



# MAZING DVENTURES 5E

## RINGS OF THE RED GOD







# THE RINGS OF THE RED GOD

**BY: JASON VEY**

Additional material by Stephen Chenault

EDITOR: Ross Thompson

5TH EDITION RULES EDITING: Tom Smith

FRONT COVER: Peter Bradley INTERIOR ART: Peter Bradley, Brian Swartz



**Playtesters:** Dwight Fiddler, Trevor Hirst, Leonide LeMaster, Tim LeMaster, Jim Davis, Shane Bradley, Jacob Harkins, Chris Baker, Ted Wallerstadt, Morgan Key, Derek Jones, Heather Ashcraft, Dominic Hinson, Ryan Hinson, Davis Chenault

**Special Thanks** to Davis Chenault for helping me remember how that one puzzle played out!



1818 North Taylor, #143, Little Rock, AR, 72207

email: [troll@trolllord.com](mailto:troll@trolllord.com)

website: [www.trolllord.com](http://www.trolllord.com) or

[www.castlesandcrusades.com](http://www.castlesandcrusades.com)

©2020 Troll Lord Games. All Rights Reserved. Amazing Adventures 5E™ is Trademark Jason Vey. All Rights Reserved. The Amazing Adventures 5E™ Logo is Trademark Jason Vey. C&C, Castle Keeper, SIEGE engine™, Troll Lord Games, and the SIEGE engine™, and Troll Lord Games logos are Trademarks of Troll Lord Games. All Rights Reserved.

Printed in the United States of America

# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to **The Rings of the Red God**, our latest adventure series for the **Amazing Adventures 5e** role playing game. In these three loosely-linked adventures, our heroes face the resurgent cult of the Red God Ornduhl in a battle across the world (and indeed, throughout time and space) to stop the evil ancient deity from rising on Earth and spreading darkness across the world.

**Rings of the Red God** serves as a sequel to our **Rise of the Red God** supermodule and brings back a deadly adversary for the heroes in the form of the Red God and his cult. It also, however, serves to connect the Earth of **Amazing Adventures** to our house fantasy setting of Aihrde. Herein you'll find secret revelations about that setting, and this serves as the first of our crossovers between the two worlds, potentially allowing you to take your modern heroes into a world of fantasy adventure, and vice-versa.

All of it revolves around the Rings of Brass, ancient tunnels which traverse the entire multiverse, first constructed on Aihrde's sister world of Inzae, and later harnessed by the dwarves of Aihrde. These tunnels have been lost for millennia, and possibly even millions of years, but they do exist on Earth, in remote locations across the world. Tracking down these portals to all of time and space could become an ongoing mission for your heroes and the Brotherhood of William St. John or whatever adventuring organization your heroes serve. Alternately, the adventures herein could represent the only encounters with the Rings your PCs ever face. It's up to you.

## THE RISE OF THE RED GOD CONNECTION

It is intended that your characters have played **Rise of the Red God** before they enter these adventures, which are set up as the return of the cult introduced therein. If you haven't played **Rise**, you can still play and enjoy these adventures, which very much can stand alone. Playing **Rise** after these adventures is also possible, by simply altering a few story details to situate those scenarios as a sequel to these. You'll need to alter or ignore direct references to **Rise** if you run these adventures first.

The most interesting thing about playing that module



## 2 AMAZING ADVENTURES 5E

first, however, is that this module ends with a sort of temporal loop, with our heroes trapping the essence of the Red God in the very place where they have already encountered him in the prior module. Thus, switching the two will create a more linear path, but won't have the same "full circle" impact.

In the end, however, the whole thing comes down to the existence of the Rings of Brass.

## THE RINGS OF BRASS

The Rings of Brass are impossibly ancient devices of utterly alien origin. They hail from another planet, though one that is perhaps not so distant as one might think. This planet, over its tens of thousands of years of civilization, was known to its inhabitants as *Aihrde*. Aihrde was a world of swords and sorcery, of gods and demons, of dwarves, elves, and men struggling for supremacy against dark creatures from the shadows and depths of the world.

It was the dwarves of this world, and its sister world Inzae, which lay beneath Aihrde and on its underside, who created and learned to use the Rings of Brass. The Rings of Brass are, at their core, portals throughout all of time and space. They connect to a series of tunnels which, like the roots of a great tree, connect all of the cosmos together through a void and maelstrom that lies in the spaces between spaces. It may well be that this network is where Earth myths of Yggdrasil and the Kabbalistic Tree of Life originate.

In exploring these tunnels and looking into the sea of time, the dwarves of Aihrde saw the end of their world, known as the Gonfod, and sought to explore the well of the world to see if it could be put off or stopped altogether. They created and transported Rings to many other worlds, always jealously guarding their secret from others, that they could always find their way home when traveling.

So it was that eventually, Aihrde was destroyed in its apocalyptic Gonfod, and as its races faded and the planet fell to ruin, the Rings of Brass also fell into disuse and were hidden and lost to the winds of ages. Still, so powerful were the magical runes carved into these Rings, that they were indestructible, and they remained, through the ages, on countless worlds throughout the many dimensions of the multiverse. Many of these rings exist right here on Earth, for those stalwart, lucky, or unlucky enough to find them.

## WHAT ARE THE RINGS OF BRASS?

The Rings of Brass, as mentioned above, are quite literally portals to other worlds, other dimensions, and even through time itself. The danger of the Rings, however, are that the secret to using and controlling them has been lost for millions of years, as the world of Aihrde saw its golden age and even its Gonfod millions of years before

the rise of human civilization on Earth, when dinosaurs walked the Earth, or even before. Aihrde is not Earth, but it was a civilization on a sister world to Earth, which waxed and waned before we even saw our birth here.

The Rings of Brass resemble great mirrors, ranging in size from five feet to ten feet or more, oval in shape, and surrounded by gleaming and ornate brass frames, traced with runes of an utterly alien origin: the magic of the Dwarven runesmiths of Aihrde. The rings are impossibly heavy, though they do not dent the ground upon which they sit. They cannot be moved by any power known to humankind and are utterly rooted in the places they are found.

When activated, the mirrored surface of the Ring of Brass shimmers and undulates like so much water, then fades to show a window to another world—or more accurately, a gateway through which one can step.

Traveling through a Ring of Brass is always a risky prospect. One never knows what they will find when they traverse the root-tunnels of the Trottigen, and indeed, one never has a guarantee that they will be able to find a way home. So alien are the runes and science used to power the runes, that it is all but impossible the Rings could be harnessed. If they could be, however, whoever controlled them would have unimaginable power, perhaps the power to rewrite history itself.

## THE RINGS OF BRASS IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

The last time the Rings of Brass were in any way known to human civilization was in the ancient world, where explorers viewed them as portals to the underworld or to nightmare realms of metal monsters and deadly threats. Indeed, this is exactly what they were to those young societies. Imagine stepping through a portal in ancient Greece and winding up in 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup>-century Earth. Many died within minutes or hours of making the trip.

As such, eventually, the Rings were abandoned or staunchly guarded. Temples were built around them and as the ages passed, volcanoes, earthquakes, and simply the ravages of time caused them to be lost to history, to the last. They became things of myth, the magic mirrors into which sages gazed and the portals to Hades that heroes traversed in search of lost loved ones.

And yet, the Rings themselves endured and they still remain across the world, just waiting to be discovered once again.

## THE RINGS OF BRASS IN THE MODERN WORLD

Where can the Rings of Brass be found? This is left to the GM to determine for themselves. Since **Amazing Adventures** is designed to be built around your world and your game, it's left to you to decide how many of these Rings

are left in the world, if any, and where they might be located. Three adventures provided herein offer locales for Rings, but as for the rest, a number of major locales that were of importance to the world of the past may provide some insight and clues as to possible locations.

As you read through, remember, these locations are *only suggestions*. We encourage you to research the ancient world for yourself. You will likely find ancient mysteries, cursed places, and unsolved secrets throughout history that strike you as even more intriguing as those we have suggested here. There's no limit on how many Rings of Brass could exist. Just be cautious: if they are hiding around every corner, it's highly unlikely they would've remained lost throughout history. It's not even recommended that every site listed here have one. Again, these are possibilities and suggestions.

In fact, just because one or more of these locations doesn't have a Ring of Brass, that isn't to say that some other dark and mysterious secret doesn't reside there. What if there are other sorts of gateways to other worlds, waiting to be discovered? What if there are passages to the Spaces Beyond Spaces and the worlds of the Great Old Ones, co-existing with the Rings of Brass? These locations could hold any number of ancient artifacts that can be used for good or ill. The Rings of Brass just happen to be the focus of these adventures.

## MINOA

Very little is known about the ancient early bronze age society of Minoa. It is known that it preceded Rome, and possibly even Greece, and that parts of ancient Greece were built upon its bones on the island of Crete. Some scholars believe that the Minoan culture was in fact among the very few truly matriarchal cultures in history, but the mystery of who its people were, how they lived, and what their culture was like have become lost to the sands of time. We do have some of their artwork and icons, their tombs and funerals to look upon, as well as elaborate ruins including palaces with plumbing systems, elaborate fresco art, and other features, and even existing samples of their written alphabets, both in linear and hieroglyphic form, but neither have ever been deciphered, but so much of who they were was subsumed into later Roman Culture, it's impossible to know any true detail short of an astounding archaeological find. If there were Rings of Brass associated with the Minoan culture, they are likely located within a lost tomb or buried temple somewhere on the Aegean Islands.

