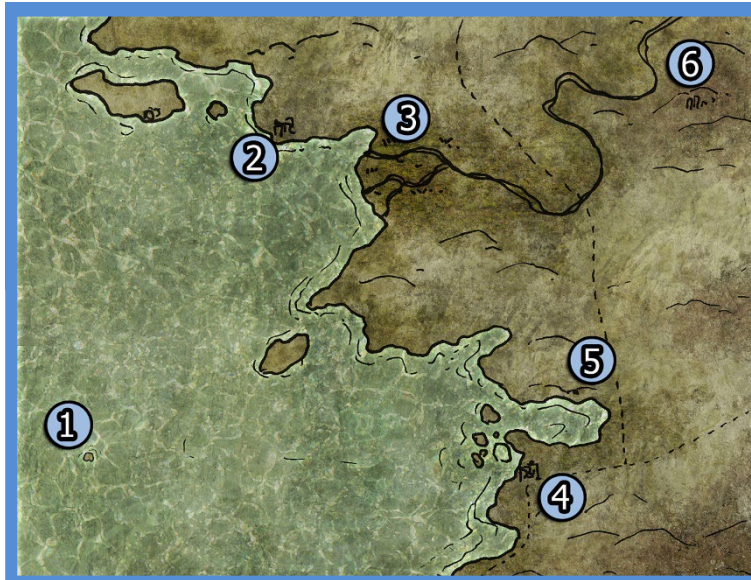




# Nekrolos – Isle of the Dead

## Adventure Supplement



### Places along the Thymos Coast

1. The Isle of the Dead (Nekrolos)
2. The City of Tirine
3. Lair of the Hydra
4. Vykos, among the ruins of Old Florithi
5. Medusa's Lair
6. Ruins of the Sun Temple

### Inside this GM supplement:

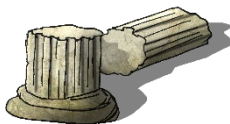
- Page 1: Setting description; regional map; variant map ideas
- Page 2: Plot hooks; useful tables
- Page 3: More useful tables; monster/combatant descriptions
- Page 4: More monsters/combatants; map ideas to extend your game
- Page 5: GM planning map

## Setting description

The archipelagic Thymos Coast has always been beset by monsters. A strange magic pervades the land that gives rise to such anomalies. Languageless women with clawed bird feet. Goats who express sour, black milk. Vicious men with the stinging tails of scorpions. Dogs with the drooling heads of men. The people who live here are used to the risk that such creatures pose. Lives are lost, or sacrificed, with depressing regularity. It was always thus and so, in the ancient times, one small coastal town sought to give their slain some peace at least in death, turning a remote island into a necropolis. Legend has it that Nekrolos did not prove to be so peaceful. That a malevolence there spread among visiting mourners, leading to the downfall of much of the old civilisation along the coast.

Nowadays, the isle is little known, but interments have quietly continued over the centuries by those who need to find a secluded spot for a burial. When approached from the north, Nekrolos shows only its steep circling cliffs. It is from the south that its impressive horseshoe rock formation is revealed. Even from the sea, the isle's gloomy mournfulness is apparent, a feeling too easily imbibed by those whose eyes linger on Nekrolos. Perhaps this uneasy feeling conferred is a ward set by the fabled Taphos guardians rumoured to reside here, protecting the caves.

Stepping from a boat onto the low courtyard, the cliffs loom above the visitor. The closed entrances to the mausoleum caves hum ominously with a ghostly moan, calling to those that behold them, yet repelling them at the same time. Two sets of crumbling stairs sweep up to the gallery from which the cave entrances may be accessed, passing through the once-grand structures of the courtyard. The uneasy feeling travellers sensed from the water increases near a huge statue that stands within a grove of trees planted to echo the shape of the cliffs. It watches any that pass. It watches any that head towards the tombs. It watches. . .



## Variant map setting and ideas

### Isle of the Dead – Tropical setting

Hidden in a secluded bay, the strange little island intrigues those who stumble across it, be they lost in the jungle or adrift on the tides. Some say the tombs belong to long-dead pirates and are filled with maps and treasures. Some say a prison was here and its brutal guards, slaughtered by prisoners in revolt, were left buried here by the Kings Guard. Others still, say the stone coffins were made by a jungle people who filled them with effigies of those they wished to avoid death. Not many who cross the shallow waters to the isle return to tell the truth.

