 17), *hold person* (DC 17), *mirror image*^o, *resist energy*, *weapon of awe*^{apg} (2)

1st—*command* (2, DC 16), *doom* (DC 16), *entropic shield*, *obscuring mist*, *protection from good*, *whispering wind*^o

0 (at will)—*create water*, *detect magic*, *purify food and drink*, *resistance*

D domain spell; **Domains** Air (Wind subdomain^{apg}), Trickery (Deception subdomain^{apg})

TACTICS

Before Combat Userib casts *weapon of awe* on his sickles before combat.

During Combat Userib takes to the air, letting his cultist guards engage opponents in melee while he targets foes with his more powerful spells, such as *flame strike*, *slay living*, or *unholy blight*, or channels negative energy using

his *malleable symbol*. If one of the maftet cultists is killed, Userib casts *divine power* and joins the melee, making a raptor dive against the most dangerous foe.

Morale Userib has fully embraced the worship of Areshkagal and fights to the death to show his devotion to his demonic patron.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 20, **Con** 16, **Int** 8, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +14; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 34

Feats Combat Reflexes^o, Dodge, Double Slice, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Critical (sickle), Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Toughness, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (sickle)

Skills Bluff +10, Fly +10, Knowledge (history) +8, Perception +16, Sense Motive +10, Stealth +16, Survival +10

Languages Common, Sphinx

SQ runic tattoos

Combat Gear *potions of cure serious wounds* (2); **Other**

Gear +1 sickles (2), *malleable symbol* (unholy symbol of Areshkagal, *Ultimate Equipment* 309), *ring of protection* +2, crushed jade worth 250 gp, diamond dust worth 50 gp

Userib learned at an early age the benefits that come with power. Gifted with brawny strength, natural grace, and a cunning wisdom, Userib gained friends and influence among his tribe, and in such a small group, he was able to wield that influence like a club. As he grew older, Userib developed the magical powers of an adept, tied to his uncommon wisdom, and this garnered him even more respect. His growing prestige exacerbated a streak of natural selfishness in his nature, and soon his pride turned to arrogance. Userib began to chafe at the limitations placed on him by the elders of the maftet tribe. He saw himself as Pride Leader Erayu's natural successor, and grumbled whenever the elders gently pointed out that the rules of succession were set long ago and could not be changed.

But some of the blame for Userib's bent development could be placed on the shoulders of Erayu himself. The elder maftet fell as much under Userib's sway as any of the other members of the tribe. Erayu felt uncommonly proud of Userib, as if his leadership had somehow led the tribe to produce such a fine individual. He encouraged and spoiled Userib, letting many infractions slide and holding the young maftet to a lesser standard of responsibility than others.

As Userib matured, however, Erayu began to see the damage he had inadvertently done. Erayu realized that Userib no longer looked to him as a leader. In fact, the young maftet now saw himself as the de facto leader of the group, viewing Erayu as an elder whose time had passed long ago. The two maftets clashed often— never physically, but in battles of words and will.

The conflict between the two maftets came to a head when Userib led a group of scouts into the desert without gaining Erayu's permission first. The scouts returned with fresh supplies—meat, leather, and some excavated treasure—but one of the scouts had been injured in a battle with a desert giant. The maftet's leg was badly crushed, and only its removal allowed the maftet to survive. Erayu laid the blame for the scout's injury solely at the feet of Userib, finally realizing that he had to put a stop to Userib's influence before the arrogant maftet led the tribe to ruin.

Erayu was considering how best to deal with the maftet—exile loomed prominently in his mind—when Userib took the matter into his own hands. Partly out of curiosity and partly as an act of rebellion, Userib broke the tribe's long-held taboo and led his friends into the Sightless Sphinx. Userib was convinced that when he re-emerged from the Sphinx with all of the treasures and secrets it contained, the tribe would finally recognize his leadership and elevate him above doddering old Erayu.

When the glabrezu Ninureset appeared before Userib and his companions inside the Sightless Sphinx, the Abyssal energies the demon exuded felt good. The energies amplified Userib's already evil tendencies, and when the maftet surrendered himself to them, his adept powers instantly matured into full-fledged cleric abilities. Now he worships Areshkagal with all his black soul, and though he's somewhat unhinged by the experience, the danger he poses comes as much from his willingness to embrace evil as it does from his powers themselves.

Userib is a muscular, powerful-looking maftet, but possesses grace and a compelling personality as well. Since his transformation, Userib's once-golden fur and wings have taken on a sable tone. Userib wears no armor, and he has traded his scimitars for twin sickles and wears a striped crimson nemes headdress in honor of his new patron. The runic tattoos on his face have twisted subtly, giving him a permanently malevolent look.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

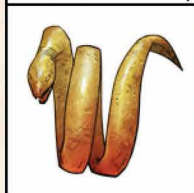
Userib is determined to remain within the Sightless Sphinx and return Areshkagal's worship to its former glory. Leading a newly ascendant cult of Areshkagal would give him greater power than he could have ever hoped for among his isolated tribe, and he will not give up that dream of power easily. Even if the PCs spare Userib's life and deliver him back to Erayu and the tribe, Userib will never return to his old ways. Evil has taken firm root in Userib's soul, and he craves the power it offers. Returning Userib alive to his tribe earns the PCs honor and respect in the eyes of the maftets, but leads to the tribe's eventual downfall. Inevitably, Userib slaughters his former tribespeople, starting with Erayu. Once that is accomplished, he relentlessly tracks down the PCs, considering them his mortal enemies.



MUMMY'S MASK TREASURES

The following unique treasures can be found in “Secrets of the Sphinx.” Player-appropriate handouts appear in the *Pathfinder Cards: Mummy's Mask Item Cards*.

ARMBAND OF THE GOLDEN SERPENT		PRICE 20,000 GP
SLOT wrist	CL 9th	WEIGHT 3 lbs.
AURA moderate abjuration		



Heavy golden coils form this serpentine armband. It wraps snugly around the upper arm of its wearer and stays firmly in place once donned.

An *armband of the golden serpent* allows its wearer to cast spells with the range of touch in melee combat without provoking attacks of opportunity. Spells with ranges other than touch provoke attacks of opportunity as normal—even spells with a range of personal. When the wearer of an *armband of the golden serpent* casts a touch spell in melee combat, the armband animates, slithering down the wearer's arm and striking to deliver the touch attack. Although the armband delivers the spell, the wearer is still required to take the necessary actions and make the required attack roll; the wearer does not gain any additional actions.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 10,000 GP
Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, <i>spectral hand</i>	

BRONZE SENTINEL		PRICE 90,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 19th	WEIGHT 500 lbs.
AURA strong evocation and transmutation		



Built by a group of forgotten arcanists and researchers in a secret outpost deep within the Osirian desert, the *bronze sentinel* is a magical vehicle shaped as a 15-foot-tall bronze humanoid statue, crafted in the shape of a muscular man wearing a silver headband that resembles two serpents twined together. When

the sentinel is active, its eyes shine with green light and a triangle of runes on its chest glows silver.

Close examination and a successful DC 25 Perception check reveal a secret catch that opens a hatch in the statue's back. Anyone who crawls inside finds seating for one Medium or Small occupant and eight unlabeled levers and pedals. These controls allow a character inside to activate and control the

sentinel's movements and actions. Operating a lever is normally a move action, but operating the lever to extend or retract the sentinel's arms (such as to attack) is a standard action. No lever can be operated more than once per round.

Lever (d8)	Lever Function
1	Uncover/cover forward porthole
2	Uncover/cover side portholes
3	Extend/retract arms
4	Close/open hands
5	Move forward/backward
6	Turn left/right
7	Open/close eyes with <i>continual flame</i> inside
8	Open/close hatch

The sentinel's hands can grasp objects as small as Fine in size, and can make slam attacks. Although the sentinel cannot swim, it can function in water up to 900 feet deep. If its portholes are covered, it holds enough air for a Medium operator to survive 1d4+1 hours.

When active, a *bronze sentinel* has the following statistics: **Size** Large; **AC** 20 (–1 size, +11 natural); **hardness** 15; **hp** 150; **Speed** 20 ft.; **Melee** 2 slams +12 (2d6); **CMB** +14; **CMD** 24.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 45,000 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, <i>animate objects</i> , <i>continual flame</i> , creator must have 8 ranks in Knowledge (engineering)	

EYE OF HORUS AMULET		PRICE 23,000 GP
SLOT neck	CL 9th	WEIGHT —
AURA moderate abjuration		



This triangular amulet of gold and lapis lazuli depicts a stylized eye—the symbol of the Ancient Osirian deity Horus, god of rulership, the sky, and the sun. Priests of Horus fashioned the first *eye of Horus* amulets centuries ago to protect

members of their order, particularly from minions of the god Set. Now, the occasional *eye of Horus* amulet turns up in a marketplace or in the hands of nomadic traders or adventurers.

An *eye of Horus* amulet grants its wearer a +2 resistance bonus on all saving throws. In addition, once per day, the wearer can surround herself with an aura of shimmering sunlight that protects her as *dispel evil*. Using this effect to drive an evil

MUMMY'S MASK TREASURES

extraplanar creature back to its home plane or to end either an evil spell or an enchantment spell cast by an evil creature cancels this effect.

Lastly, if the wearer of an *eye of Horus amulet* is targeted by an effect that causes blindness, she can, as an immediate action, cause the amulet to absorb the effect. The wearer suffers no harm from the effect, but the amulet cracks in half, rendering it forever useless thereafter.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 11,500 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, <i>dispel evil</i> , <i>remove blindness/deafness</i> , <i>resistance</i>	

FALCON CROWN		PRICE 42,000 GP
SLOT head	CL 10th	WEIGHT 2 lbs.
AURA moderate transmutation		



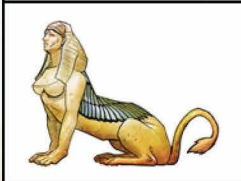
This metal headdress is shaped like a falcon's head and enameled in brilliant colors. Originally crafted for a wizard dedicated to Horus as a reward from his pharaoh for his prowess on the battlefield, the *falcon crown* was believed lost when the wizard was struck down by an ancient blue dragon. Centuries later, however,

archaeologists discovered the *falcon crown* among the ruins of Tumen. Researcher-priests of Nethys acquired the crown shortly after, and when the Nethysian priestess Serethet became the Forgotten Pharaoh, she claimed the *falcon crown* for herself.

The wearer of the *falcon crown* gains a +2 insight bonus to her Armor Class. In addition, up to three times per day as an immediate action, the wearer of the *falcon crown* can sacrifice a prepared spell or unused spell slot of 1st level or higher and transform it into a damaging ray, targeting any foe within 30 feet as a ranged touch attack. This ray deals 1d4 points of damage for every level of the spell or spell slot sacrificed. A non-spellcaster cannot create rays with the *falcon crown*, but can still gain the AC bonus.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 21,000 GP
Arcane Blast ^{APG} , Craft Wondrous Item, <i>foresight</i> , <i>haste</i>	

MYTHOPOEIC SPHINX		PRICE 13,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 11th	WEIGHT 2 lbs.
AURA moderate divination		



Carved from sandstone, this small stone statuette depicts a female sphinx and is a powerful tool for divinations. Once per week, the possessor can ask the *mythopoeic sphinx* about an important person,

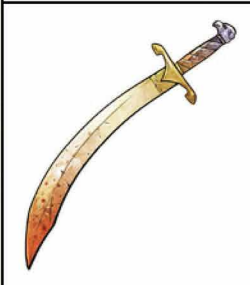
place, or thing. The sphinx then animates and relates legends about the subject in either Common, Draconic, or Sphinx, as

if with *legend lore*. In addition, a *mythopoeic sphinx* can be used as a focus component that replaces the normal focus or material components for the *augury*, *divination*, and *legend lore* spells. Lastly, the possessor of a *mythopoeic sphinx* gains a +4 bonus on Diplomacy checks to influence sphinxes.

The possessor of a *mythopoeic sphinx* can also use the figurine to call a gynosphinx to his presence and bargain for her services as if using *planar ally* to call upon an outsider. A *mythopoeic sphinx* permanently loses all of its magical abilities when used to call a sphinx in this way, becoming a mundane stone statuette, regardless of whether or not the called sphinx agrees to serve the possessor.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 7,250 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, <i>legend lore</i> , <i>planar ally</i>	

SCIMITAR OF THE STRIKING WING		PRICE 27,000 GP
SLOT weapon	CL 11th	WEIGHT 4 lbs.
AURA moderate transmutation		

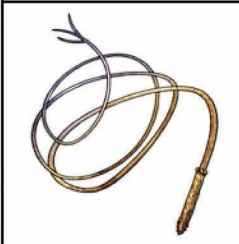


This bronze +2 *scimitar* bears an eagle motif on its pommel, and allows the user to soar through the air to deliver his attacks. As a free action, the wielder can fly without having to maintain concentration, as if affected by the *fly* spell for up to 20 rounds each day, with a +5 bonus on Fly

checks. These rounds need not be consecutive. In addition, as long as the scimitar is in hand, the wielder can use *feather fall* at will.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 13,500 GP
Craft Magic Arms and Armor, <i>feather fall</i> , <i>fly</i>	

SCORPION TAIL WHIP		PRICE 12,305 GP
SLOT weapon	CL 6th	WEIGHT 3 lbs.
AURA moderate divination		



The lash of this whip is made of countless tiny chitinous plates interlocking to form an articulated cord, tipped with sharp blades. A *scorpion tail whip* is a +2 *scorpion whip* that can strike with incredible speed. When attacking with the *scorpion tail whip*,

the wielder gains a +2 insight bonus on his initiative check, provided his first attack on the first round of combat is made with the *scorpion tail whip*. If the wielder switches weapons or makes an attack with another weapon before attacking with the *scorpion tail whip*, he does not gain the initiative bonus.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 6,305 GP
Craft Magic Arms and Armor, <i>anticipate peril</i> ^{UM}	



THE PERILOUS WASTES

On our eighteenth day out of Sothis, we sighted what we were looking for: a statue of an Osirian king of old, half protruding from a dune. Its features had long since been scoured away by the windblown sand. I confess it sent a chill down my spine every time I looked at that faceless head and thought of the curse. Nevertheless, we made camp and began digging.

Tonight our porters came to our tents, their faces veiled and bared blades in their hands. They warned us in no uncertain terms what they would do to us if we didn't stop the excavation. Kaphren, our expedition's leader, lied and said we would leave in the morning. If we are indeed the victims of a curse, I fear it may be the one we brought with us.

—Final entry from a tattered journal found in a Sothis curio shop

On most maps, the windblown dunes of Osirion's deserts appear to be nothing more than barren expanses. Desolate they may truly be, but they are far from empty. The great sand dunes slowly migrate across the desert, pushed by the ceaseless winds, alternately exposing and covering lost ruins. At night, the desert comes alive with thousands of insects and small predators searching for food in the coolness of the night air. A rainstorm in the distant mountains can cause a flash flood in a dry wadi, which will spring to life with sudden growths of flowers and other plants. Just as quickly, the waters recede, the plants die, and the wadi turns arid again. The emptiness of the desert is only an illusion, and a traveler never knows what might await just over the next dune.

Presented here are four plot hooks and two complete encounters that can be altered, expanded, and adapted to your Mummy's Mask Adventure Path campaign. These encounters can be used to help the PCs explore the desert or they could be locations the GM can use to seed particular items or plot twists into the campaign. These encounters could also be used to let the PCs earn some additional experience points if they have fallen behind in the course of the Adventure Path, or they simply could be woven into any Osirion-based campaign.

PLOT HOOKS

As the PCs travel back and forth across the endless dunes of Osirion, use the following plot hooks to spice up the journey or provide some much needed XP or treasure. You can drop these encounters and plot hooks into a hex (if you are using the exploration rules), or you may simply add them into the campaign as a break from the monotony of travel. In addition, these encounters can help a GM insert a particular treasure into the campaign or introduce a new or replacement character.

Battle for the Sea Beast: The skeletal ribcage of some colossal sea beast emerges from the sands. Living in a crude shelter among its ribs is an Osirian hermit (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 247) named Kephu. He beseeches the PCs to protect him from a group of brigands who are trying to evict him from his home. That evening the "brigands" approach. In fact, they are a mercenary band led by a Garundi mud shaman (*NPC Codex* 68) with a bloodfire sorcerer (*NPC Codex* 164), a freelance thief (*NPC Codex* 147), an expert bodyguard (*NPC Codex* 269), two border guards (*NPC Codex* 129), and three grizzled mercenaries (*NPC Codex* 268). The mud shaman claims that the skeleton is from a prehistoric sea creature that's sacred to his tribe and that he gave the hermit 24 hours to vacate the site so that it could be made into a proper shrine. The hermit has refused to leave, and the PCs must take a side before or when the situation turns violent. Hidden in the sand under the hermit's home is a treasure

worth 7,000 gp that he has been keeping secret these many years.