It is known that the civilization flourished with a golden age from approximately 2700 B.C.E. to around 1450 B.C.E., before going into decline until its final end somewhere around 1100 B.C.E. It may have existed as early as 3500 B.C.E. or even earlier. It was the first of the advanced civilizations in Europe and a trading culture whose influence reached as far as the Egyptian Old Kingdom. The most notable structures still standing from the Minoan civilization

are the palace of Knossos and the palace of Phaistos. Both of these ruins are possible locations of the Rings of Brass.

We also have no idea why the civilization went into decline. Theories involve invasions and natural disasters. What if it was a combination of both, and it had something to do with the Rings of Brass? Were the invaders extradimensional monsters? Perhaps they were Mycenaeans from Greece either looking to steal a Ring for themselves, or take control of an additional one after discovering one on the mainland?

Regardless, the mysteries of the Minoan culture make it a perfectly mysterious setting for adventures surrounding the Rings of Brass. Did the ancient Minoan peoples have contact with the world of Aihrde through the Rings of Brass? Did that connection cause the doom of their civilization as strange, mystical energies from the Aihrdian Gonfod bled through to Earth? In the end, it's up to you.

## **GREECE**

Ancient Greece is a land of mythology, the cradle of western civilization and the heart, soul, and birthplace of much of our modern culture. It's where philosophy came from, where the idea of democracy was first explored on a massive scale. It's the home of so many of the myths and legends with which we all grew up, even if we conflate Roman names with Greek tales. It's where one finds Mount Olympus, the home of Zeus, Hera, Athena, Ares, Poseidon, Aphrodite, and their ilk.

Our first adventure situates one of the Rings of Brass squarely in the depths of a Greek archeological dig, but there are, in truth, many places across Greece where these artifacts might be found. The site where the Oracle of Delphi had her visions could well have been the home of a buried Ring of Brass. The towering ruins of the Parthenon are another possibility.

Greek legends tell of an entrance to the Underworld located at the convergence of the rivers Styx, Acheron, Cocytus, and Phlegethon. While all of these rivers are mythical and no one knows definitively what real-world bodies of water they refer to (save for Acheron, which is in the Epirus region), there have been hints. Herodotus, for example, claims that the river Styx had its mouth near Feneos. Perhaps this lost entrance to the Underworld is in fact one of the Rings of Brass, which on Aihrde are said to traverse that world's own underworld.

## **ROME**

When we talk about ancient Rome, we're not talking about the ancient Roman Empire, which spanned almost all of Europe and into the Middle East, but the Italian peninsula that formed the heart of that empire. There are also plenty of opportunities to situate a Ring of Brass in this region, especially since much of Rome's culture grew out of Greece's Hellenization of the world. There's a rea-

son why so many of Rome's myths are syncretized from Greek tradition.

If Greece was the heart and soul of western civilization, Rome took it to the next level. The idea of a representative republic originated with Rome, and was later adopted and adapted, after a fashion, in nations such as Great Britain and the United States. Still, it was a land of deep mystery, and its approach towards religious freedom led to literally thousands of mystery cults dedicated to deities domestic, foreign, and in some cases utterly alien.

One interesting option for the location of a Ring of Brass in Rome itself is the Pantheon, essentially Rome's answer to the Parthenon. The Pantheon today operates as a Catholic church (the Basilica of St. Mary and the Martyrs). This building is among the best preserved buildings from ancient Rome and construction was likely begun circa 31 B.C.E. It was likely completed around 126 C.E. during the reign of Hadrian after having been destroyed at least once. Its complete history is something of a mystery, but something has inspired regime after regime to keep it in continuous use throughout the ages. Could it be due to the existence of a Ring of Brass deep within its bowels?

Indeed, the history of Rome is also inexorably intertwined with the history of Roman Catholicism, any of the mysteries of the Church could also tie into the Rings of Brass. Any number of basilica or catacombs throughout Rome or the Vatican could hold the secrets of interdimensional travel. Perhaps there's a Ring of Brass hidden beneath the floors of St. Peter's Basilica, or what if the Vatican Archives themselves were built around one of these ancient gateways? The possibilities are endless.

## **EGYPT**

If there is a part of the ancient world that's as filled with wonder and vague, mysterious familiarity as Greece and Rome, it's ancient Egypt. The culture of Egypt was as alien and mysterious as it was advanced, and the Egyptians achieved feats of engineering prowess that even today we cannot figure out how they were accomplished.

Ancient alien theorists are convinced that ancient Egypt was visited by travelers from another world (and perhaps more than one), based on strange images in hieroglyphs. Egyptian deities were strange figures with the heads of animals and the bodies of people. What if these ancient alien theorists aren't entirely wrong, but what if the visitors to ancient Egypt were as extradimensional as they were extraterrestrial?

Egypt is, in short, an ideal place for one of the Rings of Brass. One of these rings could hide within one of the Great Pyramids, or even one of the lesser pyramids scattered throughout the Egyptian desert. There may be one hidden within a secret chamber beneath the Sphinx. The Giza Necropolis, if not the Pyramid itself, is an ideal location for one of the Rings, as is the Valley of the Kings, Val-



ley of the Queens, the Luxor Temple, under the Colossi of Memnon, or within the Mortuary Temple.

The nation of Egypt is positively full of mysterious ancient sites that exude an air of secrecy and mystery. This is a land that is rich with secrets, mythology, and which has seen wars, culture, technology, and empires rise and fall for many thousands upon thousands of years. It is, in short, a perfect place to set a campaign involving the uncovering of mysterious secrets from other worlds.

#### THE ANCIENT ALIEN THEORIES

Just because you might scoff at a conspiracy theory or strange idea in real life, does not mean you should dismiss it in your game. It is highly recommended that Game Masters read up on ancient alien theories, on conspiracies like the New World Order, the Bilderbergers, even the Illuminati. Secret societies and conspiracies are the heart and soul of great modern adventure games, and there's no better inspiration than to read up on *actual* conspiracy theories.

You don't have to believe it to *use it in your game*. Every GM should be invested in learning about these theories, if for no other reason than they make for outstanding gaming fodder, and the circular logic used to back up many of these theories is a master class in building conspiracies that will keep your players guessing and turning stone after stone, never getting to the truth at the heart of the matter.

In the end, if you have no issue bringing cryptozoological creatures like the Yeti or Sasquatch into your game, you should have no qualms about playing with "real world" conspiracy theories, twisting them to your own ends as well.

## TURKEY

Turkey may not be a location that springs immediately to mind as an iconic mysterious locale in the world, but it has played a central role in the rise and fall of empires for millennia, and it, too, is full of secret, mysterious sites and ruins. The ancient city of Cappadocia dates back at least as far as Greece, and not only does the city still stand, people still live in the natural cave formations here.

A more recent archaeological site in Turkey is Göbekli Tepe. There have to date been 15 massive temples and over 200 obelisks discovered in this ancient world heritage site. It's deep in the southeastern Anatolian mountains, and dates to over 10,000 years ago. The existence of such monumental temples and sites certainly speaks to a site of ancient importance, but what secrets does it hold? Perhaps the deities worshipped in these ancient places were alien gods from a world called Aihrde, which were accessible through one of the Rings of Brass...

Also located in Anatolia, the ancient city of Perge was established around 1300 B.C.E. and was considered among the most important cultural cities in the ancient world. It was a hub of philosophy, mathematics, and astronomy, and was considered in ancient Greek mythology as a sanctuary of the goddess Artemis. Perhaps all of this knowledge came from otherworldly sources, which figures such as Apollonius traveling to other worlds to learn alien secrets which they then brought home.

## PERSIA

The ancient empire of Persia is located where current-day Iran is, and there are a number of mysterious places there which could play host to one of the Rings of Brass. This nation is the home of vast and ancient cave complexes, and one of the most mysterious and dangerous is the Killer Cave of Parau. This cave extends 751 meters into the ground and is among the deepest caves in the entire world. Exploring the known depths of the caves takes days, and no fewer than five people have died plumbing its depths. What if, somewhere in that subterranean world, resides a gateway to the underworld itself—one of the Rings of Brass?

Of course, another deadly and terrifying locale in Iran is the Dune of the Jinn. This area of 3,800 square kilometers of desert that's loaded with salt swamps. It has been rumored to be rife with the spells of Arabic demons—jinn, or djinn. The area cannot be safely navigated without a wealth of heavy-duty, professional equipment. If you situate a Ring of Brass here, it's recommended you treat the salt swamps just as you would any other deadly hazard, combining tricks like dry quicksand and lightning sand with the typical dangers of the arid desert such as sandstorms, thirst, heat, and isolation.

Located not far from the small village of Berkeh-ye Khalaf is the Stars Valley in Queshm. This is another mysterious

rocky valley with strange natural formations that is said to be filled with jinn and the howling of demons in the night. It could be an ideal location for one of the Rings of Brass, as well as the home of tribes of wild ghûls rampaging through the caves, cliffs, and tunnels.

Naturally occurring mysterious places aren't the only options in Persia, however. There are also plenty of man-made ruins like those of Babak Castle. This mysterious ruin is also known as the Immortal Castle and resides within the Arasbaran Forest. It's very difficult to get there, as the climb is hindered by thick forests. It stands as the tallest point in the region and has stood for over a millennium. It may be ideal to situate one of the Rings of Brass deep within the castle's bowels.