### Isle of the Dead – with Mausoleum

Caught in a perpetual storm, the dark isle is usually visited only by those who seek a haven within its encircling walls. For such travellers it is a cursed place. What horrors would be entombed in such remote desolation? In the courtyard a mausoleum stands, flanked with torches that burn even as the swirling wind tries desperately to extinguish them. The door stands slightly ajar. A threatening darkness leaks from the gap as would the glow of a candle. Does a demonic sexton sit waiting in the dark? Are the revenants of a murdered family waiting to enact revenge? Could this be a fabled hell door?

### Isle of the Dead – Underworld setting

Only an undead ferryman may navigate the wraithwater to reach Nekrolos. Only they may detail their fee. A person would have to be desperate to travel to the isle, a place where even the dead fear to step, so the ferryman may detail all manner of outlandish requests as payment. What cause would make a person pay any amount to visit this dead isle, notoriously remote even in the inaccessible underworld? Could it be the need to seek evil counsel from the Spirit of the Klorapyre that burns here? Or to rob the Tomb of the Fear Queen? Perhaps a traveller merely wishes to test their resolve and magic by spending a cold, dark night of terror among the very worst of the shades.

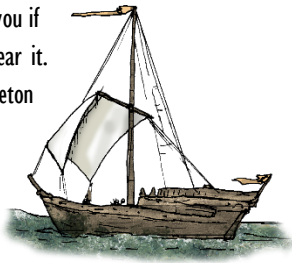
## Story ideas and tables

### Plot Hook 1

Type: Raid a tomb for a treasure

Name: Agony on the Isle of the Dead

It is a dark day. Your greatest nemesis seems to have got the better of you. But wait! A little hope remains. By the fire in The Fleece and Gold tavern, an old bard recounts an old legend. On Nekrolos, the fabled Isle of the Dead, is a crumbling sarcophagus within which lies the remains of the dread King Panaganos. He was felled by a from his duplicitous brother, the cursed armour that still entombs his body. A dark treasure such as that could turn the tables for you if you could persuade your enemy to wear it. Could the island and the armoured skeleton King truly exist?

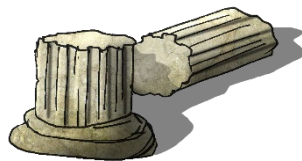


### Plot Hook 2

Type: Obtain a prophecy

Name: Waking Nan

The day is dark. All roads seem to lead to disaster. What to do? An old soothsayer finds your futures dim, untellable, but offers a different line of hope. She states a truth known among the chiromancers and clairvoyants, that the invoked spectre of one's mother's father's mother can make true prophecy to a desperate descendant. The soothsayer advises you waken the ghost with a libation of pigeon-blood. You take stock, ask around and determine that only one of you has a great grandmother with a known final resting place — the tomb caves on Nekrolos, Isle of the Dead. Sailors laugh when you inquire how to find the island. It is well heard of but little seen. Worse still, the island is rumoured to be beset with supernatural Taphos Guardians who will prevent visitors from disturbing the dead.



### Plot Hook 3

Type: Resurrect a party member

Name: Rise Up, Friend, and Live!

Oh, darkest of days. You stand over the body of your fallen comrade. How will you continue without them? The future seems bleak indeed. But no! You refuse. You will not let this body turn to dust. It will have life in it again! A tale once you heard an old seadog tell, of an island where dead things might become alive. And of a ritual that must be performed there: "Into a fire the dead priest's toe, a gorgon's lock, the prince-boy's bow. Stoked with rib of a fishgirl who did drown, hydra's blood to damp the fire down. Ash across the dead thing lay, to raise again this is the way." To return the light to your friend's eyes you would try anything. To Nekrolos...



### Useful table 1: How to find the island

- 1 Sail west toward the setting moons on the longest day of spring, turning to the south at the exact moment of moons-set. Hold this course for a two further moons-sets and you will reach Nekrolos.
- 2 Sail between the Stones of Achlys and at the exact midpoint capsize your boat. When you right your vessel, the isle will be in your sightline, directly north.
- 3 Blindfold yourself and your crew and sail across the waters in complete silence. The whispers of the dead will guide your tillerman to the island. Do not remove your blindfold until your boat has moored.
- 4 Drink of the hemlock and dream a dream of sleep-death. This is the only way to visit the Isle of the Dead. Beware, waking from such a slumber cannot be guaranteed.
- 5 Travel to the Rock of Veracita on the coast near the Cave of the Oracle. Pour the lifeblood of a dear friend into the sea and follow its drift upon the currents. This bloodtrail will take you to the isle.
- 6 Pay Xandros of Tirine a copper coin. He will take you to Skellis, son of Gart. Pay Skellis a silver coin and he will take you to lasos the Sailor. Pay lasos a gold coin and he will give you a heading towards which to sail. Pay lasos a year's wage and he might accompany you on the voyage.
- 7 Sail towards home. Keep sailing until you are home. Go home, go to bed and resolve to never seek the isle again. The next day a goatherd will die upon your threshold. Tattooed upon his back is a map to Nekrolos.
- 8 The Gods wish your quest success. Travel to three divine temples and sacrifice the God's favoured animal. After this the oracle can correctly predict the course for your voyage.