Lost Legionnaire: Looking far in the distance, the party sees what appear to be vultures circling something on the ground below, a sight not all that unusual in Osirion's deserts. Upon drawing nearer, however, they discover that the vultures are actually manticores, and the thing struggling on the ground beneath them is an enormous humanoid. It is actually a badly wounded desert giant (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 128) beset by five manticores (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 199). If the PCs assist the giant, they find him disoriented and dressed in an antiquated bronze breastplate. He identifies himself as Agrimius Decius of the Eighth Calpurnian Legion and asks if the party has seen the Blue Wyrms standard. None of the names or things he mentions are recognizable to the PCs, and they get the sense that he has been wandering this desert for a very long time. The giant himself is fairly muddled in his own mind and can give little explanation for his condition. If the PCs heal the giant and allow him to accompany them, he is of great help the next day when an adult blue dragon (*Bestiary* 94) attacks them. If the giant survives, he takes the dragon's hide and fashions it into a standard atop his broken longsword before marching off alone into the trackless dunes to seek his missing legion. If the giant is not healed, then a young blue dragon attacks the party the next day instead.

Night Visitors: When night falls over the desert, great clouds of insects emerge from burrows in the sand and begin their nightly hunt for water and breeding partners, their incessant buzzing and chirping filling the air. Dealing with all the swarming insects is irritating, but a good tent or even a bedroll provides adequate shelter from them. Perhaps more distracting are the bats that emerge from desert rock shelters and flap through the night while feasting on the insects. On some nights, the PCs hear strange shrieking calls in the distance, though they can't identify their source. After a few days, they enter the territory of a colony of hunting mobats (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 42), which emerge from a nearby cave each night to feast on humanoid meat.

The Screaming Mine: As the desert sands give way to the rocky badlands, a gaping cave mouth is spotted on a low ridge. This copper mine played out long ago and was afterward abandoned, and now it serves as the home base for a band of half-orc raiders. Gerlutak is a desert stalker (*NPC Codex* 137) and leads a group made up of axe warriors (*NPC Codex* 11) and traitorous brigands (*NPC Codex* 81) to prey upon caravans passing through the badlands. Aside from the excellent location of the mine, the group's real prize is a captured yrthak (*Bestiary* 2 290). The creature's devastating sonic attack gives the mine its name, and the half-orcs use the beast to hunt those that get away.

TROUBLED WATERS (CR II)

The PCs are awoken from their sleep one night as a minor earthquake rocks the desert near where they are traveling. It appears to do no damage other than to startle any pack animals in camp, and after an hour the hushed sounds of the night return to normal. The next day as the PCs continue their travels, they come across an isolated oasis that lies near the epicenter of the previous night's quake.

BACKGROUND

The earthquake that rocked this portion of the desert was wholly natural in origin and fairly minor, but it did cause damage to an isolated oasis. A fissure formed in one of the basins of the oasis, causing half of the pool to drain. It also opened a sinkhole that descends into Nar-Voth in the Darklands below. A trio of araneas and their loyal gug servant lived in the series of caverns lying far beneath the oasis. When the deluge from the draining oasis pool swept into their lair, one of the araneas was drowned, and the others were forced to flee. Once the deluge had passed, they emerged from their place of retreat to seek revenge against whatever had attacked them from above.

They found the fissure that had opened in the ceiling of their lair, and clambered upward into the natural tunnels below the pool that were once filled with water. They also found openings leading up into the partially drained pool itself. The araneas emerged into the darkness of night to find a camp of desert nomads beside the damaged pool. The earthquake and the sudden draining of the oasis pool had shocked the nomads, but they were otherwise unharmed. However, they didn't expect a pair of enraged araneas to erupt from the muddy pool and attack.

Some of the nomads were slain quickly, while the others were subdued and dragged into the tunnels below—along with some of their livestock—to serve as food for the gug. The araneas then looted the encampment, and got a good look at their surroundings. They realized that in this desolate area the oasis pool must serve as a stopover for many travelers, so they erased the traces of their attack, and began to keep a nightly watch over the oasis to see what other victims it might bring to them.

INTRODUCTION

The location sits along the PCs' path of travel the day following the earthquake, and they arrive before nightfall to find the abandoned nomad camp. If the PCs make camp at the oasis, the araneas' tactics are described in the Encounter section.

DESCRIPTION

The PCs arrive at the oasis as evening falls. They can arrive from any direction you choose, but the remains of the nomad camp at area A1 are immediately visible, and possibly

what attracts their attention. The oasis itself is surrounded by date palms, though several of them have been uprooted and toppled over by the previous night's earthquake.

A1. Abandoned Camp: Three hide tents stand around the barely smoldering remains of a campfire. The earthquake knocked down a pole of one of the tents, leaving it partially collapsed, but other tents are otherwise intact. The remains of a picket line can be found between two date palms where a group of camels were once tethered—though they are no longer present—and a half-dozen goats wander the remains of the camp munching on the tufts of grass in the area and occasionally sniffing at the tents.

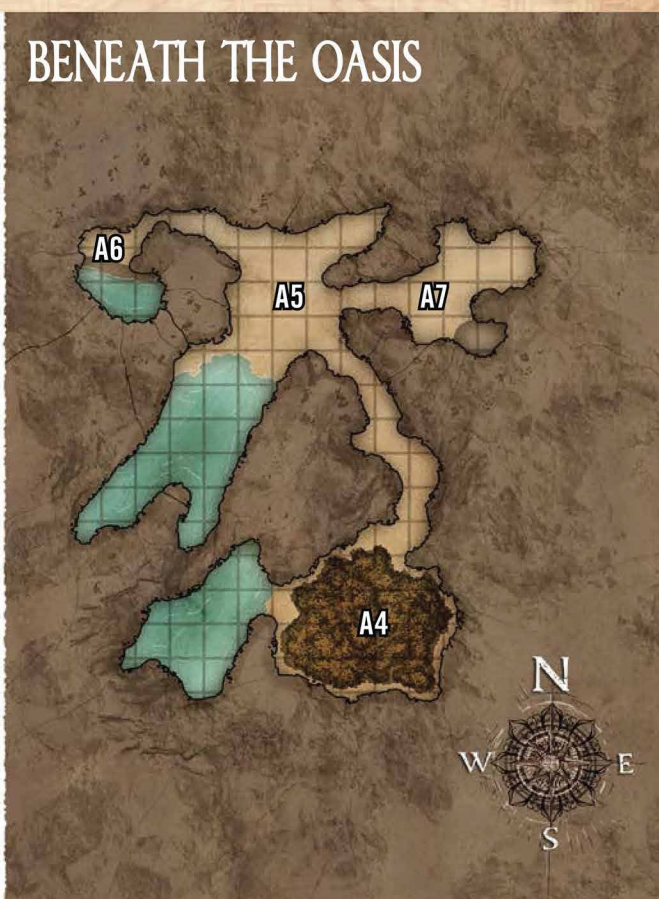
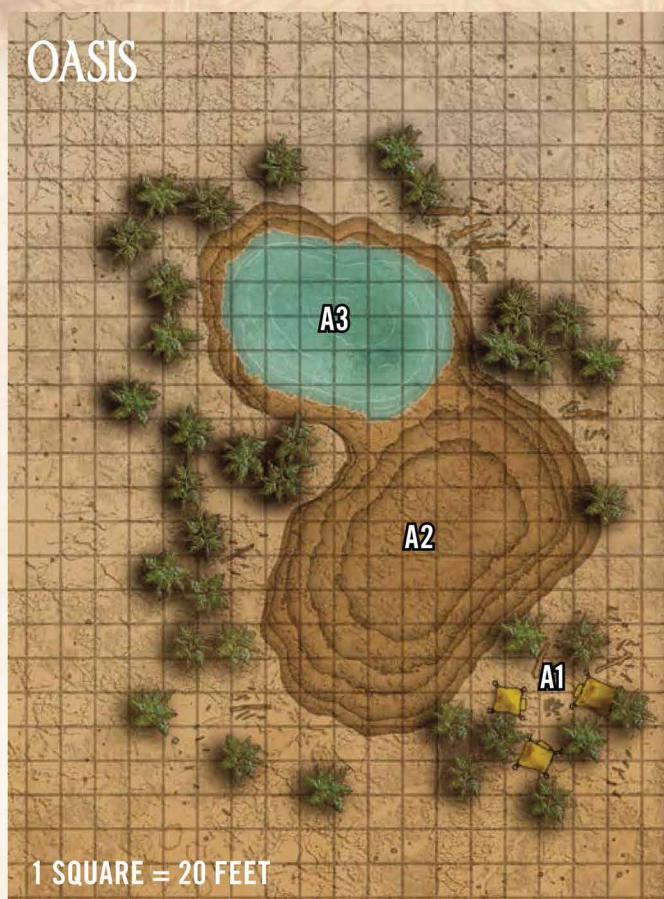
A search of the camp reveals it was certainly the home of a group of desert nomads who apparently kept a small herd of goats. The tracks show that there were once many more goats, though only the six remain. There are no visible tracks to suggest to where the others may have wandered off, or where their minders could have gone. The tents hold the bedrolls and possessions of seven nomads, though they appear to have been abandoned recently, and no valuables remain.

A2. Drained Pool: A portion of the oasis pool has drained and become a giant mud pit 20 feet deep at its center. The contour of the pool's bed is raised on the north side, so that a portion of the pool remains filled at area A3. The sides of the drained portion are slick with muddy silt, requiring a successful DC 12 Acrobatics check to descend without slipping and falling. At the very bottom, the floor of the pool is actually a large, 10-foot-thick plug of mud. Anyone stepping on it will sink through and be deposited into area A4 below. Digging it out requires 16 hours of labor, but it slowly reseals with thick mud from drainage after 6 hours, requiring the process be repeated twice to clear it permanently.

A3. Silted Pool: This portion of the pool still holds water 10 feet deep, though it is now cloudy with mud and silt from the previous night's temblor. The water level is down at least 5 feet from its original level, and the banks above the new waterline have already begun to dry in the desert heat. Despite the state of the pool, the water is still potable. Five feet below the water level at the northwest edge is a small cave opening (Medium creatures must squeeze to enter) that leads 15 feet through a water-filled tunnel to area A6.

A4. Mud Hole: The mud plug in area A2 lets out into the 20-foot roof of this cavern. Its floor is filled to a depth of 3 feet with the mud that drained from above, making the whole cavern difficult terrain. A side cavern is filled with water to a depth of 15 feet where it drained as the pool above cracked. A gug (*Bestiary* 2 151) wallows here in the mud, along with the dismembered, partially consumed corpses of desert nomads, camels, and goats.

A5. Central Cavern: Water from the pool drained into this cavern before rising to a depth of 4 feet to the south and subsequently draining out into area A7. Here, three Osirian nomads are bound in webbing while two araneas



(*Bestiary* 2 30) question them to find out where they can obtain more victims and treasure.

A6. Pool Entrance: A low ledge overlooks a 10-foot-deep pool of silt-laden water here. A tunnel in the base of this pool leads to the opening in the pool at area **A3**. Sitting on the ledge are six darkmantle-skin flasks, each holding a dose of *potion of water breathing*.

A7. Sinkhole: A sinkhole on one side of this cavern drops 100 feet into tunnels leading into Nar-Voth below where the araneas once lived. Anyone descending can continue their adventures in the Darklands beneath Osirion if they choose. The araneas have deposited a small hoard of treasure here worth 5,500 gp, including several minor valuables taken from the goatherds above.

ENCOUNTER

The gug spends most of its time rooting around in area **A4** and feasting on the carcasses of the goatherds' camels. The araneas remain holed up in area **A5** for the most part. If the PCs enter the tunnels beneath the oasis, the araneas take a stand in the entrance to area **A7**, using webs and spells to try to overcome the intruders. If nearing defeat, they retreat down the sinkhole in area **A7** and flee back into the Darklands. Sounds of combat in area **A5** draw the gug from

its feasting to fight for the araneas. If the PCs encounter the gug in area **A4**, the araneas respond to the sounds of fighting there, providing spell support and attacking with their webs from the tunnel from area **A5**. They retreat to area **A7** as described above if the gug is defeated.

If the PCs do not immediately enter the tunnels beneath the oasis, then the araneas spy on their camp after nightfall from the water at area **A3** while shapechanged into humanoid form as drow elves. They use *potions of water breathing* to remain beneath the waters of the pool. After the PCs retire for the evening, one aranea uses *silent image* to make what appears to be a desert nomad appear in the camp, so that whoever is on guard will find the nomad suddenly, silently standing nearby. The other aranea uses *ghost sound* to distract the guard and lure them closer to attempt to charm them. If successful, the araneas silently steal into camp and attempt to capture everyone in their webbing before dragging them down to area **A4** where the gug can deal with them while the araneas loot the PCs' camp itself, turning to the bodies after the gug has finished with them. If the *sleep* spell is unsuccessful (which is likely), the first aranea causes the *silent image* to walk down to the base of area **A2** and appear to sink into the mud in order to draw the PCs to the gug waiting below.

THE THRESHING FLOOR OF TAHKET-IBEY (CR 13)

While exploring, the party comes upon an ancient ruin where a team of scholars digs for lost secrets of old Osirion. Unfortunately, the scholars are more sinister than they appear, and the innocuous ruin is more than it seems.

BACKGROUND

The vast desert of Osirion is not entirely devoid of life, and around various watering holes, oasis pools, and semipermanent rivers, isolated groups of desert natives have been able to eke out an existence and even raise small crops of hardy grains in the arid environment. For centuries these tribes would bring barley to the stone foundation of an ancient building to thresh their grain. The threshing floor also served as a common meeting place between various tribes, where they could trade what little excess grain they had for other staples or even the wares of the occasional passing merchant caravan. As a result, the Threshing Floor of Tahket-Ibey (a name based on a partial inscription on a stone found there long ago), became a well-known gathering place among local tribes.

This situation changed over 70 years ago when a massive sandstorms completely buried the site. With no landmarks to use as references, the tribes lost the location, and many moved away from the area after several watering holes and rivulets were likewise buried in the storm. Since then, the site remained lost until a Pathfinder scholar, Jornus Kibbri, recently discovered the location of the ruins among the libraries of Sothis and found cryptic hints that it might be more important than originally suspected.

There are, however, three secrets Jornus doesn't know. The first is that Trevin, his new research assistant, is actually a shapeshifted pairaka div who signed on in order to corrupt the renowned scholar to make of him a fine prize for her lord, Ahriman. The second is that the threshing floor is actually a portion of a long-lost efreeti citadel. The third is that the porters hired for the expedition are actually outsiders called burning dervishes, recruited by Trevin to help claim the secrets of the citadel.

INTRODUCTION

The PCs arrive at the site as they are traveling across the wastes. They can either have heard of the expedition that set out from Sothis more than a month ago, or they can simply stumble across it in their travels. Kibbri has located the site, and his laborers have already removed most of the sand from the stone floor. He has matched some writing fragments he found to a worn engraving discovered in the stone floor, and is just about to have his team lever the stones up to reveal what is hidden beneath. Kibbri is an aloof and taciturn man, but he's not above using others to his own ends and greets the PCs cordially enough, asking them if they'll help his porters break through the floor. He promises them a share in any

treasure he finds below. If asked, he willingly provides the information in the first two paragraphs of the Background.

DESCRIPTION

It is late in the day when the PCs arrive at the site.

B1. Threshing Floor: A large swath of stone floor has been uncovered here in an excavation pit 5 feet deep. Great piles of sand have been mounded around its periphery. The stone floor is flat with the bases of some small walls rising here and there and dotted with occasional engravings, worn nearly smooth by the years. The excavators have discovered a stone plug in the floor, and are about to lift it out with crowbars and a crude A-frame hoist.

B2. Chamber of Waiting: The threshing floor is actually the roof of the efreeti citadel of Takutibakr. It was built during a genie war in the ancient past and abandoned when it was overcome by a djinni-produced sandstorm. Over centuries, the shifting sand revealed its roof, and it was taken for the foundation of a ruined building rather than the top of a buried one. The efreet sealed the citadel when they abandoned it, and left behind sacrifices to serve as guardians of the place. Sealed within this chamber are four ghuls (*Bestiary* 3 125). They immediately attack when anyone breaks the seal in the roof above.

