

# MUMMY'S MASK



## WATI, THE HALF-CITY

**W**ati endures, or so the local saying goes. The people of Wati, known for their even tempers and shrewd wit, prefer understatement. They have known war and peace, poverty and prosperity, and survived decimation at the hands of a mad god's cult. But Wati's people answer each challenge with innovation, tenacity, and the deep bonds of community. They do not endure their hardships so much as grasp them, white-knuckled and screaming, until the world permits them to return to their quiet lives, surrounded by their honored dead.

—Priestess Ankhthah Shepses, personal writings, 3076 AR



## WATI, THE HALF-CITY

The city of Wati sits on a sandstone shelf at the confluence of the Asp and Crook rivers, which provide it with building materials, rich farmland, and deep harbors sufficient to support a settlement three times its size. But even with its tenacious citizens, abundant fish and game, and thriving marketplaces fueled by the most important rivers in Osirion, Wati is forever a city better known for its dead than for its living. Behind sanctified walls, an entire quarter of the city quietly sits as a massive, urban tomb. Shops, schools, markets, and estates serve as eternal resting places for those lost to madness and disease. To manage such an immense project, the city's entire economy shifted to the industry of interment. Almost 1,800 years after the necropolis's inception, many of Wati's residents continue to serve the city's funeral industry, either directly as embalmers, undertakers, and clerics of Pharamasma, or indirectly by crafting the myriad grave goods all Osirians hope to carry with them into the afterlife. Death has become the city's lifeblood, and Wati prospers from its morbid specialty.

### HISTORY

In -1608 AR, Pharaoh Djederet II ordered the construction of a grand city to mark the birthplace of the Osirion's greatest natural resource: the River Sphinx, springing from the confluence of the Asp and the Crook. With its early foundations magically laid by the church of Nethys, the city sprang to life within just a year. Named Wati, the riverside town soon dominated trade across southern Osirion. Hardwoods and spices from Katapesh and the Mwangi Expanse bound for Sothis, and manufactured goods and luxuries from the nations surrounding the Inner Sea bound for Osirion's southern territories, all paused long enough in Wati's warehouses and markets to make its citizens famously wealthy. For centuries, Wati endured through political upheaval and the births and deaths of entire dynasties as it dominated its younger sister cities of An and Tephu.

But Wati's destiny was forever warped in 2499 AR, when the cult of Lamashtu unleashed the Plague of Madness among the city's thriving populace. Many of those whom the fever did not immediately kill were driven to murderous insanity, and within months, more than half the city had fallen in painful, anguished death. Most of the survivors fled Wati to make new homes elsewhere, but a stubborn minority remained behind, determined to reclaim their city. But even once the plague had run its course, their livelihoods collapsed as An and Tephu took over Wati's once-exclusive trade routes, and their floundering community struggled against recurring outbreaks of the undead from the city's many abandoned buildings-turned-tombs.

It took almost half a millennium for Wati's fortunes to reverse thanks to the church of Pharamasma. With the tacit

### WATI

LN small city

**Corruption** -1; **Crime** +1; **Economy** +4; **Law** +0; **Lore** +1; **Society** +5

**Qualities** pious (Pharamasma), sacred site, strategic location, tourist attraction

**Danger** +5

### DEMOGRAPHICS

**Government** council

**Population** 7,300 (6,670 humans, 292 halflings, 73 dwarves, 26 half-elves, 239 other)

### Notable NPCs

**Banker of Abadar Anok Tejuht** (LG male half-elf cleric of Abadar 9)

**Commander of the Voices Nakht Shepses** (LN male human inquisitor of Pharamasma 9)

**Council Member Ahbehn Okhenti** (CG male middle-aged human fighter 6)

**Council Member Damej Mahfre** (N female old human aristocrat 4/wizard 3)

**Haty-a Oshep Kahmed** (LN male human aristocrat 9/bard 2)

**High Priestess of Pharamasma Sebti the Crocodile** (N female human cleric of Pharamasma 13)

**Mistress of the Embalmer's Guild Bahjut Everhand** (LN female old halfling alchemist 6/expert 4)

### MARKETPLACE

**Base Value** 5,200 gp; **Purchase Limit** 25,000 gp;

**Spellcasting** 7th

**Minor Items** 4d4; **Medium Items** 3d4; **Major Items** 1d6

### NOTES

**Sacred Site:** The Grand Mausoleum and the necropolis of Wati are both sacred to the faith of Pharamasma, and draw a large number of pilgrims to the city. (*Corruption* -2, *Economy* +1, *Lore* +1)



permission of Osirion's Keleshite sultan, a Pharasmin priest named Nefru Shepses marched on Wati in 2953 AR with a small army of alchemists, masons, and morticians under his banner, intent on consecrating the entire city to the Lady of Graves, beginning with a new, monumental temple to Pharamasma called the Grand Mausoleum. Over the next 30 years, Nefru Shepses and his followers recovered the bodies of those slaughtered in the Plague of Madness from their hasty, makeshift graves and the Pharasmins walled off that portion of the city that had been abandoned, transforming it into a metropolis of makeshift tombs. Thousands of corpses were given formal burial rites and reinterred in this dead copy of the living city, which continues to serve as Wati's necropolis today.