### Useful table 2: Offerings found by the tombs

- 1 A bronze oil flask with seven hydra heads cast on the outside.
- 2 A ragged silk battle standard, emblazoned with a centaur.
- 3 Three dried satsumas, arranged in a triangle.
- 4 A gold necklace with a pendant stamped with a sword icon.
- 5 A glass alabastron with duck-beak handles. Filled with a sweet-scented oil.
- 6 The burned bones of a badger, left in the shape of a star.
- 7 A crude wooden bowl filled with rose thorns.
- 8 A small terracotta oil lamp with a dried powder inside that seems to be blood.
- 9 The remains of a small dog wrapped in a red woollen shroud. A silver tag around her neck says 'Mania'.
- 10 A lion-shaped votive flask filled with a still drinkable wine.

Useful table 3: The ghost great-grandmother's prophecies (alongside any main quest prophecy given)

1	You will see the rising sun in the moments before your death.
2	Watch your friends: one will steal your wealth, one your power.
3	A dart from the sky will graze your shoulder before piercing the one you love.
4	In the face of true danger, a dance will save you from sure death.
5	You will not live to see the glory your friends will attain.
6	At a tavern, one day soon, you will sup sour wine and meet the eye of your true love. You will follow that love for too long.
7	In one year, fame will fall upon you, unwelcome and false.
8	You will offend the gods and they will plague you with vermin until you win their favour again.

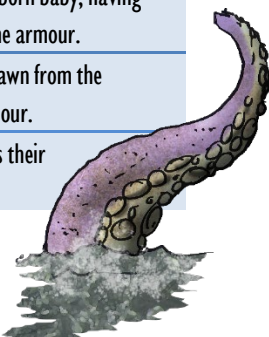


Useful table 4: Problems for your fallen comrade after resurrection

1	Your friend's soul has returned to their body, but a second soul appears to be inhabiting their mortal form with them — that of a stranger. When your friend sleeps, they speak.
2	The smell of death lingers on your friend for many months.
3	Visions of the underworld haunt your resurrected friend. They distinctly remember a young woman, Ida, begging for their help.
4	Your friend desperately desires to sleep in a tomb and will not rest until you help them achieve this wish for just one night.
5	No longer fearing death, your friend takes ever increasing risks.
6	Your friend is alive once more, but the terrible wounds and state of decay that they had in death have not gone and show no sign of healing or fading.
7	The right arm of your friend seems to have remained dead. It is largely useless, but at night it raises in an undead state with a mind of its own.
8	Food is like ashes in your friend's mouth. A cure must be found before they waste away.

Useful table 5: Curses the cursed armour could confer

1	The skin of the wearer turns to immobile bronze, whilst the soft tissue inside them eventually dies and decays.
2	The wearer's orifices all permanently seal within moments.
3	Aging very rapidly, the wearer becomes dust and crumbling bone just minutes after donning the armour.
4	The wearer finds they are as weak as a newborn baby, having not even the strength to move or remove the armour.
5	A powerful lightning bolt is immediately drawn from the heavens, immolating the wearer of the armour.
6	The wearer instantly and permanently loses their entire memory and knowledge.