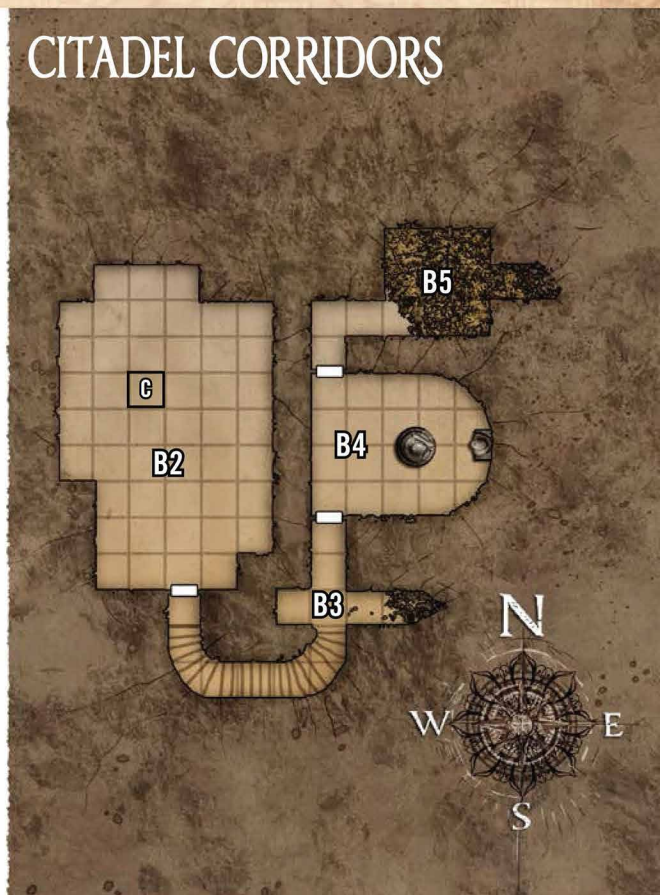
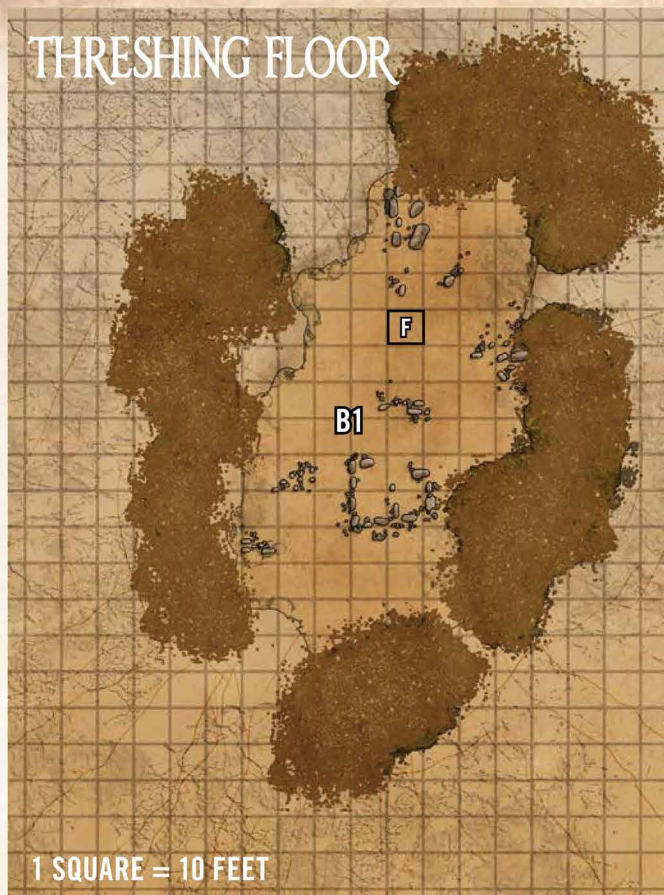
B3. Intersection: Stairs descend to an intersection. The eastern hallway collapsed long ago and is impassible.

B4. Resting Chamber: Brass doors close off this room. A large sarcophagus holding a mummified efreeti stands against one wall. When the brass doors are opened, two large fire elementals (*Bestiary* 124) spring into being to protect the remains of the efreeti. The efreeti wears a *mask of a thousand tomes* (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment* 245).

B5. Treasure Cache: A total of six clay amphorae lie in this room, resting in a large pile of sand that has filtered down through cracks in the ceiling. A now-collapsed passage once led to the east. The sand pile is the home of three sandmen (*Bestiary* 2 236), and the amphorae hold assorted jewels worth 8,500 gp.

ENCOUNTER

Kibbri's party consists of himself (use statistics for an aloof scholar from *NPC Codex* 232), his research assistant, Trevin Barth (a disguised pairaka div; *Bestiary* 3 88), and four disguised burning dervishes (see below). They attempt to raise the floor stone as the sun falls, which requires 1 hour of effort with crowbars, picks, and the help of the PCs. Once the initial guardians are released and dealt with, and once the citadel is entered, the dervishes attempt to incapacitate the Pathfinder and the PCs, hoping to leave them trapped within after they loot the chambers and reseal the floor. After the PCs deal with the dervishes, the shocked Kibbri promises the PCs equal shares of any treasures. He and Trevin attempt to stay out of combat, but the temptations



whispered to Kibbri by Trevin have convinced the scholar to attempt to murder the PCs while they sleep later that night in camp. How the PCs deal with his treachery is up to them.

BURNING DERVISH

CR 7

XP 3,200

(*Tome of Horrors Complete* 89)

LE Medium outsider (extraplanar, fire)

Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 13 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural)

hp 58 (9d10+9)

Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +8

Immune fire

Weaknesses vulnerability to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 20 ft. (perfect)

Melee +1 falchion +14/+9 (2d4+7/18-20) or
(in flame form) 2 slams +13 (1d6+4 plus 1d6 fire plus burn)

Special Attacks burn (1d6, DC 15)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 14th):

3/day—invisibility (self only), pyrotechnics (DC 14)

1/day—enlarge person or reduce person (DC 13), plane shift
(Elemental, Astral, or Material Planes only), produce flame

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 15

Base Atk +9; CMB +13; CMD 27

Feats Combat Expertise, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, Whirlwind Attack

Skills Bluff +13, Escape Artist +13, Knowledge (planes) +13, Perception +14, Search +9, Sense Motive +13, Stealth +14, Survival +14; Racial Modifiers +2 Survival when tracking

Languages Common, Ignan, Infernal

SQ elemental endurance, flame form

Gear +1 falchion

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Elemental Endurance (Ex) Burning dervishes can survive on the Elemental Planes of Air or Earth for up to 48 hours and on the Elemental Plane of Water for up to 12 hours. Failure to return to the Elemental Plane of Fire after that time deals 1 point of damage per hour to a burning dervish until it dies or returns to the Elemental Plane of Fire. It is able to survive on other planes normally.

Flame Form (Su) Three times per day, as a standard action, a burning dervish can change its form to that of a column of fire. In this form it gains two slam attacks. The transformation lasts indefinitely; reverting to its humanoid form requires another standard action.



CURSES OF THE ANCIENTS

Mirti pronounced the sarcophagus free of traps, so we unsealed it. When Raherta lifted the mask from the mummified prince within, I swore I saw the shadows move—drawing closer from the corners of the tomb—but I convinced myself it was nothing. Holding the mask, Raherta translated the hieroglyphs, 'My guests, may you share my eternal reward.' We laughed this cryptic warning off as a dead man's bluster.

"Yet now, after these many years of misfortunes and accidents, only Raherta and I remain—and in recent months, my letters to him have gone unanswered. We made the discovery of a lifetime, found wealth beyond measure, but not one of us prospered. Fortune, fame, even life itself, passed through our fingers like so much sand."

—Jakent of Shiman-Sekh, Osirionologist

Feared more than any tomb guardian, Osirion's dread curses are whispered of in haunts frequented by adventurers, explorers, and grave robbers. To enter a crypt, whether sealed or long opened, is to court the undying wrath of its builders, the dead within, and the very gods. Distinct from conventional traps, these magical afflictions typically exact their vengeance with a measure of poetry, lacking the mercy to deal a quick and clean death. While curses abound in the Inner Sea region, laid by cruel hags, evil witches, fearful linnorms, and worse, the deserts of Osirion are a land of curses, where the foolhardy are seemingly just as likely to be stricken by ancient wrath as by a parched, sun-scorched death. Noted here are just a handful of the most storied curses of Osirion and beyond.

Many of these curses punish those who trespass on tombs and other powerful sites. The most notorious Osirian curse comes from the undying mummies that guard many lost tombs. Both a disease and a curse, mummy rot reduces its victims to sand and is spread by a mummy's touch.

The fabled pyramid of the Four Pharaohs of Ascension bears a particularly insidious curse. Symbols of power lie hidden within the tomb, and should an intruder glimpse too many of these runes, the curse activates and reaves spirit from flesh, turning the would-be thief into an undying guardian. In the Gozarin Necropolis, violators of Jetrieti V's portion of the Pyramid of Masks, instead succumb to a deadly wasting disease, while rumors tell that the curse of his ancestor Jetrieti I causes its victims to burst into flame at the touch of the sun's light.

The vengeful ghost of the Pharaoh of Blades lies trapped in a labyrinth below Ipeq, victim of a curse of his own devising. His curse confounds all sense of direction within the labyrinth, denying exit to those it traps. Throughout the tomb lie hidden gems that allow escape, but they elude even the pharaoh's ghostly grasp.

Other curses specifically punish thieves; in many such cases, returning that which was stolen lifts the curse. For example, while entering the Crypt of the Everflame in Nirmathas poses no great hazard, stealing from the sarcophagi within causes the thief's possessions to age, corrode, and crumble into dust. And in Katapesh, stealing a pendant from a mummified gnoll turned a man named Cheeho into a talking dog. Though he would gladly return the pendant to end his suffering, Cheeho unfortunately has forgotten the precise location of the mummy's burial site.

Handling treasure looted from a tomb can be risky even to those innocent of theft. The Ruby Prince of Osirion himself recently bore a hidden curse contracted from a relic of Lissala, ancient goddess of runes. The grim humor of being laid low by a relic of Thassilon rather than Osirion's own lost empire was not lost on the heir of the pharaohs. Given the Ruby Prince's importance and the potency of the curse, hundreds of Pathfinders

CURSES IN OUR WORLD

Even in the real world, superstitions abound about vengeance from beyond the grave and the punishments meted out against those who desecrate sacred ground. Even before hieroglyphs were translated, accounts spoke of events such as wrathful spirits plaguing a ship, which were banished only when the pair of mummies looted from a tomb were cast overboard. With the deciphering of hieroglyphs, aided by the Rosetta Stone, the legend of Egyptian curses grew. Inscriptions in tombs threatened dire consequences to grave robbers, ranging from execution at the hands of the dead to agonizing death from incurable diseases.

Fear of the mummy's curse swelled further with the opening of Tutankhamun's tomb in 1922. It began when Lord Carnarvon, member of the first expedition, nicked a mosquito bite while shaving. The cut progressed into blood poisoning and pneumonia, and Lord Carnarvon passed away a mere month after entering the tomb. Lurid accounts of coincidences and portents preceding his demise filled the papers of the day. His death was followed by several other ominous ends, with causes ranging from disease to murder.

A few years later, Henry Field spread the tale of Sir Bruce Ingham, recipient of a mummy's hand bearing a scarab bracelet. Written on the bracelet was a warning: "Cursed be he who moves my body. To him shall come fire, water, and pestilence." Soon after, Ingham's house burned down, followed by a flood during its reconstruction.

For more than a decade, the death of any visitor to the tomb of Tutankhamun was hailed as proof of the pharaoh's dread curse. Yet in truth, most who entered the tomb lived long lives. Ultimately, the mummy's curse owes more to sensationalism and selective reporting than to vengeance from beyond the grave.



loyal to Osirion searched the far corners of Golarion for hints of a cure.

Occasionally curses act more to keep Golarion safe from the contents of a tomb than to punish would-be thieves. The layered protections of the Pyramid of An-Hepsu XI fall into this category. The Incorruptible Pharaoh and his most dangerous creations lie hidden in his tomb. Cunningly woven wards and curses keep them forever sealed away from the world, along with any intruders who have dared to disturb his rest.

Curses can also arise spontaneously, usually at sites of great evil. Untold years of ritual sacrifice and cannibalism stained Smugglers' Shiv, off the coast of Sargava, with more than blood. On its shores, the dead now refuse to remain quiet, and the living find themselves consumed with an unspeakable craving for the flesh of their own kind.

ALTERNATE BESTOW CURSE EFFECTS

The spell *bestow curse* allows the caster to invent a novel effect, but one no more powerful than those described in the spell itself (no worse than a 50% chance of losing actions, a -4 penalty on checks, or a -6 penalty to an ability score). Effects in line with that power level include the following.

- When the victim is adjacent to the area of a damaging spell or spell-like effect, the area expands to include the victim.
- The victim can't heal naturally, and magical healing heals the victim by only half the usual amount (minimum 1 point). Fast healing and regeneration are likewise halved.
- Whenever the victim takes damage, he is staggered for 1 round.
- The victim is plagued by cacophonous sounds and strobing lights that only she can hear and see. She is distracted (+5 to Perception DCs), cannot take 10 on skill checks, and must succeed at a concentration check (DC 10 + spell level) to successfully cast spells.
- Anytime the victim picks up or retrieves an object (including drawing a weapon or ammunition), there is a 50% chance that he immediately drops it. If ammunition is dropped, the attack being made is lost. Any remaining attacks in a full attack action may still be attempted.



SPREADING CURSES

Curses needn't be limited to those effects described by *bestow curse* (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 247) or in rules for afflictions (*Core Rulebook* 555). When designing a new curse, be careful not to go too far. A devastating curse can have consequences as serious as dying or being turned to stone. Certainly, horrific curses that promise inescapable doom have their place, but curses that can be endured for a time bring more to the table, as surviving and escaping such a curse can become an adventure all its own. Consider these guidelines when creating a curse.

Make It Logical: A character generally doesn't get cursed for minding her own business. More often, the victim meddled with powerful forces, disturbed an ancient grave, or even wronged a vengeful fortuneteller. Try to fit the curse to the act that brought it on, like a glutton being unable to eat or a tomb robber burning in the light of day.

Make It Interesting: A boring curse isn't worth the game time it consumes. A good curse should be creepy, comical, embarrassing, or terrifying, or have a good story behind it.

Make It Interactive: Some curses require the players and GM to roleplay effects such as an inability to lie or a compulsion to steal. This sort of curse can be very rewarding with a motivated group, as possible effects extend far beyond what game mechanics allow.

Make It Simple: A good curse has easy-to-handle mechanics. Most curses should have only one or two effects, and should be possible to resolve during gameplay. Avoid the need to reference complicated effects during combat. Failing that, prepare an index card with the curse's details.

TYPES OF CURSES

Curses can have a wide range of effects, which is something to keep in mind when designing a new curse. Some trigger only intermittently, some apply a constant penalty, and some grow worse with time. In addition, some curses function exclusively using game mechanics, while others incorporate roleplaying into their effects.

Intermittent: Some curses, such as unluck, trigger only under certain conditions and stay constant in their effects.

Progressive: A progressive curse functions much like a disease, requiring periodic checks to determine whether the affliction progresses. However, unlike those suffering from diseases, the victims of these curses cannot recover just by succeeding at saving throws. A progressive curse worsens with each failed save, often ending in incapacitation or death. Mummy rot is a typical progressive curse.

Static: Curses like *baleful polymorph* apply an effect for the entire duration of the curse, without a change in its severity.

Mechanical: These curses rely on game mechanics for the majority of their effects, such as applying penalties, ability damage, or negative conditions. This sort of curse is a good choice if you want a steady, consistent effect for the curse.

BREAKING THE CURSE

The most conventional way to rid a victim of a curse is the spell *remove curse*, occasionally with the aid of other or more powerful magic. When making a new curse, especially one with a strong story background, consider novel ways to remove the curse beyond just casting a spell. Robbers might be cursed until they return every ill-gotten coin, while a haughty aristocrat might suffer until she cleans the feet of a dozen beggars. Make the victim vaguely aware of how to end their torment, but let them discover the specific details on their own through either research or trial and error. Curses with a story-based remedy often resist *remove curse* and *break enchantment*. Increase the DC for removal by 2, 5, or even 10 based on the power of the curse. Particularly powerful curses resist *remove curse* and *break enchantment* entirely, requiring either specific conditions for removal or the application of *limited wish*, *miracle*, or *wish*.

Weaker curses also exist. A simple cleansing ritual might suffice to remove them, perhaps discoverable through exploration, research, or a successful Knowledge (religion) check. Such weaker curses could even fade naturally over the course of days or weeks.

While many NPC casters offer curse removal with no questions asked, it's common knowledge that curses aren't

CURSES OF THE ANCIENTS

picked up accidentally. Some of these casters might want to know the circumstances behind the curse (often employing Sense Motive during the discussion). Good-aligned churches could expect acts of atonement or charity as at least partial payment for removing a justly gained curse.