# MUMMY'S MASK

The consecration of the city and its necropolis revitalized Wati, and though it never reclaimed its dominance among the cities of the south, over the next 1,700 years Wati grew until its necropolis—once more than half of the city—took up less than a quarter of the city's total area. Today, long after the necropolis's completion, Wati continues to produce a great variety of grave goods for Osirion's honored dead. A steady stream of burial figures, canopic jars, embalming fluids, prayer books, and sarcophagi sail downstream on the Sphinx, outpacing Wati's crop and textile exports. Even Wati's criminal underworld revolves around death, as competing gangs regularly raid the necropolis for valuables and even human carrion.

## CITY OF THE LIVING

From the tidy Midwife district to the mazelike streets of Asp, Wati's citizens appreciate life in ways that only come from respecting the dead. Taverns, dance halls, bathhouses, and game parlors dot as many corners as shops and artisans, and Wati's boulevards and markets teem with life under the hot Osirian sun.

## DISTRICTS

Wati is divided into six districts, with its necropolis serving as an unofficial seventh district.

**Asp:** This long, winding district of low buildings and twisting alleyways runs along Wati's southern edge. Asp was built without the planning or engineering insight of Wati's core, making navigation difficult for newcomers. Few of Asp's residents think of themselves as members of a common community the way inhabitants of Midwife or Morning Sun might. Instead, the district is a loose alliance of dozens of blocks, neighborhoods, and streets all pursuing their own agendas. These associations hold bitter rivalries as well, usually along economic lines, which run from the well-off estates in the west to the slums of mud-brick hovels huddling against the walls of the necropolis in the east.

**Bargetown:** Wati's unwashed masses, heretics, and down-on-their-luck foreigners gather in this semipermanent floating district literally built atop the River Sphinx. Lashed vessels replace buildings, and narrow planks and rope railings make up Bargetown's rickety streets. Each family maintains its own tiny barge or keelboat, and joins the community for years or for only a few days, meaning Bargetown's layout is constantly in flux. The downtrodden bargers supply most of Wati's fish and shellfish, drawn from the Sphinx's sacred waters. The crocodiles and giant crayfish that prowl the river are a constant threat to the bargers, scavenging leftovers, waste, and the occasional drunk who falls into the water.

Bargetown hosts most of Wati's smuggling operations, as its residents are mostly ignored and anonymous in the eyes of Wati's mainland citizens. Those in the know can

easily find looted grave goods, poisons, drugs, and all varieties of poached animals and bizarre magical reagents on the ever-shifting flotsam market. To skirt inspections and find buyers, local smugglers generally rely on the genderless fixer and fence called **Dredge** (LE halfling rogue 6), while most of Bargetown's more bizarre goods and narcotics flow through the fingers of the self-titled "Queen of Scows," **Eswab** (NE female human bard 4).

Bargetown is a dangerous place, and not merely for its criminal element. Disease spreads quickly, and the city guards are quick to sever the ropes securing Bargetown's boats to shore at the first sign of plague. Fire is also a constant worry on the poorly maintained collection of wood, rags, and pitch. Although Bargetown has no official leader, a few individuals command the respect of many of the district's residents. Most notable is **Mahga Threefingers** (N female half-orc ranger 4), who retired from adventuring after losing one hand and half of the other in a Thuvian tomb. An old traveling companion of Ahbehn Okhenti, Mahga can still call on the swaggering noble to grant occasional favors.

**Midwife:** The district of Midwife is the heart of Wati, cradling most of the city's temples, markets, and professional artisans. Along with the necropolis, Midwife is the oldest of Wati's districts, with a history stretching back to the city's founding, and its residents take pride in maintaining their ancient community. Midwife's buildings, carved from stone and towering two to six stories tall, reflect the grandeur of Osirion's First Age, and house a wide variety of apartments, shops, and workshops.

**Morning Sun:** The majority of Wati's noble estates sit on a small rise west of Midwife called Morning Sun, so named because the district enjoys the first touch of the sun's rays at dawn. Morning Sun is Wati's least populous district, containing a mere two dozen wealthy estates that consist of palatial homes, storage buildings, servants' quarters, orchards, vineyards, and a handful of lavish apartments—all of which are colorful, well maintained, and surrounded with lush gardens and statuary. Morning Sun is the home of two major noble families who squabble for dominance in local politics. The older, conservative Mahfre family enjoys the support of many of Wati's longtime residents and those who look to the past, while the Okhenti family holds the hearts of romantics, the young, and many newcomers to the city.

