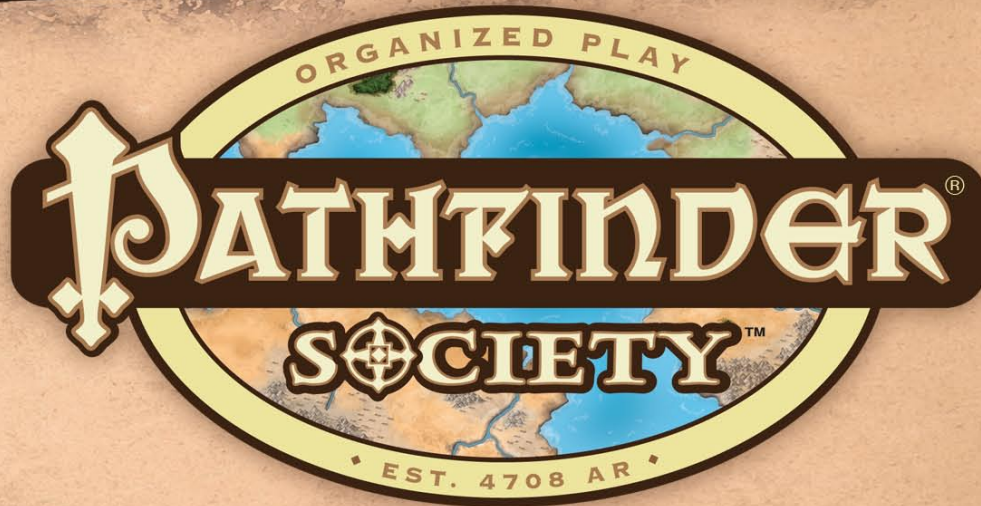


A PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO



ECHOES OF THE EVERWAR, PART IV: THE FAITHLESS DEAD™

By Neil Spicer



ECHOES OF THE EVERWAR, PART IV: THE FAITHLESS DEAD

PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO 53

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The OGL can be found on page 22 of this product.

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ECHOES OF THE EVERWAR, PART IV: THE FAITHLESS DEAD

BY NEIL SPICER

In 4305 AR, Cheliox initiated a series of imperial conquests which eventually became known as the Everwar. At the same time, an enterprising Osirian named Khalfani Zuberi, who'd made his money buying and selling everything from slaves to weapons for Osirion's conquerors (the Qadiri), decided the Everwar presented yet another opportunity to expand his wealth. He gave his three most trusted concubines rings which magically fused to their fingers, allowing him to track their status and general direction even as he sent them to three separate locations across the new Chelish frontier so they could manipulate the Everwar's markets to his advantage. Their untold success brought Zuberi unimaginable wealth, which he put to use finding ways to extend his life and perpetuate his mercantile empire.

In 4307, Zuberi drank his first *sun orchid elixir*, a life-giving potion which the nation of Thuvia sells only a few of each year to the highest bidder—a position virtually assured by Zuberi's riches. This renewed his life even as he continued to expand his holdings. In 4350 AR, however, Zuberi met an ill fate on the road to Thuvia to get another *sun orchid elixir*. A cleric of an Osirian death cult and his hired thugs assaulted Zuberi's caravan and murdered his servants, slaves, and soldiers. They left Zuberi alive and laid a terrible curse upon him. With its completion, Zuberi felt the power of his concubines' rings wink out, his connection to them severed. In his horror, he never realized the severed connection also caused their immediate and untimely deaths. Instead, concerned only for himself, Zuberi felt his own limbs grow tired, his bones become brittle, and his muscles go weak. In essence, the weight of his true age took hold again. The cleric of the death cult then justified his curse to Zuberi, blaming his obsession with living—a heresy to most Osirians. And, since Zuberi wanted life so badly, the priest decided he could have it—forever. But Zuberi would never again be able to drink the youth-giving *sun orchid elixir*—instead, he'd spend eternity as an old man.

The curse also included an overwhelming compulsion, driving Zuberi back to Sothis and making it impossible for him to leave the city. As a result, he collapsed his empire inward, selling off his holdings, and storing

ECHOES OF THE EVERWAR

The Faithless Dead completes the final chapter of a four-part Pathfinder Society arc called *Echoes of the Everwar*. It cannot be played until the players have played the first three parts (#36: *The Prisoner of Skull Hill*, #42: *Watcher of Ages*, and #44: *Terror at Whistledown*), which can be played in any order.

all his wealth in an underground vault within the Necropolis of the Faithful. He also faked his own death, retreating into his tomb of treasure, where he has resided ever since.

Fifty years ago, however, Zuberi's connection to his concubines' rings mysteriously reactivated. With renewed hope, he spent his money consulting every shaman, priest, wizard, or cleric who would listen to him, wanting to know if he could use the connection to the rings to finally lift his curse. An old wizard, a scribe and servant of the Ruby Prince, provided the answer he needed: if he could bring the three rings together again, the wizard could perform a ritual that would undo the curse. Unfortunately, Zuberi no longer knew the location of the rings—so he asked for a second ritual: he wanted the connection's power increased so he could discern exactly where the bodies of his concubines lay. The wizard warned him that doing so could have unforeseen consequences on the resting places of the rings. But Zuberi did not care and offered great wealth to convince the wizard to do it. And so he did.

The locations of his concubines confirmed, Zuberi then concocted a plan to find them and bring their remains back to him in Sothis. It took years to make the right connections, through blackmail, sabotage, and assassination, but finally, in 4709 AR, Zuberi found the right person to help him: Venture-Captain Norden Balentiir of the Sothis Pathfinder Lodge. Through planted clues and paid informants, Zuberi secretly convinced Balentiir to commission Pathfinders who would seek out each location, tasked with retrieving the bodies of the concubines and their artifacts as national treasures. These heroes faced horrific challenges at each

resting place, for the ritual to find the concubines had indeed wrought tremendous damage at each location. But triumphant, the heroes finally returned with the bodies still bearing Zuberi's rings, and unknowingly providing him the means to lift his curse and return to power.

The Followers of Almut

After receiving all three of the concubines' remains, Venture-Captain Balentiir had each one laid to rest in the Necropolis of the Faithful amid great fanfare and celebration in the Osirian capital of Sothis. Soon after, however, Zuberi's minions broke into the sepulcher and stole them away, moving the bodies to his own false tomb so the old wizard could perform the ritual to lift the curse. These actions did not go unnoticed, however.

Through the ages, the original Osirian death cult also persevered. Known as the Followers of Almut, each member carries a charge to ensure Zuberi's punishment endures. Through their divinations, they too sensed the reactivation of the rings—a clear signal the curse could soon end. Unfortunately, the death cultists mistook Venture-Captain Balentiir as an active ally of Zuberi, assuming he knowingly intended to circumvent the curse by sending Pathfinders to find the concubines at his master's behest. After witnessing the theft of the bodies from the Necropolis of the Faithful, the cultists sent a group of assassins to punish the venture-captain and the heroes who returned them to Sothis. At the same time, another band followed Zuberi's minions back to his tomb, determined to stop him before he can undo the curse.

The Faithless Dead

Among the deceased who eventually face Pharsma's judgment, true atheists—the faithless dead—impact the very solidity of their souls, disrupting their natural ability to migrate through the Astral Plane to their final reward. Those who reach Pharsma's Boneyard are locked away in the tombs and graves of her palace to await their fate at the End of Time. But those who resist or flee Pharsma's judgment remain behind as ghosts or spirits on the Material Plane, hiding themselves in places or objects—often emotionally driven to finish some incomplete task.

Thus did Zuberi's concubines—Akila, Kamilah, and Meskhenet—come to exist upon their untimely deaths with the severing of their connection to Zuberi. Hiding their spirits within the weapons and objects they once wielded in his service, they now seethe with rage at his continued existence. For they sense the extension of his life as a result of theirs and they'd like nothing more than to go to their reward in Pharsma's Boneyard—but only if they can take Zuberi with them.

SUMMARY

Venture-Captain Norden Balentiir summons the PCs to the Pathfinder Lodge in Sothis to inform them about the theft of the concubine remains from the Necropolis of the Faithful, and to ask their assistance in tracking them down again. However, before the PCs arrive, the death cultists take Balentiir prisoner and lay a trap for them in retaliation for their perceived alliance with Zuberi. Upon defeating the cultists, and either interrogating the survivors or consulting Balentiir, the PCs learn of Zuberi's curse, his connection to the concubines, and the threat he poses to Osirion and the entire Inner Sea region.

Balentiir suggests they consult an elder gnosphinx named Sekhmanu to help locate the bodies and learn more about Zuberi before opposing him. After impressing the sphinx with gifts of knowledge and an exchange of riddles, Sekhmanu helps the PCs by casting *legend lore* on each of the personal items (sword, staff, and wand) that once belonged to the concubines. This process unleashes their spirits, which manifest and impart additional information about Zuberi and his allies. Then the concubines pledge to aid the PCs by leading them to Zuberi.