CRUEL CURSES

The curses below could be incorporated into traps, associated with locations, triggered by opening crypts or offending powerful spellcasters, or inflicted in any other circumstance that calls for a vengeful affliction.

CREEPING SENILITY

Type curse, disease; **Save** Will DC 19 negates, Will DC 19 to avoid effects

Onset 1 minute; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d2 Int drain and 1d2 Wis drain; **Cure** Creeping senility can be cured only by successfully casting *remove curse* and *restoration* within 1 minute of each other. Additional castings of *restoration* are required to restore the drained ability scores.

DAYBANE

Type curse; **Save** Fortitude DC 17 negates

Effect The target takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage for every minute of exposure to bright light, including daylight. This effect ends when the creature falls unconscious. This curse never deals lethal damage.

DAYBLIND

Type curse; **Save** Fortitude DC 17 negates

Effect The target is blind except in dim light or darkness.

DISSOLUTION

Type curse, disease; **Save** Fortitude DC 18 negates

Onset 1 week; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d2 drain to a random ability score (determined each day); **Cure** A dreaded form of wasting curse, dissolution can be cured only by successfully casting both *remove curse* and *remove disease* within 1 minute of each other and succeeding at both checks by 5 or more. If both checks succeed but either one succeeds by less than 5, the curse seems to be removed but returns in 1d4 weeks. While in remission, the curse cannot be detected or removed.

FAMINE

Type curse; **Save** Will DC 22 negates, Fortitude DC 22 to avoid effects

Effect Any food that the target attempts to consume instantly rots into a putrescent mass. The target can attempt a Fortitude save to choke down the spoiled food. If the target fails at the check, she takes 1d2 points of Constitution damage. In either case, attempting to consume food leaves the target sickened and unable to eat for 1d4 hours. Food

created by magic can resist spoilage with a successful caster level check against the DC of the curse.

FEVERED DREAMS

Type curse, disease; **Save** Will DC 17 negates, Will DC 17 to avoid effects

Onset first period of sleep after exposure, **Frequency** 1/day (when sleeping)

Effect The target's sleep is plagued by nightmares. On a failed save, the target awakens fatigued, cannot prepare arcane spells or sleep again that day, and takes 1 point of Constitution damage and 1 point of Wisdom damage; **Cure** Fevered dreams can be cured only by successfully casting both *remove curse* and either *remove disease* or *dispel evil* within 1 minute of each other.



MUMMY'S MASK

FONT OF TRUTH

Type curse; **Save** Will DC 15 negates, Will DC 15 to avoid effects
Frequency 1/minute (when speaking only)

Effect The target is unable to intentionally lie. In addition, anytime the target is asked a question, she must succeed at a Will save or answer in exacting, truthful detail. The target receives an additional save once per minute to cease elaborating upon her answer.

PARCHED

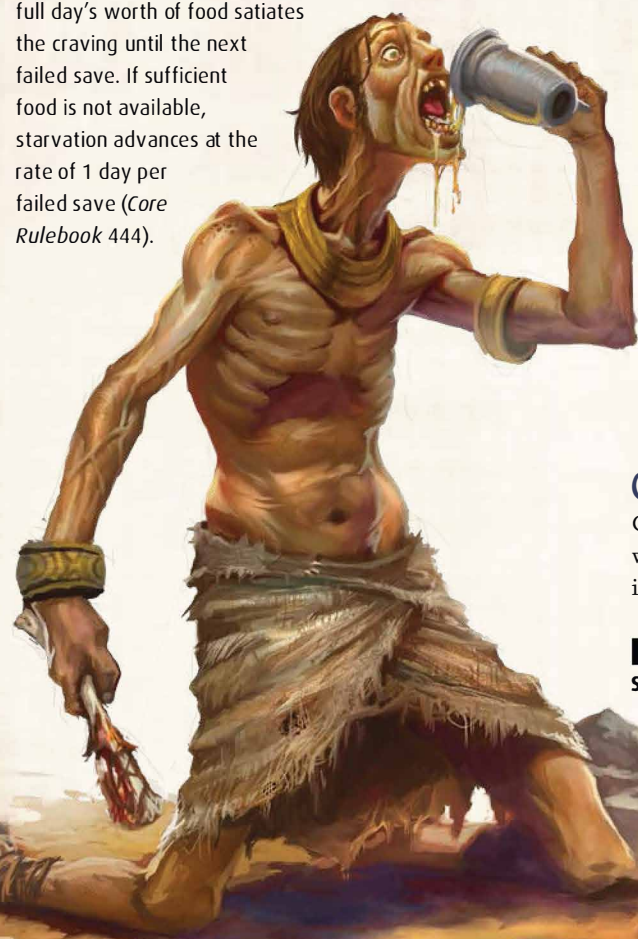
Type curse; **Save** Will DC 15 negates, Fort DC 15 to avoid effects
Onset 1 hour; **Frequency** 1/hour

Effect This variant of the ravenous curse causes extreme thirst. A gallon of water slakes his thirst until the next failed save. If the victim does not drink within 10 minutes of a failed save, dehydration sets in (*Core Rulebook* 444), and he must succeed at a Constitution check to avoid taking nonlethal damage.

RAVENOUS

Type curse; **Save** Will DC 15 negates, Fort DC 15 to avoid effects
Onset 1 hour; **Frequency** 1/hour

Effect The target suffers from ravenous hunger. Gorging on a full day's worth of food satiates the craving until the next failed save. If sufficient food is not available, starvation advances at the rate of 1 day per failed save (*Core Rulebook* 444).



SHATTERED SELF

Type curse; **Save** Will DC 20 negates
Frequency no more than 1/day (see text)

Effect The victim's mind splits into two coexisting personas, one normal, the other malicious and self-destructive. When in control, the self-destructive persona sabotages the victim's efforts and plots the demise of the victim's friends and loved ones. It takes care to conceal its actions and intent from others. The normal persona retains only the haziest recollection of actions taken by its alternate, and has no sense of missing time or having blacked out. Exactly when the alternate persona takes control is up to the GM, but it does so no more than once per day. Each time the alternate persona surfaces, the victim must succeed at a save or the alternate persona takes control for 1d6 minutes. Normally these takeovers happen when the victim is alone or with just one person, but moments of extreme stress may force the victim to attempt a save against this effect as well. The alternate persona has full access to the normal persona's memories, and receives a +10 bonus on Bluff checks to conceal its presence. Despite the malevolent nature of this affliction, the victim's alignment remains unchanged when under the curse's effects; **Cure** Shattered self can be cured only by successfully casting *remove curse* and either *heal* or *greater restoration* (or other means of restoring sanity) within 1 minute of each other.

VULNERABILITY

Type curse; **Save** Will DC 17 negates
Effect The target becomes vulnerable (*Core Rulebook* 562) to a single energy type, taking 50% more damage than normal from that energy type. If the target is immune or already vulnerable to the damage type, the curse has no effect. If the target has resistance to or protection from the energy type, apply the vulnerability before the resistance or protection.

CURSED SPELLS

Curses are strong magic, and spellcasters throughout the world have explored new ways to lessen their sting and to intensify their bite.

ABEYANCE

School abjuration; **Level** cleric 2, inquisitor 2, paladin 2

Casting Time 1 minute

Components V, S, M (a flask of holy water worth 25 gp), DF

Range touch

Target creature touched

Duration 24 hours

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless),

Spell Resistance yes (harmless)

Abeyance suppresses the effects of a single

CURSES OF THE ANCIENTS

curse on a creature. It does not restore any damage or drain that might have been caused by the curse. *Abeyance* cannot suppress curses that cannot be removed by *remove curse*, but it can suppress curses such as lycanthropy that require *remove curse* along with additional measures. An individual curse can be suppressed only once by *abeyance*, even if cast by a different caster.

Abeyance does not allow a creature to divest itself of cursed objects, though it can suppress a curse contracted from an object.

AGGRAVATE AFFLICTION

School necromancy; **Level** cleric 3, druid 3, sorcerer/wizard 4, witch 3

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target one creature

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw see text; **Spell Resistance** yes

All recurring afflictions (those with a frequency, including curses, diseases, and poison) possessed by the targeted creature immediately trigger, requiring an immediate saving throw (as described in the affliction) to avoid suffering their effects. A successful saving throw does not count toward ending the affliction, and this extra save does not change the timing of the next save against the affliction. Afflictions without a frequency are unaffected by this spell.

BESTOW CURSE, GREATER

School necromancy; **Level** cleric 7, sorcerer/wizard 8, witch 7

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range touch

Target creature touched

Duration permanent

Saving Throw Will negates; **Spell Resistance** yes

You place a curse on the subject. Choose one of the following.

- -12 penalty to an ability score, or -6 penalty to two ability scores (to a minimum ability score of 1).
- -8 penalty on attack rolls, saves, ability checks, and skill checks.
- Each turn, the target has a 25% chance to act normally; otherwise, it takes no actions.
- Bestow one of the curses or variants in this article.
- Bestow curse of the ages or unluck (*Core Rulebook* 557).

If a specific affliction is bestowed, the save DC of the spell replaces the usual save DC of the affliction. You can also invent your own curse, but it should be no more powerful than those described above.

The curse bestowed by this spell cannot be dispelled, but it can be removed with a *break enchantment*, *limited wish*, *miracle*, or *wish* spell. It cannot be removed with *remove curse* or suppressed with *abeyance*. The DC to remove the curse with *break enchantment* increases by 5.

CURSED ITEMS

Retrieving treasures from Osirian tombs carries risks beyond the traps and guardians found within. Ancient Osirians deliberately created items that were seemingly beneficial but concealed harmful effects, causing even treasure hunters who are knowledgeable about curses to risk death from innocuous-seeming loot.

Like most cursed items (*Core Rulebook* 536), the following resist attempts to identify their inimical nature. These particular items were crafted deliberately as punishment for thieves. In addition to the items listed below, *necklaces of strangulation*, *periapts of foul rotting*, *poisonous cloaks*, *robes of powerlessness*, *robes of vermin*, and *scarabs of death* might lurk in Osirian treasure troves. Methods of creation for the items below have been lost or are carefully guarded secrets.

CARNIVOROUS JAR		PRICE
—		—
SLOT none	CL 11th	WEIGHT 10 lbs.
AURA moderate necromancy		

A wooden stopper depicting an animal or human head seals this limestone jar. Any creature that opens the jar takes 3d6 points of Constitution damage as several of its internal organs vanish from its body and appear inside the jar. If the creature survives, the resulting trauma deals 2d6 points of bleed damage every round. This bleed damage lasts until the victim receives at least 5 points of magical healing or benefits from a DC 20 Heal check. A *carnivorous jar* functions only once, and can be found alone or in sets of four.

INTENDED MAGIC ITEM

preserving flask, *restorative ointment*, or any item held in a jar or similar container

CONSTRUCTOR ARMOR		PRICE
—		—
SLOT body	CL 12th	WEIGHT 30 lbs.
AURA strong transmutation		

Designed to resemble the wide scales on a serpent's belly, this armor functions as a +1 *breastplate of fire resistance*. The first time the wearer is struck in melee, the armor animates and begins crushing its wearer. On the round that the armor animates, it automatically grapples the wearer. In following rounds, at the beginning of the wearer's turn, the armor makes a grapple combat maneuver check (CMB +20) to constrict the wearer. If successful, the armor deals 2d6 points of damage each round. Once animated, the armor releases its grip only when it is destroyed or its wearer dies. The wearer can't physically remove the armor once it activates, but others can help destroy or remove it. This armor functions normally (without animating) when worn by unliving creatures such as constructs and undead.

INTENDED MAGIC ITEM

+1 *breastplate of fire resistance*

In the Belly of the Crocodile

PATHFINDER'S JOURNAL: SHADOW OF THE SANDS 4 OF 6

Deserts offer no mercy to the unprepared. Between the unrelenting heat, the scarcity of food and water, and the desperate denizens carving out their existence in the stretches of sand, the desert proves a singularly inhospitable place. Research helps. Experience is better.

And, of course, it never hurts to have allies.

I found the caravan near the marketplace. Parili let out a whoop of joy on seeing me, and I was buoyed to see the boy's good color. When I'd untangled myself from his ferocious hug, I explained my situation to the caravanners. My daggers were lost back at the papyrus factory, and I needed supplies as quickly as possible.

The caravanners pulled together, and before the hour was out I had provisions, two sharp daggers on loan, and a worn caftan. The garment's original owner explained that the dun linens would help me blend in with the sand and keep me cool during the day. I thanked the caravanners fervently, even trotting out some broken phrases of Osiriani. My accent was getting much better.

Before I left Tephu, I made one more stop. Back at the sage's shop, Bethos blinked in surprise to see me.

"More gold won't speed the process along," he said.

"I'm hoping gold will buy me something more substantial than time."

Bethos had alchemical gear for sale, and we haggled over a few choice items. The money I'd saved (and earned) by traveling with the caravan was gone now, but at least the translation was already paid for. Once I rescued Farhaan, I'd find some way back to Varisia.

Only a few hours of daylight remained by the time I made it back to the gates, but I pressed on. The kidnappers had left on camels, and I hoped that meant they would camp for the night. It's risky to push even a sure-footed mount onward in the darkness. If I traveled with as much speed as possible in the remaining daylight and pressed on through the night, I might catch up with them by morning.

Over the years, my long nights hunting had prepared me for sleeplessness. I waited patiently through the gritty eyes, the yawns that nearly unhinged my jaw, and the dizziness, on into the jittery, wide-awake stage that followed. I felt keen and alert. I moved as quickly as I could along the sand that too-quickly gave up its heat to the night. Soon I was hustling to keep warm as much as to catch up with my quarry. To my left, the Crook ran through the desert, its constant murmur keeping me company. The sand stretched to a gritty shelf that overhung the riverbed. Reedy vegetation and date trees filled the space between

shelf and river. A drop of only eight feet or so divided desert and bank.

The moon illuminated the rolling dunes, and the trail left by half a dozen camels following a river was easy enough to spot. I kept Toothy's travel satchel under my caftan, against my side. Though he had plenty of rags to burrow into, I worried about him getting too cold.

As the hours passed, I found my overtired strength ebbing. I hadn't fully recovered from my all-night vigil over Parili, and despite my determination, my steps dragged. Then I caught the unmistakable whiff of camel on the breeze. I was instantly awake, hurrying forward until I spotted the small camp on the horizon. I hunkered down to lower my profile and swung around the camp toward the river, hoping its noise would cover any sounds of my approach. Whatever I was going to do, now was the time.

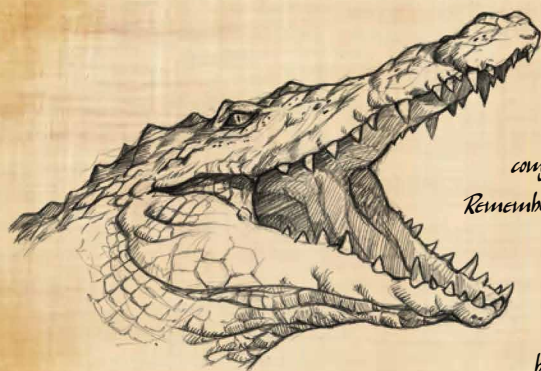
I wished I had a plan.

The kidnappers had found a ruin in which to camp. Old settlements and temples littered the desert, some with wind-scoured walls ground down to rocky lines, others mostly intact. This one seemed halfway between—a few walls stood and provided some shelter from the desert winds, while piles of rubble marked where the rest of the structure had been. A ruined outpost, too small to hold all the kidnappers, sat in crumbling silence to the east. I saw the shuffling shadows of camels tethered in a group to the south of the structure and a humanoid shape I suspected was a guard.

The moonlight that had allowed me to track the kidnappers now threatened to reveal my presence. I sidled up to the edge of the rock shelf that overhung the river. I could see a sandy slope downstream. The kidnapper's camp faced onto a steep beach leading down to the water. After some quiet scrambling, I made it over the shelf and landed in the river grass below.

My boots instantly sank into silt. Water seeped into the hem of my caftan and dragged it down. I crouched, getting my knees wet, and let the waving grass help conceal my form. I crab-walked farther into the river, where the riverbed became rockier and more stable. I was in rushing water up to my knees now, but I could move more quietly and the reeds were taller here. Still crouching, I swished my way through the river, making straight for the beach.