The Mahfre family was one of the stubborn remnants who stayed in Wati following the Plague of Madness, rallying their fellow citizens when times got hard and overseeing the city's management in the absence of official leadership from Sothis. Their influence has declined in the centuries since the coming of the Pharasmins and the rebirth of the city, but the family's loyalty and bravery in Wati's darkest hours all but guarantees the Mahfres will always have a place in the local government. The family's current matriarch, Damej Mahfre, sits on the city council and revels in her ancestors'



## WATI, THE HALF-CITY

legacy while resenting the influx of lowborn outsiders into her city. She's especially keen to see the fickle Okhenti family brought low, and spends more time in devious schemes to embarrass her perceived rivals—such as the current leader of Wati's church of Pharama, the commoner Sebti the Crocodile—than actually running what should be her family's profitable winery.

The Okhenti family, on the other hand, fled Wati after the Plague of Madness, journeying through northern Garund and across the Inner Sea. A noble family with no lands or people to govern, the Okhentis finally returned to Wati alongside Nefru Shepses and the church of Pharama. Today, the house of Okhenti has its fingers in most of Wati's trade and counting houses, and many acolytes at the Sanctum of Silver and Gold are either distant relations or adopted family members. The Okhentis still send their young scions to study abroad and bring back fresh new ideas and contacts to govern with a wider perspective. Critics accuse the family of being globetrotting dilettantes with no concern for their hometown, while proponents claim the Okhentis bring new lifeblood to Wati's markets. The family's swaggering, middle-aged patriarch, Ahbehn Okhenti, spent his youth as an adventurer in Absalom and Thuvia, and does little to convince detractors of his family's competence. Ahbehn's roguish charms have earned him both a reputation as a ladies' man around town and a dozen bastards, whom he generously provides for with money and cushy political appointments.

**Outer Farms:** West of Wati, beyond the stable sandstone shelf on which the city rests, miles of silty, verdant farmland stretch along the banks of the Crook River. Barley, beans, cabbage, cucumbers, flax, garlic, melons, and millet fill Wati's fields, but onions reign supreme on nearly every farm. Wati's residents believe that onions are a gift from Pharama. Beyond being a representation of the Great Beyond, the onion's stalk represents life, while the bulb's persistence represents the many stages of a soul's growth before, during, and after mortal existence. Many local recipes incorporate one or more varieties of onion, and embalmers across Osirion stuff onions into the chests or eyes of the dead. Most farms also support a small stand of date palms or pomegranate trees, as well as goats and chickens. Larger livestock like oxen are considered an affectation of the rich or out-of-touch foreigners, and any farmer investing in them opens herself up for ridicule. Livestock must be brought inside or otherwise protected for several weeks every summer when the rivers flood, making large animals more trouble than they're worth.

Most of the region's farmers are composed of independent families, though they tithe a percentage of their crops to the pharaoh, whose wisdom and counsel with the spirits ensures the yearly flood and the rich silt it delivers. Wati's *haty-a*, or governor, collects these tithes as the pharaoh's representative, and his surveyors spend the end of each summer measuring and marking each farm after the annual floods shift the land. Small intrigues abound just before autumn, as farmers beg, bribe, and cajole bureaucrats to enlarge their properties or squabble over strange treasures washed ashore by the floodwaters.

**The Veins:** Nestled between Midwife and Bargetown, Wati's harbor district stacks block upon block with woodcarvers, tar kilns, warehouses, and whatever shanties can be crammed between them. Its myriad shallow canals breed unabating clouds of insects, the bites of which spot the bodies of the locals, who stain their hands and cheeks with pitch to repel the pests. **Ahmeb Tekhra** (N male human expert 5) was appointed by the previous *haty-a* to oversee the district, but he has long since sold his loyalty to Wati's various smuggling gangs, most notably the Fading and the Silver Chain.



NEB-AT

### NOTABLE LOCATIONS

The following are some of the more notable locations found in the living city of Wati.

**Getwabh's Tarworks:** The largest and most profitable business in the Veins ironically has little to do with shipping. Instead, the sprawling, brick structure belonging to **Getwabh Zet** (N male dwarf expert 5) houses dozens of enormous kilns and cauldrons. Day and night, Getwabh's dwarven and human workforce process wood shipped down the Crook River into tar, charcoal, and wood alcohol for the city's other industries. With Wati's reliance on barge traffic, fired bricks, and embalming, the old dwarf's venture has paid off, making him one of Wati's richest citizens and giving him unparalleled influence along the waterfront. While city politics bore the aging engineer, the same can't be said for his eldest daughter, **Meehr Zet** (LN female dwarf aristocrat 3), who eagerly spends her father's money to buy her way into high society events.

