



ENCOUNTERS IN THEROS



Bring your campaign to life with this companion
supplement for *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*

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INTRODUCTION

Encounters in *Theros* presents 74 short encounters to complement the *Mythic Odysseys of Theros* campaign book. This supplement has the following chapters:

- **Chapter 1: City Encounters.** Short encounters for the polis, city, or large town.
- **Chapter 2: Wilderness Encounters.** Short encounters for the forest, plains, or desert.
- **Chapter 3: Mountain Encounters.** Short encounters for the mountains and hills.
- **Chapter 4: Watery Encounters.** Short encounters for water-related regions, such as the coast, islands, sea, or swamps.
- **Appendix A: Player Handout.** This item is given to the players during the appropriate encounter.
- **Appendix B: Creature Statistics.** A modified stat block provided for convenience.

RUNNING ENCOUNTERS

Encounters in Theros requires use of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 5th Edition core rulebooks (*Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Monster Manual*). You'll also need a copy of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*, though with a little adjustment, you could use most of these encounters in any heroic fantasy adventure.

The *Monster Manual* and *Mythic Odysseys of Theros* contain stat blocks for most of the creatures found in the encounters. Other creatures are found in appendix B. If a creature doesn't appear in the *Monster Manual*, there will be a small note directing you to its stat block.

Spells and equipment mentioned in the encounters are described in the *Player's Handbook*. Magic items are described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* unless otherwise noted.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations appear in this book:

- DC = Difficulty Class
- XP = experience points
- gp = gold piece(s)
- NPC = nonplayer character
- DM = Dungeon Master

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Random encounters can help bring a location to life, creating the impression that the adventure takes place within a complex and dynamic ecosystem. Random encounters also help with game pacing, making players feel genuine effort is involved when they move through potentially dangerous areas. They also provide fun opportunities for you to improvise and often blossom into ongoing campaign elements.

When the characters travel through Theros, you can roll a d20 for every 8 hours they spend traveling or resting to see if a random encounter occurs. On a roll of 12 or higher, choose the appropriate encounter table and roll or choose an encounter from it. You can change the number of encounters the characters experience as you see fit.

ENCOUNTER DIFFICULTY

Each encounter represents a certain kind of potential challenge, and not all of them should result in combat. When you let the dice have their way, the generated encounter might be far too difficult or dangerous for the characters in their present circumstances. They might need to flee, avoid contact, or negotiate their way out of the challenge.

You're always free to adjust the roll or simply choose an encounter, but remember; not every encounter needs to result in combat. A powerful creature might chase the party in a new direction, demand they perform a task, or turn out to be an unexpected ally. Another excellent trick is to have a rescuer appear at the last moment, someone who could become a group patron. There are many options besides fighting.

CITY ENCOUNTERS

The following encounters can occur in any polis, city, or large town in Theros:

CITY ENCOUNTERS

d20 Encounter

- | | |
|----|----------------------------|
| 1 | Between Darkness and Light |
| 2 | Contest! |
| 3 | Date with Destiny |
| 4 | Dead Ringer |
| 5 | <i>Deus ex machina</i> |
| 6 | Drama in the City |
| 7 | Gift from the Gods |
| 8 | Love is a Battlefield |
| 9 | Out of the Maze |
| 10 | Petrified Cult |
| 11 | Phaeodetic Method |
| 12 | Read the Entrails |
| 13 | Rowdy Crowd |
| 14 | Scavenger Hunt |
| 15 | Sing, O Muse! |
| 16 | Stormcast Epiphany |
| 17 | The Fallen Champion |
| 18 | The Statue |
| 19 | Two Went Out |
| 20 | Underworld Entrance |

The encounter descriptions are presented in alphabetical order.

BETWEEN DARKNESS AND LIGHT

A crowd has gathered at the city's agora. A local priest, Ochesius (a neutral, male human), stumbles between the stoas, arguing with himself and visibly distressed. Use map 4.2 in chapter 4 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros* to depict this encounter if you wish.

Ochesius has become an **oracle** (see chapter 6 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*) of the gods Heliod and Erebos, who vie for control of his abilities. The sun is dazzling in the agora—light bends to follow the oracle while shadows grasp at him. The characters have stumbled into the middle of a divine altercation, and the omens are making the crowd uneasy.

THE DILEMMA

When Ochesius's powers manifested, he received visions of the future from both Heliod and Erebos, regarding the fate of his son, Alcandros—a warrior stationed at an outpost between Akros and Phoberos. Alcandros's outpost will soon be attacked by a band of Bloodhorn minotaurs. In Heliod's vision, Alcandros dies a warrior's death; his comrades live, and the outpost holds. In Erebos's vision, Alcandros lives, but his unit is slaughtered and the outpost falls. Each god has given Ochesius the same demand: dedicate his powers to them, and Alcandros's fate plays out as they have foretold.

Ochesius is desperate for someone to help him reach a decision. Encourage players to discuss the dilemma: they can sway Ochesius's thinking with a successful DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check, but good roleplaying should be rewarded, and a check may not be necessary. Upon reaching a decision, Ochesius falls to his knees and declares his allegiance to either Heliod or Erebos. If the players tire of the discussion, or fail to reach a decision, Ochesius makes the choice himself.

DECISION MADE

Whichever god has been forsaken sends servants to punish Ochesius and those around him:

Erebos's Wrath. If Ochesius chose Heliod, shadows manifest from the agora's dark corners and attack. There's one shadow per character.

Heliod's Wrath. If Ochesius chose Erebos, two griffons screech overhead and dive to attack.

Treasure. If Ochesius survives, he gives the characters his gold aspergillum (a tool for sprinkling holy water) worth 50 gp.

CONTEST!

The characters learn of a contest within the city's arena offering prizes of 100 gp to the winner. Characters can participate in the following games:

Gladiatorial Combat. The characters can fight any number of beasts, monstrosities, or gladiators in an arena (see chapter 4 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros* for an arena map). Battles to the death, naval competitions, and games of capture the flag could be part of the combat.

Chariot Race. Characters participate against 2d4 veterans proficient with land vehicles. Each single-person chariot is drawn by two horses and has a movement speed of 60 feet. The first to cross the finish line 600 feet away

wins. Each turn, the driver must make a Dexterity check using land vehicles. If the total is 10 or less, the chariot moves 60 feet. If the total is between 11 and 19, the chariot moves 75 feet, and if the total is 20 or more, the chariot moves 90 feet.

Track and Field Games. Games like shot put, discus, foot races, long jump, and more are all available. Most are solved with all athletes making opposed Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks at the DM's discretion. NPC athletes use the **gladiator** stat block.

DATE WITH DESTINY

A messenger approaches the party. This messenger bears an invitation to dine with the famous oracle Serafim Fotiadis and relays that she has something of great importance to tell the characters.