Finally, the ruins of Takht-e-Soleyman was first discovered (or rediscovered) by German pilots during WWII. It was a military and religious site dating to the sixth century B.C.E., but the specifics of it, what it did, who the people were that live here, and what is at the bottom of the hundred-plus-meter deep lake at its center remain a mystery to this day. Many have died attempting to discover the lake's secrets, and their corpses have not been found. What if they were drawn into another world?

## **CENTRAL AND SOUTH AFRICA**

South Africa is the home of many mysterious and chilling stories over the centuries. One of the most famous is the Cape of Good Hope, the site of the famed story of the Flying Dutchman, a doomed sailing vessel that heralds the death of any sailor who crosses its path. Perhaps the Dutchman didn't just succumb to a storm, but was pulled into a dimensional-temporal vortex created by a Ring of Brass beneath the sea?

The Waterspook of Karoo National Park is another mysterious ghost story from South Africa. The spirit is said to haunt the local mountains, able to appear and disappear at will, and to lure livestock into a deep pool, causing them to drown. There are a large number of unmarked graves in the region where unwary travelers have died untimely deaths. Perhaps this haunted pool in the mountains hides a Ring of Brass.

Technically, the history of the town of Matjiesfontein begins in Victorian times, the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. But this town on the Western Cape is the home of numerous mysterious happenings and ghostly apparitions. What if the town was originally laid out to protect a dark secret—a dimensional portal that lay there since ancient times, and the ghostly visions are actually bleed-through from other worlds and other times?

## **CHINA**

The heart of the mysterious Orient, China is one of the most ancient civilizations in the world, dating back many

thousands of years. Though today it is known for its ultramodern, bustling metropolises crowded with people, lights, technology, and manufacturing, it is also chock full of ancient and mysterious places which could hide a gateway to other worlds. The most obvious location to place such a portal in China is the Forbidden City, the home of the imperial palace for over six centuries. There are countless murders, sacrifices, and failed, bloody revolutions that took place within its walls, and even today it is said the ghosts of these thousands of dead haunt its walls.

It's one of the most toured sites in China, but it could also hide uncovered secrets. What if the responsibility of the inhabitants, as well as the reason for many of those failed uprisings, murders, and slaughters, was to protect a gateway that offers untold power to those who gain control over it?

Fengdu, the City of Ghosts, is another possible location for one of the Rings. This city was first erected two millennia ago and consists of a collection of monasteries, shrines, and temples which are all dedicated to the afterlife of ancient Chinese mythology. It is said that it was the home of Imperial officials who used the site as the location for a ritual that would grant them immortality.

Ever since, they are said to take people to the underworld, but that ghosts who come here must visit three specific sites before they can make the journey. What if the truth is, there are three keys one must activate at three specific locales, to open the way to a portal that leads to a variety of other worlds?

Naturally, the most obvious and easy place to locate one of the Rings of Brass is within one of the Seven Wonders of the World and one of the largest structures ever built by humankind: the Great Wall of China. Its place in Chinese history, and the many battles, deaths, and heroic actions that occurred here cannot be understated. It is possible that somewhere within or beneath this structure, is buried one of these powerful artifacts, and that part of the wall's purpose is to keep it safe from evil.

## **JAPAN**

Japan's history and mythology are rife with death, demons, ghosts, and even vampires. There are a number of locales in this small island nation that could be the secret location of portals to other worlds. One of the most famed mysterious places in Japan (thanks to a recent film) is Aokigahara Forest. Known as the suicide forest, thousands of people have reportedly killed themselves over the years beneath its lush canopy.

Even more disturbing, many who have gone in to die but changed their mind have reported an irresistible pull towards the darkest depths of the forest, like a voice in their mind beckoning them forth. What if there's a reason for that? What if the dimensional energies from a certain mysterious portal wreak havoc with one's perceptions while within the forest limits?

Mt. Fuji, of course, is a pristine landscape surrounding a legendary volcano, and the magnetic ore that abounds in the soil causes anomalies that render a compass useless. Countless people have gotten lost trying to find their way out with no sense of direction. Maybe it's not just the iron that causes the problems...but the competing magnetic pull of other worlds bleeding through the dimensional portal somewhere around the Northwest base of the volcano?

The site of a major campaign during World War II, Iwojima Island is the home of the most dangerous active volcano in the entire world, which is expected to erupt sometime in the next century, with consequences to the islands and mainland that will be nothing short of apocalyptic. It is said to be haunted by the spirits of thousands of soldiers who died here and may be a hub of supernatural energy. Could this energy fuel—or be fueled by—a Ring of Brass hidden within the fiery depths of Mt. Suribachi?

These are just a few of the haunted and strange locales to be found in Japan. From abandoned tunnels containing mysterious bodies to the skeletons of abandoned amusement parks, to ancient but empty schoolhouses, the potential for supernatural encounters and portals to other worlds here are almost endless.

## **NORTHERN EUROPE**

Northern Europe is known as the home of the Vikings, and it has its share of strange and mysterious locales which could hide one of the Rings of Brass. The 67 buildings of the medieval complex of Akershus Festning in Norway have but a single building that is known as the most haunted spot in the country with reports of fierce ghost dogs and even a faceless phantom woman named Mantelgeisten haunting its depths. Perhaps these occurrences are due to the presence of an extradimensional portal.

The Borgvattnet vicarage in Sweden is also the site of unexplained paranormal phenomena. It sat for centuries undisturbed, but starting in 1927, reports of unseen forces tearing at clothing, spirits watching over visitors, and even the apparition of women crying have been reported. What if this building has hidden a Ring of Brass for hundreds or thousands of years, and something happened in 1927 that caused it to become active?

Château Miranda in Belgium is the still-standing shell of a stunning medieval castle, which by the 1950s was used as an insane asylum. Today, the locals claim that the sounds of screaming souls erupt from the castle, which has become known since then as Chateau de Noisy. Maybe the screams are coming from the afterlife, which can be accessed by walking the pathways within the Ring of Brass deep within its bowels...

## **THE BRITISH ISLES**

The British Isles are a veritable haven of ghost stories and paranormal phenomena. Some of the most obvious

locales which will find their way on everyone's list will be the Tower of London and Stonehenge. Still, there are other places that are just as mysterious.

The Hell Fire Club in Dublin was the home of a branch of this infamous secret society (which is detailed in the **Amazing Adventures** core rulebook). The Hell Fire Club is the site of many rumors of black masses, animal and human sacrifice, and demonic creature sightings over the years. The club has always been a hedonistic society dedicated to the dark arts and control of the supernatural. What if they were hiding a Ring of Brass in the bowels of their headquarters?

The ancient bed & breakfast establishment known as the Ram Inn is rumored to have been built over the site of an ancient pagan burial ground. It is also rumored to have been the site of devil worship and even child sacrifice. It is said that over 20 spirits haunt this place, including a genuine incubus. This is another space that is ripe for hiding a portal to other worlds and other dimensions.

Finally, Scotland's Edinburgh Castle which has stood since the 12<sup>th</sup> Century is considered to be one of the most haunted places in Scotland. From mysterious music wafting through the halls to slamming doors and strange voices in the dead of night, there are all sorts of strange happenings here. Perhaps most mysterious of all, after a massive paranormal investigation was held in 2001, the results were suppressed and never revealed. Perhaps there's a secret being protected in the dungeons of the castle.

## **NORTH AMERICA**

Though the United States is barely 250 years old, North America has been inhabited for thousands of years. There are a number of sites in North America that might hide a Ring of Brass.

Just outside of the town of Salem, New Hampshire (not to be confused with the Massachusetts village) lies a mysterious stone formation and artificial cave complex known as "America's Stonehenge." This complex is presumed to date to the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, but no one knows for sure how old it is, when it was erected, or why. It's said that horror writer H.P. Lovecraft came here to get inspiration for his own tales, and what if that inspiration came from extradimensional beings that used a hidden portal somewhere beneath the rocks?

Across the nation in Lovell, Wyoming, is the Bighorn Medicine Wheel, one of a number of similar structures that are somewhat similar to the Standing Stones in England. The Bighorn Wheel is the largest of these, at 75 feet in diameter and organized in the shape of a wheel. Its pre-dates the earliest known inhabitants. What if, dead at the center of the wheel and obscured by supernatural means, a Ring of Brass sits, just waiting to be revealed?



Chaco Canyon in New Mexico contains the ruins of an ancient city inhabited by the Anasazi people, Ancestral Puebloans who were enemies of the local Navajo (the term "Anasazi" means "enemy" and was the Navajo term for them). The site occupies a 9-mile stretch of land with buildings aligned along compass points and the lunar cycle, with massive above-ground and subterranean areas. It's possible that somewhere in this complex is one of the Rings of Brass, possibly protected by a secret society of modern Hopi, Zuni, Acoma, and Laguna peoples who are descended from the Ancestral Puebloans.

Finally, the outpost/town of Ends Meet, which is nominally located in Arkansas, but has been said to appear wherever it's needed across North America, is a dimensional nexus unto itself which exists on many worlds, and has a Ring of Brass at its heart. Ends Meet is detailed in the **Ends Meet** Adventure module and sourcebook for **Amazing Adventures**.

In Canada, the mysterious walls at Bayer Lake in Halifax present a similar locale to America's Stonehenge, a rock structure that appears to have been a fortification of some sort, but whose true origins are a mystery. It could house a Ring of Brass somewhere in the area.