Zuberi's tomb lies within the Necropolis of the Faithful. To identify the proper entrance leading from his false burial chamber into the deeper passageways of his treasure-laden stronghold, the PCs must solve a simple puzzle of hieroglyphs. Once inside, they discover the slaughtered remains of the second group of death cultists sent to stop him. Making their way past several traps, they then encounter Zuberi's former slaves and bodyguards, raised from the dead to serve him again. These sentinels exist as living monoliths (a prestige class from *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Osirion, Land of Pharaohs*), imbued with ancient powers and protections from the great sphinxes of a bygone age. Winning past these guardians, the PCs then come face to face with an immense ettin with the heads of a jackal and a falcon, a champion partially possessed by Zuberi's spirit by means of a *magic jar* spell.

If the PCs defeat the guardians, they interrupt Zuberi's wizard before he can complete the ritual, leaving him a frail, dying old man bereft of the life given to him from his concubines. The power of the rings broken, Zuberi withers away, leaving behind only dust and sand.

Recovered Items

At the start of this scenario, you should ask each player to show you the chronicle sheet for the three previous adventures in the *Echoes of the Everwar* series.

Before play begins, make a note for each character detailing whether or not they retrieved the body of the concubine (as noted by the ring checkbox) and the personal item of the concubine in each of the previous adventures (a wand in #36, a *staff of swarming insects* in #42, and a +1 (or +2) *flaming burst keen falchion* in #44). Players receive a bonus later in the adventure for each concubine they helped retrieve in a previous adventure. They do not need to have bought the magic item to receive this bonus.

GETTING STARTED

Read the following to get the adventure underway:

Sothis, throne of the pharaohs, and capital of Osirion, is a city rooted in ancient tradition. Of these, perhaps none is more sacred than funeral rights. As such, it came as no surprise when Venture-Captain Norden Balentiir invited you once again to Osirion's capital for the funerals of three important figures who once played a significant role in their nation's history—a powerful sorceress named Akila, a warrior-woman called Kamilah, and a lady smuggler known as Meskhenet the Wise. As you were involved with retrieving their remains, Balentiir celebrated your success and asked that you remain after the ceremony, while he continued to study these women in an effort to better understand their—and Osirion's—past. Weeks passed, allowing you to rest from your recent exploits and enjoy the wondrous city of Sothis, but your vacation ended when Balentiir sent word, asking for your immediate counsel at the Pathfinder Lodge.

Prior to receiving Balentiir's summons, the PCs should have had an opportunity to receive the missives from their faction contacts. Each benefactor has kept a close eye on Osirion's celebration and many have their own questions about the historical significance of the concubines. Since helping to retrieve the remains, the PCs should also have had ample time to purchase and restock any equipment they need in Sothis. Once Balentiir's messenger departs they should have no trouble reaching the lodge after gathering their things. Since the PCs have been stationed together, they arrive at the lodge as a group.

ACT I: THE PATHFINDER LODGE

The Pathfinder Lodge of Sothis has its own unique past. Once a police station, it actually comprises an entirely walled compound with a two-story structure providing access to a series of underground vaults once used to

house prisoners. Now it serves as a storehouse, barracks, and training facility for Pathfinder agents. The grounds inside the walls contain a variety of trees—date palms, sycamores, and tamarisk—all designed to create a small oasis of tranquility in the city.

The primary structure of the lodge is constructed of fine white limestone blocks. Ceiling height reaches 12 feet in most rooms. The external and internal doors are made of wood, but covered in copper to reinforce them (hardness 5, hp 20, break DC 23). They remain unlocked unless otherwise specified. Common lamps filled with sootless castor oil illuminate each room. And the rooms themselves prove mostly empty since the Followers of Almut have already slain most of the guards, servants, and Pathfinders. The PCs arrive at night, thereby restricting their vision to dim light conditions, as altered by any light sources they bring with them. Lamps and torches illuminate some parts of the compound as noted in each location's description.

1. Courtyard (CR 4)

The main entrance to the Pathfinder Lodge passes through the double doors of an immense archway towering over the 12-foot-high exterior walls surrounding the grounds. The doors stand slightly ajar and unbarred, despite the late hour. Beyond the archway, torchlight illuminates the approach toward a natural garden of shade trees and undergrowth occupying much of the inner courtyard and blocking view of the lodge itself on the far side.

Upon gaining entrance to the compound, the Followers of Almut slew the guards and servants who would otherwise be stationed here, dragging their bodies off into the undergrowth of the gardens. A DC 20 Perception check made by PCs that intentionally look through the doors for signs of trouble spot fresh bloodstains on the pavement and signs of struggle.

Traps: The leader of the cultists cast a *glyph of warding* over the inner archway, set to trigger when any non-follower of their faith passes through. Its activation also warns the cultists at area 2, who hear the *sound burst* without needing to make a check.

GLYPH OF WARDING

CR 4

Type magic; Perception 28; Disable Device 28

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity (*glyph of warding*—triggered by non-followers of Almut death cult); **Duration** instantaneous; **Reset** none

Effect spell effect (spell *glyph*—*sound burst*, 1d8 points of sonic damage to all creatures within 10 feet, creatures also stunned 1 round unless they succeed on a DC 13 Fortitude save)

Sothis Pathfinder Lodge

1. Courtyard
2. Oasis Garden
3. Lodge Entrance
4. Common Room
5. Balentiir's Office

x Assassin



2. Oasis Garden (CR 8 or CR 10)

A large garden of sycamore trees dominates this central courtyard. Strung between them, a wooden framework supports a variety of grapevines and hanging plants, obscuring much of the view ahead. Beneath their shade, dark paths wind through the lush undergrowth.

Servants of the Pathfinder Lodge normally tend this garden oasis, drawing water as necessary from two pools fed by the aqueducts of the River Sphinx to either side. It normally serves as a place of quiet contemplation and rest. At night, however, the garden lies within complete darkness due to the overhead canopy provided by the trees.

The bodies of two guards and two servants have been hidden in the garden. They can be found with a DC 15 Perception check by anyone looking through the bushes. Although they have nothing of value on them, it is obvious from their wounds that they were slain by large blades (such as those carried by the cultists).

Creatures: Two cultists keep watch over the grounds here, hiding within the foliage. Charged with eliminating any more Pathfinders who approach the lodge, they spend prove especially vigilant. If the *sound burst* is triggered at the entry, they are immediately aware of intruders; otherwise they must detect them normally. Once aware of intruders, they immediately begin creating blast runes in squares adjacent to them to damage anyone that approaches them. Any damage dealt to the cultists also alerts their comrades at area 4 due to the *scrolls of status* they used on one another before infiltrating the lodge.

Tier 7–8 (CR 9)

ALMAUT DEATH CULTISTS (2) CR 6

Male human cleric of Almut 5/fighter 2

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; Senses Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 19 (+7 armor, +2 deflection, +1 Dex)

hp 56 each (5d8+2d10+23)

Fort +8, **Ref** +2, **Will** +7; +1 vs. fear

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee masterwork scimitar +10 (1d6+3/18–20), mwk dagger +9 (1d4+3/19–20)

Ranged mwk light crossbow +7 (1d8+1/19–20 plus poison), mwk dagger +6 (1d4+3/19–20)

Special Attacks channel negative energy (3d6, DC 17, 7/day)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +9)

6/day—blast rune (1d6+3 energy damage, 6 rounds), bleeding touch (3 rounds)

Spells Prepared (CL 6th; concentration +9)

3rd—*bestow curse** (DC 16), *glyph of warding** (DC 16), *meld into stone*

2nd—*death knell** (DC 15), *eagle's splendor**, *hold person* (DC 15), *spiritual weapon**

1st—*cause fear*^D (DC 14), *cure light wounds* (2), *deathwatch**, *shield of faith**

0—*bleed* (DC 13), *detect poison*, *read magic*, *stabilize*

D domain spell; **Domains** Death, Rune; *already cast

TACTICS

Before Combat Prior to infiltrating the Pathfinder Lodge, each cultist uses a *scroll of magic vestment* to protect himself and a *scroll of status* to remain aware of one another's condition. They also use *death knell* against the servants and guards they slay. Once alerted by the activation of the *glyph of warding* at the gate (or after observing anyone bypassing it), they cast *deathwatch*, *eagle's splendor*, and *shield of faith* on themselves and place blast runes in the squares around them, preparing for an attack.

During Combat With the power of *deathwatch* to aid them, the cultists fire poisoned bolts at any PC that avoided damage from the *sound burst*. Then, they continue sniping at intruders to draw them to the blast runes in front of them. Thereafter, they draw their scimitars and channel negative energy to wear down opponents, trusting in their *status* effect to warn their colleagues inside the lodge.

Morale The cultists retreat to area 3 after falling below 20 hit points so they can cast *meld into stone* and buy time to heal themselves before renewing the attack.