If the party accepts the invitation, Serafim treats them to a meal at her estate and relays a vision she received while observing the stars. She shares that as she contemplated the omens, she also saw an image of the party, and believes the gods wanted her to deliver their message. Roll a d4 to determine the nature of the vision:

1. Serafim foresaw a bloody massacre as a band of Pheres centaurs ravaged a farming community. She believes Karametra wants the characters to prevent this violence and tells them the location of the community.
2. Serafim saw the abandoned halls of a temple recently unearthed by a storm. She believes Klothys wants the party to restore it to its former glory and describes the location of the temple.
3. Serafim saw a band of minotaurs who have rejected Mogis and journey to live in the human poleis. She believes Iroas wants the characters to **escort** them to safety and details the minotaurs' current **whereabouts**.

4. Serafim saw a hidden cave system where a trio of escaped convicts were building a bandit force. She believes Heliod wants the characters to bring these criminals to justice and describes the location of the caves.

DEAD RINGER

The characters begin to see notices posted around the city that read:

Maro's ring closed until further notice. Capable heroes needed, please inquire at the box office. Compensation offered.

If the party asks around, they locate Maro's Ring, a small venue which employs professional actors to stage dramatic wrestling matches. At the box office, they meet the owner Maro "Carnage" Stichius, who relays his problem.

Some months ago, one of the ring's actors, crowd favorite Cois, "the Viper," slipped during a maneuver and died as a result of the accident. Cois was given a hero's funeral and buried, but two days ago, his eidolon appeared during a match, attacked an actor, and sent the audience into a panic. "The Viper" now haunts the ring as a **ghostblade eidolon** (see chapter 6 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*) that deals bludgeoning damage instead of slashing damage with his Ghostblade attack, and Maro needs the party to defeat him so the ring can reopen.

Maro's rapidly losing money, but he can offer box seat season tickets as a reward. Once the ring's back in good standing, the tickets can be sold for a large sum or, if gifted, can garner favors with polis residents.





DEUS EX MACHINA

The characters visit a great amphitheater outside one of the poleis of Theros. They may be there by happenstance, or because they were hired as guards. A classical comedy is being performed in this amphitheater, depicting one of the great conquests of the champion known as the Slayer (see “Champions and Heroes” in chapter 1 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*).

This play has been the subject of a great deal of gossip around the polis, because it uses a remarkable, new moving construct called the *apo mekhanes theos*—the god from the machine—to represent the monster that the Slayer will defeat in combat. The mekhanes is constructed from a skeleton of wooden beams, with joints made of metal hinges concealed by cloth drapery, and its skin is clay decorated with dazzling geometric designs.

During the play, however, a jealous god imbues the mekhanes with life, and it turns on the actors. Since the actor playing the Slayer isn't actually a warrior, he's quickly batted away. As the mekhanes turns on the chorus, the audience rises, unsure if this is part of the play or an actual monster attack. You can use map 4.13 in chapter 4 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros* to represent this amphitheater.

Roll a d4 to determine the type of monster represented by the mekhanes:

1. **Chimera**
2. **Cyclops**
3. **Gorgon** (use the **medusa** variant in chapter 6 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*)
4. **Hydra**

The mekhanes has the following modifications, which don't affect its challenge rating:

- It's a **construct** instead of its usual creature type.
- It has **immunity** to poison and psychic damage and **exhaustion**.
- It can't be charmed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, or poisoned.
- It has **vulnerability** to bludgeoning damage from magical weapons.

THE SHOW MUST GO ON

If you want to make this encounter more challenging from a roleplaying perspective, the director of the comedy hides in the shadows just offstage and whispers to one of the characters as they arrive onstage. “Make it seem like part of the show! You're the Slayers now. Make a grand statement. Dedicate the kill to the gods or something!” She then turns to the frightened chorus and hisses, “Back them up, for the gods' sakes!”

The chorus backs away from the rampaging mekhanes and speaks lines of prose in response to the characters' improvised lines. The role of the chorus in Theran drama is to represent the people of the polis, so by reacting favorably to the characters' speeches and attacks, they help calm the uneasy audience. They might say:

- “With monstrous might, the beast attacks. What strength can the Slayer hope to summon against it?”
- “Tall-backed Slayer, hold your blade high. We citizens of this bold polis pray for your success!”
- “Can it be? Yea, it shrinks away! The accursed monster reels in the face of the mighty Slayer's power!”

CONCLUSION

If the characters were here as bodyguards, they're paid their total fee of 100 gp after the show. If they weren't hired to protect the play and ask the director for compensation, one character can make a DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check. On a success, the director agrees to pay them gold pieces equal to the total of the check × 5.

Also, if the characters kept the illusion of the play intact, the audience rewards them with a standing ovation as the mekhanes falls. Wreaths of dried flowers are thrown at their feet, and the director greets them after the play and gives them each 50 gp.

Finally, if one or more of the characters dedicate this play to the gods of Theros, the gods take note and smile upon them. Each character with a piety score increases it by 1 (see “Piety” in chapter 2 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*).

DRAMA IN THE CITY

The characters encounter two groups of actors who each claim the other group stole their script and intends to put on a plagiarized production of *The Tragedy of Elspeth and Daxos*. The Pyrite Players offer the characters 50 gp if they can retrieve all copies of the script, while Ephara's Muses promise to dedicate the performance to the characters and offer them front-row seats at all their future plays.

Sneaking into either group's rehearsal requires a successful DC 13 Dexterity (Stealth) or Charisma (Deception) check. If the characters ask around about the upcoming performances, they're directed to the agora, where Galenos Sotiris, a young scribe who specializes in scripts, works. With a successful DC 12 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check, Galenos reveals that both groups stole a copy of the script from the original playwright and paid him to make additional copies.

GIFT FROM THE GODS

While passing through a city market, the characters are approached by Kanli, a small child who's lost their mother in the crowds. Should the characters choose to help, they find Kanli's mother after 1d10 minutes of searching the market. Optionally, you can have them make a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check each minute of searching, locating the mother on a success.

Kanli's mother, Syna, thanks the characters and offers them a token of thanks, a silver medallion engraved with her family crest. She insists they accept the reward for protecting her child as it will honor both her and her god, Karametra.

The medallion is worth 20 gp, but it also has a powerful enchantment upon it that can't be detected by spells such as *detect magic*. Roll a d4 to determine the nature of the enchantment:

d4 Encounter

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| 1 | Folly of Phenax |
| 2 | Secrets of Keranos |
| 3 | Charge of Klothys |
| 4 | Glory of Iroas |

Folly of Phenax. The medallion is actually a cursed relic of the god Phenax. Sometime within the next hour, the medallion enchants the character carrying it. When it does, the character must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or gain a random form of long-term madness (see "Madness" in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). The enchanted character must repeat the saving throw every 24 hours, switching to a new form of long-term madness on a failed save, or temporarily ending the effects on a successful one.