Useful table 6: Some tomb inscriptions and inhabitants

1	In here lieth dear rigid-hearted Astasio, son of Birios of Minris, who did die petrified before the glare of the fearsome gorgon. His weapons, unbloodied, rest with him eternally.
2	Bescalded from birth, sleep, our beautiful Ycthya. Taken in her maiden days while sea-bathing, mistaken for prey by swimming fangtail cats. Even the pyre could not scorch her damp bones.
3	Ptollia, daughter of the wind. She did never know her sire and in her quest to find him she did perish at the hands of the Lyen Man. Buried with her too, her servant Gribos, who died of rage.
4	The Tomb of Prince Myron of Florithi, the boy who never grew to be king. Buried beneath him, the arrow and bow which took his life. Myron, you have dominion over that cruel arrow now.
5	Antalea, at peace at last. The fates and her family did hound her until she did jump into the pit of the Fire Giant. Her stripped bones, retrieved by her love Zeno, were burned & interred here.
6	To this tomb we commit what remains of Thais, wife of Nedrion of Galaria. The Gyg-beast took her head but could never take her heart which now lays outside of her here, encased in gold.
7	The funereal remains of Solon, son of Tolon, grandson of Uolon. He wished to fly, but his feet were fated to never leave the earth. Down, down they ground until embedded in the rocks others do stand upon. In a wind sent by the Gods, Solon did one day snap.
8	Nikand, priest of the Sun Temple. Oh God of Light, bring our brother to your halls where he will serve at your feet eternally.

## Combatants and Foes

### Taphos Guardians

#### Medium construct

*With the appearance of the ancient bronze statues once favoured in this region, the Taphos Guardians were created by a mourning family to quietly protect a certain tomb. A misstep in the magical process created guardians that slew the mourning family and now allow no living thing to venture onto the island. Imbued with a magic that emanates an aura of unease and dread, they position themselves in innocuous locations and wait patiently for intruders.*

#### Abilities and features

Taphos Guardians are intimidating opponents. Standing five heads taller than an average human, they are cast to resemble classical warriors. Magical wards carved into their surface create a wide area of uneasiness around them. As a result, opponents find it difficult to overcome their fear as they face them.

Taphos Guardians are created in pairs. Each pair of constructs sees what the other sees and shares lifeforce. They can coordinate attacks, setting up ambushes without any verbal communication, and can share hit points during combat when one is close to destruction.

## The Mournful Ghouls of Nekrolos

### Medium undead

*Some centuries ago, a group of mourners secretly brought a body to the island for interment, ignoring warnings. Their boat destroyed by Guardians, they became stranded on the isle. As their food supply*



*dwindled, they found themselves forced to pick through remains of the dead on the island that they might stave off death. This atrocity changed them, however, and they became cruel and pitiless ghouls, lurking in the shadows and grasping any opportunity to feed on fresh meat.*

### Abilities and features

A Ghoul of Nekrolos knows the small island intimately and can move around it often unseen. They gain an advantage to any stealth checks.

Unlike most ghouls, a Ghoul of Nekrolos excels in making traps. They use the bones and funerary material in the crypts to fashion elaborate hazards. A catacomb inhabited by a ghoul is likely to have a trapped entrance.

## Panaganos

### Medium Undead Greater Wight

*The Dread King Panaganos did not rest easily in death. Having met his end at the hands of his traitorous brother, his soul has been trapped for centuries by the cursed armour on his decaying body, hatred festering and building. Now, if released from his tomb, he will draw in all the death energy that pervades this place and become more terrifying in death than he ever was in life.*



### Abilities and features

Standing over 8ft tall, Panaganos is colossal. Wielding a huge sword and heavy round shield, Panaganos delivers crushing and devastating blows each time his weapon connects with an opponent.

The bones and decaying sinews of Panaganos still recall their years of training, and as a result this undead brute can fight with surprising skill and finesse. Panaganos can attack up to three adjacent opponents at the same time.

## The Phylax

### Colossal aberration

*Lurking deep in the waters that surround the Isle of the Dead, the Phylax is much older than the tombs it guards, having begun its life in the waters of the Farsea. It was placed here as a punishment by the Gods of the Dead*

*for wrecking the divine ship The Heaven Muse. It cannot leave the area and is compelled to attack any vessels or travellers that arrive with selfish or violent intentions, as it once possessed itself. A colossal creature, all that is usually seen of it are the strong muscular tentacles that emerge from the water moments before a devastating strike.*



### Abilities and features

The body of the Phylax sits deep on the seabed, safe from harm. It attacks with anywhere between 3 and 10 huge tentacles, guiding their attacks through a form of echolocation. The tentacles are incredibly strong, able to bisect a person with their contractions.

The Phylax guards this island as penance. Having done so for centuries, it is tired and weary, but still forced to destroy. However, if someone were to find a way to break the sentence, the way to the island would be safe.

## Extend your adventure

The Isle of the Dead map can easily fit into most campaigns, but if you are looking for more maps with ancient Mediterranean cultural themes (such as those we have hinted at in this supplement), consider the following lists.