L'Anse Aux Meadows Norse Village in Newfoundland dates at least to the year 1000 and is attributed to Leif Erikson and his Vinland colony. The site, like many other early Viking settlements, was mysteriously abandoned and no one knows why. Could it be that they fled from the demonic forces that emerged from a Ring of Brass, burying the artifact and leaving the cursed place for a better destination?

In Ontario, there are two old train tunnels: the Screaming Tunnel and the Blue Ghost Tunnel, which are said to be haunted where you can hear and see spirits that haunt the area, and there are many stories as to why. Again, perhaps these restless spirits are wandering the phantom dimensional pathways of a Ring of Brass after getting lost within its complex pathways...

## MEXICO AND CENTRAL AMERICA

The most obvious locales for Rings of Brass in Latin and Central America involve the many ruins of the Aztec, Maya, Olmecs, Oaxaca, Yucatec, and many others. Perhaps the most intriguing place to set a Ring of Brass is the Xunantunich Ruins in Belize. This ancient Mayan archaeological ruin is hidden in the rainforests of the nation about 80 miles away from Belize city. It's reported to be haunted with reports of a lonely woman with glowing red eyes in a flowing white dress walking the temple.

While the woman of El Castillo may be harmless (she has never been said to attack anyone), perhaps she is a guardian, watching over the Ring of Brass located in a hidden chamber somewhere within these ruins, just waiting to be found.

## SOUTH AMERICA

In fact, the prior supermodule in this series, **Rise of the Red God**, is set in South America in an Incan ruin in Peru, and the Temple of the Red God portion of that module expressly locates a "dimensional portal" in the ambulatory of that temple. It is expressly intended that this portal be one of the Rings of Brass. It is left to the GM if you wish to locate other Rings throughout South America.

For example, in Tiahuanaco on the Altiplano near lake Titicaca in Bolivia, there are two doorways in the ruins there. The Puerta del Sol and the Puerta de la Luna. The Moon (Luna) door already has myths about people disappearing by walking through the stone archway when the timing is right. Perhaps it's a damaged Ring hiding in plain sight that only works intermittently.

## ANTARCTICA

Read H.P. Lovecraft's *At the Mountains of Madness*. 'Nuff said!



# EPISODE FOUR: ORACLES OF DESTINY

## BACKGROUND

Several years ago, the Brotherhood of William St. John faced one of the greatest horrors the world will ever know, a vampire named Altrus Farri, who was dedicated to bringing about the rise of Ornduhl, the Red God, also called Sang-Xiu, the Blood Emperor, the Crimson Caliph, a deity who had been lost to the annals of history, but whose return was inexplicably prophesied in tombs across the entire world. The heroes stopped the dark god's rise, and Farri is long reduced to dust, but the cults of the Red God have risen once more to wreak havoc upon the world, thanks to his successful release of the *Andanuth*, a corrupt "bible" of sorts, also known as the *Codex Sanguinus*, which tells the story of the Rise of the Red God on his alien world, his destruction of the Father deity of that alien realm, and the secrets of his runic magic.

The Cult of the Red God has become yet another enemy in the long line of dark conspiracies, criminal empires, and dark sects the Brotherhood battles in its efforts to keep humankind safe from dangers both without and within the world. Far from destroyed following the fall of Farri, the cult went deep underground for several years, vanishing off the radar of the world's law enforcement and even the Brotherhood itself.

For years, the cults have been silent, but now they have risen again, and they are working to harness the power of an unthinkable, ancient and magical technology. If they can capture this technology, the Red God could rise again, and an age of untold darkness would fall across the world. It is up to the heroes to stop the cult of the Blood Emperor, the Red God Ornduhl, from using the Rings of Brass.

## THE ANDANUTH OF THE RED GOD VS. THE CODEX OF AIHRDE

Those who own the **Codex of Aihilde**, for our house fantasy campaign setting, will note that *The Andanuth* is the first portion of that work, and is a history of the world of Aihilde, up to and through the Winter Dark. This should be referred to as the *True Andanuth*. The *Andanuth* released by the Cult of Ornduhl (Sang-Xiu) on Earth is a different document. It takes the stories of Ornduhl from the *True Andanuth*, vastly expands upon them, and turns them into the *Codex Sanguinus*, a bible for the Red God's dark cult. GMs can use the *True Andanuth* from the **Codex of Aihilde** as a basis from which to develop their own version of the *Codex Sanguinus* for their game.

## ACT ONE

### PLAYER BACKGROUND

The year is 1940. War rages across the world, and the United States, though not officially a participant, is actively supporting the Allied cause with supplies and even soldiers under the command of other Allied nations (particularly Great Britain). While Nazi Germany remains the greatest threat to the world, there are also other, more esoteric groups seeking to take advantage of the chaos and bloodshed to further their own dark agendas.

That's where the Brotherhood of William St. John comes in. Ever paragons of freedom and justice, they have taken it upon themselves to root out these dark forces wherever they show themselves and keep the world safe from these villains. They have entangled with many such groups over the years: the Brotherhood of the Serpent, Chimera, and the Cult of the Red God among them.

### IN THE THICK OF IT

Our game begins right in the thick of the action. Recently, the heroes have been tracking a cult known as the Esoteric Order of Sang-Xiu, an offshoot of the Cult of the Red God, and have after months of skirmishes and legwork, finally tracked their leaders to a hidden base deep within Chinatown. This has led to a car chase which is where our adventure begins—a wild chase through the streets of Chinatown, and running gunfire, complicated by environmental concerns (pedestrians, fruit vendors, obstacles, etc.).

Run the car chase using the rules for vehicle combat in the **Amazing Adventures** core rulebook. Eventually, a battle will ensue, but the heroes will find themselves in the middle of a trap, surrounded by what appear to be overwhelming forces.

It's left to the Game Master whether the battle takes place in an alley at the end of a car chase, or inside the warehouse hideout of the cult. Whichever choice you make, let the battle run for several rounds, as the tension builds. Just as things look all but hopeless, the bark of a tommy gun rings out, and the cavalry arrives. If the battle takes place in an alleyway, additional cars arrive on the scene, crewed by men in black suits. A successful CL 2 Wisdom check reveals they are all wearing golden pins in the form of a triple cross.

If the battle takes place inside the warehouse, the reinforcements arrive on the scene and perhaps hurl flash-bang grenades or smoke grenades into the area, at which point the heroes feel themselves being pulled out of the place as F.B.I. troops charge in.

The battle turns quickly, with the cult fleeing into the shadows. At this time, the newcomers step forward and introduce themselves as representatives of His Holiness, Pope Pius XII. They've come here to seek out the noble Brotherhood of William St. John for help with a desperate situation. Now, they say, is not the time, for there are ears everywhere, but they wish to meet tomorrow afternoon, where they will explain what they need. They approach one of the group and hand them a slip of paper. "Be here," they say.

Then, without another word, they get back in their cars and drive away.

## VEHICLE AND ENEMY STATS

**CHEVROLET MASTER** *Dex 12 (+1) Con: 13 (+2) Cr 55 Max 88 Acc 5 AC 13 DR 10 HP 30*

**FORD ROADSTER:** *Dex 16 (+3), Con 13 (+2), Cr 50, Max 100, Acc 5, AC 13, DR 5. HP 30.*

**CULTISTS** (*NE humans*): *HP 9 (HD 2d8), AC 12, Spd 30ft. Str 11 Dex 12 Con 10 Int 10 Wis 11 Cha 10. Perception 10(+0). Deception +2, Religion +2, Stealth +4. Dagger +3 (1d4+1) or pistol +3 (1d8+1/double tap). SA Dark Devotion (Advantage vs. charm/frightened).*

*Some cultists may also be spellcasters (Wis 12; DC 11; +3). Cantrips (at will): light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy; 1-level (4 slots): command, inflict wounds, shield of faith; 2-level (3 slots): hold person, spiritual weapon.*

## TROUBLESHOOTING

### SETTING THE GAME IN OTHER TIMES

It's possible your game is set in another time period besides 1940. This shouldn't have much of an effect on the scenario at all. Simply set it in whatever time you like. The cult of Sang-Xiu can exist in any period or era, as can most of the other cults in the adventures herein. If you're in a situation where cell phones would create a problem, there are two solutions: the heroes either can't get a signal where they are (the enemy could be using jammers or any other excuse), or help arrives after the scene plays out.

### USING OTHER ADVENTURING SOCIETIES

It's also possible that your characters are not members of the Brotherhood of William St. John. This, also, is not an issue. Simply replace references to the Brotherhood with references to whatever adventuring group the characters belong. Even if the characters are freelance, they could have built a reputation in occult or conspiracy circles due to their past exploits, giving them enough of a reputation for the Church to call them in for help.

### THE HEROES DECIDE NOT TO HELP

For the most part, the heroes should follow the story. There are always, however, players who are out to derail the GM's game just because they can. If the heroes decide

not to pursue the lead from the Church representatives, they will be approached somewhere besides the park (see Act Two) — either at a diner or automat while they're having lunch, while they're on a walk, or even with a knock at their front door.

If the characters still refuse to help, the Church representatives will leave them contact information, should they change their minds. After this, continual attacks on the heroes by the cult and others with interest in the treasures of the Sibyl, especially during personal times, should convince them to take action.