The cursed medallion always finds its way back to the character until the enchantment is broken by a *greater restoration* spell or similar magic. Optionally, the character can rid themselves of the medallion by gifting it to an unwitting soul and succeeding on a Charisma (Deception) check at a DC determined by the DM. The character must be indebted in some way to the person they're gifting the medallion, and the person receiving it must accept the gift freely.

Secrets of Keranos. If a creature with a passive Perception score of 12 or higher handles the medallion, they notice ten small runes carved along its inner edges. The runes can't be read, nor identified as belonging to any particular language. Each night after sundown, tiny flashes of lightning encircle the medallion for 1 hour. A character who holds the medallion for 10 seconds receives a shock that deals 3 (1d6) lightning damage. After taking the damage, the lightning flashes cease and one of the runes begins to glow with a faint light.

Each night thereafter, another rune can be lit if the same character holds the medallion for 10 seconds during the lightning flashes. The lightning damage increases by 1d6 for each lit rune (e.g. 2d6 to light the second rune, 3d6 to light the third rune, etc.). If another character attempts to do this, the runes stop glowing and the process resets. It also resets if the medallion isn't held within that hour.

Once all ten runes are lit, they merge into a magical incantation that is functionally equivalent to a *spell scroll* of a randomly determined spell of 4th level or higher. Once this incantation has been used, the runes fade from the medallion.

Charge of Klothys. The medallion contains the soul of a mortal unchained from their destined path. The same night the party receives the medallion, each character is enchanted by the medallion and receives visions of an ancient, ruined shrine in the mountains (or an environment of your choice). This enchantment is functionally equivalent to the *geas* spell, but the characters automatically fail the saving throw.

From the next dawn, those affected by the enchantment must travel to the ancient shrine, which is a 60-foot-square platform guarded by a **woe strider** (see chapter 6 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*). Defeating the woe strider causes its body to transform into a **champion** (see appendix B) dressed in resplendent, golden armor, who thanks the characters for restoring their path before vanishing in a flash of light. After this occurs, the medallion's enchantment ends.

Glory of Iroas. Characters who attempt to sell the medallion or show it to the locals are told a rumor that such medallions permit entry into a secret underground arena located somewhere in the city. Optionally, characters can learn this with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (History) check.

Within the rumored location (an abandoned building or shop of your choosing), a hidden stairwell leads into an underground tunnel ending in an 80-foot-square cavern beneath the city. The area is guarded by the arena's organizers, a **bandit captain** and five **veterans**. They refuse admission into the area without the medallion.

Once they've presented the medallion, the characters can participate in the gauntlet of battles. The prize money increases with each victory. The characters can use their own gear, but killing any of their opponents disqualifies the characters. The contests occur in the following order:

1. 1d6 **thugs** (prize: 10 gp per thug)
2. 1d3 **berserkers** (prize: 50 gp per berserker)
3. Two **gladiators** (prize: 350 gp)
4. A **champion** (see appendix B) (prize: 500 gp and an item from Magic Item Table F)

LOVE IS A BATTLEFIELD

The characters cross paths with Eronus (a neutral, male, human **commoner**) praying loudly in the streets for Helioid to send him heroes to help his love. If he notices the characters, he throws himself at their feet, begging for help. Eronus claims to have had an argument with his true love, a golden-haired, female gladiator named Delica, after foolishly losing all her hard-won money in dice games. The jilted Eronus tearfully claims Delica broke up with him and stormed off to the arena to let off some steam.

Eronus wants the characters to go to the arena and apologize to Delica on his behalf. The only problem is that she refuses to meet anyone except in battle in the arena. He offers them his most prized possession if they refuse: a *potion of aqueous form* (see chapter 5 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*).

If the characters enter the arena to face Delica, roll a d4 to determine Delica's statistics and her reactions to the characters. In all cases, Delica begins by trying to battle the characters. If they want to talk to her, they must fight while doing so.

1. Delica is a lawful neutral, female, human **gladiator**. A character who succeeds on a DC 17 Charisma (Persuasion) check made as an action convinces Delica to cease combat and take back Eronus.
2. Delica is the name of a **fleecemane lion** (see chapter 6 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*) that eats people alive in the arena for the entertainment of others. After stealing coins from a temple of Phenax, Eronus was cursed by the deity to fall in love with the lion. The gambling and subsequent argument are all in Eronus's head.

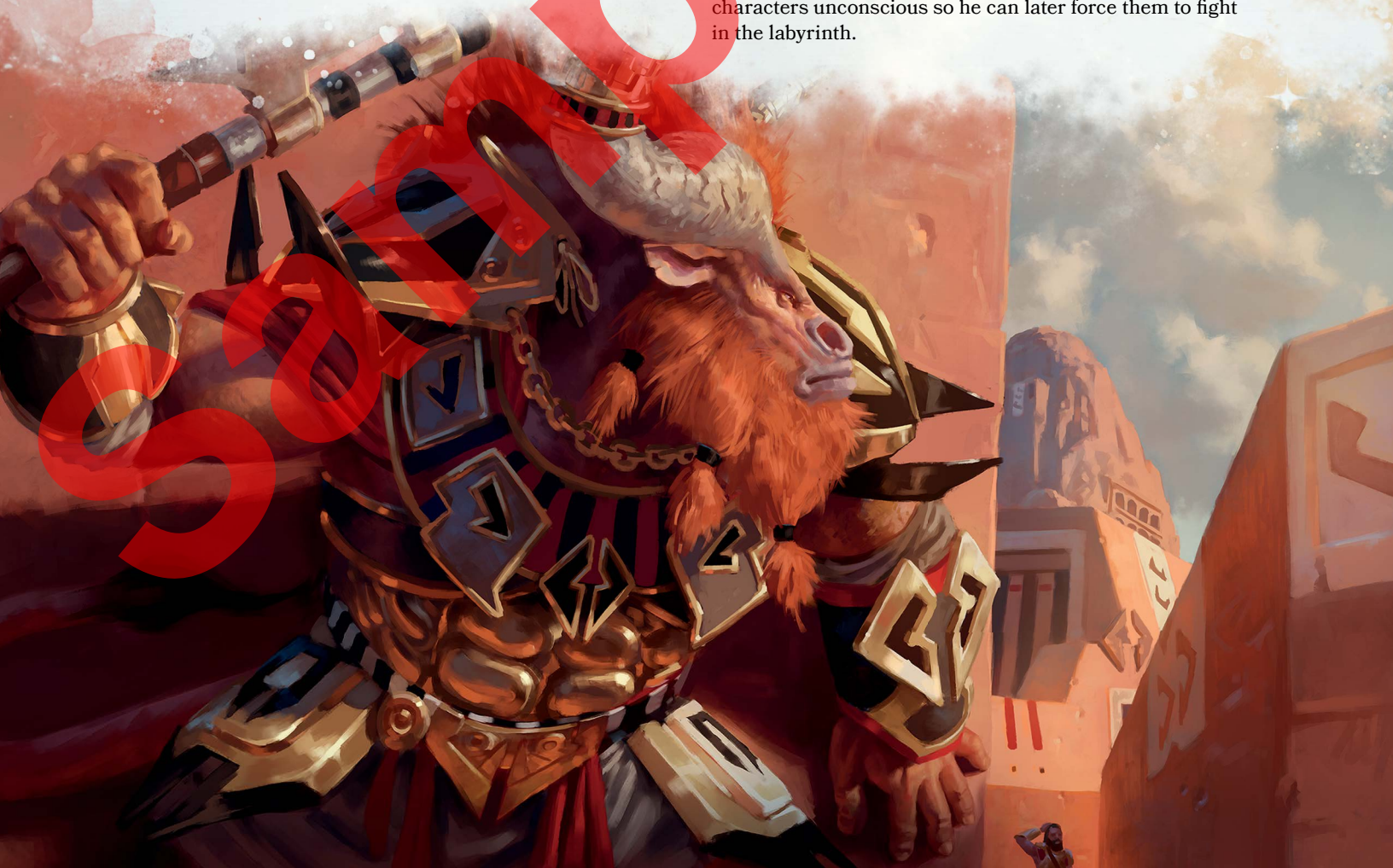
3. Delica is a female, gorgon (use the **medusa** variant in chapter 6 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*) devotee of Phenax who can cast the *disguise self* spell at will. She broke up with Eronus after he proved worthless and now looks for rich, new heroes to scam.
4. Delica is a female human, and secretly an **oracle** (see chapter 6 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*). She has foreseen her death at the hands of the criminals Eronus owes money to. If the characters agree to find the criminals and prevent them from harming her, she'll forgive Eronus, provided he promises to change (and Delica has seen that he will change).