Base Statistics **AC** 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16; **hp** 52

(5d8+2d10+19); **Melee** masterwork scimitar +9 (1d6+2/18–20), mwk dagger +8 (1d4+2/19–20); **Ranged** mwk dagger +6 (1d4+2/19–20); **Special Attacks** channel negative energy (3d6, DC 14, 5/day); **Domain Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 5th; concentration +8) 6/day—blast rune (1d6+2 energy damage, 5 rounds), bleeding touch (2 rounds); **Spells Prepared** (CL 5th; concentration +8); **Str** 14, **Cha** 10; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 20; **Skills** Intimidate +8

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 12, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 21

Feats Channel Smite, Combat Casting, Extra Channel, Improved Channel, Scribe Scroll, Stealthy, Toughness, Weapon Focus (scimitar)

Skills Heal +7, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (religion) +7, Linguistics +4, Perception +4, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +4, Stealth +6, Survival +7

Languages Common, Osiriani

SQ aura, bravery +1

Combat Gear giant wasp poison (2 doses), *potion of cure moderate wounds*; **Other Gear** masterwork breastplate, masterwork dagger, masterwork light crossbow, 10 +1 bolts, masterwork scimitar, silver holy symbol

Tier 10–11 (CR 10)

ALMAUT DEATH CULTISTS (4)

CR 6

hp 56 each (same as above)

Rewards: If the PCs defeat the death cultists, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 7–8:

Give each player 414 gp.

Tier 10–11:

Give each player 827 gp.

3. Lodge Entrance

Two sphinx statues flank the approach to the main portico of the Pathfinder Lodge. The windowless, white limestone structure rises two-stories, surrounded on all sides by date palm trees, which stir softly in the nighttime breeze. Three copper-bound doors gleam in the light provided by two oil lamps hung from the portico's columns.

Signs of battle mark the steps and support columns of the lodge entrance. A DC 20 Perception check detects the telltale signs of blood from the slain guards dragged inside.

Development: If the cultists retreat from area 2, they make a final stand here, casting *meld into stone* to hide within the sphinx statues or stone columns. While concealed, they heal themselves with any remaining spells before emerging to attack again.

4. Common Room (CR 10 or CR 11)

Two fireplaces struggle to illuminate this large room, but still manage to highlight a woven tapestry of gold and blue silk dominating the west wall. A couple of damaged tables and broken or overturned chairs fill most of the eastern half of the room. In the northeast corner stands a decorative clay urn, while another lies smashed to the south. Burnished copper-bound doors etched with hieroglyphs mark exits along every wall.

This central chamber serves as a gathering place for Pathfinder trainees and visiting dignitaries wishing to meet with Venture-Captain Balentiir. Much of the room lies in shambles now following the death cultists' attack. They also locked the door (Disable Device, DC 25) to Balentiir's office at area 5.

Traps: The cultists placed a *glyph of warding* over the double doors marking the eastern entrance as well as the door leading to area 5.

Creatures: The Followers of Almut fought a prolonged battle here with the Pathfinder trainees, servants, and guards. After disposing of the bodies in the upper bedrooms, they sealed off the stairs to the lower vaults and occupied themselves by interrogating Balentiir in his office. Now, they wait here for the PCs to arrive so they can put them and Balentiir to death for their assumed alliance with Zuberi.

Tier 7–8 (CR 10)

ALMAUT DEATH CULTISTS (3) CR 6

hp 56 each (see page 6)

TACTICS

Before Combat Once alerted by the *status* effect cast on their comrades outside the lodge, the remaining cultists use *meld into stone* to retreat into the walls and prepare an ambush (with one or two cultists at each location marked by an X on the map). When the PCs arrive, the cultists cast *deathwatch*, *eagle's splendor*, and *shield of faith* before emerging to attack.

During Combat The cultists fight with their scimitars, having applied giant wasp poison to the blades for their initial attack. They also use Channel Smite to empower each blow with negative energy, alternating these attacks with spells or their bleeding touch ability, as necessary.

Morale Believing the PCs and Venture-Captain Balentiir serve Zuberi, the cultists fight to the death unless subdued.

GLYPH OF WARDING (2) CR 4

Type magic; Perception 28; Disable Device 28

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity (*glyph of warding*—triggered by non-followers of Almut death cult); **Reset** none

Effect spell effect (spell *glyph*—*bestow curse*, DC 16 Will save negates, –4 penalty on attack rolls, saves, ability checks, and skill checks; single target)

Tier 10–11 (CR 11)

ALMAUT DEATH CULTISTS (6) CR 6

hp 56 each (see page 6)

GLYPH OF WARDING (2) CR 4

(same as above)

Rewards: If the PCs defeat the death cultists, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 7–8:

Give each player 621 gp.

Tier 10–11:

Give each player 1,241 gp.

5. Balentiir's Office (CR 3)

A small oil lamp reveals a bound figure wearing a hood and seated in a chair behind a large wooden desk in this office. Several maps and scrolls lie piled upon a nearby table to the north, positioned across from the open doors of a matching cedar cabinet. The smell of lamp oil fills the air as evidenced by several puddles on the stone floor.

Venture-Captain Balentiir uses this small space as his office. He keeps files and records on previous Pathfinder missions in the cabinet, which the Followers of Almut have removed and dipped in lamp oil in preparation of burning the venture-captain's body in his own office.

Traps: The cultists placed a *glyph of warding* around Balentiir to ensure his cooperation. He's aware of the ward but can do little to warn the PCs since the cultists also gagged him and tied him to his chair before placing the hood over his head. If anyone triggers the *glyph*, it also sets fire to the lamp oil. This destroys the Pathfinder records and automatically catches Balentiir on fire. Any PCs who stepped across the oil-covered floor may also catch fire unless they succeed on a DC 15 Reflex save. Refer to page 444 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* for information on the damage incurred by this situation, as well as how to rescue such victims.

Creatures: Venture-Captain Balentiir is the sole occupant of this room. Tortured and interrogated for the last several hours, he has suffered tremendously at the hands of his captors.

VENTURE-CAPTAIN NORDEN BALENTIIR

hp 112 (currently 25)

GLYPH OF WARDING CR 3

Type magic; Perception 28; Disable Device 28

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity (*glyph of warding*—triggered by non-followers of Almut death cult); **Reset** none

Effect spell effect (blast *glyph*—*glyph of warding*, 3d8 fire damage, DC 16 Reflex save for half damage); multiple targets (all targets within 5 feet of intruder who activates the *glyph*)

Development: Once rescued, Balentiir thanks the PCs for saving his life. Even if the PCs don't manage to capture or interrogate any of the cultists, he can

provide them with the information he learned from them, and also shares the news about the theft of the concubines' remains from the Necropolis of the Faithful. Note that if the PCs failed to recover the bodies of any of the concubines in the previous adventures in this series, Balentiir had them recovered at a later date by other Pathfinders. If this is the case, adjust these answers accordingly. He answers their most likely questions as follows:

Who are these attackers? "They called themselves the Followers of Almut."

Why did they attack you? "They claimed I must be an ally of Khalfani Zuberi, some Osirian merchant they believe poses an extreme danger to the entire region of the Inner Sea. They said he would use the rings from the concubine bodies you retrieved to undo some kind of curse and restore himself to power."

Why did you send for us? "The concubine bodies were recently stolen from the Necropolis of the Faithful. Until now, I had no idea who might have done such a thing, but this Khalfani Zuberi they described sounds like he might be our man."

What should we do? "Stop him, of course. Get those bodies back and find out who he is and what he wants with them."

How will we find him and the bodies? "Do you remember those items you found when you recovered the bodies, right? There's a sphinx who watches over the Necropolis of the Faithful named Sekhmanu. I will give you the items and you should take them to her. She can divine the location of their previous owners—even if they're dead. She's often helped us research such historical artifacts to find the burial places of those who made or carried things we've unearthed. But be careful. Sekhmanu's a little eccentric sometimes. She'll want to play a bit before she agrees to aid you." Note that if the PCs have any other items in their possession, you should change this text accordingly. If none of the PCs possess the items, they gain the following: Akila's wand, which is non-magical, Kamilah's *+1 flaming burst keen falchion* (+2 for Tier 10-11), and Meskhenet's *staff of swarming insects* (3 charges).

Mission Notes: If any cultists are captured and interrogated, Qadira faction PCs may also ask them about the secret stronghold of the Followers of Almut. A successful DC 30 Diplomacy or DC 20 Intimidate check obtains the necessary information, thereby earning the Prestige Award for that mission. Osirion faction PCs who inquire about Isthemes may learn he accompanied the cultists who followed after Zuberi's minions and the bodies of the concubines. This requires a DC 25 Diplomacy check or a DC 20 Intimidate check.

ACT 2: DIVINATIONS OF THE SPHINX

Under the advice of Venture-Captain Balentiir, the PCs should next find their way to the Necropolis of the Faithful to consult the elder sphinx, Sekhmanu, about the concubine bodies. Along the way, they may ask their contacts or the local citizens about her as well as the necropolis. Osirion faction PCs gain a +2 circumstance bonus on these checks. Consult the sections below for the results of such inquiries.

Diplomacy (gather information)—Necropolis of the Faithful

15+ Built on the original grounds of the High Temple of Pharasma, the Necropolis of the Faithful has served as one of Garund's oldest places of burial for thousands of years.

20+ Living relatives and servants of those laid to rest in the necropolis often pay their respects to the deceased by leaving gifts and offerings in their memory. Pharasmin priests and their sphinx allies maintain and guard the grounds.

25+ The Necropolis of the Faithful closes at night, but many have noticed strange, shadowy figures moving among the tombs. The Pharasmins have allayed any fears of undead behind these shadows. But, many speculate about their origin, with some suggesting sphinxes, cultists, or the Pharasmins themselves moving about the tombs for some unknown purpose.