The river was cold, and shivers soon wracked my body. I saw the guard more clearly now: a definite humanoid shape with a scarf wrapped around the head. I waded closer, pushing aside floating branches from a fallen date tree. The tree's trunk rested horizontally on the river's surface,



CROCODILIANS

"Crocodilians" is the proper term for crocodiles and their kin. The long-bodied, sharp-toothed creatures can be found all across Osirion, and in many other regions as well. Unlike alligators, crocodiles can live comfortably in salt water as well as fresh water; so any relatively roomy body of water can be a home to them. Remember that the next time you consider taking a dip in the ocean or bend over a river to refill your waterskin.

Crocodiles do prefer warm climates, though, so you're unlikely to encounter them in far northern regions. Besides the common crocodile, there's the marine crocodile, which lives in tropical oceans; the Nile crocodile, which can swallow an adult ore whale; and, of course, the ferocious *deinosuchus*, an enormous beast that grows up to 50 feet long. I suppose that with such variety in the species, it's possible some

relative of the common crocodile has developed to survive in northern climes.

Osirian crocodiles tend to measure fifteen to twenty feet in length. Their hides are dark brown or olive green, and young crocodiles often display black bands on their skin that fade as they age. Baby crocodiles survive on a diet of insects, frogs, and tiny fish, and as they grow, they incorporate larger fish, water birds, snakes, and carrion. Adult crocodiles readily attack large prey such as antelopes and warthogs, and attack domesticated animals if near a settlement. And, of course, they sometimes attack the owners of domesticated animals, particularly if the owners wander too close to the river. Another good reason to bring along someone who can conjure water when venturing into the desert.

Caimans are tiny versions of crocodiles, and while their small size makes them less of a danger to humanoids, they are by no means domesticable. Like all crocodilians, caimans are cold-blooded and must be kept warm in cool climes and cool in hot weather. They eat mainly small fish and insects, but have trouble digesting hard-shelled bugs. Their propensity for biting fingers off the hand that feeds them also warrants care on the part of the handler.

half-submerged and directly in my path. The trunk was wider than most, but I thought I could make it over. I leaned my upper body against the rough bark and twisted until I could get my legs up and lie flat. I was straddling the tree, wondering why it seemed so buoyant, when a knot on the trunk opened to reveal a slitted eye.

I froze. My thoughts were a tangled panic threaded through with profanity in several languages. My chest pressed against the crocodile's back. The rough hide snagged on my wet caftan. For a moment, the world seemed frozen. Even the rushing of the river seemed to cease. Then the crocodile's eye flicked, forward and back, as if searching for the source of whatever had disturbed it.

In my research on Osirion I had, of course, read about crocodiles. Their jaws were powerful enough to bite through the hull of a river barge. Once they got hold of prey, they dragged it down to the river's bottom and feasted on still-living flesh while the victim drowned. I'd read gruesome true accounts of crocodile attacks. Even seen some woodcut illustrations.

This was almost worse than the zombies.

As I tried to quell my panic and figure out how the hell to get off my scaly perch, the croc shifted. It swung its muzzle from side to side, the same way Toothy did when he was hungry.

Toothy! I'd almost forgotten about my little mascot. I knew from the last few days that Toothy was almost immobile at night. The cold rendered him sleepy and slow. Perhaps this oversized creature operated the same way. If I moved slowly it might not see me as a threat. Toothy ate only every few days, after all—maybe this beast wasn't even hungry.

I shifted my weight cautiously to one side, preparing to slip quietly into the water and be on my way. The croc swung its head ponderously in my direction, eye searching for me. I gulped. Toothy liked scratches at the base of his skull so I tried that, digging my fingernails into the pebbled hide. The croc's eye slowly closed and it settled back into the water. Trying not to breathe too loudly, I slid all the way off its back. The croc remained where it was, floating silently on the river, almost indistinguishable from a floating log (though I had a feeling I'd be able to tell the difference from this point on).

With as much haste as I could manage, I waded through the reeds down the last few yards to the ruins. The steep beach led from river's edge to ruins like a sandy ramp, the shelf face rising up vertically on either side. A wide stone block, probably an observation point, overlooked the disjointed frame of an old shadoof—a pivoting pole with a bucket on one end used to lift water into the outpost. In the bright moonlight I could see lines carved into the rock

MUMMY'S MASK

face—tally lines. This was an old port where river craft once stopped to pay a tax when traveling between Tephu and Ipeq. I guessed the ruins were an old temple to Wadjet, an ancient river goddess still worshiped locally in Osirion.

I took a moment to commit the tally lines to memory and hoped I'd have time to come back and make a proper sketch to add to my report. My shivering intensified and I turned my attention to the more pressing matter. At the top of the beach, the camels shifted in their pen, their gamy scent wafting down to me. The guard focused more on the desert than the river, and I couldn't blame him; I wouldn't be expecting a single attacker to come bursting up out of the river in the middle of the night either.

Rising up like a waterlogged river spirit wouldn't advance my cause, though, so I watched until the guard's attention seemed firmly fixed on the desert. Then I flattened myself against the sand and crawled up the beach until I reached the camel enclosure.

Two swift slashes from my dagger undid the ropes on one side of the pen. The camels didn't react; habit kept them in place more than the pen did. I heard footsteps as the guard made his way toward the riverbank and I flattened myself on the ground. The footsteps paused and I held my breath. Then the steps moved away, around the edge of the camp.

I scuttled in the opposite direction. A pile of rubble afforded me some concealment. I saw huddled shapes around a dying fire by the walls of the ruins and knew Farhaan must be among them. Once I was well shielded by the rubble, I reached into my pack and took out one of the items I'd purchased in the sage's shop.

Different cultures have different terms for the small exploding rocks alchemists produce; I've always called them drumstones. I turned the plum-sized rock over in my hand, sized up the distance to the pen, and threw.

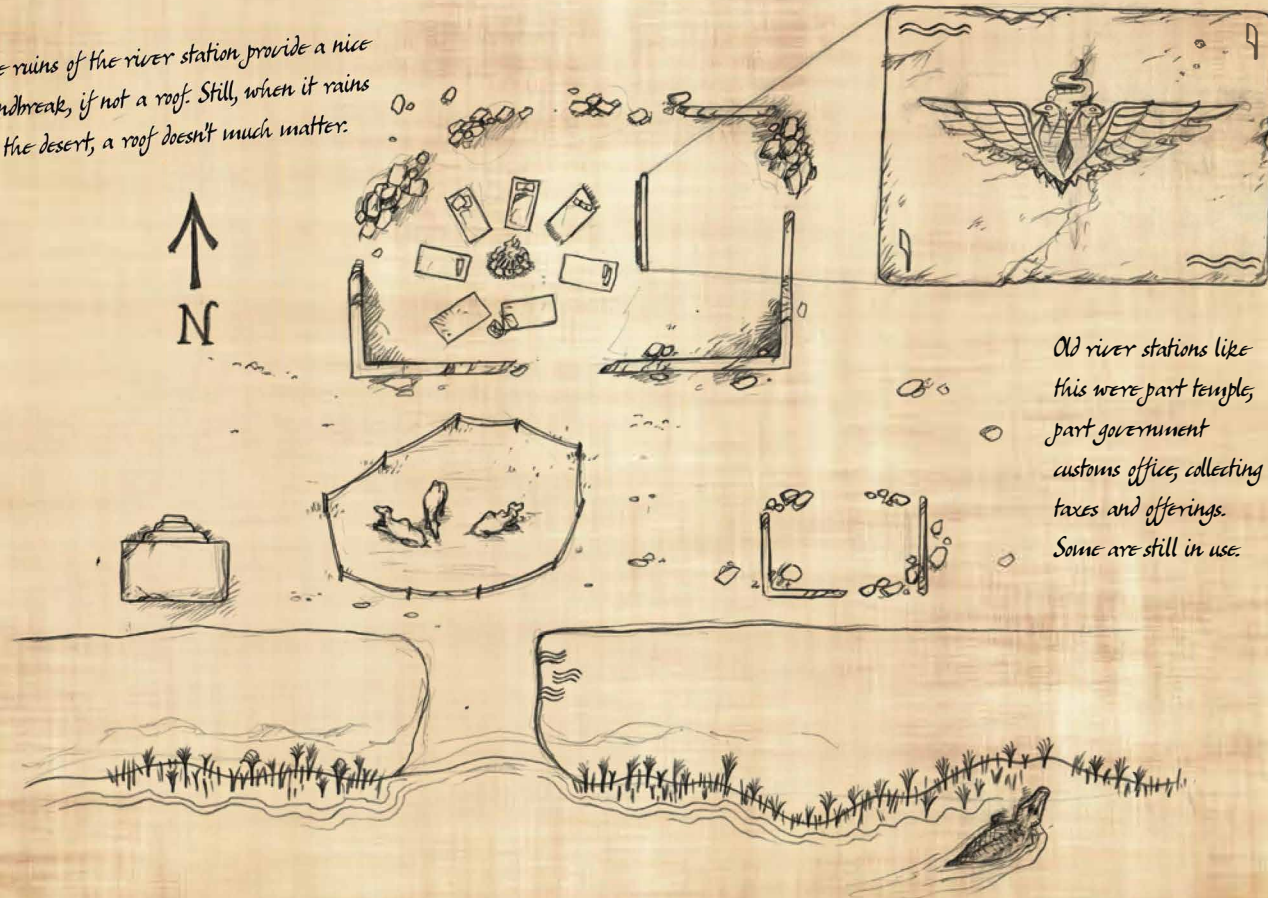
A thunderous boom echoed through the camp. The camels' sounds of panic were lost in the roar and the beasts charged over the sagging ropes of their pen.

Shouts erupted from the camp, and the sleeping figures reared up in their bedrolls like worms wriggling from the ground. Someone yelled, "Get the camels!" Most of the sleepers ran to collect the spooked mounts, and one sprinted over to the guard. One figure stayed on the ground, another standing over him.

Farhaan. It had to be.

I slunk through the shadows toward the prisoner, drawing a dagger as I moved. With luck I'd be able to fell the guard quickly and get Farhaan out of there before anyone noticed the camel stampede was a distraction.

The ruins of the river station provide a nice windbreak, if not a roof. Still, when it rains in the desert, a roof doesn't much matter.



Old river stations like this were part temple, part government customs office, collecting taxes and offerings. Some are still in use.

The kidnappers stayed alert, though, watching for trouble. Two stood at the top of the beach and kept glancing back at the prisoner and his guard. I cursed under my breath. I'd thought I could just walk into the camp, cut Farhaan's bonds, and wander out again while everyone ran after camels. This whole situation was a mess. What was I even doing here? I contemplated turning and sprinting into the desert, leaving Farhaan to his fate. Sure, he'd helped me in the bar, led me to the first translator, called my name in the street in Tephu. But I owed him no real loyalty.

I hesitated for a moment, just long enough for the screaming brays to reach us from the river.

The sounds were so horrible I almost stepped out of the shadows to find out what the hell was making that noise and whether I should start running. The two alert guards charged for the beach, their forms disappearing from my field of vision as they slid down the sandy slope. More agonized screams, a thunderous growl, and the splash of churning water came together.

One of the camels must have bolted down the beach and into the shallow river water. It seemed my friend the crocodile had been more disturbed by my passage than I knew, because judging by the sounds, it now faced off against the mount and one or more of the kidnappers.

The prisoner's guard looked down as if weighing options, then muttered something and sprinted for the beach.

I hustled into the camp, my distracted mind taking time to note the symbol of Wadjet painted on a square, wooden display, almost six feet tall, propped against a wall. The symbol, faded from the years, showed a double-headed cobra with wings stretching out to either side. In its day the display would have shone in Wadjet's colors of gold and blue.

I reached the prisoner's side and dropped to one knee, sawing at the ropes winding around the bedroll.

A face blinked in the moonlight. Dark eyes I recognized, a chin stubbled by days on the road. "Nenet?"

"You seem surprised." My voice rasped from stress and the chill. "Did you give up on me so soon?"

"Not at all." Farhaan struggled out of the bedroll as the ropes fell away. "I thought you'd be here hours ago."

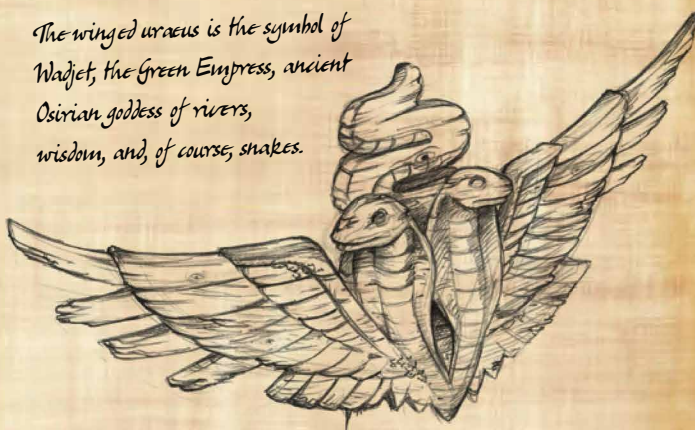
"I stopped for a drink first."

I took Farhaan's hand and hauled him to his feet. Farhaan wobbled a bit but stayed up. "Now what?"

"Now we... uh..." My plan had involved us running while the kidnappers tried to recapture their camels, before they had time to make a real pursuit. Now that plan seemed frail and flimsy. These kidnappers appeared more determined and skilled than I'd hoped. I swiveled around, searching for the most promising direction in the moonlit desert. "Now we—" "Run?"

Farhaan and I jumped and spun around in tandem, no doubt amusing Kema, who stood only a few feet from us. The hairs on the back of my neck rose just seeing the

The winged uraeus is the symbol of Wadjet, the Green Empress, ancient Osirian goddess of rivers, wisdom, and, of course, snakes.



woman. Kema had traded in her long knife for a curved scimitar, and its blade caught the light as she pointed it first at me, then at Farhaan.

"Well, well," she said when she got a look at my face. "Look what crawled out of the mud."

I brandished my dagger. "You might be able to kill one of us, but not both. Let us go and we won't have to take you down."

Kema laughed. She looked much as she had back in the Tooth & Hookah, though she now wore battered leather armor over her linen tunic and trousers. "My allies are driving off your beast as we speak. They'll return to me in a few moments, whether I call them or not. Surrender now and save yourselves the trouble of a fight."

"Not a chance," Farhaan said, almost before Kema finished her sentence.

"Hey!" I sputtered. "You don't speak for both of us."

Twin surprised stares from Farhaan and Kema.

"Kidding," I said. "You should have seen the look on your faces."

Kema snarled and took a step toward me, raising her scimitar. Farhaan took the opportunity to jump in and deliver a solid punch into Kema's armpit. Kema bit back a howl of pain and retreated, glowering. I pressed forward with dagger outstretched. "We're not interested in killing you."

"You don't speak for both of us," Farhaan muttered.

"Let's say goodbye here and hope our paths never cross again," I offered.

Sparks all but flew from Kema's eyes. "I'm not surprised he would team up with a grave-robber. Look at you two. Desecrators of tombs, killers of innocents. Kill me and my allies will incapacitate you and bring you both to our temple for justice. Kill them and your punishment still awaits, inevitable, in the Boneyard."

I let her ramble while I wracked my brain for a plan. I couldn't argue with the logic of Kema's statement, barring the religious diatribe at the end. We were at a serious disadvantage. I scanned the camp, searching for any sort of

aid among the crumbling columns and scattered bedrolls. My dagger followed Kema's every move like a dowsing rod. I slipped my free hand into a pocket of my caftan.

"We're neither tomb-robbers nor murderers," Farhaan was saying. "You've been misled."

"Oh?" Kema kept her scimitar up, her sharp eyes watching for an opportunity. From the river came a shout of alarm, a figure pointing at us from the top of the beach. "How many of your troupe returned from the mausoleum? 'Hero of the Half-City' indeed. More like 'Destroyer of—'"

"We don't have time for this." I freed my hand from my pocket and flung a cloud of glittering, sparkling motes into Kema's face.

At least that's what was supposed to happen. My swim in the river had left the alchemical powder damp and clumpy. Much of the glitter and sparkle was gone, leaving mostly dun-colored blobs that splattered onto Kema's face.

Still, enough of the effect remained. A few dancing motes flew into Kema's eyes. She shrieked and rubbed at her face. Bethos had told me the blinding effect would last only a few minutes, so I grabbed Farhaan by the elbow and took off toward the camp.

He dragged on my arm. "Where are we going? There are a lot of very angry, very armed people that way."

"Trust me, I have a plan!"

Kema slashed blindly at us as we darted past. The tip of her blade scored my arm and I winced.

"This isn't over!" Kema howled.

The kidnappers gathered on the beach. Two sat on the ground, badly injured by the looks of it, while one secured the recovered camels. Two others faced toward us, blades drawn, and I couldn't see the rest. Either they were chasing camels in the desert or in the belly of the crocodile.

The two armed guards dashed for us. I pointed my dagger at the wooden carving of Wadjet's symbol on the wall. "Grab that."