OUT OF THE MAZE

A young **minotaur** named Orena Bloodhorn was lured to the city by a wily **satyr** named Baramon, the owner of an underground fighting pit. Baramon tricks young minotaurs into fighting in the pit, which is a labyrinth filled with traps and monsters. The labyrinth is modeled after the labyrinthine layout of Skophos, and wealthy patrons watch the minotaurs' brutal escapades with delight. Unlike her Bloodhorn brethren, Orena is far less interested in blood sports and wants to serve in Skophos's Lesser Peristyle as an acolyte.

If the characters agree to help, Orena leads them to the fighting pit and introduces them to Baramon, who's delighted to meet new adventurers and agrees to let Orena return home—if the characters join him for a night of drinking and revelry. If the characters agree, Baramon produces a bottle of wine for each character. Orena, meanwhile, takes the opportunity to leave the city.

If the characters renege on their deal, Baramon turns hostile. During combat, Baramon's tactic is to knock characters unconscious so he can later force them to fight in the labyrinth.



PETRIFIED CULT

The characters are approached by an anxious gravedigger, Mopsius (a neutral, male, human **commoner**), who's looking for heroes to rid the graveyard of "hooded trespassers up to no good." This encounter happens at night. You can use any exterior section of map 4.3 in chapter 4 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros* to illustrate the site.

Inside the graveyard, a **fleecemane lion** (see chapter 6 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*) lies prostrate atop a sarcophagus, lit by a pair of burning torches in standing sconces. Nearby, a hooded **cult fanatic**, Aspasia, examines a group of four robed statues. These are petrified initiates of the Cult of Frozen Faith (see chapter 2 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*). It's been a year since they took their poison, and Aspasia's here to oversee their return. Two **cultists** accompany her, but are hiding in the shadows and can only be spotted with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. The lion is due to be sacrificed by the new initiates. It's been sedated and is incapacitated, but remains aware of its surroundings.

DISTURBING THE RITUAL

The cultists are hostile to anyone who intrudes on their ritual. If combat ensues, one statue transforms back to life each round on initiative count 20. Roll a d6 for each statue when it transforms: it crumbles to dust on a one, returns as a **cultist** on a two to a five, and becomes a **cult fanatic** on a six.

Fleecemane Lion. If the characters defeat the cultists, the lion's sedation soon wears off. It only attacks if threatened by the characters, otherwise it turns and flees the city. If the cultists overwhelm the characters during combat, the lion could rouse early and leap to their aid.

Treasure. Aspasia carries a gold ceremonial dagger etched with serpent scales worth 100 gp. If any cultists escape, the characters earn the enmity of the Cult of Frozen Faith.

PHAEODETIC METHOD

In this encounter, the characters are asked to debate with a great philosopher. In the midst of this Socratic dialogue, the philosopher is attacked by his rivals.

As the characters explore the city-state of Meletis, they're stopped by a woman in a guard's uniform named Xenophia (a neutral, female, human **guard**). Xenophia is a student of a great philosopher, and that gives her a bit of a superiority complex. She wants more people to discover her instructor's teachings, and wants the characters—who are powerful adventurers with opinions uncommon to students of philosophy—to participate in one of Phaeodetes's famous Dialogues.

WHO IS PHAEODETES?

Xenophia's teacher is the philosopher Phaeodetes (a neutral good, male, human **acolyte**). This aged man is on the rise in the city-state of Meletis. He's gained a large and passionate following, and he muses to his followers daily on the nature of life and morality on the steps of the Pyrgnos in Meletis (see "Features of Meletis" in chapter 3 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*).

Phaeodetes is a Uremidean philosopher (see "People of Meletis" in chapter 3 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*)

who's created a new philosophical teaching style called the Dialogue, in which a small group of people gather and, with Phaeodetes's aid as a facilitator, debate a broad topic like "What is happiness?" He believes this sort of low-stakes debate will help his followers reach new heights of rhetorical skill and learn how to live a balanced, ethical life.

XENOPHIA'S REQUEST

To begin this encounter, read or paraphrase the following:

A small crowd has gathered on the steps of the Pyrgnos, around a white-bearded man. He speaks about complex topics of ethics and philosophy, but he uses simple, understandable words. One person breaks away from the crowd, a woman in a Meletian guard's uniform, and asks to speak with you in private.

Xenophia, upon meeting the characters, pulls them several yards away from the crowd. She believes encouraging adventurers with violent and uncivilized worldviews to participate in her teacher's philosophical Dialogues will bring him great renown in the polis. She jingles a pouch of 50 gp and says that it's theirs if they simply participate in an entire Dialogue and try to unravel a philosophical quandary without resorting to violence.

PHAEODETIC DIALOGUE

If the characters accept, Xenophia points them toward Phaeodetes. The philosopher welcomes them into the crowd with a smile, and engages them in the Dialogue with a simple question, "I see a weapon at your side. Do you enjoy using it to kill?"

The crowd around Phaeodetes goes silent, and all turn to follow the growing Dialogue. Phaeodetes's goal is to get the characters to answer to the question "Is it moral to kill?" He responds to the characters' answers with questions, and he never asks simple yes-or-no questions. He always asks questions that require a complex answer. Here are some questions he might ask over the course of the Dialogue:

- "Why do you say that?"
- "Did what you just say contradict something you said earlier?"
- "Why do you think that's true?"
- "What evidence is there to support that?"
- "Does anyone have a counterargument?"
- "Perhaps, but what would happen if . . .?"
- "Why do you think I asked you that question?"