30+ A recent visitor to the necropolis saw heavily armed, black-garbed priests approach the southern entrance last evening. None wore the markings of a Pharasmin.

Knowledge (history)—Sekhmanu

15+ Sekhmanu is a legendary gynosphinx who watches over the tombs of the necropolis, aiding the temple of Pharasma as a potent guardian. She's provided this service for hundreds of years.

20+ Sekhmanu loves to collect riddles and knowledge of faraway lands and cultures. Outside of conversing on these subjects, she seemingly resents all other contact. Rumors suggest she feasts on the bodies of those who displease her and adds their bones to the burial chambers of the tombs she guards.

25+ Sekhmanu is actually an elder sphinx devoted to Pharasma with potent divination abilities. Adventurers have sought her assistance over the years in obtaining information about people (living or dead) and their artifacts.

30+ An obscure passage in the *Pathfinder Chronicles* states a group of Pathfinders once aided a sphinx named Sekhmanu hundreds of years ago, rescuing her from a terrible fate.

RIDDLES OF THE SPHINX

Sekhmanu has gathered a variety of riddles over her long lifespan, from simple to complex. She asks the following riddles to test the PCs' cunning, intellect, and resolve.

Riddle #1: "The more you take from me, the larger I become." *Answer:* A hole.

Riddle #2: "When nature cries, my walls arise, supporting nothing, stopping nothing, until the light of day, sends me away." *Answer:* A fog bank.

Riddle #3: "Feed me and I live. Give me water and I die." *Answer:* Fire.

Riddle #4: "No sooner am I spoken than I'm broken." *Answer:* A promised secret.

Riddle #5: "I'm the part of a bird that's not in the sky. I can swim in oceans, yet I'm always dry." *Answer:* A shadow.

Riddle #6: "At night they come without being fetched. By day they are lost without being stolen." *Answer:* The stars.

Riddle #7: "I'm all about, but cannot be seen. I can be captured, but never held. Cannot speak, but can be heard." *Answer:* The wind.

Riddle #8: "What does a man love more than life and fear more than death? The poor have it. The rich require it. A contented man desires it. And all men carry it into the Great Beyond." *Answer:* Nothing.

Consulting Sekhmanu (CR 9)

When the PCs arrive at the Necropolis of the Faithful, the priesthood of Pharasma can direct them to the lair of Sekhmanu. The sphinx makes her home atop the rocky hills and monuments overlooking the tombs and river below. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs approach the hills.

A steep climb from the Crimson Canal into the sun-drenched cliffs above Sothis finally reveals the High Temple of Pharasma and the Necropolis of the Faithful. Time-worn monuments and obelisks rise from within like silent sentinels marking the tombs and vaults of ancient Osirion. A challenging roar soon interrupts their quiet vigil, however, as mighty wings lift a creature of frightening ferocity into view. With the body of a lion and the head and torso of an Osirian queen, it perches upon the weathered base of a toppled statue with its claws extended. "Who dares trespass here?" it demands with a guttural snarl. "Speak now! Answer Sekhmanu or test your fate!"

Despite the sphinx's bravado, Sekhmanu takes a cat-like interest in visitors to her part of the necropolis. As long as the PCs quickly state their purpose, her attitude starts out as Indifferent. Otherwise, she remains Unfriendly. In the course of their discussion, the PCs can sway her to become more helpful if they participate in

her game of riddles, or if they offer some historical or cultural knowledge she finds interesting in exchange for her assistance.

To convince Sekhmanu to aid them, the PCs must improve her attitude to helpful with a Diplomacy skill check. The needed result for doing so starts out as DC 24 if Sekhmanu is indifferent, or DC 29 if she proves unfriendly. The PCs can earn a cumulative +2 circumstance bonus on the Diplomacy check for each of Sekhmanu's riddles they manage to solve. Likewise, if the PCs identify themselves as Pathfinders, they immediately receive an additional cumulative +5 circumstance bonus. Sekhmanu also trades in information, craving news and insight into faraway lands and cultures. Each PC may make a DC 15 Knowledge (geography) or Knowledge (history) skill check to share some new piece of information with the sphinx to gain another cumulative +2 circumstance bonus, as well. If the PCs still fail to convince Sekhmanu, they can return to Balentiir and request his help. This guarantees the sphinx's support.

Creatures: Sekhmanu originally lived thousands of years ago, predating much of Osirion's history all the way back to the Qadiri occupation of Sothis. Unfortunately, a powerful wizard turned her to stone when she opposed the Qadiri and Sekhmanu weathered the passage of time for centuries as little more than a statue. Several years ago, however, a Pathfinder explorer found and restored her. Since then, she has studied the doctrine of Pharasma in gratitude for her change of fate. In addition, she frequently aids Osirian Pathfinders in their research, but only after making them earn such assistance by honing their wits in a contest of riddles or sharing what knowledge they've gained in the course of their travels so she can fill in the historical events and knowledge she missed while petrified.

SEKHMANU

CR 9

Advanced gynosphinx (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 257, 294)

hp 126

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Insight of the Oracle (Sp) As an esteemed oracle of Pharasma,

Sekhmanu may also cast *Speak with Dead* and *Discern Location* once per day as spell-like abilities, but only when asking questions about those who have died or while trying to locate their physical remains. Sekhmanu must still have seen such creatures or have some item once belonging to them to use this power.

Manifest Spirits

After successfully persuading Sekhmanu to aid them, the sphinx casts *Legend Lore* on the objects once belonging to Zuberi's concubines—Akila's wand, Kamilah's falchion, and Meskhenet's staff. If the PCs don't possess these objects, consider having Balentiir provide them as part of

the collected relics the Pathfinders held for study. Akila's wand is a nonmagical item she once selected as her arcane focus. Kamilah's item is a *+1 flaming burst keen falchion* at Tier 7–8, but the enchantment rises to +2 for Tier 10–11. Meanwhile, Meskhenet's item is a *staff of swarming insects*. Because the concubines' spirits also retreated into these objects, Sekhmanu's spell actually causes them to manifest in the course of her ritual. Read the following to describe this scene:

Sekhmanu's chant abruptly ends as the sphinx recoils with a flurry of her wings. Even as she withdraws, an eldritch mist seeps from the items laid before her. "What trick is this?" the sphinx demands, "These artifacts carry faithless spirits within... godless creatures who should have journeyed to the Boneyard long ago!" No sooner has she spoken these words than the pillars of mist coalesce into translucent images of three young women garbed in the raiment of Osirian concubines. Each one bears a distinctive ring upon her hand which glows with an angry red radiance.

After manifesting, the concubines remain disoriented for a moment before allowing the PCs to question them. They answer all questions in unison, a chorus of voices. The answers to the most likely questions are as follows.

Who are you? "Akila, Kamilah, and Meskhenet. The concubines of Khalfani Zuberi."

Who is Zuberi? "A powerful merchant from long ago. He once ruled a shadow empire of businesses and foreign interests, many coordinated by us. Through them, he became one of the wealthiest men in the world. And he used that wealth to live an unnaturally long life, extending it through magical means with *sun orchid elixirs* bought in Thuvia."

Are you still loyal to Zuberi? "Our loyalty never stemmed from a sense of devotion. He ensured it with these rings. Though they are fused to our bones, they cling to our spirits as well. Through them, we are linked to Zuberi. And he to us."

Do you know where your bodies are? "They lie not far from here. In the tombs to the south. We can guide you there if you promise to help us."

How can we help you? "Zuberi must die by our hand for us to find rest. We'll help you if you agree to let us possess your bodies and act through you when you face him."

How would your possession work? "You must perform a simple ritual while holding one of our items. Akila can show you. But it will only work once for each of us. That's because a connection still exists between our spirits and our bodies. We are torn between two places and can only exist here and help you for a short time. You will not lose control during this possession, but we will be able to aid you more directly."

SPIRITUAL POSSESSION

By performing a simple ritual that requires a standard action in combat, PCs holding one of the concubines' items may summon their spirits to possess them. Each concubine then aids that PC with a variable effect corresponding to their item, as described below. Note that these bonuses are in addition to those granted by the spirits in the fight against Zuberi.

Akila's Wand—The sorcery of Akila's spirit grants the PC she possesses the ability to immediately recall one spell of 3rd level or lower that they just cast once per day as if using *mnemonic enhancer*. In addition, she grants a protective ward to all PCs within a 10-foot radius centered on the possessed PC which grants a +3 deflection bonus to AC and a +3 resistance bonus on all saving throws for 5 rounds.

Kamilah's Falchion—The warrior-woman's rallying presence empowers each PC with a *greater heroism* effect, granting them a +4 morale bonus on attack rolls, saves, and skill checks, immunity to fear effects, and 12 temporary hit points for the next 12 minutes.

Meskhenet's Staff—The power of Meskhenet's spirit provides the PC she possesses the effects of a *death ward* for 12 minutes. In addition, she grants fast healing 5 to each PC within a 10-foot radius centered on the possessed PC for 5 rounds.