**Golden Lake:** Separating the Grand Mausoleum from the Sunburst Market, this artificial pool takes its name from the coating of gold dust cast over its surface each year on the Day of Bones. The lake also houses a rare breed of white crocodiles that are sacred to Wati's Pharamin church. Regularly fed and cared for, these long-lived cousins of the more dangerous crocodiles found in Osirion's rivers pose little threat to tourists or residents. Crocodile Keeper



## MUMMY'S MASK

**Neb-at** (CN male human expert 5) demonstrates an uncanny control over the sacred beasts, but he lines his purse by selling the occasional crocodile or egg to individuals seeking rare spell components or a sacrilegious delicacy. High Priestess Sebti is aware of her half-brother's crimes, but can't bring herself to expose her elder sibling. Instead, she arranges for concerned freelancers to interrupt his clandestine trades, or hires adventurers for missions that "accidentally" disrupt his meetings.

**Grand Mausoleum:** Rivalled in size and importance only by the High Temple of Pharamasma in Sothis, Wati's temple of Pharamasma dominates the cityscape and handles the business of the city's births and deaths, as well as the details that occur in between. Since the Lady of Graves eclipsed Nethys and Abadar as Wati's patron deity, her followers have assumed control over much of the city's infrastructure, and have combined the Grand Mausoleum into a cross between a house of worship and city hall. All final decisions are still made by the city council and overseen by the haty-a—the pharaoh's personal representative—but council meetings and the day-to-day affairs of state are held within the sprawling complex. The temple's high priestess, Sebti the Crocodile, rose to power from the common rabble. Daughter of the previous keeper of Pharamasma's sacred crocodiles and largely self-educated, Sebti has been a constant thorn in the side of Wati's nobles since assuming control of the church a decade ago. Preaching a doctrine of personal fulfillment rather than happiness, wealth, or achievement, Sebti invariably sides with the common citizenry on government matters, making her popular with the common folk but loathed by the rest of the council and even some members of her own faith.

In addition to the temple's clergy, the Grand Mausoleum hosts an arm of the militant wing of the church called the Voices of the Spire, dedicated to eradicating any undead within the city's sprawling necropolis. They are led by the humorless Nakht Shepses, a bastard son of the influential Shepses line.

**Hall of Blessed Rebirth:** A multitude of professional funerary organizations once flourished in Wati before Bahjut Everhand took control of the city's influential embalmer's guild. After 30 years of the halfling's silver-tongued negotiations, backroom dealings, and economic intimidation, most of the region's morticians, doctors, and alchemists have joined the guild, transforming the guildhall into an academy specializing in anatomy, chemistry, and medicine, and even tutoring exceptional

students in alchemy and wizardry. While most of Wati's residents give the school a wide berth, ambitious families across Osirion send their children to the Hall of Blessed Rebirth to master the Half-City's techniques in medicine and embalming.

Mistress Bahjut Everhand is a worshiper of Anubis, the ancient Osirian god of the dead, and the Hall of Blessed Rebirth contains a shrine devoted to the jackal-headed deity. Bahjut gained her epithet from her desiccated left hand. Rumors claim that she preserved the exquisitely mummified appendage while still an apprentice. Others claim the old crone mummified her heart as well, as she's never shown a hint of fear or compassion, even to the Pharasmins whose oversight she has come to resent.

**House of the Pharaoh:** Wati's massive and illustrious House of the Pharaoh is the pharaoh's personal estate in the city. The palace hasn't seen a royal occupant in over 30 years, however, and the building functions as the center of Wati's secular authority—though in practice, more of the city's governance takes place at the Grand Mausoleum. While the pharaonic apartments remain empty, the rest of the estate buzzes with bureaucrats maintaining the city's property laws and economic records. Oshep Kahmed, the personal representative of Pharaoh Khemet III, serves as Wati's

overworked, thankless haty-a, or governor, and head of the city council. Despite his lofty title, Kahmed realizes he's little more than an outsider and figurehead on a council of religious fanatics and nobles whose grievances stretch back millennia. He mostly leaves the governing to Wati's long-term residents and rarely votes except to break ties, instead focusing on keeping the city's farms and orchards as productive as possible.

**Insula Mater:** The prominence of Pharamasma's faith in Wati attracts many expectant mothers to the city from outlying villages and regional settlements. Many of Pharamasma's clerics donate time as caretakers and midwives at the Insula Mater, a temple, clinic, and dormitory for pregnant travelers and new mothers. Although eclipsed in importance by the Grand Mausoleum, the Insula Mater still enjoys a steady stream of donations and gifts from Wati's wealthiest women. "**Aunty**" **Anjet Jehuti** (NG female middle-aged human alchemist 2/cleric of Pharamasma 3) leads the Mother's Handmaidens, the temple's small, full-time staff of clerics and healers.