This method of questioning and answering goes on until the characters have come to a conclusion that's free of contradictions. He isn't looking for an objective truth, but for a coherent philosophy.

Pay attention to your players: if it's clear they're becoming bored or frustrated, move to the next scene immediately.



PHILOSOPHY OF VIOLENCE

Just as the Dialogue concludes (or in the midst of the Dialogue, if the players have lost interest), another group of armed individuals strides into the crowd. They're mercenaries hired by Phaeodetes's philosophical rivals, who want to see his methods eliminated from the polis. They tell the characters to get out of the way so they can "teach this old man a lesson."

These mercenaries are retired Meletian hoplites (see chapter 6 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*). They're also broke, and need the money from their mercenary contract. They don't back down, but they can be knocked out if the characters wish to avoid unnecessary death (see "Knocking a Creature Out" in chapter 9 of the *Player's Handbook*). Phaeodetes heals the characters, but doesn't attack personally. Xenophia also helps defend her mentor.

REWARD

If the characters kill Phaeodetes's assailants, he shakes his head and says, "A massacre like this is a tragedy. My pupil, do you think this bloodshed was fated by the gods?"

If the characters incapacitated the mercenaries without killing them, Phaeodetes smiles and says, "This frightful event could have become a tragedy, my friend. Your mercy may have greater consequences than you know. You're always welcome in my Dialogues."

Regardless of the outcome of the attack, Phaeodetes disperses his pupils in case another attack follows, and Xenophia gives them the 50 gp she promised, plus a *spell scroll* of *zone of truth* she received from her mentor, as a personal token of her thanks.

READ THE ENTRAILS

A scruffy, middle-aged man stands behind a crude, wooden street stall with many caged chickens. He cries out, "Fortunes read for five silver! Results guaranteed!"

If someone pays for his services, he quickly guts a chicken and stares intently at the entrails. Roll a d4 to determine what predictions he makes:

1. You'll soon become involved with one of the gods. When you do, don't act impulsively. Consider your choices carefully or you may regret it.
2. A new opportunity is just around the corner, although it may come in an unusual form. If you act boldly, it will turn out to be very lucrative.
3. An enemy you thought you were rid of will reemerge in your life. You'll need to find a new way to deal with this foe—the old ways won't work.
4. It's time for you to make a big change. You've been thinking about doing something daring, going somewhere you've never been before. Now's the time to act.

ROWDY CROWD

The characters are relaxing in a tavern when a great crowd passes by the window. Roll a d4 to determine who they are:

1. It's the Festival of Purphoros, which the locals celebrate by dashing through the streets being chased by a mechanical bull (use the **animated armor** stat block). As the characters watch, someone slips over and the bull begins to gore them.
2. A group of farmers (including 1d6 + 2 **bandits**) are marching about the collapse in grain prices. As the characters watch, they begin shaking down random strangers on the street.
3. It's an unruly demonstration by the Lexicographical Guild, protesting the decline of grammatical standards. One of them smashes the tavern window and tosses in a burning dictionary, starting a fire.
4. It's a group of local youths (including 1d6 **thugs**) pursuing a purse snatcher. The thief screams for help as they disappear around the corner.

SCAVENGER HUNT

While moving through a polis, the characters pass a nonvocal woman in simple garb sat on the ground, with strange symbols carved in the dirt around her. Any characters who understand thieves' cant recognize the symbols' message: "The path to great treasure starts here."

If approached, the woman maintains an air of mystery and doesn't respond, but if asked about the treasure, she hands over a small metal box. The eight-pointed star of Kruphix adorns one side, and the other side holds the following riddle:

*As Heliod displayed his might,
My fickle mistress fled from sight,
I long again to see her face,
And open my heart to her grace.*

The riddle reveals the **only way to open the box** is to expose it to moonlight. If the characters do so, the box clicks open, revealing a folded map to one of Kruphix's hidden temples of mystery.

SING, O MUSE!

A famous singer, Melpolia Sirensborn, approaches the characters to ask for their help as backstage bodyguards during their next performance. Melpolia has received anonymous letters threatening to ruin their performances, or even kill them, unless they stop expressing their less-than-favorable opinions about certain city officials. It's up to the characters to keep Melpolia from being silenced—in more ways than one.

Melpolia is a nonbinary, human **bard** (see appendix B), but they have no armor or weapons while onstage. Roll a d4 to determine which threat appears during the performance:

1. The statues onstage come to life with a metallic growl. Two **bronze sables** (see chapter 6 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*) charge Melpolia.

2. A **Returned sentry** (see chapter 6 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*) rushes the stage, magically compelled to assassinate Melpolia.
3. A cloaked audience member throws a cloth sack at Melpolia's feet. Four **amphisbaenae** (see chapter 6 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*) emerge from the bag, their tongues flicking eagerly.
4. A large crate backstage emits an ominous barking, then bursts open to reveal a **two-headed cerberus** (see chapter 6 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*). The cerberus rushes onto the stage, where Melpolia tries to hold it at bay as the audience scatters.

STORMCAST EPIPHANY

The characters pass near a shrine of Keranos while the annual Stormcast Festival is underway. During the festival, Keranos might grant a supplicant's desires in exchange for a piece of sea glass. Excited children clamor past the characters on their way to the shrine, each declaring louder than the last how they'll receive Keranos's blessing this year.

Outside the shrine, Kalypso, a cheery sailor down on her luck, is selling sea glass during the festival to make ends meet. Some pieces are genuine, but most are ordinary glass:

"A fisher two villages over traded me this one, insisting it reach someone needier than he. A noble soul. Each piece, only two silver."

Characters with a passive Wisdom (Insight) score of 12 or higher, or who succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check, realize that despite her upbeat demeanor, Kalypso looks drawn. Characters who browse her wares and succeed on a DC 8 Intelligence check using glassblower's tools, a DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) check, or a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check notice most pieces lack the distinctive weathering of sea glass.

Kalypso, a human **swashbuckler** (see appendix B), opens up under questioning, and can be convinced to stop trading with a successful DC 12 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check. Characters who mention Keranos or offer her at least 5 gp have advantage on the check. She promises to give away the remaining sea glass except for the first piece she found, which will be her offering to Keranos.

As the characters leave the shrine, a bolt of lightning strikes Kalypso. If the characters convinced her to stop, all she has to show for it is a small, eye-shaped burn and a cunning plan for a legitimate, new enterprise. If they failed, she's a charred corpse surrounded by a pool of molten glass. The genuine sea glass is strangely unharmed.

THE FALLEN CHAMPION

The Dancing Satyr Theater is poised to start their next production of *The Theriad* in two days but the actor who's supposed to portray the Champion has fallen terribly ill. An emergency casting call has been posted and auditions are being held this evening!