## ACT TWO

### MEETING IN THE PARK

In the park, the next day, the men meet the group to explain the situation. As the heroes scout the area, look around, or even just sit on a bench, the mysterious men simply appear, as if out of nowhere. There is no explanation for how they accomplished this (in truth, they're just masters of espionage and stealth), and guide the players to a spot far away from other people. A few comfortable benches await, and they invite the heroes to sit.

"We thank you for coming," one of the men says. "We don't want to waste your time, and ours is brief, so we'll get right to it: someone has inexplicably broken into the Vatican archives and stolen several important documents. These documents formed the three known volumes of the *Sibylline Books* from Ancient Rome. Worse still, when properly arranged and read, these documents formed a set of instructions that reveal the location of the remaining six books, which history reports to have been burned by the Cumaean Sibyl hundreds of years before Christ.

In truth, their destruction was a deliberate illusion, and the Sibylline Order hid them in a temple somewhere in the Middle East—a temple whose location the Church has only just recently deduced—at least in general terms. This deception was due to the fact that the Sibylline Order believed them to be far too dangerous to fall into the hands of human civilization, a feeling the Church shares.

"The Church believes that the Esoteric Order of Sang-Xiu, who if we are correct are old enemies of yours, seeks to use the information contained within these lost works to unleash a great evil upon the world. This enemy is the very force the Order worships, a dark and demonic deity known as the Crimson Caliph, or Ornduhl the Red God. The Church is asking you and your Brotherhood to find the books before the Order, and to keep them safe. We cannot trust even our own men, since they have no idea how the Vatican archives were breached."

### ASSASSINS!

Just then, gunshots ring out, and both of the Vatican officers slump over, dead. Their assassins flee into the forests.

## 10 AMAZING ADVENTURES 5E

Just before dying, one of the Vatican officials presses an amulet into the hands of one of the PCs, and manages to choke out, "The Library of Celsus [KEL-soos]. Find the entrance there...Let Heaven's Arrow point the way..."

## THE CHASE

A chase should now ensue with the PCs pursuing the assassins into the woods. The GM should keep the chase dynamic, mixing Strength (athletics), Dexterity (acrobatics), and Wisdom (survival) checks to handle the race through the woods, avoiding obstacles, and picking up lost trails. Eventually, the chase can end in one of two ways, at the GM's discretion. The first is a battle with the PCs, where the assassins attempt to take out those they view as a threat to their resurgence. The second is that the PCs may simply find them dead with thick white foam at their lips and a smell of bitter almonds about them.

Regardless, these assassins won't be taken alive; they have cyanide capsules they will use if they cannot escape. The heroes will find upon them the symbol of the Red God, indicating that they are members of the cult of Sang-Xiu. There should be between 2 and 4 cult assassins with whom the PCs have to contend.

**CULT ASSASSINS** (LE Human Rogue 4) HP 23(HD 5d8), AC 14, Spd 30 ft. Str 10 Dex 15 Con 10 Int 10 Wis 12 Cha 10. Perception 11(+1). Deception +2, Religion +2, Stealth +4. Sv: Dex +4, Int +2. Short Sword +4 (1d6+2) piercing, pistol +4 (1d8+1/double tap) or bolt-action rifle +4 (2d6+1). SA Sneak Attack (1/turn; 7(2d6). Speedy Strike (advantage on initiative). Deadly Strike. (advantage on attacks and max damage vs. foe who hasn't acted). Spellcasting (Cha, DC 10, +2 attacks): Cantrips (at will) eldritch blast, poison spray, vicious mockery, 1<sup>st</sup> level (3 slots) charm person, hellish rebuke, sanctuary.

## TROUBLESHOOTING

The PCs may be smart enough to attempt to use magic like *speak with dead*, or psionic necromancy powers to summon the spirits of the dead cultists for information. Unfortunately, the assassins have very little information to share. They don't know who gave them the orders to assassinate the heroes; it was a faceless voice in the shadows, as many orders of the cult come down. They also don't know why they were sent to kill the Vatican representatives; they are utter fanatics and they obey their cult priests without question.

Use of *Spirit Medium* or *Necromancy* will yield the same results; treat the spirits of the deceased cultists as ghosts with a Challenge of 4 for purposes of checks and saving throws. Should the GM wish to really take things to a new level, summoning the ghosts can lead to an entire new conflict, one with which the heroes may or may not be equipped to face!

**GHOST** (CE Medium Undead) HP 45 (HD 10d8), AC 11, Spd 40ft fly. Str 7 Dex 13 Con 10 Int 10 Wis 12 Cha 17. Perception 11 (+1), darkvision 60ft. Withering Touch +5 (4d6+3 Necrotic), Horrifying Visage (all who see frightened (DC 13 Wis neg.) Failing save by 10 also ages 1d4x10 years), Possession (Recharge 6; Ghost possesses target (DC 13 Cha neg.)). SA Etherealness (action), Ethereal sight (60 ft), Incorporeal movement, Damage Resistance to acid, fire, lightning, thunder and bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons, Damage immunity to cold, necrotic, poison, Immune to charmed, exhausted, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained.

## ACT THREE

### TO THE MIDDLE EAST

Any character who succeeds at a DC 12 Intelligence (history) check or takes any time at all to do some basic research will be able to determine that the Library of Celsus is located in Turkey, and was a famed landmark of the ancient world. It's located in the ancient ruins of Ephesus, which are about a mile from Selçuk [SA'chook], the central town of Selçuk district in İzmir Province.

Assuming you are running in the stated era, there is a World War going on, Turkey at this time is a staunchly neutral country in the world war, which means that Allied and Nazi sympathizers can be seen throughout the region. This means two things. First, it is possible to travel there, though it may require flying over enemy airspace. Second, the city itself is something of a powder keg waiting to blow.

### ARRIVAL IN SELÇUK

Selçuk is the central town in its namesake district of İzmir Province, along the coast of the Aegean Sea. In ancient times it was a philosophical center of the Greek and Roman Empires and was called Agios Theologos, after John the Theologian. By the 14<sup>th</sup> century, it was the capital of the Beylik of Aydin. At this time, under the control of the Ottoman Empire, it was renamed Ayasoluk. It was first named Selçuk in 1914.

By 1940, it has a population of around 600-700 people, and the Old Quarter is a center of traditional culture. On Ayasuluk Hill, a number of historic buildings and sites can be found, including the Isa Bey Mosque and the Grand Fortress. Though these days a small port town, it is a bustling, vibrant town filled with merchants and an uneasy powder-keg of Allied and Axis forces mingling, always ready to fight.

### A POTENTIAL ALLY

At some point after their arrival, as the heroes settle in, they are approached by a Turkish man of handsome countenance and average build. He trails them for a time and

## THE RINGS OF THE RED GOD 11



will allow them to detect him following them—in truth he's studying them to see just how perceptive they are. When they finally confront him (or he approaches them), he will show the symbol of the Vatican hidden beneath the lapel of his jacket, and introduce himself as Kudret Kahraman, a representative of the Church, sent to help the heroes in their search for the Codices.

He will seem genuinely saddened at the news of his cohorts having been assassinated, but this will seem to just redouble his determination to help. In truth, Kudret is a high priest of Sang-Xiu, utterly dedicated to the cult of the Red God, but he has been implanted within the Vatican for so long he's become an expert at deception and misdirection. Under no circumstances should there be any indication whatsoever that he might betray the group until the very end.

Portray Kudret as a staunch ally, utterly dedicated to the quest to keep the Codices away from the cult, even willing to put his own life on the line to save the characters and the mission. His betrayal should be a sharp sting when it eventually comes; before then he'll do whatever he must to gain the heroes' trust and even present as a true friend to the Brotherhood.

## **EPHESUS**

The ruins of Ephesus itself are located about 3 kilometers (just over 2.5 miles) to the southwest of Selçuk. The city was known far and wide in the ancient world as the location of the majestic Temple of Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. The ruins of the Library of Celsus can also be found here, as well as an amphitheater capable of seating 25,000 people.

It's possible that the Gospel of John was written here, and it was the site of the Council of Ephesus in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century, around 200 years after it was originally sacked and destroyed by the Goths in the third century. The city was, in short, a site of vital importance in the ancient world for centuries. It was the site of two different agoras, one a commercial market, and one used for business of the state, as well as a number of Roman baths. It was outfitted with a highly advanced aqueduct system as well as water mills.

Here's an overview of some of the major ruins currently being excavated in Ephesus.

**TEMPLE OF ARTEMIS:** The Temple of Artemis, as stated earlier, was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Originally it covered nearly 100,000 square feet and boasted marble pillars standing 56 feet high. It was the reason the city was known as Servant of the Goddess, and it took 120 years to complete. Today, all that is left is a single column uncovered in the 1870s, and a few fragments of the Frieze. Though considered part of the city, the temple is actually right on the edge of Selçuk, a few miles from the rest of the city ruins.

**LIBRARY OF CELSUS:** The Library of Celsus has seen its original façade reconstructed from original pieces unearthed by archaeologists. It was originally erected around the year 125 CE, in honor of the Roman Governor Tiberius Julius Celsus Polemaeanus. The Governor himself is buried beneath the ruined library, which once held almost 12,000 scrolls. Stunningly detailed statues of Arete and of Celsus himself were uncovered in the ruins, but depending on when you are setting the adventure, may have been moved to museums.

**AMPHITHEATRE:** The theatre is believed to be the largest of its kind in the ancient world, even larger than the famed structure in Rome. It had a seating capacity of around 25,000 people and was originally used for drama, but later was the site of gladiatorial games.