**Mender's Row:** While Wati's sister city of An exports far more raw textiles, Wati dominates the trio of southern



OSHEP KAHMED



## WATI, THE HALF-CITY

sister cities in the creation of finished garments, funerary wrappings, and rugs. Mender's Row—more often referred to as “the Mend” by locals—is the core of Wati's textile industry, stretching from the Rising Phoenix dye market for several blocks to the city's only textile mill, run by the Essesh family. Competitive pride keeps several dozen independent weaver's shops churning out quality clothing at a steady pace and in a variety of hues. The Rising Phoenix's technique for creating a distinct reddish-purple dye from the local giant crayfish remains a closely guarded secret of the proprietors, **Shamihh Hep** (NG female human sorcerer 3) and **Ohmun Kotem** (LE female human commoner 8), and ensures that Wati's fashions stand out in markets as far-flung as Absalom.

**Precinct of Left Eyes:** This retrofitted fortress houses Wati's town guard. Long ago, Wati's laws dealt only two punishments: gouging out the right eye, or death. Though these laws soon proved untenable, over the years, the locals' nickname for the palace of justice came to be its official moniker. The precinct encloses guard barracks, a jail, and two dozen pillories used for public punishments for minor transgressions. Befitting a city obsessed with death, Wati's criminal underworld revolves around the trade in grave goods and even the dead themselves. In response, the militant wing of the Pharasmin church, the Voices of the Spire, has taken over guarding the tombs in the city of the dead. Rumors also claim that the Voices of the Spire have excavated a dungeon deep beneath the precinct for those criminals, necromancers, and spirits who require fates far worse than imprisonment, torture, or death.

**Sanctum of Silver and Gold:** This small, comfortable temple of Abadar has held sway over Wati's economy for thousands of years, and has been rebuilt and remodeled dozens of times to accommodate the waning and waxing of Abadar's appeal in the region. The result is a confusing layout that confounds visitors and faithful alike, but protects the temple's vault like no guard ever could. The Sanctum's leader, **Banker Anok Tejuht** (LG male half-elf cleric of Abadar 9), implies (but never outright states) that minotaurs stalk his temple's forgotten corners, and at least one would-be burglar has been found at sunrise, mysteriously gored in the temple's adytum.

**Shrine of Wadjet:** When Pharaoh Djederet II ordered Wati's construction, he laid a golden brick where the Asp and Crook rivers mingle to form the Sphinx. The priesthood of Wadjet, the ancient Osirian goddess sometimes revered as the embodiment of the River Sphinx, established a small shrine on the site and constructed a stone staircase on either side leading down into the water. Although Wadjet's faith is no longer as popular as it was during the city's founding, the shrine remains, and most religious and civic festivals in Wati begin or end on these stairs and the plaza before them. Popular superstition

claims that water drawn from the base of the stairs under the sun of the solstice has healing properties, and pilgrims come from across Osirion to make offerings and bathe in the first currents of the holy river. Even the priests of the Grand Mausoleum draw the water for their fonts from the stairs' edge.

**Sunburst Market:** This enormous open-air market forms the bustling heart of Wati. Decorated pillars mark out a regular grid, and various merchants hang attention-grabbing banners and samples of their wares from the painted sandstone columns. On busy days, the open plaza transforms into a maze of tents and tables that display goods ranging from artwork, cosmetics, and food to weapons, poisons, and magical tomes. Traveling merchants from neighboring cities often come to the sunburst market to ply their wares. In theory, all merchants must register with and pay a fee to Abadar's Sanctum of Silver and Gold at the north end of the market, but in practice, as much as a quarter of Sunburst Market's retailers are squatters who move in and out of the city with all the oversight of the desert wind. Most of the fees the temple collects pay for the services of the so-called “Marketwives,” **Rekitre** (LN female human inquisitor of Abadar 5) and **Khipa Yannanza** (N female human rogue 3), who patrol the market in daylight hours, watching for pickpockets and delivering swift justice to thieves. Anyone foolish enough to violate Abadar's law under their gaze soon finds one of their hands added to the dozens already dangling from the plaza's grisly Pillar of Second Thoughts.

**Terhk's Fine Expeditions:** Part caravan company, part hunter's lodge, and part adventurers' guild, Terhk's Fine Expeditions tries to be all things at once for anyone traveling the deserts of southern Osirion. **Terhk Fourwinds** (NG male half-orc expert 3/fighter 3), the towering, scar-riddled proprietor, is always eager to bring on new guards or wilderness guides, though word about town claims he eats those who fail him once too often. Long-time residents know that Terhk's fierce exterior is an act, however, cultivated to sell his company's services and intimidate challengers before they become violent. Around those he trusts, Terhk happily slips on his glasses and whiles away evenings with a book or a senet board. A sucker for fiery, independent women, the pacifist half-orc has pursued a clandestine love affair with Teht Blackblossom of the Whispering Stone for years, though neither of them is willing to admit to their growing need for commitment.