Locations mentioned in this supplement:

- Medusa's Lair (Patreon June 2020)
- The Hydra's Lair (Patreon July 2020)
- The Sun Temple (Patreon Feb 2018)

Other classical-themed maps:

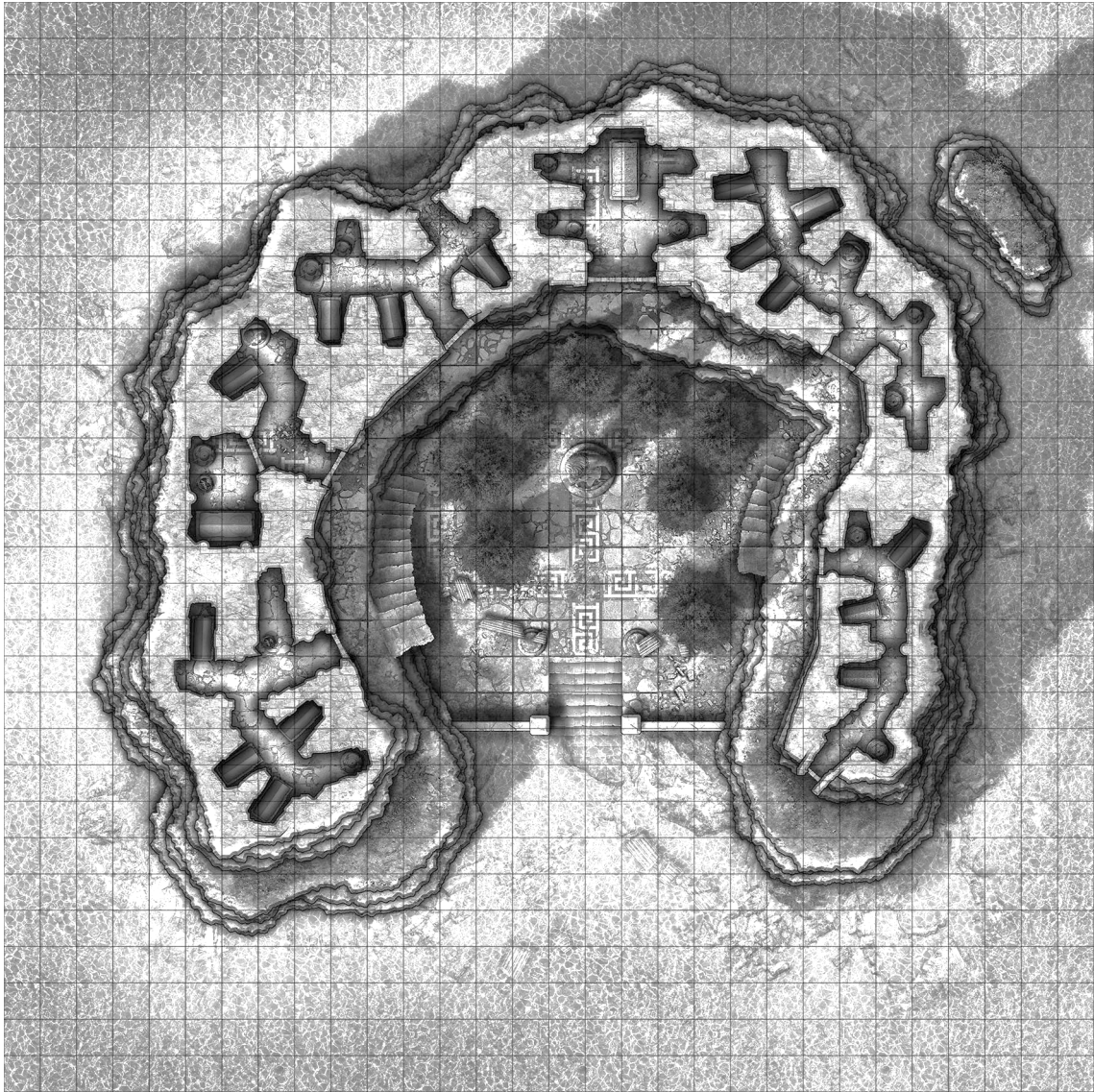
- Lair of the Minotaur (on DrivethruRPG)
- The Hermit Cave (Patreon Nov 2018)
- The Temple of Love (on DrivethruRPG)
- Trial of the Maze (on DrivethruRPG)





# Nekrolos — the Isle of the Dead

## Planning Sheet



Notes