**THE ODEON:** This smaller, indoor theatre was constructed in the Second Century C.E. and seated just about 1,500 people. It was decorated with Corinthian red granite pillars.

**THE TEMPLE OF HADRIAN:** This structure dates to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century C.E. and was renovated around the 4<sup>th</sup> Century. Its bas reliefs depict the Emperor Theodosius I and his wife, as well as other figures of ancient Rome.

**THE TEMPLE OF THE SEBASTOI / TEMPLE OF DOMITIAN:** This temple was dedicated to the Flavian Dynasty and was among the largest temples in the city. It was built in the style of ancient Greek temples and contains a statue of the emperor.

**THE TOMB AND FOUNTAIN OF POLIO:** This fountain was erected in about 97 C.E. in honor of the architect who created the Marnas aqueduct and is known for its concave façade

**BASILICA OF ST. JOHN:** This church dates to the 6<sup>th</sup> Century and is said to be built over the site of the tomb of John the Apostle, but like the Temple of Artemis, is actually located in Selçuk.

## **THE SEVEN SLEEPERS**

The city of Ephesus is also believed to be the home of the Seven Sleepers, revered saints and figures in the Christian and Islamic traditions. These seven young people were said to have been persecuted around the year 250 for their belief in a single god. They hid inside a cave and emerged 3 centuries later. The grotto of the Seven Sleepers is located on the slopes of Mount Pion, not far from Selçuk/Ephesus, and attracts hundreds of pilgrims every year. If the player characters are in need of ideas or being pointed in the right direction, it's possible that an extremely aged and venerable old man might have some memories of the item they seek...

One of the Seven Sleepers appears below, in the Temple of St. John. Similar stats could be used for all seven, or if the GM wishes, they could each have a different specialty—one might be an Arcanist, one a Hallowed, one an

Occultist, one a Pugilist, one a Hooligan, etc. This could be a prime opportunity to bring in some of your 5e Fantasy classes and introduce fighters and paladins to face down your heroes. Remember, however, that the Seven Sleepers are to the very last, “good guys.” They’re devout Christians after an early conception when the faith was still a mystery cult and persecuted by Rome.

### **THE ARROW OF HEAVEN**

Not long after arriving in Selçuk, the heroes are once more accosted by their enemies, who have also arrived in search of the Codices. This leads to a chase through the streets of the town, into a trap set for the heroes by their enemies, and eventually, to the ruins of the city of Ephesus itself. Whether this occurs as a running battle, repeated assassination attempts and skirmishes, or actions of a more intrigue-based nature is left to the discretion of the GM.

In the end, what’s important is that they need information from the Library of Celsus, which will eventually lead them back to the Basilica of John and eventually, to the Temple of Artemis...which will point them directly back to the library.

### **THE LIBRARY OF CELSUS**

In Ephesus, the heroes must somehow locate what they’re looking for in the ruins of the Library of Celsus, currently just a part of a façade, with ancient pieces lying in piles of rubble. As they look for their other clues, they may note (especially with someone who has an archaeology background and a successful Intelligence check), the several other main archaeological sites of interest in Ephesus.

The Arrow of Heaven could be any of a number of places, but the Library will certainly seem to be the logical place to begin, as it was at one point the repository of learning, knowledge, and information of this area of the ancient world.

As the heroes search through the beginnings of the excavation (which right now is little more than an unearthed façade), they may unearth a number of clues, including Christian iconography that dates to later than the library itself. This iconography will form a trail of sorts, one image leading to the next, until with a DC 15 Intelligence (investigation) check, the final symbol leads to a hidden scroll casing, which at a glance contains an ancient alchemical scroll.

The scroll itself has nothing to do with their quest but may be quite valuable as an archaeological find unto itself. On the inside of the scroll case cap, however, is a small inscription in Koine Greek, which reads, “The Ring of the Saint unlocks the Vault of Heaven.” It also includes an image of a Greek Orthodox-style cross. It’s clearly far newer than it should be and was obviously deposited here sometime after the fall of Ephesus.

This is a direct reference to a ring worn by St. John. The heroes’ next stop is the Basilica of St. John.



### **BASILICA OF ST. JOHN**

The Basilica is located near the center of Selçuk district, on Ayasuluk Hill. It dates to the 6<sup>th</sup> Century C.E. and as legend has it, is constructed over the tomb of St. John the Apostle. It is located roughly 2.2 miles from Ephesus. Deep within the bowels of the Basilica, the heroes must find the sarcophagus of the saint himself and remove the ring from his finger.

The tomb is accessed beneath the altar in the Basilica, which slides away when a hidden panel is pressed, revealing a staircase descending into the darkness. It’s left to the GM exactly how the heroes can locate the panel—the most basic method is with a DC 15 Intelligence (investigation) or passive Perception check, but if the heroes fail, they could find themselves at a dead end. It’s best, in the end, to ask the heroes to describe what they are doing and how they are searching, and allow the check to speed up or slow down their search—that is, if they succeed at the check, they easily find the panel. If they fail, finding the panel takes quite some time.

The staircase descending to the Saint’s tomb is pitch dark, though there are unlit torches in sconces along the walls which could be lit. The stairs end in a long hallway which opens up into a single room with a stone sarcophagus at its center, surrounded by ancient Christian iconography.

As they enter the tomb, they will find a young man, fully bearded and himself covered in dust, sitting and waiting. The young man immediately weaves a powerful spell (DC 18 Constitution save to resist) which puts anyone who fails their save to sleep. He will, however, leave one member of the party unaffected by the spell, so he can demand to know their business.

It is incumbent upon that party member to explain what they are looking for and make a case to get the ring. The young man is one of the Seven Sleepers, who has taken on the job of guarding the ring of St. John throughout the ages. He is wary of letting anyone have the key to seeking out the Sibylline Codices, as he feels they aren't safe in anyone's hands. He himself doesn't even know where they are, only that the ring of St. John is the next step in the journey.

The hero or heroes must convince him that they are the right hands—or at very least, less dangerous than those who will come after. This young man is not evil, and the idea of simply killing him should at very least leave a very bad taste in the mouth of any hero of good alignment. He is also a fairly powerful spellcaster who will fight to defend his charge. Attacking him will accomplish nothing aside from convincing him that the PCs are not a safe bet.

On the other hand, if the heroes are hitting a dead end, the timely arrival of some cultists of Sang-Xiu on the scene could help to convince him. When the cultists attack the young man, if the heroes side with the Sleeper, it will go a long way towards his willingness to allow them to take the ring.

**THE SLEEPER** (NG Human Hal 10): HP 69 (HD 10d8+20), AC 17, Spd 30. Str 12 Dex 13 Con 15 Int 14 Wis 16 Cha 12. Perception 13 (+3). Insight +6, Medicine +6, Persuasion +4, Religion +5. Sp: Wis +6, Cha +4. Mace +7 (1d8+4 plus 1d6 radiant). SA Divine Domain (life). Channel Divinity (2/rest), Destroy Undead (CR 1), Divine intervention, improved healing (healing spells grant an extra 2 + spell level hit points), preserved life (channel divinity; heal 5 x cleric level in hp divided among any creatures in 30 ft), self-healing (spells to heal others also restore 2 + spell level hit points to caster); divine strike (deal extra 1d8 radiant damage on a successful attack 1/round). Spellcasting (Wis; DC 14; attack +6): Cantrips – guidance, light, resistance, sacred flame, thaumaturgy; 1-level (4 slots) – bless, cure wounds, guiding bolt, healing word, protection from evil and good, shield of faith; 2-level (3 slots) – aid, enhance ability, lesser restoration, prayer of healing, spiritual weapon; 3-level (3 slots) – beacon of hope, dispel magic, mass healing word, protection from energy, revivify, spirit guardians; 4-level (3 slots) – death ward, guardian of faith; 5-level (2 slots) – greater restoration, mass cure wounds, raise dead. Equipment: +3 holy mace, cuir boille armor, silver-gilded wooden holy symbol, prayer wheel, 5 sticks of incense.

**CULTISTS** (NE humans): HP 9 (HD 2d8), AC 12, Spd 30ft. Str 11 Dex 12 Con 10 Int 10 Wis 11 Cha 10. Perception 10(+0). Deception +2, Religion +2, Stealth +4. Dagger +3 (1d4+1) or pistol +3 (1d8+1/double tap). SA Dark Devotion (Advantage vs. charm/frightened).

Some cultists may be spellcasters (Wis 12; DC 11; +3). Cantrips (at will): light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy; 1-level (4 slots): command, inflict wounds, shield of faith; 2-level (3 slots): hold person, spiritual weapon.

**THE RING OF ST. JOHN:** This ring contains the same sigil as that worn by the Vatican agents, and when twisted contains a small map of ancient Ephesus. The map shows that the next stage on the heroes' journey is the Temple of Artemis, with the sigil once again drawn over that location on the map.

## THE TEMPLE OF ARTEMIS

The Temple of Artemis is located just outside of Ephesus, on the outer edge of Selçuk, but presents yet another challenge: All that remains is a single pillar and a few crumbling remains. Archaeological expeditions before World War I were able to identify the remains of three different buildings, which date back over 2,000 years and indicate successive destruction and rebuilding over the ages. A wealth of artifacts have been discovered at the site.

The heroes will need to search the area to find the entrance, once again, to the underground chamber that will provide them the final piece of the puzzle: the location of the Sibylline Codices.