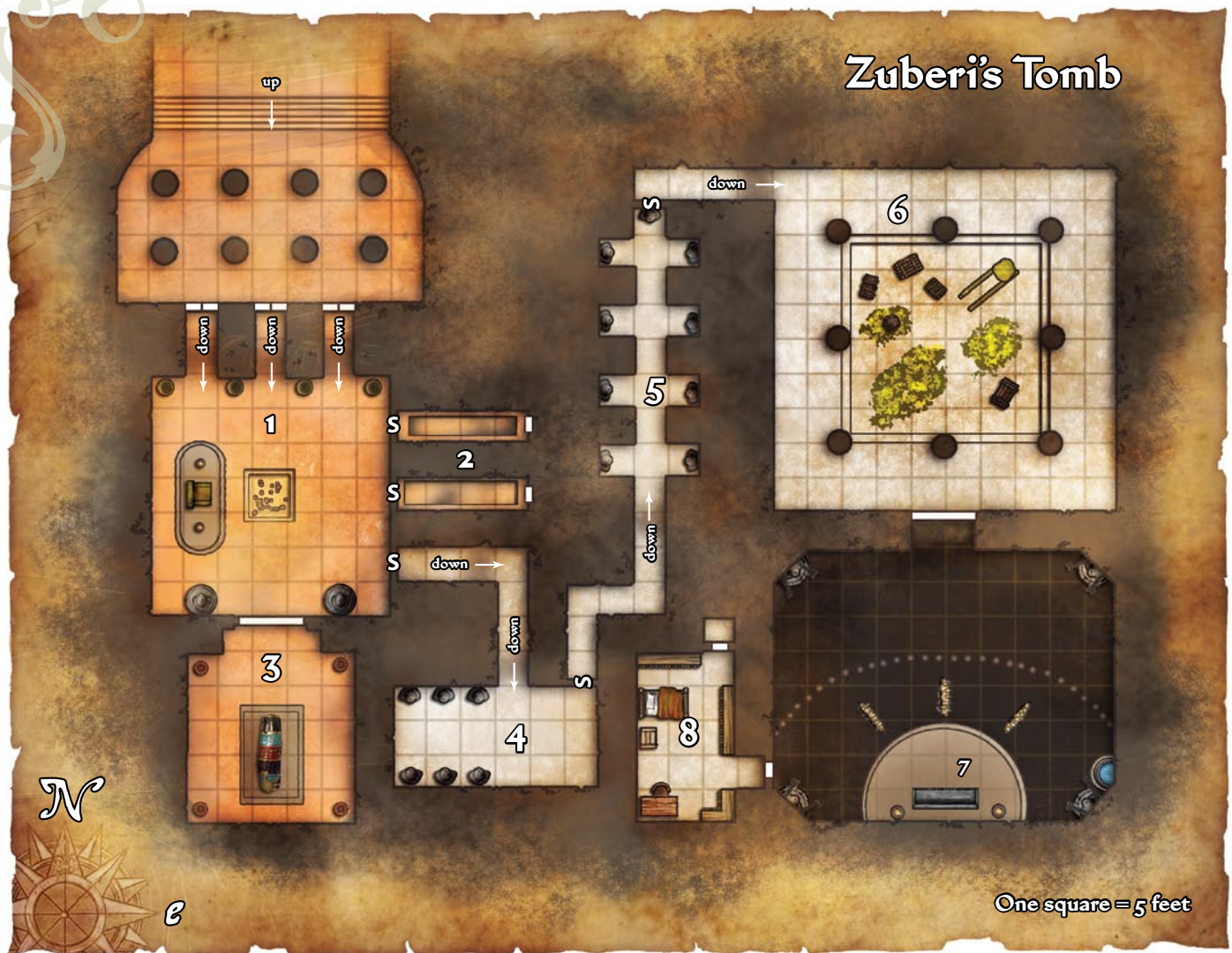
What does Zuberi want with your bodies? "He cares nothing for our physical remains. He only desires our rings. They will help him revoke the curse which leaves him aged and infirm. Soon he will restore his youth and reclaim his power."

Mission Notes: Andoran faction and Cheliox faction PCs can learn further information about the concubines by agreeing to allow one of them to possess their bodies, as the overlay of senses and memories grants them this insight automatically. Otherwise, Cheliox faction PCs can ask the concubine Meskhenet about her activities in their homeland, if they wish. Or Andoran faction PCs can converse with all three spirits to better understand their historical significance. A DC 20 Diplomacy check garners enough information to earn the Prestige Awards for these missions.

ACT 3: ZUBERI'S TOMB

When Zuberi fully understood the limitations of the curse imposed on him by the Followers of Almut, he despaired he would live out the rest of his days as an invalid, unable to defend against the many enemies he'd made over the years. Feeble and afraid, he collapsed his empire inward so he could commission a large tomb in the Necropolis of the Faithful to hide and protect

Zuberi's Tomb



himself. Then, he spread word he didn't expect to live much longer and faked his own death, retreating into the safety of the hidden tomb.

The complex itself consists of a throne room surrounded by images and artistic representations of Zuberi's former influence on Osirion. A false burial chamber completes the illusion of his final resting place; however, a secret passage off the throne room leads deeper underground to Zuberi's vaults and actual living quarters. The construction of the false tomb uses pink granite, whereas Zuberi's subterranean retreat relies more on the white limestone used extensively throughout the Necropolis of the Faithful. Except where noted otherwise, ceilings reach a height of only 8 feet and the passageways remain dark and silent. Minor shafts no larger than 6 inches in diameter permeate most of the complex to improve the circulation of fresh air.

The spirit of Meskhenet the Wise can guide the PCs to the correct tomb. Read the following when they approach the entrance:

Alabaster steps ascend an elevated platform under the shade of a solid stone roof supported by eight thick columns, each one carved in the likeness of a bearded Osirian councilor. Along the far wall, three sets of golden double-doors await, each inscribed with intricate hieroglyphs.

Any PCs capable of speaking Osiriani or those who succeed on a DC 20 Linguistics check can decipher enough of the hieroglyphs to recognize its proclamation as the final resting place of Sahib ul-Makam al-Rafi Khalfani Zuberi. The honorific Sahib ul-Makam al-Rafi simply means "Holder of the Eminent Position," an ostentatious title Zuberi used to refer to himself at the height of his power. The doors remain unlocked and open to reveal sloped passageways descending into the tomb.

1. Antechamber

The sloped passageway descends ten feet before opening into a large 35-foot-square chamber. Four decorative clay urns stand beside each entrance along the north wall. To the west,

an alabaster throne inlaid with gold, lapis lazuli, and carnelian stones sits upon a raised dais flanked by two bronze braziers. The throne overlooks a miniature model of buildings and structures in the center of the room, portraying the city of Sothis. To the south, two statues with the heads of jackals stand with stone glaives in their hands by a huge stone door engraved with the symbol of an all-seeing eye. Hieroglyphs also cover the entire eastern wall, reaching all the way to the chamber's 20-foot ceiling. The images depict scenes of everyday life in ancient Osirion.

Zuberi had this anteroom constructed to serve two purposes, namely to impress visitors with his status and wealth, but also to serve as a place for others to honor him by leaving gifts. To say no one thought highly enough of him to do the latter would be an understatement. Instead, Zuberi paid petitioners over the years to deliver food and drink to him in the form of such offerings.

The symbol on the massive stone door to the south serves as Zuberi's personal emblem and supposedly identifies his final resting place. Lifting the door requires a DC 20 Strength check and it lowers once again unless braced.

The hieroglyphs on the eastern wall actually mark three separate secret doors. Each set of hieroglyphs corresponds to a different age in Zuberi's life. The northernmost door has glyphs depicting his childhood. The middle (and most prominent of the scenes) shows Zuberi as a middle-aged man. And the southernmost door displays glyphs of an elderly man. Zuberi chose to hide the entrance to his secret vault behind the last door. It requires a DC 25 Perception check to find each door. An *arcane lock* secures them (DC 20 Disable Device, hardness 8, 60 hp, Break DC 38).

Mission Notes: Andoran faction PCs who study the miniature model of Sothis can gain insight into the location of buildings and structures used to support the slave trade in ancient Osirion during the Qadiri occupation with a DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) skill check. This earns them the Prestige Award for that mission.

2. Trapped Passageways (CR 8 or CR 10)

A 40-foot-long hallway extends down a narrow passage, ending at a stone door. The door's surface bears a bas-relief of an Osirian nobleman holding a scepter of authority.

Traps: Each of these passageways ends at a seemingly locked false door. Anyone attempting to open any of these doors triggers a deadly pit trap, which also automatically shuts the secret door leading to area 1 unless prevented from doing so with a spike or heavy object weighing more than 5 pounds

with hardness 5 or greater. Alternatively, a PC outside the pit trap may attempt to hold or stop the secret door from closing with a DC 20 Strength check each round. At Tier 10–11, the chamber also fills with insanity mist, affecting everyone in the corridor and in the pit as soon as the pit opens.

Tier 7–8 (CR 8)

CAMOUFLAGED SPIKED PIT TRAP CR 8

Type mechanical; Perception 25; Disable Device 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect 50-ft.-deep pit (5d6 falling damage); pit spikes (Atk +15, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d6+5 damage); DC 20 Reflex avoids; multiple targets (all targets in 40-ft.-long corridor)

Tier 10–11 (CR 10)

CAMOUFLAGED SPIKED PIT TRAP CR 8

(same as above)

INSANITY MIST TRAP CR 8

Type mechanical; Perception 25; Disable Device 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset repair

Effect poison gas (insanity mist); never miss; onset delay (1 round); multiple targets (all targets in 40-ft.-long corridor and pit trap)

3. False Tomb

This 25-foot-square chamber contains a large sarcophagus lying on a raised dais of granite. Its surface includes tracings of gold, carnelian, and black onyx. Four green urns with wax seals rest in each corner.