"What?"

"The wooden thing. Grab it!"

I charged our attackers, hoping I could hold them off for the minute or so it took Farhaan to do as I had ordered. I tossed a dagger at one kidnapper and sliced his neck, eliciting a grunt of pain and a spray of blood. I drew a second blade and dove between the two as they neared me. They flailed at me as I tumbled past. I grabbed a handful of sand and threw it at one man's face as I righted. It wasn't blinding powder, but he flinched and gave me room to get my blade up and secure my footing. I fainted at the other kidnapper, drawing him away from Farhaan, while he tried to take my head off.

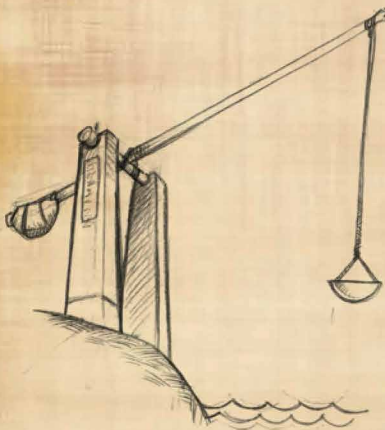
Now they were on me in earnest, working together to force me back into a corner where two old walls met. I gave ground before their weaving blades. Remembering Kema's words, I took heart in the idea that they weren't fighting to kill me, only to kidnap me and bring me to some mysterious cult-temple for yet more mysterious "justice." That sounded much better.

Farhaan crossed behind my attackers, dragging the wooden carving along. The cumbersome board made it hard for him to hustle. He met my eyes as I fainted and parried, trying not to give ground. I tossed my head toward the river, hoping the movement looked natural. Farhaan nodded and changed direction.

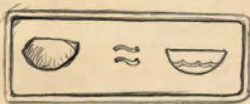
One of the kidnappers caught the movement and leveled a heavy sweep of his scimitar at my head. I gave ground, and he angled himself between me and my route to Farhaan. The kidnappers exchanged short, growly sentences I couldn't make out. I tried a rush between them, but they drove me back with quick jabs of their blades. Gritting my teeth, I fell back further. They pushed. Pinning me into the corner.

I heard Farhaan call my name. "Jump!" I shouted. "I'll follow!"

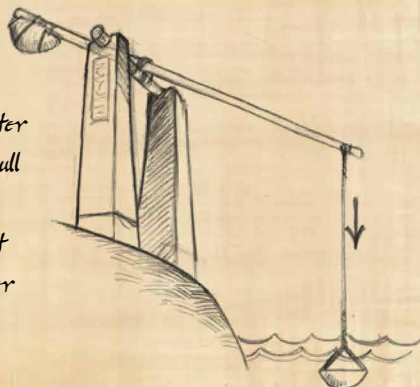
If I didn't get out of here in the next few seconds, I'd be left behind at the mercy of this gang. I let my gaze drift to the left and make a motion with my free hand, as if signalling an ally. One kidnapper turned his head to look.



A shadoof or shaduf is a common Garundi irrigation tool that helps people haul water from the river.



A counterweight that can support a half-full bucket is attached to a lever.



The person hauling the water uses her weight to easily pull the bucket down, filling it, then lets the counterweight help her lift it, to fill water jars or irrigation ditches.

I took my chance, slamming into his chest and driving my dagger into his side. The man let out a scream and tried to swing at me, but I was too close. I let go of the dagger's hilt and grabbed two fistfuls of robe. As the other came for me I swung my new shield around and heaved. The momentary tangle as the kidnappers danced drunkenly was enough to let me sprint after Farhaan.

I careened around the old wall and saw the wide stretch of riverbank, and Farhaan already plummeting off the cliff. He disappeared from sight but I heard the splash as he hit the water.

I hesitated for a split second. Footsteps pounded in the sand behind me.

Then I was running for the observation post, the stone shelf I'd seen from the river. Worn steps cut into the side and I took them two at a time. The last kidnapper was on my heels. I reached the summit and leaped out over the river.

A brief moment of dizziness and elation as I soared through the air—

I hit the end of the shadoof and scrambled for purchase. The weighted beam swung wildly—it was made to hold a bucket of water, not a flying Pathfinder. But I managed to keep my grip on the crumbling wood as the beam hauled me out over the river. In a second it would bring me back around and slam me into the river bank.

I let go as I swung out over the river, and my momentum carried me along a few more feet before I plunged into the water. I came up sputtering, dragging Toothy's travel-satchel to the surface with me to make sure he didn't

drown. Farhaan called my name. Already the current was carrying the board away, Farhaan clinging to its edge.

I kicked out hard, and despite the caftan dragging around my knees and the awkwardness of the travel-satchel, I managed to swim to the makeshift raft. Farhaan reached out a slick hand. I twisted my fingers in his sleeve and he hauled me close enough to scramble up. I lay halfway on the raft, my legs dangling in the water.

I coughed wetly. "You owe me five new daggers."

"A small price to pay for such a dramatic rescue by such an... innovative rescuer."

"One was enchanted, too. What do you mean, innovative? I had everything under control." I practically had to shout to be heard over the rushing river.

Farhaan tapped a hand on the board. "I wouldn't have thought to use this as a raft."

"What can I say? I live by my wits." I adjusted my position, settling more firmly on the raft. "Kema wasn't in your inn coincidentally, was she? You knew who she was when you jumped into our fight."

"You don't think I put my life on the line for anyone who wanders into my bar, do you?" he hollered.

"No, just me."

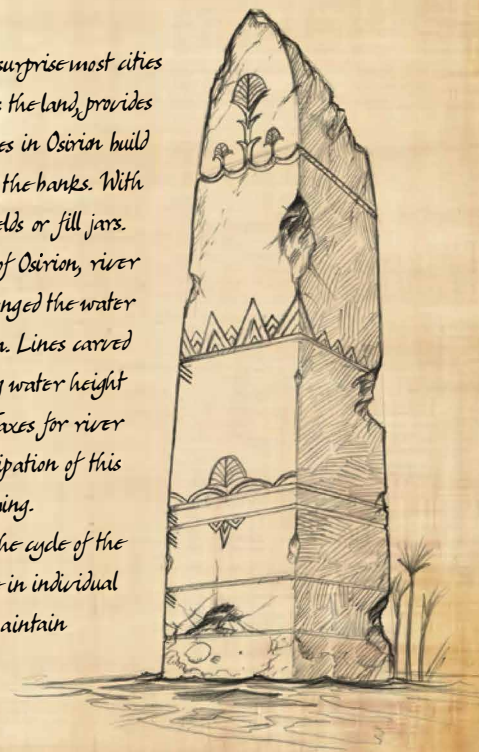
He grinned. I was dying to ask him about Kema and her interest in him, but I had to concentrate on staying afloat, and I could barely hear him at that moment. When we made landfall, I'd make him tell me everything. Until then, I had to be content with a companionable silence as we floated down the winding Crook.

RIVER TAXES

Rivers are the arteries of a country, carrying life-giving water to farms, villages, and cities. It's no surprise most cities are built next to a river—or even better, on a delta where a river splits in two. The water irrigates the land, provides the people with something to drink, and brings boats and fish to the area. Many riverside communities in Osirion build shadoofs—long poles balanced with a bucket on one end and a counterweight on the other—along the banks. With minimal effort, farmers can swing the bucket into the river and then swing it back to irrigate fields or fill jars.

Like anything vital to survival, rivers are often taxed by governments. Historically, in parts of Osirion, river level charts were carved on sheer banks or on stone pillars placed along a river. Seasonal floods changed the water level over the course of a year, and predicting these changes was vital to the prosperity of the nation. Lines carved in the pillars allowed river watchers (usually priests of Gozreh or Wadjet) to measure the changing water height and check the quality of deposited silt in order to predict how fruitful the growing season would be. Taxes for river travel would then be adjusted accordingly. In fertile seasons, the river tax would be high in anticipation of this abundance. In dry seasons, tax rates fell and travelers would be warned that lean times were coming.

In the wake of Anubis's death, a number of storms ravaged the Osirian coastline and disrupted the cycle of the rivers. The river level charts were temporarily abandoned, and new tax systems were put in place in individual cities to replace the income. Though the rivers have returned to normal, most cities continue to maintain their own tax systems. A few river level charts are still in use, but most are no more than curiosities along the riverbanks.





BESTIARY

The full moon bathed the desert in a cool shade of pale blue, but the day's heat still radiated from the rocky ground. We began making camp amid the fallen stones of what one of clients claimed was once a temple dedicated to the Ancient Osiriani god Apep. One of my fellow guards dislodged a stone while inspecting the ruins for safety, and unearthed a well-used passageway. A trio of skeletons clad in ancient armor clattered out from the formerly hidden passage, followed seconds later by a great winged beast with a jackal's head. The creature spit curses at us as it tore into the other caravan guards. Though I peppered the beast with arrows and lived to tell this tale, some of my fellows weren't so lucky.

—Shema Patesi, mercenary

This volume of the Mummy's Mask Adventure Path features a bestiary of feline-headed tomb guardians, dangerous animated plants, strange desert worms with a connection to the seasonal floods, and a new jackal-headed sphinx.

HAZARDS, HORRORS, AND HELPERS

The random encounter table presented here features a number of typical threats the PCs could encounter in Osirion's Parched Dunes. During the course of the adventure, the PCs explore a wide swath of desert. There they encounter specific creatures as they traverse the hex map, but in some cases random encounters are needed. Throughout the adventure, when required to determine the results of a random encounter, use the Parched Dunes Encounters table for a suitable result. In addition, the bestiary in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #81: Shifting Sands* contains an additional random encounter table for the Parched Dunes, but the encounter results on that table are of lower-level threats.

Since this adventure spans a range of levels, some of the results might be too simple or too difficult for the PCs, depending on where they are in the course of the adventure. If the result rolled is outside the challenge rating range appropriate for the PCs, roll again or simply choose a more fitting encounter. Depending on where the PCs are when the random encounter begins, some of the monsters on the table might be too large to fit in the encounter area. In this case, reroll the result to find a more appropriate encounter.

GMs who wish to learn more about Osirion or those looking for other encounter ideas or desert hazards should check out *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Osirion, Legacy of Pharaohs*.

Mummified Riddler (CR 9): Majestic creatures, sphinxes rarely pursue undeath voluntarily, but some are killed by foul necromancers and transformed into undead abominations. This is the case for Menenba, a now-mummified gynosphinx (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 196). Lairing in a cave in the Parched Dunes, she no longer politely invites exchanges of knowledge, and instead prowls the desert, destroying whatever living creatures she comes across. Though she's now a cruel and dangerous undead beast, she can still provide aid to parties that spare destroying her. If the PCs manage to keep Menenba from attacking and instead engage her in conversation (a frustrating task), she shares information about the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh and gives a general idea of where it might now be located.

Trapped Explorer (CR 10): Lurking among the ruins of an old temple is a tophet (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 271) crafted to look like a rotund pharaoh. The PCs aren't the only adventurers to stumble across this dangerous construct. An Ouat monk named Tumakrah (use the statistics for a steadfast defender on page 100 of *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex*

PARCHED DUNES ENCOUNTERS




d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
01-03	1d4 dragonnes	9	<i>Bestiary 3</i> 104
04-07	1d8 hieracosphinxes	9	<i>Bestiary 3</i> 253
08-11	Mummified riddler	9	See below
12-14	1d4 behirs	10	<i>Bestiary 34</i>
15-17	1d4 bone golems	10	<i>Bestiary 3</i> 133
18-22	1d4 destrachans	10	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 83
23-26	1d8 giant adult ant lions	10	<i>Bestiary 3</i> 17
27-31	1d8 maftets	10	<i>Bestiary 3</i> 188
32-35	1 rukh	10	<i>Bestiary 4</i> 228
36-38	Trapped explorer	10	See below
39-43	1d8 wardens of the Forgotten Pharaoh	10	See page 15
44-46	1d8 hellcats	11	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 153
47-50	1 seps	11	<i>Bestiary 4</i> 237
51-55	1d8 desert drakes	12	<i>Bestiary 3</i> 105
56-60	1d6 desert giants	12	<i>Bestiary 3</i> 128
61-64	1d8 festering spirits	12	<i>Bestiary 4</i> 98
65-69	1d8 girtablilus	12	<i>Bestiary 3</i> 130
70-73	1d6 yrthaks	12	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 290
74-77	1d4 carnivorous crystals	13	<i>Bestiary 3</i> 45
78-81	1d4 elder air elementals	13	<i>Bestiary 120</i>
82-85	1d8 greater earth elementals	13	<i>Bestiary 122</i>
86-89	1d12 leukodaemons	14	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 68
90-95	Sinister warrior	14	See below
96-98	1d8 shira divs	14	<i>Bestiary 3</i> 90
99-100	1 black scorpion	15	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 240

100) came through the area as he was mapping the Parched Dunes and was swallowed by the tophet. If the PCs defeat the construct and free Tumakrah, he offers them his *sandals of the lightest step* (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment* 232) in appreciation for freeing him and saving his life. If questioned on the whereabouts of the Sightless Sphinx, Tumakrah apologizes that he is unfamiliar with the monument, but can possibly warn the PCs of other nearby threats.

Sinister Warrior (CR 14): Called to Golarion by a powerful sorcerer, this sepid div (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 89) chose to stay behind after completing its service. In the weeks that have followed, this div, named Raayani, has stalked the region looking for Usij cultists supposedly secreted throughout the Barrier Wall Mountains. He hopes to find these cultists and have them wait on him hand and foot, savoring the praise he is egotistically assured he will receive from these mortals. He has even created an entourage of a dozen normal human skeletons (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 250*) that he animated from a lost tomb to serve him as standard bearers. When encountering the PCs, Raayani demands they submit to him as slaves, and gives them a few seconds to agree to his conditions before he attacks with his rain of debris ability.

CYNOSPHERX

A jackal's head draped in a tattered headdress extends from a winged, leonine body.

CYNOSPHERX	CR 6	  
XP 2,400		
NE Large magical beast		
Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +8		
DEFENSE		
AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 19 (+1 Dex, +10 natural, -1 size)		
hp 76 (9d10+27)		
Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +5		
Immune disease		
OFFENSE		
Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (poor)		
Melee bite +13 (1d8+7 plus disease and trip), 2 claws +13 (1d6+5)		
Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.		
Special Attacks devour secret lore, disease, pounce, powerful bite, trip		
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +11)		
At will— <i>speak with dead</i> (DC 15)		
3/day— <i>detect thoughts</i> (DC 14)		
1/day— <i>animate dead</i> , <i>seek thoughts</i> ^{APG} (DC 15)		
STATISTICS		
Str 20, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 14		
Base Atk +9; CMB +15 (+17 trip); CMD 26 (32 vs. trip)		
Feats Cleave, Combat Expertise, Flyby Attack, Improved Trip, Power Attack		
Skills Fly +4, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (any one) +11, Perception +8, Sense Motive +8, Survival +8		
Languages Common, Draconic, Sphinx		
ECOLOGY		
Environment warm deserts and hills		
Organization solitary		
Treasure standard		
SPECIAL ABILITIES		
Devour Secret Lore (Su) When a cynosphinx reduces a living creature below zero hit points, it steals some of its essence. Treat the cynosphinx as if it were the target of an <i>aid</i> spell with a caster level equal to the dying target's Hit Dice. A cynosphinx can only affect a single creature with this effect once in a 24 hour period.		
Disease (Ex) <i>Carriion fever</i> : Bite—injury; <i>save</i> Fort DC 17; <i>onset</i> 1 day; <i>frequency</i> 1 day; <i>effect</i> 2 Con damage; <i>cure</i> 2 consecutive saves.		
Powerful Bite (Ex) A cynosphinx adds 1-1/2 times its Strength bonus to its bite attack.		

Cynosphinxes are hoarders of secret knowledge and guardians of abandoned ruins. Those who intrude upon the realm of a cynosphinx and fail to offer a tribute of secret knowledge provoke the beast to savage anger.

Whereas androsphinxes barter information for the sake of achieving enlightenment, cynosphinxes strive to learn secrets to gain power over others. Often, a cynosphinx enters a parley hoping to secretly learn clandestine information with its ability to read its target's thoughts, steering the conversation toward such topics with leading questions. Quick to anger, the cynosphinx kills those it feels are inferior, knowing that it still has the opportunity to converse with the trespasser after its death. If the knowledge it seeks is relayed during clever, amusing conversation, the sphinx rewards the provider with invaluable clues to a desired object or location, or simply safe passage through its territory, though the cynosphinx rarely shares any of its own secrets willingly. A cynosphinx stands 12 feet tall at its powerful shoulders. Built of muscular flesh and sinew, a cynosphinx weighs roughly 1,200 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Rare even among sphinxes, a cynosphinx is a terror of the desert. Were it not for its fixation on secrets, it would be a scourge to all who dwell among the sands. Its canine head grants it a sense of smell superior to that of other sphinxes, giving it the ability to stalk prey in conditions of poor visibility. Though it possesses massive wings, a cynosphinx is an ungainly flier. In addition to hit-and-run attacks from above, one of its favored tactics is to hover over an enemy and whip up a cloud of dust and debris to blind its prey.