**Threshed Souls Fragrances:** One of Wati's countless perfume and incense sellers, Threshed Souls Fragrances stands out both for its variety of iris-based scents, and by cornering a very special market—trade in mumia, a drug made from the flesh of the mummified dead.



# MUMMY'S MASK

## LOCATIONS

1. Acrid Street
2. Archives of the Ibis
3. Cenotaph of the Cynic
4. The Dry Veins
5. Dust Parlor
6. Getwahb's Tarworks
7. Golden Lake
8. Grand Mausoleum
9. Hall of Blessed Rebirth
10. House of Pentheru
11. House of the Pharaoh
12. Insula Mater
13. Mender's Row
14. Phasasma's Needle
15. Precinct of Left Eyes
16. Sanctum of Silver and Gold
17. Sanctum of the Erudite Eye
18. Shrine of Wadjet
19. Sunburst Market
20. Tahetep's Dance Hall
21. Terk's Fine Expeditions
22. Threshed Souls Fragrances
23. Tomb of Akhentepi
24. Tooth & Hookah
25. Ubet's Folly
26. Umbracene Well
27. Vizier's Hill
28. Whispering Stone





## WATI, THE HALF-CITY

The shop serves as the headquarters for the Fading, Wati's most successful gang of mumia smugglers. Rather than attempt to smuggle corpses out of the necropolis, the Fading's secret to success has been to sneak their alchemists in. The finished drug is more easily transported and distributed, and is even delivered directly to some of the gang's regular customers. The proprietors of Threshed Souls, **Khim-ali** and **Jhen-din Seht** (NE male human rogue 3), are the sons of wealthy Katapeshi immigrants, but they take their orders from a mysterious veiled overseer whose identity remains hidden even to them. For more information on mumia, see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Lost Kingdoms*.

**Tooth & Hookah:** This modest inn and hookah bar is best known for its mascot, Toothy—a tiny crocodile that lives in the inn's well. For more information on this attraction, see page 72.

**Ubet's Folly:** Built atop a fang-shaped jut of rock in the River Sphinx, this fortress was among the first structures completed in Wati's infancy. Intended to protect the harbor from waterborne raiders, it saw little use and was eventually abandoned. Centuries later, the half-crazed dwarf sorcerer Ubet Sandborn took possession of the neglected ruin and spent a lifetime shaping the fortress's exterior into the likeness of a sphinx and carving tunnels deep beneath it. Ubet and his small cult vanished overnight more than 100 years ago. The general assumption is that one of their poorly planned tunnels collapsed, crushing the lot, but some whisper that Ubet stumbled across a secret from Wati's founding best left buried. Ubet's Folly, as the sphinx is now known, still draws occasional curious adventurers, but most of Wati's residents recognize it for what it is—a crumbling ruin more likely to collapse than reveal any treasure. Still, it remains an open secret around town that real sphinxes occasionally visit the structure for some mysterious purpose, otherwise ignoring the city proper.

**Whispering Stone:** Despite being run by the incorrigible liar **Teht Blackblossom** (CG female human witch 3), the Whispering Stone has been Wati's most popular tavern, inn, and game house for generations. The bar is built around an enormous, ruined statue buried up to its shoulders and broken off halfway up the head, leaving only a chin and pair of lips visible atop a 7-foot-high neck. Determining the identity of the so-called "Stone Lips" is a popular pastime in Wati, and the statue has been variously identified as representing Pharamasma, some ancient Osirian goddess, one of Osirion's forgotten pharaohs, a local noblewoman lost to history, a warlord who conquered Wati in its earliest days, or a nameless wizard who supposedly tamed the local elementals. Those looking for luck in love sneak a kiss from the sandstone smile—usually after buying a few drinks, of course.

Since taking over the Whispering Stone from her father, Teht has encouraged every rumor and introduced more. She loves to stir the pot, and isn't above using superstition about her family's powers to coax along whatever stories are making the rounds. As both a shameless gossip and a favorite ear for Wati's frustrated servant class, Teht knows many of the city's secrets. She takes as much delight in gathering them as she does sharing them, provided a listener drops enough coin on her onion soup and pomegranate wine. Those looking for solid information should be warned that the Stone's barkeep has a flair for the dramatic, and never tells a full truth.