Zuberi filled this sarcophagus with the body of a trusted servant named Ramehotep, who perished hundreds of years ago. The servant often posed as Zuberi, as he bears a striking resemblance to the man. Once he has his curse removed, Zuberi plans to resurrect Ramehotep.

Mission Notes: Cheliox PCs who examine the wax-sealed urns can find enough embalming oil to ship back to their faction leader, thereby earning the Prestige Award for that mission.

4. Concubine Catacombs

This winding, downward slope enters a 15-foot-by-30-foot hall. To the west, two lines of upright sarcophagi face one another along the north and south walls. To the east lies a diamond-shaped table of black basalt, bearing six ornate masks of gold decorated with semiprecious stones.

This catacomb serves as the final resting place for six of Zuberi's other concubines. None warranted the honor of Akila, Kamilah, and Meskhenet, but Zuberi had their remains placed here anyway. Now, he worries over the decision to restore them to life by resurrection or curse them with undeath as mummified guardians. A secret door (DC 25 Perception check to find) lies hidden in the northeast corner.

Mission Notes: Taldor PCs who take one of the concubine masks from the table can fulfill the Prestige Award for that mission.

5. Hall of Servants

This 50-foot-long corridor contains several dark alcoves. On the floor between them lie six black-garbed figures, surrounded by scattered weapons and a pool of blood.

This hall contains nine upright sarcophagi that once contained the remains of Zuberi's devoted bodyguards, mummies charged with preventing anyone from going any farther into Zuberi's sanctum. The last sarcophagus to the north hides a secret door (DC 25 Perception check to find).

Creatures: The second team of death cultists met their end in this passageway, cut down by Zuberi's mummy and living monolith guardians. A DC 15 Perception check notices one of these cultists still lives (stable at -3 hit points). If healed and made conscious, he reveals himself as Isthemes, the nephew of Amenopheus, the Sapphire Sage. If the PCs share their intention to find Zuberi and end his threat, Isthemes describes the mummies and living monolith guardians to them, explaining that he saw the living monoliths leave this chamber before losing consciousness, heading to the north through a hidden door.

Tier 7–8 (CR 10)

MUMMIES (6) CR 5

hp 60 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 210)

Tier 10–11 (CR 11)

ADVANCED MUMMIES (6) CR 6

hp 76 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 210, 294)

Mission Notes: Osirion faction PCs who ensure Isthemes survives may further convince him to abandon the Followers of Almaut with a DC 20 Diplomacy check, thereby gaining the Prestige Award for that mission. Qadiri PCs may also interrogate Isthemes about the stronghold used by the Followers of Almaut, learning its location with a DC 20 Diplomacy

or Intimidate check and earning the Prestige Award for that mission.

6. Treasure Vault (CR 10 or CR 11)

Eight stone columns support the 30-foot-high vaulted ceiling in this massive square chamber. Between them lies a sunken floor filled with treasure encompassing several piles of coins, ornate chests, art and trade goods, arms and armor, and even a gilded chariot. To the south stands a set of bronze double doors engraved with the image of a single eye. These doors stand open, but a shimmering field of faint blue light stands between them. In the chamber beyond, you can see a strange black vault in which a mysterious and horrific ritual is underway.

When Zuberi cashed in the accumulated wealth of his far-flung merchant empire, he placed it within his tomb to keep it close at hand. And, since the reactivation of his concubines' rings, he's spent half that fortune on the rituals to locate their bodies, plant information to ensure the Pathfinders would retrieve them, resurrect his most loyal servants, and surround himself with guardians while he undergoes the arcane process to end his curse. Even then, the vault still holds an amazing amount of riches. The treasure-filled area between the support columns acts as difficult terrain for anyone attempting to cross it.

While Zuberi is physically in area 7, his spirit is here. The ritual to restore his youth is underway and it is a delicate process. The wizard performing the ritual had to cast Zuberi's spirit out of his body or it would be destroyed by the dangerous magic at work. While the ritual is underway, his spirit resides within one head of an ettin guardian that waits in this room. Should that body be destroyed, Zuberi's spirit would be forced back into his real body, ruining the ritual as noted in area 7. The doorway to area 7 is blocked by a *wall of force*, but that barrier is shattered if Zuberi is forced to return to his body.

Creatures: Zuberi keeps his most powerful guardians here to watch over his treasure vault. More recently, he entrusted them to guard the doors granting access to the ritual chamber at area 7. They attack as soon as anyone enters.

The spirits of the three concubines manifest themselves at the very start of this fight, each one pointing at the ettin and calling out Zuberi's name, before swirling around the PCs and vanishing into their chosen item. See the sidebar on page 11 for details on the benefits of the PCs allowing themselves to be possessed by one of the spirits.

Tier 7–8 (CR 11)

ZUBERI-POSSESSED ETTIN**CR 9**

Male ettin (possessed by rogue 10)

LE Large humanoid (giant)

Init +0; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +12**DEFENSE****AC** 19, touch 9, flat-footed 19 (+2 armor, +8 natural, –1 size)
(+3 dodge vs. traps)**hp** 73 (10d8+28)**Fort** +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3; +3 vs. traps**Defensive Abilities** evasion, trap sense +3, improved uncanny dodge**OFFENSE****Speed** 40 ft.**Melee** 2 mwk flails +13/+13/+8/+8 (2d6+6)**Ranged** 2 javelins +6/+1 (1d8+6)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Special Attacks** sneak attack +5d6, superior two-weapon fighting**Rogue Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 10th; concentration +13)3/day—*read magic*2/day—*magic missile***TACTICS****Before Combat** Zuberi gives the ettin a *potion of false life* to drink before standing guard outside the ritual chamber.**During Combat** Under the influence of Zuberi's possessing spirit, the ettin holds back while the living monoliths engage PCs first, casting *magic missile* or throwing javelins instead. Zuberi then readies the ettin's flails and directs him into flanking situations where he can use his sneak attacks to maximum effect.**Morale** Zuberi forces the ettin to fight to the death.**Base Statistics** CE Large humanoid (giant); **Init** +3; **AC** 18, touch 8, flat-footed 18; **hp** 65; **Fort** +9, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5; **Defensive Abilities** none; **Ranged** 2 javelins +5 (1d8+6); **Special Attacks** superior two-weapon fighting; **Spell-Like Abilities** none; **Dex** 8, **Int** 6, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 11; **CMD** 23; **Feats** Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun, Iron Will, Power Attack; **Skills** Handle Animal +8, Perception +12; **Racial Modifiers** +4 on Perception; **Languages** pidgin of Giant, Goblin, and Orc**STATISTICS****Str** 23, **Dex** 10, **Con** 15, **Int** 17, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 16**Base Atk** +7/+2; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 24**Feats** Leadership, Magical Aptitude, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Vital Strike, Weapon Finesse**Skills** Acrobatics +4 (+8 jump), Appraise +16, Bluff +16, Diplomacy +16, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (history) +12, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (nature) +6, Knowledge (nobility) +6, Knowledge (planes) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Linguistics +10, Perception +12, Sense Motive +13, Sleight of Hand +9, Spellcraft +10, Stealth +5, Use Magic Device +20**Languages** Common, Draconic, Giant, Kelish, Osiriani, Sphinx, Terran, Vudrani**SQ** rogue talents (bleeding attack* +4, combat trick, major magic,

minor magic, opportunist), trapfinding, trap sense +3

Combat Gear *potion of false life* (already drank); **Other Gear**

leather armor, masterwork flails (2), javelins (4)

SPECIAL ABILITIES**Superior Two-Weapon Fighting (Ex)** Due to his partial possession of only one of the ettin's heads, Zuberi still gains access to its superior two-weapon fighting style. As such, the ettin can still fight with a flail or javelin in each hand and, because each head controls one arm, the ettin does not take a penalty on attack or damage rolls for attacking with two weapons. Zuberi can also apply his combat feats and sneak attack abilities to the attacks controlled by his head.**ENLARGED LIVING MONOLITH GUARDS (4)****CR 5**

Male human fighter 5/living monolith 1

N Large humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6**DEFENSE****AC** 17, touch 10, flat-footed 16 (+7 armor, +1 Dex, –1 size)**hp** 62 each (5d10+1d8+31)**Fort** +7, **Ref** +2, **Will** +4; +2 vs. death effects, mind-affecting effects, and saves against negative levels, +1 vs. fear**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** mwk falchion +11 (2d6+9/18–20)**Ranged** javelin +5 (1d6+4)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 6th; concentration +5)3/day—*enlarge person***TACTICS****Before Combat** Each living monolith drinks a *potion of darkvision* and a *potion of false life* to prepare itself while standing guard during Zuberi's ritual.**During Combat** At the first sign of trouble, the living monoliths invoke their *enlarge person* ability to grow to Large size, then wade into melee, wielding their falchions two-handed for maximum cleaving power.**Morale** The living monoliths fight to the death, trusting in Zuberi to raise them once more if they prove themselves worthy.**Base Statistics** Medium humanoid (human); **Init** +2; **Senses** Perception +6; **AC** 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17; **Melee** mwk falchion +11 (2d4+7/18–20); **Ranged** javelin +7 (1d6+3); **Str** 17, **Dex** 14**STATISTICS****Str** 19, **Dex** 12, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 21**Feats** Cleave, Endurance, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (falchion), Weapon Specialization (falchion)**Skills** Acrobatics +5, Climb +6, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (engineering) +5, Knowledge (history) +5, Knowledge (religion) +5, Linguistics +4, Perception +6, Sense Motive +5, Survival +5**Languages** Common, Osiriani, Sphinx**SQ** armor training +1, bravery +1, ka stone, weapon training