The Dancing Satyr Theater is situated on a hillside off a bustling square in the heart of Akros. As the characters approach the theater, they see a portly gentleman in a vivid green tunic perched atop a pedestal outside the gate crying out over the crowds to promote the upcoming production.

A similarly dressed man stands beside the gate to let in anyone who's arrived for the audition. Once the characters have explained they're interested in auditioning for roles in *The Theriad*, they're ushered through the gates and then through a soaring stone archway into the amphitheater. A female satyr wearing a vest of silk woven through with gold thread stands on the stage before a small crowd of spectators and hopeful performers:

The Theriad is a tale of bravery and mighty prowess. Today, we'll be looking to see what you're each capable of so we can find someone worthy of being our Champion. Fear not though, we also need several musicians to fill out the orchestra for those who possess other skills. Line up if you're here to audition and we'll see what you've got!

As each character approaches the stage, they're able to perform one of several feats in an attempt to impress the theater manager. Consult the chart below for examples, but feel free to add additional suitable feats. Each character must attempt at least five different feats. They gain 1 point for each success, and an additional point if they succeed on a check by 10 or more. Three points are required to land a role. The character with the highest number of points is awarded the role of the champion. Award advantage on rolls for creative roleplay.

- Gladiator Showdown—a DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check.
- Test of Strength—a contested Strength check to defeat the strongman. He has a +6 Strength modifier.
- Duelists' Dance—a DC 18 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check.
- Heroic Speech—a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check.
- Dominion of Archery—a DC 16 Dexterity check.
- Instrumental Performance—a DC 18 Dexterity or Charisma (Performance) check. A character proficient with an instrument has advantage on the check.
- Poetic Words—a DC 16 Charisma (Performance) check.
- Melodic Song—a DC 16 Charisma (Performance) check.



THE STATUE

A well-dressed messenger approaches the characters, asking them to come to the villa of a wealthy man named Deimos. Last night his residence was burgled, and he lost many valuable items, including coin and jewelry. Deimos asks the characters to investigate.

Deimos is very puzzled as his doors and windows are protected by wards that prevent anyone opening them from the outside at night, and those wards are still intact (for safety reasons they do, however, easily open from the inside). He has a single servant, a butler named Nausicaa who's served the family for years.

Deimos notes one other peculiar thing. Although he has several valuable works of art, the only one that's missing is a statue that was delivered the previous day by Ianthe, a sculptor with an exceptional reputation, who's recently moved to the city.

Ianthe's workshop is full of statues, including several works in progress. She's sympathetic but insists she knows nothing about the theft. A character who makes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check discerns that she's lying.

If the characters search the workshop, they find the stolen goods in a small, locked side room. If the characters break into the side room, or confront her about it, Ianthe utters a command phrase and 1d4 statues (use the **animated armor** stat block) come to life and attack the party. Ianthe then retreats to her office.

Once the statues are defeated, Ianthe confesses to the crime. She isn't a sculptor at all, but a thief and an **illusionist** (see appendix B) who disguises herself as a statue to enter her targets' homes. She bought most of the statues in her workshop from other sculptors. She practiced this deception for some years in another city but had to move as the local aristocrats grew increasingly suspicious of her.

TWO WENT OUT

The characters are approached by a woman named Karme. Her brother was recently killed by centaurs while on a business trip with his best friend, who survived the encounter. Karme requires someone to retrieve his remains for burial. Her brother's name was Phrixus, and his friend's name is Menelaus.

When the characters see Menelaus, he tells them that he and Phrixus, who were lifelong friends and partners in a mercantile business, were returning from a business trip to a nearby city and took a shortcut through an old forest. There, they were ambushed by centaurs and Phrixus was killed while Menelaus escaped. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that Menelaus is frightened and is perhaps being misleading.

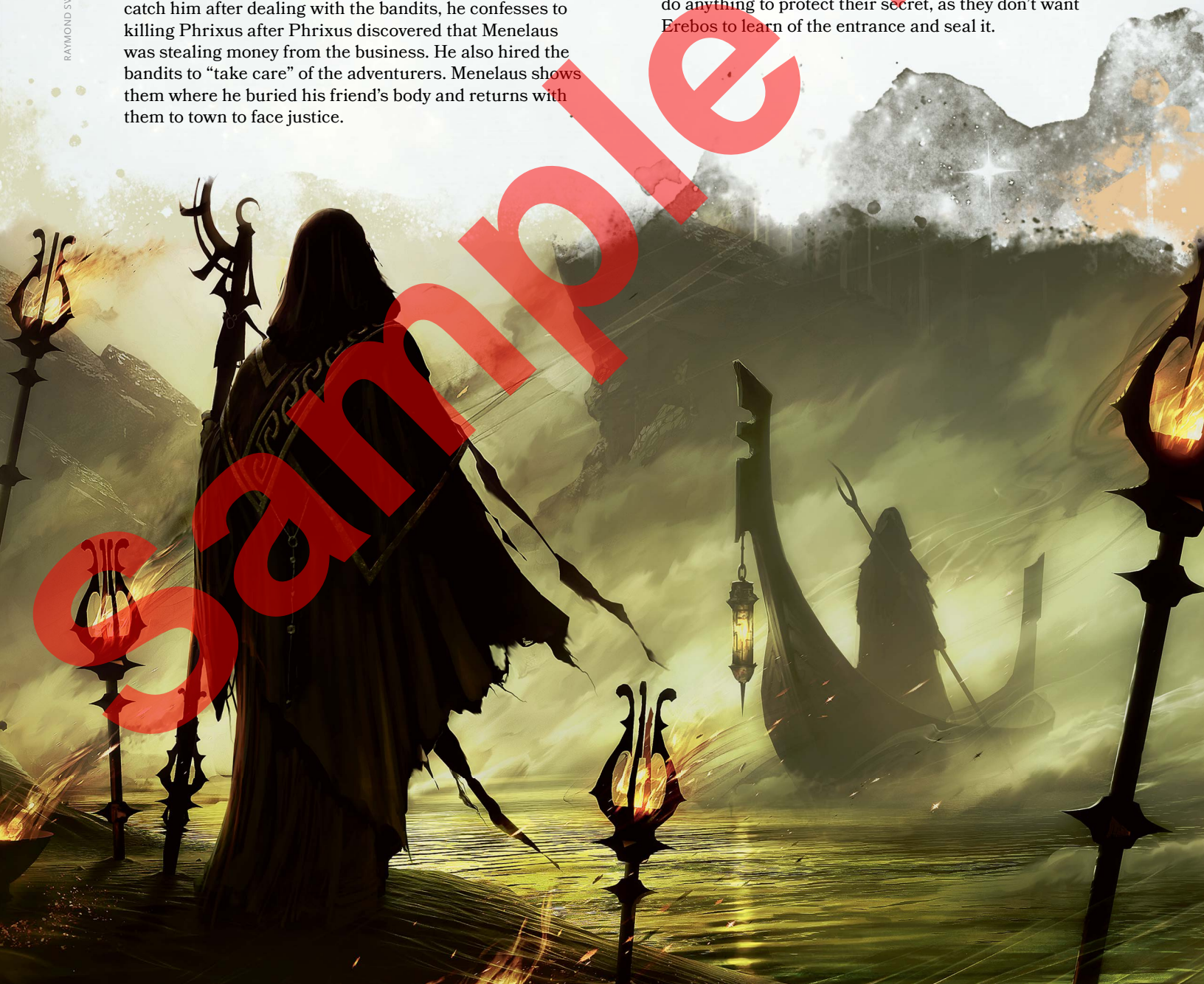
Menelaus doesn't wish to return to the old forest, but finally agrees to show the characters the site of the attack. He's busy with some business affairs at the moment but can take them the following afternoon.