### CITY OF THE DEAD

The sturdy stone buildings of Wati's necropolis were once part of the living city, and even now could still be mistaken for apartments, estates, shops, or tenements if not for the faded paint and desert sand piling up in the streets. Separated from the rest of the city by high stone walls inscribed with prayers and blessings, the necropolis has an outward appearance of peace and repose. The dusty streets are mostly empty of life, but a variety of creatures, both living and undead, still call the necropolis home, surreptitiously avoiding the notice of Pharamasma's clergy. Entrance to this section of the city is highly regulated by the Church of Pharamasma, and the priesthood reconsecrates the necropolis each year as part of a weeklong festival surrounding the Day of Bones. Astute locals know that this ceremony provides little actual protection from the dangers hiding in the necropolis.

### NOTABLE LOCATIONS

The following are some of the more prominent locations within Wati's necropolis.

**Acrid Street:** Once the center of Wati's incense and perfume industry, this area takes its present name from the stench of the ravenous dead that now inhabit its streets—ghasts and ghouls. The ghouls have existed here since the Plague of Madness, and even the Pharamsin Voices of the Spire have thus far failed to eliminate them. The cool, dry storage vaults, labyrinthine plumbing, and sturdy construction of the industrial perfumeries provide an ideal habitat for the ghouls, and the lingering smells of ambergris, myrrh, and essential oils confound any attempt to track the undead by their appalling stench. Dozens of feral mobs of ghouls and festrogs make their homes across the necropolis, but Acrid Street hosts three noteworthy packs.

The Lapis Dogs consider themselves the true inheritors of Wati. Descended from those who fell into cannibalism under the effects of the Plague of Madness, the Lapis Dogs prefer kidnapping live prey from the living side of Wati, either to slay and let ripen for later meals or to infect with



## MUMMY'S MASK

ghoul fever and swell their “native” ranks. Their leader, **Het Maht Re** (NE male ghastr conjurer 6), claims to be the first victim of the Plague of Madness, and preaches that “foreign” flesh tastes bitter and breeds inferior ghouls. Despite the group’s distaste for foreigners, the Lapis Dogs don’t hesitate to attack them, and newcomers would do well to steer clear of Acrid Street.

By far the most ruthless ghoulish pack is the Sunset in Red, a twisted army made up of unfortunates who have succumbed to mummy addiction. Unwanted in life, these bitter undead find solace in the mad, antiestablishment ramblings of **Gahbek Seh** (CE male ghoulish barbarian 6). They believe themselves the victims of a sick world and ache to escape the necropolis and visit the same unkindness upon the living of Wati.

More sophisticated are the eerily lifelike Walkers of Nemret, who claim to be pilgrims from a ghoulish utopia buried deep beneath the dunes. Disciples of the charismatic **Kesh Rakeen** (LE female ghoulish bard 5), the Walkers of Nemret nibble at the long-preserved dead of Wati and even work with mortal smugglers. Rakeen believes that the demon lord Kabriri created the Plague of Madness and gave it to Lamashtu, and seeks to merge the ancient contagion with her own ghoulish fever.

**Archives of the Ibis:** A combination library and monastery, this quiet retreat for contemplation and learning was dedicated to Thoth, the ancient Osirian god of knowledge, literature, and science. When the Plague of Madness swept through the city, the clerics and monks of the archives took their own lives rather than succumb to the infection, only to rise from their suicides as babbling allips that still haunt the temple complex to this day. The insane contemplatives of Thoth know secrets long buried, and those willing to risk madness might pry precious secrets from their dead lips.

**Cenotaph of the Cynic:** After the Plague of Madness decimated Wati’s population but before the necropolis was consecrated, Wati’s few remaining citizens constructed this tomblike monument in honor of all those who had fallen to the plague. With the coming of the Pharasmins and the creation of the necropolis, the cenotaph was repurposed to house the remains of those citizens who professed no faith in the gods at all.

Today, a cult of lamia sisters called the Amushet inhabits the Cenotaph of the Cynic, guarding it against the living, the dead, and especially the divine. The sisters visit brutal justice on trespassers, but generously welcome fellow atheists or others shunned by the gods. The Amushet sometimes take mates from curious visitors, using them to sire the next generation of their clan. Uncharacteristically merciful for lamias, the sisters allow their paramours to leave merely blinded and hideously insane.

**The Dry Veins:** Once part of Wati’s busy harbor district, most of the canals in this section of the necropolis have been drained and bricked over, creating a network of crypts for the poor and unknown. Artistically inclined clerics of Pharamasma make room for new bodies by stacking the desiccated bones into creative sculptures and decorations, giving the catacombs an unsettling charm. The dark labyrinth also provides travel and cover for grave robbers and smugglers, who brick up sections of the tunnels to form hidden storage caches, secret drop points, or even safehouses. Although the Dry Veins are largely safe, strange creatures like chokers, gricks, and giant vermin skitter through the oldest crypts and nest in forgotten corners, and more than a few criminals using the tunnels have met grisly ends before they were able to reclaim their hidden treasures.