Like all sphinxes, a cynosphinx is long-lived, but it has a particularly selfish desire to cling to its lengthy existence, making it a careful combatant who will flee rather than perish. This obsession usually leads a cynosphinx to search out the secrets of longevity and immortality, not just for its own use, but also because it knows the value mortals place on such secrets.

A cynosphinx requires little sustenance and even prefers to feed on carrion, finding rotting flesh more palatable. Because of this, an area with a few hundred gravesites can sustain a cynosphinx for several millennia. Even when a cynosphinx makes a fresh kill, the creature lets it rot for several days before devouring the carcass. Its diet mainly consists of the decaying corpses found abandoned within its lair, with bone marrow being a particular treat. Due to its affinity with the dead, and its obsessive need to learn secrets, a cynosphinx always interacts with its exhumed morsels, speaking with the dead and learning what it can before fully consuming the body. Like a scholar devouring knowledge from a book, a cynosphinx pores over both the physical and intellectual particulars of its strange corpse diet.

When a cynosphinx it sees fit to mate—usually once its will to live ends—it needs a gynosphinx, just like other sphinxes do. However, due to the cynosphinx's disdain

for mating, not to mention gynosphinxes' utter disgust toward cynosphinxes, this type of union is rare. In nearly every case, the resulting offspring from such a pairing is a cynosphinx. Gynosphinxes want nothing to do with such offspring, and offer no protest when the cynosphinx takes the progeny away. Before it dies, the new father brings the child to its lair, leaving its progeny a carcass to learn from and feed upon.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Cynosphinxes dwell among the abandoned burial sites of civilized folk. Due to their obsession with lost secrets and their steady diet of carrion, a cynosphinx's ideal lair is a graveyard, tomb, or necropolis. When a cynosphinx takes up residence at such a site, the otherwise contemplative creature defends its territory with tenacity. However, if a visitor approaches a cynosphinx's territory with the promise of divulging secret lore, the sphinx may grant an audience. In such an instance, if the promise of lore fails to satisfy the cynosphinx, the intruder finds herself quickly under attack. Fortunately, many tombs and necropolises have tight nooks and narrow crannies far too small for a cynosphinx to maneuver in. If a clever traveler offers to explore these regions for the obsessive cynosphinx, she may find this arrangement to be just the bartering chip she needs to leave the sphinx's territory alive.

Solitary by nature, a cynosphinx truly feels comfortable only among the dead, and leaves its lair only for brief, localized patrols or when a longer journey promises to unearth lost knowledge. Cynosphinxes are always male and treat other sphinxes as inferior, save for androsphinxes. Cynosphinxes ignore criosphinxes, subjugate hieracosphinxes, and only associate with gynosphinxes for the purpose of mating—an act cynosphinxes find revolting. If a cynosphinx finds its only recourse to extend its legacy is through mating, this is usually done through blackmailing a gynosphinx or resorting to other forms of coercion or subterfuge. In fact, a cynosphinx would rather discover a means of extending its own lifespan than sire an offspring—as they view even their own progeny as threats to their well-guarded store of knowledge. Toward the androsphinx, the cynosphinx harbors a seething jealousy. Envious of the androsphinx's superior intellect, wisdom, and guile, a cynosphinx will plot to murder any androsphinx it discovers. Cynosphinxes believe they can extract a wealth of knowledge and learn powerful secrets from the carcass of a slaughtered androsphinx using their *Speak with Dead* ability. If a cynosphinx's food supply is abundant, the one category of creatures with whom it will ally is the

undead. It is common for a cynosphinx to take a place at the head of an undead menace or even to serve a greater power such as a graveknight or a lich.

CYNOSPINDEXES AS MOUNTS

Although they have the physical ability to carry a rider, cynosphinxes cannot be trained as mounts. They are intelligent beings who choose for themselves whether to accept a rider. A worthy rider is usually a powerful undead creature of evil alignment with whom the cynosphinx has an obsession, or who has promised eldritch secrets in return for service. Often, a creature petitioning a cynosphinx for this arrangement must provide such knowledge regularly for the cynosphinx to continue to grant its consent as a steed. A cynosphinx is considered a special cohort, not a normal mount.



ESTUARINE WORM

As thick and tall as a towering palm tree, this mud-colored worm hisses through a fanged mouth. Atop its head, a small protuberance shines like a star.

ESTUARINE WORM (AHKET FORM) CR 10



XP 9,600

N Huge magical beast (aquatic)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 30 ft.; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 19 (+3 Dex, +11 natural, -2 size)

hp 126 (11d10+66)

Fort +13, **Ref** +10, **Will** +6; +4 vs. enchantment

Defensive Abilities willful; **DR** 5/piercing or slashing;

Resist acid 10, fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee bite +20 (2d8+11/19-20 plus grab), tail slap +15 (2d8+5)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (2d8+11), guiding star (DC 14)

STATISTICS

Str 32, **Dex** 16, **Con** 23, **Int** 1, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +24; **CMD** 37 (can't be tripped)

Feats Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception), Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Perception +11, Stealth +8 (+16 in water), Swim +19;

Racial Modifiers +8 Stealth in water

SQ amphibious, seasonal transformation

ECOLOGY

Environment warm marshes and rivers

Organization solitary, pair, or nest (3-6)

Treasure incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Guiding Star (Su) When the estuarine worm is in ahket form, its bioluminescence attracts weak-minded creatures. Any creature within 120 feet that attempts to move during its turn must succeed at a DC 14 Will save or be forced to move toward the estuarine worm instead of in its intended direction. This ability is otherwise treated a gaze attack. This ability is a mind-affecting illusion (pattern) effect, though vermin are not immune to this effect. The estuarine worm can activate and deactivate this ability as a free action. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Seasonal Transformation (Ex) An estuarine worm has two forms: ahket (wet season) and shemu (dry season). In its shemu form, the estuarine worm is one size category smaller than when it's in its ahket form. Further, its Strength and Dexterity decrease by 8 and it loses its damage reduction. It also loses its guiding star ability and its willful special quality. Its natural armor bonus increases by 8 and it gains DR 15/bludgeoning. In addition, all of the creature's movement speeds are decreased by 10 feet.

An estuarine worm assumes its shemu form if it goes 24 hours without exposure to water. An estuarine worm that is targeted by a *control water* (lower water), *greater polymorph*, *flesh to stone*, or *transmute mud to rock* spell immediately shifts to its shemu form (instead of experiencing the spell's normal effect).

An estuarine worm takes on ahket form if it is submerged in water for 24 hours. An estuarine worm that is targeted by a *control water* (raise water), *greater polymorph*, *stone to flesh*, or *transmute rock to mud* spell immediately shifts to its ahket form (instead of experiencing the spell's normal effect).

Willful (Ex) In ahket form, an estuarine worm gains a +4 competence bonus to Will saves against enchantment spells and effects.

ESTUARINE WORM (SHEMU FORM)

CR 10

XP 9,600

N Large magical beast (aquatic)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 30 ft.; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 8, flat-footed 27 (-1 Dex, +19 natural, -1 size)

hp 126 (11d10+66)

Fort +13, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6

DR 15/bludgeoning; **Resist** acid 10, fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft., swim 10 ft.

Melee bite +17 (2d6+7/19-20 plus grab), tail slap +12 (2d6+3)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (2d6+7)

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 8, **Con** 23, **Int** 1, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +19; **CMD** 28 (can't be tripped)

Feats Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception), Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Perception +11, Stealth +8 (+16 in water), Swim +15;

Racial Modifiers +8 Stealth in water

SQ amphibious, seasonal transformation

When Alboras, one of the brightest navigable stars, returns to the night sky, it is a sure sign the River Sphinx will soon flood its banks and replenish the land after the harvest. The inundation also revives the rare but deadly estuarine worms. During the wet season, which is called *ahket* in Osiriani, the giant worms hunt the flooded plains. When the waters recede and Alboras disappears below the horizon again, the estuarine worms retreat as well. During shemu, the dry season, they enter a semi-torpid state and lie buried beneath the dry soil for protection.

A typical estuarine worm measures 25 feet long and 3 feet wide during the wet season. The worms have a bioluminescent organ atop their heads. At night, the tiny,

flickering light might be mistaken for a star low on the horizon. When the dry season comes, the estuarine worm contracts to become half as long and half as wide. Its skin, once soft and spongy like wet mud, becomes as hard as stone.

ECOLOGY

Estuarine worms are most active when the River Sphinx is at its highest levels and crests its banks. Though the farmers leave when their lands flood, those who live on the edges of the flood plain, as well as those who sail the river, are still at risk of attack by these predators. Estuarine worms bury themselves in the mud during the day and emerge to hunt at night when it is cooler. The carnivorous worms eat whatever they can find, from fish and frogs, to livestock and people. They have even been known to gorge on crocodiles and hippopotamuses, after which they bury themselves for a time in order to digest their hefty meals. The lights on their heads attract small animals above and below the water, which in turn can attract larger prey. Stories are told of travelers who mistake the light for Alboras and navigate their small riverboats right into the maw of a worm.

As the floods recede, the estuarine worms become less active. When the land above them is no longer underwater, the worms remain buried in the moist soil. For the rest of the year, they live off fat and water stored during the wet season. The worms' flesh contracts, becoming denser in the process. It is commonly believed that the worms, like the soil, harden from dehydration, but it is, in fact, a natural defense mechanism. Though they might seem to be asleep, estuarine worms remain a danger in the dry season. When the worm's resting spot is too shallow or a plow digs too deep, farmers risk disturbing a worm in its hibernation. Though the worms may not be as agile or as hungry during this time, they are still dangerous predators.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Estuarine worms are typically solitary hunters. They reproduce parthenogenetically, and thus have little need for contact with others of their kind. Estuarine worms reproduce rarely, but birth large numbers of offspring when they do. Most of the spawn, however, are eaten by other predators long before they reach full size. When multiple worms are found together (usually because of lower-than-normal floodwater), only the alpha worm uses its bioluminescence. This sign of dominance also keeps potential prey from being drawn to multiple light sources.


Several cults in Osirion keep estuarine worms as sacred beasts in their secret temples. Worshipers of both Lamashtu and Rovagug believe it was their

respective god who birthed these worms. Members of the Old Cults revere estuarine worms for their connection to the star Alboras and the Great Old One who supposedly dwells there. The cultists seek out the worms during the season of shemu, when the worms are less violent and more tractable. A combination of brute force and magic are necessary to find, exhume, and contain these elusive creatures. In captivity, estuarine worms can be made to change form regardless of the season through the application or exclusion of water. The high priests of these cults also know certain spells that can trigger an immediate change. The cultists connect to their god through the worms, offering sacrifices to them and reading omens in their violent squirming. The worms serve as guards against intruders, and can also be used as weapons against the cult's enemies.



GOLEM, PANTHEREON

This finely sculpted statue is formed of hardened clay. Its muscular body is topped with the head of a feline predator.

PANTHEREON	CR 11	  
XP 12,800		
N Large construct		
Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, <i>true seeing</i> ; Perception +2		
DEFENSE		
AC 24, touch 8, flat-footed 24 (–1 Dex, +16 natural, –1 size)		
hp 118 (16d10+30)		
Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +7		
DR 10/adamantine and bludgeoning; Immune construct traits, magic		
OFFENSE		
Speed 30 ft.		
Melee bite +22 (4d6+7 plus cursed wound), 2 slams +22 (1d10+7)		
Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft. (5 ft. with bite)		
Special Attacks cursed wound, eye beam, haste		
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +6) Constant— <i>true seeing</i>		
STATISTICS		
Str 24, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 15, Cha 1		
Base Atk +16; CMB +24; CMD 33		
Feats Improved Initiative ⁸		
ECOLOGY		
Environment any		
Organization solitary or pride (2–4)		
Treasure none		
SPECIAL ABILITIES		
Cursed Wound (Ex) The damage a panthereon deals doesn't heal naturally and resists magical healing. A character attempting to use magical healing on a creature damaged by a panthereon must succeed at a DC 26 caster level check, or the healing has no effect on the injured creature.		
Eye Beam (Su) Once per round as a standard action, a panthereon can unleash a beam of blinding light at a target within 60 feet as a ranged touch attack. The beam deals 2d8 points of fire damage. Any creature struck by this beam must succeed at a DC 18 Fortitude save or be blinded for 1 hour.		
Haste (Su) After it has engaged in at least 1 round of combat, a panthereon can gain the benefits of haste once per day as a free action. The effect lasts 6 rounds and is otherwise the same as the spell.		
Immunity to Magic (Ex) A panthereon is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against the creature, as noted below.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A <i>disintegrate</i> spell slows the golem (as the <i>slow</i> spell) for 1d6 rounds and deals 1d12 points of damage (no save). A <i>soften earth and stone</i> spell cast directly at a 		

panthereon reduces its damage reduction to DR 2/adamantine and bludgeoning for 1d4 rounds.

- Any magical attack against a panthereon that deals electricity damage heals 1 point of damage for every 3 points of damage it would normally deal. If the amount of healing would cause the golem to exceed its full normal hit points, it gains any excess as temporary hit points. A panthereon gets no saving throw against magical attacks that deal electricity damage.

Carefully constructed to serve as tomb guardians and protectors of their creators and their treasure, panthereons are a variant of clay golems. The majority of these golems were created during the First Age in Osirion, though evidence of their existence has turned up beyond the nation's borders. A panthereon stands over 8 feet tall and weighs 600 pounds. While its sculpted form may vary, it is typically muscular and wears no clothing save for a simple Osirian skirt.

ECOLOGY

Osirion's golem makers dispute the notion that the panthereon's design was simply the work of some arcane crafter. Instead, many of them believe the inspiration for its creation was bestowed by the ancient gods themselves. The design for golems has changed little from their initial creation in the First Age, and most variations only came along during the end of the Second Age.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

As mindless constructs, panthereons have no society or culture of their own. Scholars closely associate panthereons with the societal norms of Osirion during the period when the creatures were widely used as tomb guardians. Many panthereons have abilities tied to their creators, but most of these creators have long since perished, leaving the golems to act on their last given orders.

CONSTRUCTION

A panthereon's body is carved from 1,000 pounds of clay mixed with the powdered bones of a purebred Osiriani cat that was either awakened or served as a bonded familiar. During the sculpting process the creator may only moisten the clay with water sourced from an Osirian desert oasis and must add 1,500 gp worth of rare oils and powders.

PANTHEREON
CL 11th; Price 48,500 gp
CONSTRUCTION
Requirements Craft Construct, <i>animate objects</i> , <i>bless</i> , <i>commune</i> , <i>prayer</i> , <i>resurrection</i> , <i>searing light</i> , <i>true seeing</i> , creator must be caster level 11th; Skill Craft (pottery) or Craft (sculpture) DC 16; Cost 28,500 gp

VARIANT PANTHEREONS

While most panthereons possess the statistics presented above, a few of Osirion's finest golemmakers have developed specialized panthereons, each with slightly different enhancements to their abilities. Each one of these variants lists the new abilities, as well as any additional construction requirements and the additional cost in special materials required to create the variant.

ESTEEMED (CR +0)

The ultimate palace guard, an esteemed panthereon can take the form of a black house cat (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 131) at will as a standard action. This allows the panthereon to guard a location without being seen as an obvious sentry. Esteemed panthereons can be commanded to change between house cat and guardian forms by their creator, or they can be made to do so under set conditions. Though not widely held, the superstitious belief that any house cat could be a disguised esteemed panthereon has led some to keep cats as a deterrent to thieves and vandals.

Additional Construction Requirements: *beast shape II*; **Additional Cost:** 21,000 gp.

SLAVER (CR +0)

The slaver panthereon was initially designed to supervise recalcitrant slaves, but it has since proved equally useful when hunting anyone the golem's creator wants to have captured alive. Because slaves and prisoners are often a very valuable commodity, the slaver panthereon has the ability to, as a swift action, convert all of its attacks to nonlethal damage. When it does so, its slam attacks also gain the grab special ability. As another swift action, it can change its attacks back to dealing normal lethal damage (losing the grab ability in the process). Since they are nonintelligent, slaver panthereons default to dealing nonlethal damage unless their master orders otherwise.



Additional Construction Requirements: *Merciful Spell*; **Additional Cost:** 21,500 gp.