The key to open the underground chamber is secreted within a partial column that is surrounded by a foundation of stacked stones. Between the stones and the column is a small statue of Artemis, standing about 12 inches high, her hands held out in welcome. One hand, however, appears to be pointing to her right (the viewer's left) rather than open.

The statue seems to be rooted to the ground and cannot be pulled free. It can, however, twist, and the pointing hand indicates the direction that it rotates (clockwise). Upon twisting the statue, there is a click, and the ground slowly drops away to reveal a staircase leading down into the Earth.

Finding the entrance to the underground temple nominally requires a DC 15 Intelligence (investigation) check, but again, it is necessary for the PCs to find the statue to complete their mission, so the GM should not allow a failed roll to stop the heroes cold. Failed rolls could create complications or cause the PCs to take extra time.

## THE TRUE TEMPLE

Much like the Tomb of St. John, the Temple of Artemis is a single (albeit cavernous) subterranean room. It is surrounded on three sides by statues of various Greek deities, mostly figures such as Apollo, Artemis, Persephone, Hades, Selene, and the like—gods of the sun, moon, underworld, and hunt with a strong focus on mother goddess figures.

Archaeologists in the group will be stunned at the presence of a wide range of differing sculpture styles, with even deities such as Isis, Cybele, and Inanna among those represented. The temple is a haven of the syncretism of the ancient world, in a way that has rarely been seen, and is an astounding find.

On the fourth wall appears to be a star map of the night sky, with the various stars etched shallowly into the stone. At the center of the room, an enormous, 15-foot tall statue of Artemis herself stands, her bow drawn with the arrow pointing towards the star map wall.

A single star on the wall, the central star in the belt of Orion, is drilled far more deeply than the others, and forms a “keyhole” of sorts to a chamber behind the wall. The hole is not easily visible from the floor (passive Perception 18), the opening itself is far too deep to reach with lockpicks, and the wall is so smooth that it would take a DC 18 Strength (athletics) or Dexterity (acrobatics) check to climb.

Climbing the statue, however, is possible, and from the shoulder of the statue, one can see the opening. The arrow is also directed right at the opening itself, and in the head of the arrow appears another debossed area, into which the Ring of St. John will snap. Finally, the arrow appears to be made of a shaft of lightweight metal and is nocked to an actual string. It can be released simply by pulling the thumb of the statue back.

When the ring is fit into the arrowhead and the arrow launches, it forms a key that will unlock the panel and trigger a set of complex gears which will pull back the wall.

### **THE CHAMBER OF HEAVEN**

Beyond the wall lies another chamber, this one dome-shaped, with a series of dots etched across the entire ceiling. On the floor, at the center, sits a series of lenses surrounding a brazier which is filled with oil, waiting to be lit. On a shelf in an alcove along the far right wall resides a bronze arrow, etched with early Christian symbols. The arrow is seated (permanently, it seems) in a sort of display stand, which on examination will turn. When the arrow is turned, the lenses also re-orient.

When the brazier is lit and the arrow turned to properly orient the lenses, two things happen. First, the ground begins to rumble, and the grinding of stone fills the chamber. The rumbling goes on for what seems to be forever, like a mild earth tremor that goes on far beyond the few seconds of a normal earthquake, but which proceeds for many minutes.

Second, the lenses focus the firelight to project a series of lines and images on the ceiling. These lines and images form a map of the ancient city of Ephesus, with a brightly glowing spot located directly over the library. This indicates the entrance to the Sibylline Temple, and the rumbling is an impossibly complex series of underground gears, pulleys, and levers that are altering the landscape below Ephesus, opening the temple itself so that it can be accessed.

The players have found the end of their quest, and it's taking them right back to the library, where it all began.

## **TROUBLESHOOTING**

It's more than possible that the heroes will decide to investigate the Temple of Artemis on their own before even going anywhere else. They might, then, find the statue and the tomb and bypass a huge chunk of the adventure. If you as the GM are okay with this, let it roll. It will, at worst, shorten the adventure and rob the players of a bit of excitement and intrigue. Alternately, the statue may be locked, and only turn when the ring of St. John is inserted into its base, matching its embossed sigil to the debossed area on the statue, and twisted like a key.

This discovery will spur them to find the strange sigil needed to unlock the statue. Certainly allow a Hooligan to attempt to pick the lock, but whatever they roll, their attempt fails, so they need that strange sigil (and until they get to the Tomb of St. John, they won't know what the sigil even is)!

Likewise, they may explore the Basilica of St. John before heading to Ephesus. This is really no big deal and will only eliminate a small part of the adventure; again, however, the GM could imagine that the scroll case cap from the Library forms a sort of key that unlocks the tomb of St. John, and thus is necessary to enter that area.

## **ACT FOUR**

In this act the heroes have arrived at the Sibylline Temple, only moments too late. Their enemy, a powerful occultist devoted to Sang-Xiu the Blood Emperor, has gained the Sibylline books and is able to call upon their power to channel the deity's power.

### **BACK TO THE LIBRARY**

Upon uncovering the keys to that which they seek, the heroes can use the map they gained through the use of the Arrow of Heaven to guide them to a secret entrance beneath the library, leading deep beneath the surface, to an ancient and lost Sibylline Temple located through a labyrinth of buried clerics and holy men.

Unfortunately, there is a traitor in their midst: Kudret is in reality the high priest of the Red God and has a talisman that allows him to psychically communicate with his cult. The moment the entrance to the Temple is uncovered, he alerts his people, who rush to the scene and begin a ritual to unlock its secrets.

As the heroes rush back to the temple, they are dogged by their enemies at every turn, and it becomes apparent that the cult's goal appears to be slowing the heroes down as much as it is to try and stop them altogether.

At last, our heroes make it to the temple, where they are shocked to find the leader of the cult of Sang-Xiu, with the books in hand, and a number of cultists as well as several demonic acolytes by his side. Also, in the temple is



what appears to be a vast brass mirror, encircled by some sort of strange, alien, runic script. The giant mirror is one of the Rings of Brass, the only objects in the multiverse which have the power to release the Red God from his eternal imprisonment and unleash him upon the world.

The heroes must battle the sorcerer, contend with his activation of the Ring of Brass, stop the Blood Imperator from coming through, and capture the Sibylline Books, transporting them safely away. During the battle they also unveil Kudret as the traitor and true high priest of the Blood Imperator, working alongside the sorcerer to bring about the rise of the Red God.

Up until now he has played along with the heroes, his best shot at uncovering the Codices, but now that he's found the temple and discovered his people within, he betrays the PCs and switches sides, revealing his diabolic power and taking the form of a horrific, inhuman monstrosity which the heroes must defeat.

**CULTISTS** (NE humans): HP 9 (HD 2d8), AC 12, Spd 30ft. Str 11 Dex 12 Con 10 Int 10 Wis 11 Cha 10. Perception 10(+0). Deception +2, Religion +2, Stealth +4. Dagger +3 (1d4+1) or pistol +3 (1d8+1/double tap). SA Dark Devotion (Advantage vs. charm/frightened).

Some cultists may also be **spellcasters** (Wis 12; DC 11; +3). Cantrips (at will): light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy; 1-level (4 slots): command, inflict wounds, shield of faith; 2-level (3 slots): hold person, spiritual weapon.

**DEMONS** (LE Medium Fiend): HD 6d8+6 (HP 37), AC 15, Spd 30ft. Str 17 (+3) Dex 15 (+2) Con 13 (+1) Int 15 (+3) Wis 14 (+2) Cha 14 (+2). Saves: Str +6, Dex +5, Wis +6. Perception 15 (+5), Stealth +5, Survival +5. Multiattack: Bite 2d6+3 piercing and Claw 1d8+3 slashing. Multiattack (2 claws and bite), Consume soul (those killed can't be raised), feed (gain 1 HD/3 victims killed), pass without trace, Spell-like abilities (Save DC 15). At will – change self, levitate, minor illusion, misdirection; 1/day – charm monster, dimension door, fear.

**THE RED GOD SORCERER** (LE Human Arc 6) HP 32 (HD 6d6+6), AC 15, Spd 30ft. Str 8 Dex 11 Con 12 Int 18 Wis 16 Cha 12. Perception 13(+6). Arcana +7, Insight +7, Deception +4. Sv: Int +7, Wis +6. Staff +2 (1d10-2) or dagger +6 (1d6+3). SA Arcane Recovery, Ritual Casting, Arcane Focus, Arcane Tradition (Evocation), Savant, Sculpt Spells, Potent Cantrip. Spellcasting (Int; DC 15, Attack +7): 0-level (4) – acid splash, chill touch, mage hand, ray of frost; 1-level (4 slots) – charm person, color spray, expeditious retreat, hideous laughter, mage armor, magic missile; 2-level (3 slots) – acid arrow, blindness/deafness, invisibility, ray of enfeeblement, suggestion; 3-level (3 slots) – animate dead, bestow curse, fireball, hypnotic pattern, lightning bolt.