They head out of the city and follow a rarely used track. After walking about five miles, they're ambushed by $1d4 + 4$ **bandits**. Menelaus runs away. If the characters catch him after dealing with the bandits, he confesses to killing Phrixus after Phrixus discovered that Menelaus was stealing money from the business. He also hired the bandits to "take care" of the adventurers. Menelaus shows them where he buried his friend's body and returns with them to town to face justice.

UNDERWORLD ENTRANCE

The characters learn of an entrance to the Underworld within the city. Roll a d4 to determine this entrance's location and the adventure hook associated with it:

1. The entrance is in a graveyard connected to a temple of Erebos. A disguised **night hag** runs the temple, sneaking into the Underworld at night to capture souls and make **shadows** that terrorize the local populace for her own twisted pleasure.
2. The entrance is found at the bottom of a 10-foot-deep well. Characters are asked to explore the well after a child falls in and isn't seen again.
3. The entrance is hidden in the underground section of an abandoned arena. At night, **ghost gladiators** come through the entrance and battle, creating a ruckus. The characters are asked to deal with the haunting.
4. Mysterious figures are seen crawling out of the sewers at night. The officials who ask the characters to investigate think it's part of a criminal enterprise, but it's actually Returned coming through the hidden Underworld entrance in the sewers. The Returned do anything to protect their secret, as they don't want Erebos to learn of the entrance and seal it.



WILDERNESS ENCOUNTERS

The following encounters can occur in the forest, plains, or desert regions of Theros:

WILDERNESS ENCOUNTERS

d20	Encounter
1	Alseid Offering
2	Apothecary
3	Bacchanalia
4	Bardstock
5	Brush with Divinity
6	Dangerous Game
7	Hall of Statues
8	Komast's Cup
9	Lightning Tower
10	My Brother's Reaper
11	Night Runners
12	Paid in Bull
13	Plow Tree
14	Protoporos Practice
15	Pygmechion
16	Satyr Revel
17	Silver Fountain
18	They Might Be Giants
19-20	Too Many Heads

The encounter descriptions are presented in alphabetical order.

ALSEID OFFERING

While traveling through a farming region ten miles or farther outside a polis, the characters wander past a small roadside statue. The statue is ancient, its features worn away by centuries of exposure to the elements. A small stone tray is set at the feet of the statue, filled with bottles of mead, wreaths of wildflowers, and baskets of dates. Placed atop the stack of offerings is a glistening bundle of ten +1 arrows wrapped in golden cord.

Characters that steal from the offerings are attacked by three **alseids** (see chapter 6 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*) who swarm out of the fields sometime before sunset. If you want to make this encounter harder, these alseids are harvestguard alseids, and gain the ability to cast *shield* and *spiritual weapon* at will. This increases their

challenge rating to 2 (450 XP). Their *shields* manifest as visible clouds of grain, and their *spiritual weapons* take the form of scythes.

Characters that add to the offering tray rather than stealing from it are visited by the trio of **alseids** after 1 hour. These alseids bestow a *charm of vitality* upon one of the characters as thanks (see “Supernatural Gifts” in chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

APOTHECARY

A wandering apothecary dressed in robes bearing Pharika's symbol approaches the party. They claim to carry vials of water drawn from Pharika's blessed healing pools. The apothecary has five bottles to sell, priced at 1 gp per vial. When inspected, or subjected to the *identify* spell, these vials of cursed water appear to have the same properties as an ordinary *potion of healing*. Roll a d4 once to determine the nature of these mixtures:

1. Functions as a *potion of healing*, but also gives the drinker rancid breath for the next 3 days. During this time, the character has disadvantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks.
2. Functions as a *potion of poison*.
3. Functions as a *potion of superior healing*.
4. Functions as a *potion of healing*, but the drinker becomes cursed. Over the next 3 days, the drinker's skin turns scaly, their hair falls out, and their eyes become serpentine. At the end of the third day, they transform into a gorgon (use the **medusa** variant in chapter 6 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*). During the three days, *remove curse* or similar spells can stop this change. Once the three days have passed, only a *wish* spell or divine intervention can revert a character to their normal state.

BACCHANALIA

While traveling, strange, lilting music comes from nearby. If the party investigates, they find an pavilion adorned with flowers for a grand party. A group of forty **commoners** play instruments, drink, and dance around the pavilion. Closer inspection reveals these villagers are exhausted, some are barely conscious, and they're completely unable to stop their “celebration.”

Winding through the crowd are five Nyxborn **satyrs** lead by a Nyxborn **satyr thornbearer** (see chapter 6 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*) named Bacchus.

These unfortunate partygoers are villagers from the nearby hamlet of Dionysia, which celebrates the local legend of the party king Bacchus and his band of merry satyrs. While holding a party to celebrate this legend, their collective belief manifested into these Nyxborn visitors. Bacchus and his satyrs have ensorcelled the villagers to celebrate for three days now, and if Bacchus isn't defeated or persuaded to leave, the villagers will perish from exhaustion.

If the heroes try to persuade Bacchus to leave, satyrs have advantage on ability checks made to convince Bacchus.

BARDSTOCK

While traveling, the party spots a collection of tents filled with people celebrating. This event is a festival arranged by satyr dawngreets to celebrate bardic talents. Performers, spectators, wine merchants, and food vendors are all in attendance to enjoy the festivities. If the party approaches, they're welcome to view or join the following events taking place:

Battle of the Bands. Three bands prepare to play a set in the battle of the bands. A character can compete solo, or multiple characters can compete as a band. To determine the winner, each NPC band rolls a d20, and one character per entry rolls a Charisma (Performance) check.

If multiple characters play as a band, have them roll a DC 14 group Charisma (Performance) check first. If the group check is successful, the elected character has advantage on the roll to determine the winner.

Whichever entry rolls highest wins the battle of the bands and is awarded an *instrument of the bards* (*doss lute*).

Amazing Feats. Three performers prepare a variety of acts to showcase their talents. A character who wishes to compete must describe their act then make an appropriate ability check. Some examples of qualifying acts include: juggling with a Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check, lifting a massive statue with a Strength (Athletics) check, or commanding an animal to dance with a Wisdom (Animal Handling) check.