SPELL BEARER (CR +1)

This panthereon serves its master by augmenting and reinforcing the master's spellcasting. Some sages believe the spell bearer panthereon was a precursor to the present-day shield guardian golem. A spell bearer panthereon can store a single spell of 1st through 6th level, but the golem can't be commanded to cast the spell as a shield guardian golem would. Instead, should that spell be cast on the golem or its creator (as long as the creator is within 60 feet), the spell is immediately countered, as by counterspell, requiring no action of the panthereon or its creator. Once used, the spell in the panthereon is gone, and a new spell (or the same spell) may be placed into it.

In addition, if a spell bearer panthereon's creator casts a spell within 60 feet of the panthereon, the golem may mirror its creator, and also cast the same spell the following round. A spell bearer panthereon can use this ability once per day for any spell 3rd-level or lower.

Additional Construction Requirements: *Improved Counterspell*, *mnemonic enhancer*; **Additional Cost:** 30,000 gp.

TRUE HUNTER (CR +1)

During creation, this panthereon is given the name of an individual it is tasked with slaying. The target's identity must be clear and unambiguous. Once the ritual is complete and the panthereon is activated, the golem receives a +4 bonus on attacks against its named target and deals it an extra 2d6 points of damage. This additional damage is not multiplied on a critical hit. A true hunter can always detect the presence and location of its target so long as the target is within 1 mile.

If the true hunter's target is killed, it becomes a regular panthereon. If the target is resurrected or reincarnated, the true hunter instinctively becomes aware of this, and regains all of its old abilities. It can't pinpoint their direction or presence unless the target is within 1 mile.

Additional Construction Requirements: *instant enemy*; **Additional Cost:** 26,500 gp.

STRANGLEREED

This tangled mass of thick reeds sways in the breeze. Hidden under the surface of the water, a wicked maw of barbs and thorns waits in ambush.

STRANGLEREED

CR 9



XP 6,400

N Large plant (aquatic)

Init +9; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 14, flat-footed 18 (+5 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size)

hp 114 (12d8+60)

Fort +13, **Ref** +11, **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities all-around vision, **DR** 5/slashing; **Immune** plant traits

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft., climb 10 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee 2 tendrils +15 (2d8+6 plus grab), bite +14 (1d8+6)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (5 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks constrict (2d8+9), grab (Huge), pull (tendrils, 5 ft.), strangle, suffocate

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 20, **Con** 21, **Int** 1, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +16 (+20 grapple); **CMD** 31

Feats Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Lunge, Skill Focus (Stealth), Stealthy, Weapon Focus (tendrils)

Skills Climb +14, Escape Artist +7, Perception +10, Stealth +15, Swim +14

SQ freeze, water dependency

ECOLOGY

Environment warm rivers or lakes

Organization solitary or patch (2–6)

Treasure incidental

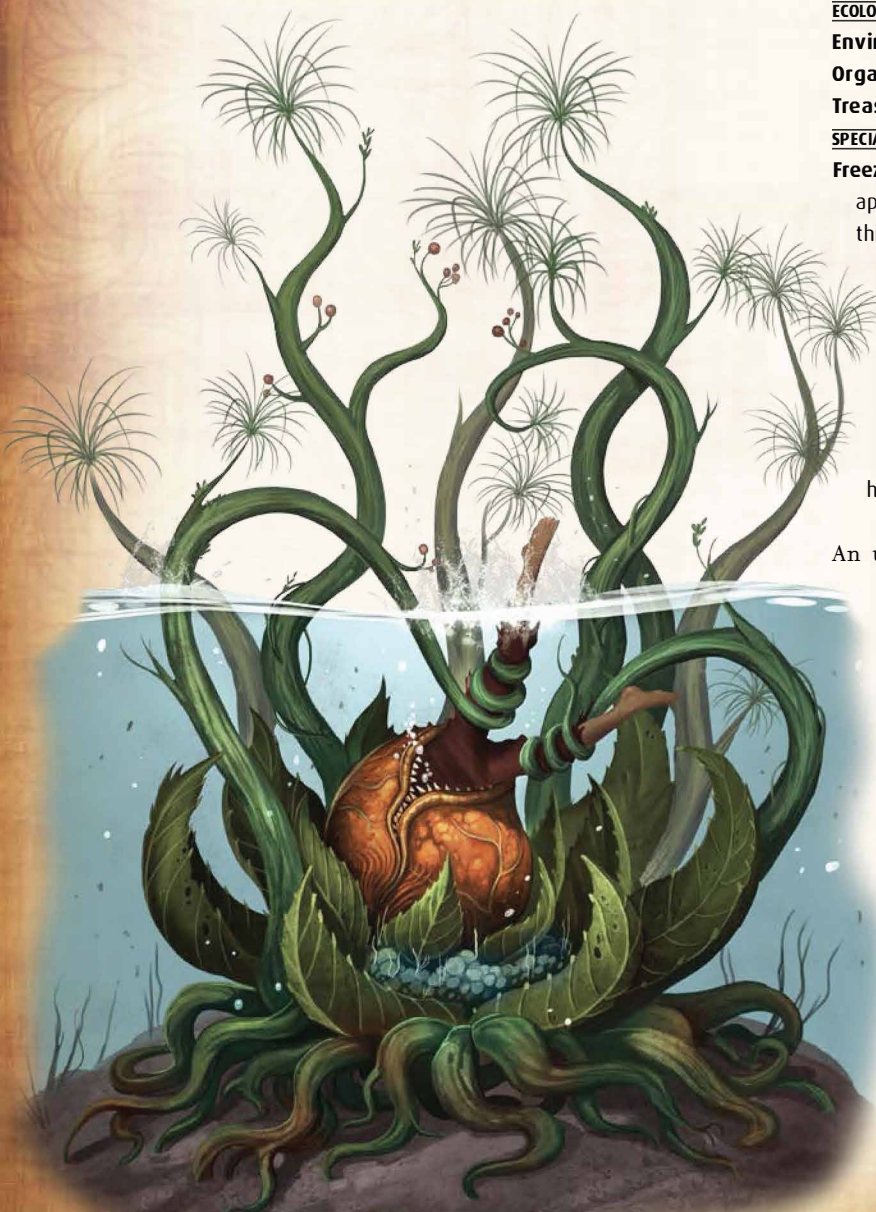
SPECIAL ABILITIES

Freeze (Ex) A stranglereed can hold itself so still that it appears to be normal vegetation. A stranglereed that uses this ability can take 20 on its Stealth check to hide in plain sight as a regular patch of reeds.

Strangle (Ex) Stranglereeds have an unerring talent for seizing their victims by the throat. A creature that is grappled by a stranglereed can't speak or cast spells with verbal components.

Suffocate (Ex) A creature that's affected by a stranglereed's strangle ability can't breathe and must hold its breath or suffocate.

An unlikely predator, a stranglereed floats motionless in calm lakes and rivers, patiently waiting for prey to approach before lashing out with two thick tendrils. This horrifically efficient killer gets its name from its uncanny ability to find a victim's throat with its tendrils. Once the stranglereed has secured its prey, it pulls its victim beneath the surface of the water and directs the victim toward a submerged circular orifice ringed with hundreds of gnashing barbs and thorns. Exceptionally voracious, the stranglereed never stops feeding, and in desperate times, the industrious plant can leave the water briefly in order to hunt on land. These vicious, tenacious plants can even chase down their prey if it breaks free of their strong tendrils. Fortunately, a stranglereed can spend only a limited amount of time out of water. A stranglereed resembles a patch of normal reeds that covers a roughly circular 10-foot diameter area. Submerged in the water under this unassuming vegetation lies



a large stalk that ends in its circular mouth. Its length is roughly 8 feet, from its mouth to the tips of its extended reeds. A stranglereed weighs 800 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Above the calm waters, the stranglereed resembles a large but innocuous reedbed. However, underneath the water's murk, a large cylindrical stalk bobs in the currents. At the end of this stalk gapes a maw ringed with multiple rows of sharp barbs and thorns capable of shredding the flesh from prey's bones. Several tendrils grow from under the stranglereed's stalk to root themselves loosely into the bed of the lake, oasis, or river where it dwells. When the stranglereed detects prey, two tendrils specialized for grasping prey shoot toward their target and attempt to grapple it. The stranglereed lashes its tendrils around its target's throat and begins to asphyxiate the target. Once its hold is secure, it reels the prey into the water and into its hungry maw. Over centuries of evolution, the stranglereed has developed the ability to extend the range of these lashing tendrils by using an effective, if awkward, lunge.

Close inspection reveals that the stranglereed has multiple eyes that resemble fuzzy nodules running up its many reed stalks. In fact, over a hundred of these tiny orbs can be detected on a typical specimen, and they grant the stranglereed a superior sense of sight.

A stranglereed can venture onto dry land for a limited period of time, which it does when food is scarce or its prey breaks free from its tendrils and flees onto land. Its stalks can change in appearance to match the surrounding flora, a process that takes approximately 24 hours. This enables the plant to blend in with its surroundings whenever it finds itself in a new body of water.

A stranglereed reproduces by expelling seeds that float on air currents much like a dandelion's fluff. Those that land on dry earth soon die or are scavenged by birds and other small animals. Those that land in water grow into full-sized stranglereed stalks within 1 month. A large body of water can be home to a cluster of stranglereeds if the food supply can meet their demands.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Typically found in warm, slow-moving water, the stranglereed favors sites that attract large mammals. Watering holes, sluggish rivers, lakes, and especially oases are common feeding spots. While the stranglereed can sustain itself on a diet of fish and other marine life, it seems to prefer the taste of hot blood washing through its gullet. Possessing an animal intellect, the stranglereed quickly adapts to its habitat and soon discovers which creatures it can realistically take down and which are better left alone.

Though stranglereeds can be found throughout Osirion, they pose the greatest danger in and around Tephu, where workers harvest the abundant papyrus reeds for Tephu's profitable papyrus trade. Papyrus harvesters have taken to prodding growths of papyrus with long poles to determine whether the reeds are in fact mundane plants or dangerous stranglereeds. Some enterprising harvesters even seek out and kill stranglereeds to sell to those who use their pulp in the creation of guardian scrolls (for more information on guardian scrolls see page 82 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #79).

When food is abundant, groups of stranglereeds often entwine their tendrils to create a strong matrix that allows them to work together to tackle much larger prey. This prey is often torn apart and split among the various members of the entwined patch. Entwined stranglereeds seem to release their fluff-like seeds more frequently than their solitary brethren. After spending years in an entwined state, these plants can sometimes merge into one larger creature referred to as a bloated patch.

VARIANT STRANGLEREEDS

Nomads and explorers tell chilling tales of more aggressive stranglereeds dwelling in secluded areas of the Inner Sea that glory in blood-drinking, paralyze victims, and have gigantic mouths. Fortunately, the tales passed from nomad to nomad are often exaggerated, and while stranglereeds that possess some of these qualities do exist, they are simply minor variations on the standard stranglereed.

Stranglereed Bloated Patch (CR +1): This variation of the stranglereed has the giant creature simple template. Because of its enormous size, this variation prefers to swallow its prey whole. The bloated patch's bite attack gains the grab special attack, and any creature grappled in its mouth can be swallowed whole. The bloated patch gains the following special attacks: bite (grab) and swallow whole (4d6 acid damage, AC 16, 14 hp).

Stranglereed Sucker (CR +1): This variation of the stranglereed has the advanced creature simple template. In addition, the tendrils of this stranglereed are lined with tiny suckers that draw forth the victim's blood. This ability not only makes these stranglereeds less likely to lose their prey, but also make it easier for them to drink their prey's warm blood. Because of this evolution, stranglereed suckers gain an additional +2 bonus on combat maneuver checks when grappling and their tendril attacks gain the bleed ability (2d6).

Toxic Stranglereed (CR +2): This variation of the stranglereed has the advanced creature simple template. When the tendrils of the toxic stranglereed strike its prey, its target must succeed at a Fortitude save or become paralyzed. The toxic stranglereed's tendrils gain the following special attack: paralysis (1d4 rounds, DC 16).

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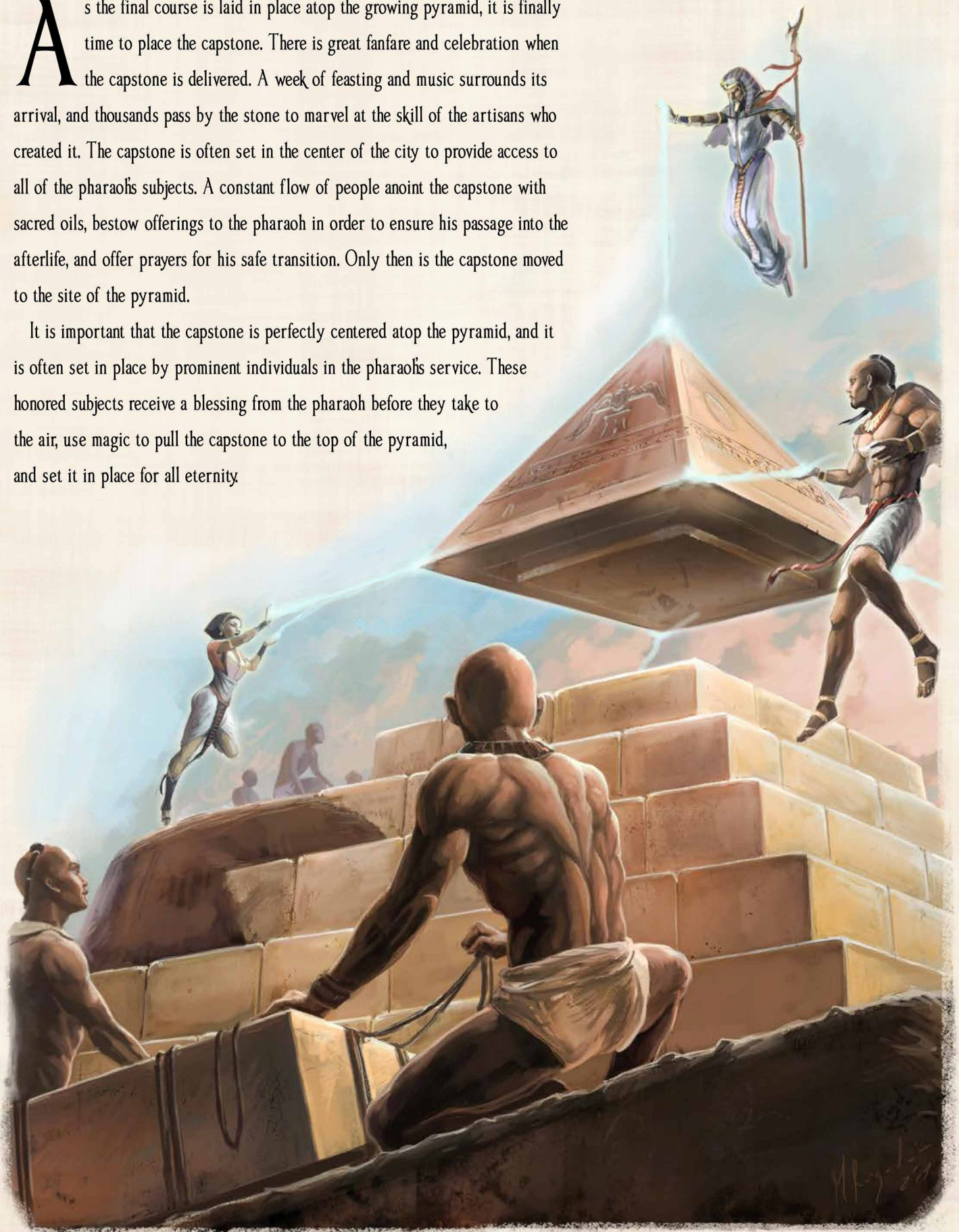
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As the final course is laid in place atop the growing pyramid, it is finally time to place the capstone. There is great fanfare and celebration when the capstone is delivered. A week of feasting and music surrounds its arrival, and thousands pass by the stone to marvel at the skill of the artisans who created it. The capstone is often set in the center of the city to provide access to all of the pharaoh's subjects. A constant flow of people anoint the capstone with sacred oils, bestow offerings to the pharaoh in order to ensure his passage into the afterlife, and offer prayers for his safe transition. Only then is the capstone moved to the site of the pyramid.

It is important that the capstone is perfectly centered atop the pyramid, and it is often set in place by prominent individuals in the pharaoh's service. These honored subjects receive a blessing from the pharaoh before they take to the air, use magic to pull the capstone to the top of the pyramid, and set it in place for all eternity.



FORGOTTEN NO MORE

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This volume of Pathfinder Adventure Path continues the Mummy's Mask Adventure Path and includes:

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