(heavy blades) +1

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of darkvision* (already drank), *potion of false life* (already drank); **Other Gear** +1 *breastplate*, javelins (3), masterwork falchion

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ka Stone (Su) During his induction, a living monolith receives an engraved scarab stone in his forehead. This stone is inscribed on its inner side with the monolith's true name and oaths to the gods and pharaohs. It cannot be removed without his permission, cannot be dispelled (though it ceases functioning in areas where magic does not work), and does not use a magic item slot. The ka stone tightly binds the monolith's mind and spirit to his body, providing him with a +2 bonus on saves against negative levels, negative energy, death effects, and mind-affecting effects. A living monolith can also invoke the power of his ka stone three times per day as a swift action, enabling him to grow in size as if using *enlarge person* (even if he is not a humanoid).



Tier 10–11 (CR 12)

ZUBERI-POSSESSED ETTIN

CR 9

hp 73 (see page 15)

TACTICS

Before Combat Zuberi gave the ettin a *potion of false life* to drink before standing guard outside the ritual chamber.

During Combat Under the influence of Zuberi's possessing spirit, the ettin holds back while the living monoliths engage PCs first, casting *magic missile* or throwing javelins instead. Then, Zuberi readies the ettin's flails and directs him into flanking situations where they can use Zuberi's sneak attacks to maximum effect.

Morale Zuberi forces the ettin to fight to the death.

ENLARGED LIVING MONOLITH GUARDS (6)

CR 5

hp 62 each (see page 15)

TACTICS

Before Combat Each living monolith drinks a *potion of darkvision* and a *potion of false life* to prepare itself while standing guard during Zuberi's ritual.

During Combat At the first sign of trouble, the living monoliths invoke their *enlarge person* ability to grow to Large size, then wade into melee, wielding their falchions two-handed for maximum cleaving power.

Morale The living monoliths fight to the death, trusting in Zuberi to raise them once more if they prove themselves worthy.

Developments: When the ettin possessing Zuberi is defeated, his spirit screams as it departs the corpse and flies through the air, shattering the *wall of force* between this area and area 7 before returning to its body and ruining the ritual. See area 7 for the full effects of this occurrence.

Treasure: While treating with Zuberi, his wizard (see area 7) secretly stole away most of the real treasure in this chamber, teleporting it with him after each visit while placing and manipulating a *permanent image* to hide his theft (DC 20 Will save to disbelieve).

Mission Notes: Taldor PCs should find any of the living monoliths' ancient falchions suitable for meeting their faction leader's request. Osirion PCs can do the same by removing a ka stone from one of the slain guardians with a DC 15 Heal check.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat Zuberi and his guardians, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 7–8:

Give each player 729 gp.

Tier 10–11:

Give each player 1,066 gp.

7. Ritual Chamber

If the PCs gaze into this chamber while fighting the minions in area 6, read or paraphrase the following to them.

Beyond the shimmering doorway, you can see a large chamber carved from black basalt and white marble. On the far side of the chamber, behind a wall of iron bars, sits a wizened old man in front of three long, human-shaped bundles, holding a glowing green gem aloft with his eyes closed. In front of him is a mage, chanting and casting handfuls of dust into the air while performing an intricate ritual.

Thirty feet overhead, carved arches resembling immense pharaohs support the ceiling of this large chamber with their outstretched arms. Beneath them sits a rounded dais with two bronze braziers and a low stone bench covered in hieroglyphs. Black basalt and white marble tiles lead toward it, their polished surface reflecting the brazier's shimmering flames. Three evenly spaced bundles lie on the floor, wrapped in burial shrouds. Trickling water also echoes from an in-wall fountain to the east. A single door leads west.

Originally, Zuberi expected to use this chamber as a secret hall from which to manage his far-flung empire while in exile. But, as he continued to deal with the ailments and limitations of his advanced age, he abandoned that idea and the chamber has lain fallow ever since.

Now, however, Zuberi has repurposed the room into a ritual chamber for the ceremony to lift his curse. The shrouded figures on the floor are the bodies of his former concubines, and the hieroglyphs on the stone bench serve to further magnify the ritual.

Creatures: When the PCs arrive in area 6, they can see Khalfani Zuberi in this chamber sitting on the low stone bench atop the dais. He holds a large gemstone as the receptacle for the *magic jar* spell used to safeguard his soul through the ritual. His wizard ally, a sage in service to the Ruby Prince, keeps his attention on the intricacies of the casting, unable to respond to an interruption without risking greater harm to himself. In addition to the *wall of force*, a barrier of iron bars (hardness 10, 60 hp, Break DC 28) surrounds the ritual area, rising from the floor to the ceiling.

When the ettin in area 6 is defeated, the spirit of Zuberi is forced to return to its body, ruining the ritual. The *wall of force* is shattered and the spirit returns to circle around its body. Once the PCs finish the fight and enter this room, proceed with the development section. The moment the ettin is slain, the wizard conducting the ritual cries out in pain and the ritual is spoiled—he then promptly casts *teleport* to escape. Should the PCs find a way into this chamber before slaying the ettin, the wizard flees, causing the ritual to fail. This does not say

the ettin, but it does cause it to become shaken for the rest of the combat. Should the PCs manage to slay Zuberi before his spirit returns, the ettin immediately withers and dies, taking Zuberi's soul along with it.

KHALFANI ZUBERI CR 1

Male old human rogue 10

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init –5; **Senses** Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 10, touch 7, flat-footed 10 (+2 armor, +2 deflection, –5 Dex, +1 natural) (+3 dodge vs. traps)

hp 10 (10d8–50)

Fort –2, **Ref** automatically fails, **Will** +3; +3 Ref vs. traps

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +3, improved uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 0 ft. (cannot move)

Melee none (cannot move)

Special Attacks sneak attack +4d6

Rogue Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +13)

3/day—*read magic*

2/day—*magic missile*

TACTICS

Before Combat To prepare for the ritual, Zuberi spirit inhabits the ettin in area 6, freeing him from this crippled body.

During Combat Zuberi's physical body is too weak to move or take any action, other than mental ones, such as controlling the ettin with his detached spirit.

Morale Unwilling to give up his bid for youth and vitality, Zuberi fights to the death in the body of the ettin. If forced to return to this body, it promptly begins to die, as noted in Development.

Base Statistics Without his *bear's endurance* and *false life*, Zuberi's stats are **hp** 45; **Con** 6.

STATISTICS

Str 1, **Dex** 1, **Con** 1, **Int** 17, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +7/+2; **CMB** +2; **CMD** –3

Feats Leadership, Magical Aptitude, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +5, Appraise +16, Bluff +16, Diplomacy +16, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (history) +12, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (nature) +6, Knowledge (nobility) +6, Knowledge (planes) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Linguistics +10, Perception +8, Sense Motive +13, Sleight of Hand +10, Spellcraft +10, Stealth +10, Use Magic Device +20

Languages Common, Draconic, Giant, Kelish, Osiriani, Sphinx, Terran, Vudrani

SQ rogue talents (bleeding attack* +4, combat trick, dispelling attack* [CL 10th], major magic, minor magic), trapfinding, trap sense +3

Combat Gear *potion of bear's endurance* (already drank), *potion of displacement*, *potion of false life* (already drank), *wand of acid*

arrow (21 charges), wand of enervation (9 charges); **Other Gear** amulet of natural armor +1, bracers of armor +2, +1 flaming shortsword, +1 light crossbow, 10 +1 bolts, 2 screaming bolts, ring of protection +2.

Development: As soon as the ettin is defeated, Zuberi's spirit returns to float around its body. This ruins the ritual and causes the wizard to flee. When the PCs finish the fight and enter this area, read or paraphrase the following to them.

The spirit that inhabited the ettin swirls around the body of an ancient, wizened man. With a silent scream it soars high through this arched chamber before diving back into the man's toothless maw. In an instant, his body begins to wither, appearing to age even further, if that is possible. In sections, his flesh turns to sand, his hair to dust, his bones to ash. He crumbles before your eyes, leaving little behind aside from the riches and wealth that he valued above all else.

The ritual to free Zuberi from his curse was only partially complete. While it lifted the undying curse, it had not yet repaired his body to the point where his spirit could inhabit it. When the two rejoined, his body promptly turned to its true age and he was destroyed.

PCs carrying any of the concubine's chosen objects feel a pull toward the corresponding body arrayed on the floor in front of Zuberi's remains. When the items are returned to the bodies, the spirits of the concubines leave the objects and return to their forms, allowing them finally to find peace. Each one smiles in appreciation as they pass from this world.