A second character can participate as an assistant for these acts, granting the performer advantage on their roll.

To determine the winner, each NPC rolls a d20, and the performing character makes an appropriate ability check. Whichever performer rolls highest is deemed the best act and wins a *stone of good luck*.

Pie Eating Contest. Twelve commoners prepare to participate in a pie-eating contest. When the contest begins, each participant must succeed on a Constitution saving throw each round to stay in the competition. The saving throw begins at DC 10, and the difficulty increases by 2 each round. Participants who fail a saving throw must withdraw from the contest.

The last participant left in the competition wins. If a tie occurs, use the highest roll of a d20 to determine the victor. The winner of the contest is awarded a *decanter of endless water*.



BRUSH WITH DIVINITY

The characters come across a god disguised as an ordinary traveler when they stop for the night. Roll a d4 to determine the traveler's appearance and divine identity:

1. The traveler is a broad-shouldered, dark-skinned human carrying a spear and shield—Iroas, disguised as a simple soldier.
2. The traveler is an aged, female human wearing a robe embroidered with serpent designs.
3. The "traveler" isn't a humanoid, but a wolf with leaf-green eyes.
4. The traveler is a stout, bearded, male human—the mortal disguise of Keranos.

If a character attacks the traveler, describe how they take the blow without flinching, then raise a glowing hand. The offending character must make a DC 25 Constitution saving throw. On a successful save, they are reduced to 0 hit points. On a failed save, they die. The traveler's form then turns to star-studded darkness and slowly fades away.

GOD OF VICTORY

Iroas invites the characters to make camp with him and swap tales of past battles and exploits. Stoic but friendly, he listens intently to their stories and encourages them to always hold fast to their courage, even when the odds seem insurmountable. In the morning, he's gone, leaving behind a gleaming bronze token engraved with the image of a bull.

GOD OF AFFLICTION

Pharika welcomes the travelers to her campsite and offers them a libation from her kylix (a broad, shallow cup with black and gold designs). If the characters refuse, she merely shrugs, but they may later find themselves the subjects of her ire. If they accept and drink the tangy wine, she leaves behind a *potion of poison* when she departs before dawn.

GOD OF THE HUNT

In her wolfish guise, Nylea boldly pads into the characters' camp to sniff their food or lay by their fire. At your discretion, a druid, a ranger, or a character devoted to Nylea might awaken to find *bracers of archery* or a *longbow of warning* next to their bedroll.

GOD OF STORMS

Caught in an unexpected thunderstorm, the characters find shelter in the covered camp of the disguised Keranos. He invites them to keep him company and offers them a reward if they can solve a puzzle that's been troubling him:

*Who walks at once in shadow and starlight,
Is mortal and yet divine,
A concept and yet a creature?*

The answer (which Keranos knows perfectly well) is the Nyxborn. Let the players answer, or have the characters make a DC 12 Intelligence check. A character with the Nyxborn supernatural gift has advantage on this check.

If the characters answer correctly, Keranos nods solemnly and thanks them. He also gifts them with a clasp in the form of a dragon's skull.

There are no consequences for an incorrect answer, but if the characters answer flippantly or treat the riddle as a joke, Keranos flies into a rage, packs up his belongings, and storms off, leaving the characters in the worsening rain.

DANGEROUS GAME

As the party travels through the forest, an injured rabbit comes hurtling toward them from the trees.

A silky, red rabbit bounds out of the tree line and stops at your feet. It speaks in a shaky voice:

"Please, please hide me. They're coming to kill me. I can lead you to treasure, give you gold, whatever you want. Please, just hide me now!"

This rabbit is Phormos, a hunter who angered Nylea by killing the beasts of the wood without her blessing. She transformed him into a rabbit and set a trio of **Setessan hoplites** (see chapter 6 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*) to hunt him.

The party has a couple of minutes to react before the hoplites arrive in pursuit. If the party concealed the rabbit, the hunters ask them if they've seen the beast, then quickly depart if the characters answer no. If the party haven't hidden the rabbit, the hoplites attack it (Phormos has 1 hit point remaining).

If the party protects the rabbit from the hoplites, Phormos thanks them profusely and can lead them to his cache nearby where he's stashed 200 gp, two *potions of healing*, and a *+1 longbow*.

If the party allows Phormos to live, worshipers of Nylea decrease their piety score by 1 (see "Piety" in chapter 2 of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros*).

HALL OF STATUES

Deep in the forest, the characters discover an overgrown temple of Pharika. Olive trees lean on and twist around the temple's mossy pillars, and a stone altar, carved like writhing snakes, sits in the center of the flagstone floor. The temple is open to the sky, but the tangled vegetation makes the interior gloomy. Inside are six statues of warriors posed in various battle stances.

LIVING STATUES

Three of the statues are alive. These creatures use the **gargoyle** stat block with the following modifications: they can't fly, and they attack with shortswords that deal slashing damage. The statues were bound to this place by an unknown creator, and attack anyone who enters. They attempt to surround their targets, closing in silently whenever the characters are looking elsewhere. A character spots them moving with a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check.

Altar. A stone bowl filled with rainwater rests on the altar. If the water is consumed by a follower of Pharika, it grants the benefits of a *potion of healing*. If consumed by a follower of Nylea, the water has no unnatural properties. To all other creatures, the water is toxic. Those who drink it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or suffer the effects of assassin's blood poison (see "Sample Poisons" in chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Treasure. Each living statue has a gold symbol of Purphoros embedded in the sole of one of its feet, along with a maker's mark: a bull's head with one central eye. The three symbols can be prized out and are worth 40 gp each.

KOMAST'S CUP

Last night, the characters were invited to, or caught up in, a night of good-natured dancing, feasting, and storytelling hosted by a traveling band of revelers led by Nerissa, a satyr dawningreet. As the merciless sun approaches its zenith, the characters, scattered across a field (and its trees and hedges), stir. Nearby, the party's animals and a friendly, but unfamiliar, donkey luxuriate in the sunshine, sporting new straw hats.

Memories creep back: Entertaining. Being entertained. Forfeits and prizes. A best reveler competition. A satyr called Nerissa. The "Komast's Cup." Falling asleep.

Ask the players if and how their characters reveled. Once everyone's answered, characters who revealed make a DC 15 ability check based on their answer. Err toward allowing unusual combinations of abilities and proficiencies, if it makes sense. Here are some examples:

- Body-painting—a Dexterity check using a disguise kit or painter's supplies
- Drinking games—a Constitution check using brewer's supplies or a gaming set
- Feast preparation—an Intelligence check using cook's utensils or an herbalism kit
- God/hero stories—a Charisma (History or Religion) check

On a success, the character who rolled highest realizes they're still cradling an amphora from last night. It's decorated with dancing satyrs and a reclining, female