**Dust Parlor:** Wati’s largest gambling house now stands eerily empty, avoided even by the undead of the necropolis. Strange lights and noises float through its shuttered windows under the new moon, leading most residents of Wati to conclude that a powerful ghost or demon haunts the building. In truth, the Dust Parlor serves as an unlikely meeting place for many of the area’s elementals, who use the hall as neutral ground to meet, play senet, and exchange stories and wonders. **Abax Crumbletongue** (N male dust mephit rogue 1) ostensibly runs the parlor and spends his days chasing undead away from the property or fretting over the future of his “empire,” particularly recently, as a coven of air elementals called the Stinging Sisters has been dominating the games and is slowly eroding the mephit’s influence.

**House of Pentheru:** Located atop Vizier’s Hill, this mansion of a noble family became its owners’ tomb during the Plague of Madness. The House of Pentheru is detailed on page 21.

**Pharamasma’s Needle:** Soon after the Pharasmins arrived in Wati to rebuild and consecrate the city, a burning rock fell from the sky into the River Sphinx where Bargetown now floats. Nefru Shepses took this as a sign of approval from the Lady of Graves, and ordered the black stone dredged from the river’s depths and carved into a capstone for a sacred obelisk, erecting the monument just inside the gates to the necropolis. Today, mourners interring their loved ones inside the necropolis still stop at Pharamasma’s Needle on their way to the gravesites to gain the goddess’s blessing for the deceased’s journey to the Boneyard.

**Sanctum of the Erudite Eye:** This ancient temple of Nethys was abandoned following the Plague of Madness. The sanctum is detailed on page 37.

**Tahetep’s Dance Hall:** Born a nameless slave to a Keleshite master in Totra, the warrior who would be called



## WATI, THE HALF-CITY

Tahetep won his freedom after saving the life of his master during a slave uprising. Ashamed that he had sided with his master instead of his fellow slaves, the freedman fled to Wati and took a new name, Tahetep. He established a popular dance and music hall to help drown his guilt in shallow pursuits of the flesh, but the Plague of Madness struck before the old warrior could find any peace. With inhuman strength and skin that reportedly turned aside iron blades, Tahetep slaughtered his wife, children, and two dozen patrons in the course of a single night. Local stories claim the authorities boarded up Tahetep in his dance hall, fearing a confrontation with the lunatic, and other stories insist he remains there even after centuries: immortal, insane, and forever singing the few songs his broken mind remembers.

The story would likely end there, had Tahetep not left his master's service with a fortune in foreign silver. Every few years, a silver ingot stamped with Qadiran markings surfaces in the Sunburst Market, tempting treasure hunters and adventurers to brave the sealed dance hall in search of more. The only person ever known to return is the so-called Dancing Lady of Wati, a now-elderly woman who emerged from the dance hall blind, deaf, and mute, and who waltzes on her single remaining leg through the city streets to a melody only she can hear.

**Tomb of Akhentepi:** This tomb of a respected military commander predates the creation of the necropolis. See page 9 for more details on this site.

**Umbracene Well:** This deep shaft carved into the bedrock beneath Wati existed even before the city's founding, covered by an immense stone plug crafted by unknown hands. In the worst throes of the Plague of Madness, the well became a makeshift pauper's grave, and corpses by the hundreds, if not thousands, were cast into its black depths, which showed no sign of ever filling. Locals believe the well is bottomless, but sages speculate that the shaft likely connects to the Darklands, possibly plunging as deep as the Vaults of Orv. The stone plug that originally covered the well is long lost, and residents of Wati, both living and undead, avoid the site, no doubt due in part to the hundreds of tiny, toothed mouths that line the walls of the shaft, hungrily smacking their lips in the darkness.

**Vizier's Hill:** Before the Plague of Madness, many of Wati's nobles settled upon this hill, but like the other residents of the current necropolis, they abandoned their estates during the pestilence. A clan of dark folk known as the Xotl emerged from the Darklands into Wati's necropolis more than a century ago, taking up residence in the subterranean wine cellars of the villas upon the hill. The church of Pharamasma tolerates the dark folk's presence

in the necropolis, as they help keep the more dangerous vermin in the district under control. As a race that leaves no corpses upon death, the dark folk are fascinated by the human mummies preserved in the necropolis, and their current leader, who goes by the moniker **Unwrapped Harmony** (CN female dark stalker oracle of bones 4), hopes to learn the secrets of mummification to share with her own people.

Over the years, some dark folk have splintered from the primary Xotl clan. The most powerful of these breakaway clans, the Ten Iron Coins, follows the twins **Xikhai the Owl** (NE female dark slayer rogue 2) and **Xikhai the Ox** (NE male dark slayer ranger 2) in looting the necropolis's tombs to shower their adopted family with treasure. The Ten have slowly been working up the nerve to sneak out of the dead city by night and rob the living.



UNWRAPPED HARMONY