Finally, allow any members of the Osirion faction to make a DC 35 Perception check. Anyone who succeeds can't be sure, but they're relatively certain the wizard tending to Zuberi's ritual was none other than Amenopheus, the Sapphire Sage and the leader of the Osirion faction in Absalom.

Treasure: For Tier 10–11 only, the PCs also find a *robe of scintillating colors* with Zuberi.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat Zuberi, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 7–8:

Give each player 2,672 gp.

Tier 10–11:

Give each player 4,922 gp.

8. Zuberi's Bedroom

This tidy room apparently serves as a bedroom. Bookshelves line the north and east walls, while a desk and chair take up the southwest corner. Just past the bed to the north lies another small door.

Zuberi used this room as his resting place for hundreds of years. The bookshelves contain several ancient scrolls and treatises. The northern door leads to a small privy.

Mission Notes: Qadira faction PCs should take immediate interest in Zuberi's bookshelves. A search of the books and scrolls turns up the fire-etched tablet of Sarenrae with a DC 25 Perception check, thereby earning them the Prestige Award for that mission.

CONCLUSION

After the PCs deal with Zuberi, they report back to Venture-Captain Balentiir. The discovery of Zuberi's treasure vaults leads the Osirians to quickly move in and reclaim any of his wealth left behind. Balentiir heralds the PCs as the heroes of Sothis and plans a grand party at the Sothis Pathfinder Lodge in their honor. Many influential and powerful Sothis citizens attend, and the PCs are encouraged to regale the crowd with their tale of finding the concubines and then rescuing them once more.

Meanwhile, the Followers of Almut (not completely destroyed by this debacle) recede into hiding once more, at least content that Zuberi is dead and not once more the power-hungry maniac he was in years past.

FACTION MISSIONS

Andoran Faction: PCs from the Andoran faction who learn more about the concubine's history in Act 2 earn 1 Prestige Award. PCs from the Andoran faction who also obtain the location of the slave pens and auction houses of ancient Osirion in Act 3 earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

Cheliox Faction: PCs from the Cheliox faction who learn the full scope of Meskhenet's activities in Cheliox during Act 2 earn 1 Prestige Award. PCs from the Cheliox faction who also obtain a sample of the embalming fluids in Act 3 earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

Osirion Faction: PCs from the Osirion faction who obtain a ka stone from of the living monoliths in Act 3 earn 1 Prestige Award. PCs from the Osirion faction who also persuade Isthemis to abandon the cult of Almut in Act 3 earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

Qadira Faction: PCs from the Qadira faction who obtain the fire-etched tablet of Sarenrae from Zuberi's bedroom in Act 3 earn 1 Prestige Award. PCs from the Qadira faction who also successfully learn the location of the Almut cultists' stronghold in Act 1 or Act 3 earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

Taldor Faction: PCs from the Taldor faction who acquire an ancient falchion from Zuberi's guardians in Act 3 earn 1 Prestige Award. PCs from the Taldor faction who also take one of the ornate masks from the concubine catacombs in Act 3 earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

Andoran Faction Handout

Champion of Liberty,

I hope my letter finds you well after your return to Osirion. Venture-Captain Balentir put on quite a show interring the bodies of those ancient concubines you helped retrieve. Congratulations on a job well done. I can't say we fully understand their significance yet. So find out what more you can about their history and send that information back to me.

Also, we're attempting to learn more about the slave trade during the height of Osirion's occupation by the Qadiri—specifically the location of the auction houses and holding pens they used. Unfortunately, the Osirians have done all they can to erase records of Qadira's influence from those days. If you get a chance to examine any of the old ruins or records, I'd appreciate any insight you can lend us.

Capt. Colson Maldris

For Freedom,

Captain Colson Maldris



Cheliox Faction Handout

Servant of the Majestrix,

It sickens me to send you into the heart of Osirion again, but I must console myself knowing you'll likely wilt in their summer heat. Remember to drink lots of water.

While there, I want you to learn more about these concubine remains. Apparently, they retrieved one of the bodies from the Collapsed Halls here in Cheliox and I want to know why it was there in the first place. It angers me to know the Osirians once dabbled in our past. So learn more about their history here and report back to me.

In addition, the Osirians apparently interred the concubine bodies in the Necropolis of the Faithful. The embalming oils they use there have some rather unique properties. Procure a sample for me. And don't spill it! Or I'll have someone spill your blood!

Be Safe My Sweet,

Zarta Draldeen

Paracountess Zarta Draldeen

Osirion Faction Handout

Favored of the Forthbringer,

Since laying to rest the bodies you helped return to Osirion, strange things have occurred at the Necropolis of the Faithful. Sekhmanu the sphinx described the appearance of living monoliths—guardians who once served her kind—but they have since retreated into the tombs, obviously owing their allegiance to someone or something else. We'd like you to bring back one of the ka stones these warriors wear on their foreheads so we can study them.

Also, equally disturbing, my own nephew, a knowledgeable son of Osirion named Isthemes, has forsaken his studies and involved himself with a death-obsessed cult known as the Followers of Almut. He took an especial interest in the return of the remains buried at the necropolis and I fear the cult may be involved. Please find him and persuade him to abandon his folly and return home.



For the Ancestors,

Amenophus

Amenophus, The Sapphire Sage

Qadira Faction Handout

Servant of the Satrap,

It appears the Osirians recently laid to rest the remains of some important figures from their past. Our spies inform me one of them—a concubine named Meskhenet—worked for a man named Zuberi who used to collect tribute for the Qadiri when we occupied Osirion hundreds of years ago. The scrolls of Al-Bashir mention this Zuberi had a fire-etched tablet of Sarenrae's earliest doctrine predating the writings contained in her holy book, The Birth of Light and Truth. He never sent this tablet back to Qadira before his death. If you should discover any evidence of it, bring it to us.

In addition, I also understand the death cult of Almut is active once more in Sothis. Their religious doctrine has keleshite roots and we thought we had eliminated them. If you should run across any of their members, I expect you to capture and interrogate them about their stronghold's location and report back to me.

Sincerely,

Pasha Muhlia Al-Jakri

Muhlia Al-Jakri

Taldor Faction Handout

Hero of Taldor!

I envy your opportunity to trod the sandy streets of Sothis once again. Your service to the Empire certainly takes you to some of the most interesting places Golarion has to offer. Along those lines, a recent conversation ensued between myself and one of the imperial scholars about the nature and cut of Osirian falchions from the 4300's. If you could acquire one and ship it back to Taldor, it would help settle our dispute.



Also, one of my mistresses informed me we're invited to a masquerade ball at the Imperial Palace. She has her heart set on wearing something more exotic and eye-catching than the everyday costumes the other courtesans will have. I've heard the concubines of Osirian pharaohs and nobles often wore ornate masks as decoration. If you could find one for me, I'd be most grateful.

Glory to Taldor!

BARON JACQUO
Baron Jacquo Dalsine

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SCENARIO 53: ECHOES OF THE EVERWAR, PART IV: THE FAITHLESS DEAD

Scenario Chronicle #

TIER	
7-8	4,436
TIER	
10-11	8,056
TIER	

MAX GOLD

This Chronicle Certifies That _____

Player Name A.K.A. Character Name Pathfinder Society # Faction

Has Completed This Scenario.

Items Found During This Scenario

TIER
7-8

Hero of Sothis: You have twice rescued artifacts of important significance for the nation of Osirion. The Ruby Prince himself grants you a one-use magic item known as the *amulet of glory*. You may call upon the powers of this amulet once when making an initiative check to receive a +10 bonus on that check. Once used, the amulet dissolves to dust and is no longer usable, and you should place a line through this entry on the chronicle sheet. You may only receive this reward if you have played all four parts of the Echoes of the Everwar arc.

- Amulet of natural armor* +1 (2,000 gp)
- Bracers of armor* +2 (8,000 gp)
- +1 *flaming shortsword* (8,310 gp)
- Giant wasp poison (Limit 10; 210 gp)
- Potion of cure moderate wounds* (300 gp)
- Potion of displacement* (750 gp)
- Ring of protection* +2 (4,000 gp)
- Screaming bolt* (Limit 2; 267 gp)
- Wand of acid arrow* (21 charges) (Limit 1; 1,890 gp)
- Wand of enervation* (9 charges) (Limit 1; 3,780 gp)

TIER
10-11

- Giant wasp poison (Limit 20; 210 gp)
- Robe of scintillating colors* (27,000 gp)

EXPERIENCE

Starting XP

+1 XP

Final XP Total

Prestige Award

Starting PA

PA Gained (GM ONLY)

Final PA Total

GOLD

Start GP

+ GP Gained (GM ONLY)

+ Items Sold

= Subtotal

- Items Bought

= Subtotal

- Gold Spent

= Subtotal

Items Sold / Conditions Gained

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

TOTAL VALUE OF ITEMS SOLD
Add 1/2 this value to the "Items Sold" Box

Items Bought / Conditions Cleared

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

TOTAL COST OF ITEMS BOUGHT

For GM Only

EVENT

EVENT CODE

DATE

Game Master's Signature

GM Pathfinder Society #