**KUDRET KAHRAMAN, HIGH PRIEST OF ORNDUHL** (CE large fiend) HP 114 (HD 12d10+48), AC 16, Spd 40ft. Str 23 Dex 14 Con 21 Int 14 Wis 13 Cha 17. Perception 21(+11). Stealth +7. Bite +11 (10ft, 2d10+6, plus 1d8 acid), claw +11 (2d6+6), tail +11 (15ft, 2d8+6), Ne-

crotic breath (recharge 5, 60ft line, 6d8 necrotic, Dex DC 15 half), frightful presence (120ft, frightened 1 minute, Wis DC 15 neg.). SA blindsight 60ft, darkvision 120ft, amphibious, auto succeed saving throw 3/day, Multiattack (frightful presence, bite and 2 claws). Spellcasting (Save DC 15; +7 attack) Cantrips – guidance, light resistance, sacred flame, thaumaturgy; 1-level (4 slots) – Bless, bane, command, shield of faith; 2-level (3 slots) – aid, silence, spiritual weapon, hold person; 3-level (3 slots) – animate dead, cure serious wounds, dispel magic; 4th level (3 Slots) – freedom of movement, sending, death ward; 5th level (1 Slots) – flame strike, contagion. Possessions: Amulet of telepathy (Disguised as Vatican sigil; allows psychic communication with other Sang-Xiu cultists; only functions for devout followers of the Red God).

## ESCAPE INTO MYSTERY

As the battle reaches its climax, as the sorcerer and/or Kudret fall to the heroes, one or both screams out a final incantation just as one of the heroes collects the Sibylline Codices. There's a blinding light and the sound of glass shattering that seems to surround all the heroes. They can't focus as the pitch gets higher and higher, until the ringing is excruciating and unbearable.

When the light fades, our heroes find themselves in a completely alternate landscape, what appears to be a tropical island surrounded by lush jungle. They are on a beach, with water as far as they can see (salt water, if they taste it).

It would seem they've escaped with the Sibylline Codices, but they have no idea where they are, and now must decide what to do with them. For now, however, they need to figure out where they are. It certainly seems they are still on Earth, somewhere—the sun and the sky look familiar, as do the plants. Off in the distance, in fact, is the rusted out husk of what appears to be the fuselage of a plane...

## EPISODE FIVE: THE ISLAND OF THE LOST

***Synopsis:** Our heroes, after their last battle with the Cult of Sang-Xiu, find themselves stranded on a Lost World type island. They must rescue the pilot from savages, battling gigantic apes and prehistoric monsters, and get home before a supervolcano erupts, consuming the island.*

### DRAWING OUT THE ADVENTURE

*Island of the Lost* is very much a “lost world” type setting. Enterprising and industrious GMs could come up with any number of adventures with the heroes exploring the island and getting into all sorts of troubles with dinosaurs, giant dire animals, and gradually even encountering the natives armed with suspiciously advanced technology before encountering Nesbitt.

You may even decide to up the intrigue factor by having Rameses contact the heroes and attempt to recruit them into his organization, be it Chimera or the Cult of the Red God (or both, if you’re feeling particularly nasty). This middle section of the adventure is really a framework giving you a point A to B to C presentation which could be mixed up, shifted around, and tailored to create any level of intrigue and exploration you like. For this reason, we’re leaving the island’s description deliberately skeletal, so that you can develop it for yourself.

Should you choose to run the scenario exactly as it’s presented here, we’ve given you all you need. No detailed maps or geography are necessary, and the adventure will still provide a fast-paced, fun, and exciting excursion into a land filled with ancient monsters and alien super-science!

### LIMITED RESOURCES

Some things to remember: starting in this adventure, the heroes aren’t going to get home for a long time. That means they’re in survival mode and resources are going to be scarce. As the GM, you should inform them all that they have limited food, limited supplies, and especially, limited ammunition. It is not remotely unreasonable to inform the heroes that they have 100 rounds of ammunition for each of their firearms, and that they now must begin to keep track. Players will inevitably argue for more, but it’s rare even for a soldier in the military to carry much more than that—ammunition is bulky and above all, heavy. The heroes intended on going on a mission and coming home. Further, they counted on the ability to pick up more ammo if needed. They did not intend to be stranded.

Likewise, as they run low on food and water, allow the use of Wisdom (survival) checks to hunt and gather for nourishment. Raiders will likely become very useful in this area, especially if their Natural Explorer terrain is of the jungle variety. If you own the **5e Fantasy Game Master’s Guide**, that book has concrete guidelines regarding the practice of foraging, and the amount of food and water required to sustain a person.

Still, the exact amount of ammo and other perishable and limited resources you allow the heroes to possess is left entirely up to you. Your players may not find the mechanics of survival in a harsh environment to be fun; finding that balance for your group is part and parcel of being a good GM. It’s okay, for example, to limit ammunition to provide a challenge, while glossing over the foraging for food, or vice-versa, if that’s what your table will enjoy.

### CHECKING THE CODICES

At some point, the characters will certainly want to look over the Codices. They are written in ancient Greek, which could create a stumbling block for characters that don’t speak that language. If this is the case, allow Nesbitt (see later) to speak the language, and be able to provide a translation, as the information therein will be important as the heroes’ adventures go on.

Alternately, if you don’t have a character who speaks the language, a Raider can use their Cryptolinguist ability to translate the Codices, or you could allow any character with proficiency in Arcana to decipher the language, and have it written in a strange, magical, runic language instead of ancient Greek. Finally, if you have a psychic who has the psychometry power, they might in this case be able to gain information from the books using that power—the books are books of mysticism and psychic prophecy, after all!

A cursory examination reveals them to be books full of some sort of strange runic magic, full of references to an alien world, millions of years old. The celestial references and sky maps therein, with a successful CL 8 Intelligence Check, will reveal the planet referenced to appear to be Venus, though it seems to be called “Aihhrde,” within the context of the text. If the players have gone through **Rise of the Red God**, which is intended, the star maps in the Codices which reference Aihhrde, precisely match those found in the High Priest’s Chambers of Altrus Farri in “Temple of the Red God.”

It also, in later addendums, reveals locations of more of these “Rings of Brass” across the world, and the ways in which they could be used to bring forth all manner of horrific creatures...or to travel the multiverse itself.

This may be a good opportunity for the GM, if you have the **Codex of Aihhrde** or the standalone **Andanuth**, published by Troll Lord Games, to pick and choose a few passages from that work to deliver to the heroes. For the most part, it will be flavor information and won’t be directly germane to this particular adventure, but it can add some mystery and excitement, and further tie the Aihhrde setting to the Earth of **Amazing Adventures**. The Rings of Brass are mentioned in the **Codex** on pages 42-43 and 111-112 of the current printing (as of this writ-

ing); the Index includes a concise list of references to Ornduhl, who played a major role in the development of that cosmology.

Alternately, you can make up your own information to impart. The Red God on Earth is part of a pantheon of deities known as the Shade; these “outer gods” are all alien entities drawn to Earth from far off dimensions and worlds, and all are in some way associated with the darkest aspects of mortal nature. Besides Ornduhl the Red God (Obsession, bloodshed and the undead), the pantheon features such entities as the King in Yellow (madness and entropy); S’korath-D’nakkara, Lady of Darkness, the Violet Queen (tyranny, murder, lies and betrayal); the Jade Empress (poison and sickness); the Midnight Scourge (blindness, deafness, and bigotry); the Gray Mist (indecisiveness and confusion), and others. More on the Shade Mythos will be presented in future sourcebooks.

### AIHRDE IS VENUS??

Yes! Fans of our Aihilde campaign setting for **Castles & Crusades** or 5e Fantasy may be taken aback by this revelation, but Aihilde is, in fact, Venus, millions of years ago. Some current scientific theories hold that Venus may once have been an Earth-like world, but many millions of years ago, *something* happened to that planet, a catastrophic event and possibly an impact from a massive celestial object, which flipped it on its axis, eliminating its magnetosphere and reversing its rotation. This event may have led to the runaway greenhouse effect that left us with the Carbon Dioxide, Nitrogen, and Sulfur Dioxide atmosphere it has today, with the sulfuric acid clouds that surround the planet.

In our lore, Venus was indeed an Earth-like world known to its inhabitants as Aihilde. The event that caused this was the very moon of Aihilde falling from the sky and smashing into the planet itself, which may or may not have been part of the Gonfod prophesied in the histories of Aihilde. So that fantasy world is closer than you realized! In Part 3 of this super-module you will see a post-apocalyptic, slowly dying Aihilde centuries or even millennia after the catastrophic event, as the atmosphere is being poisoned and the populace struggle to eke out what life they have left.

## ACT ONE

Our heroes find themselves stranded on what appears to be a tropical island. In the distance is the rotted fuselage of a plane, which appears intact enough that it could at least provide some shelter and give them a place to take respite and figure out what to do next. Approaching the plane, they can take stock of their surroundings. They’re on the shore of an ocean—which one, they have no idea (GM NOTE: It’s the Pacific). The sun is shining, but

overhead a strange cloud formation like a sort of vortex swirls, shot through with white, pink, purple, and yellow streaks of lightning. It appears to be just hanging in space at this point, but it could well be the cause of the wrecked aircraft fuselage on the beach.

The plane is the wreckage of a Curtiss T-32 Condor, and if nothing else, is apparent evidence that they’re not the first people to be stranded on this island. Unfortunately, it’s in such wrecked and rotted state that even a gadgeteer wouldn’t be able to put it back together. In addition, there’s no sign of the Ring of Brass that seemed to transport them here when it shattered. They are well and truly lost with no idea where to go next. The best news is that they appear to have kept the Sibylline Codices out of the hands of the Cult of the Red God, and the Codices themselves may potentially provide some information.

## EXPLORING THE ISLAND

Eventually, our heroes will set out to explore the island in an effort to either escape or at least figure out where they are. With the proper Wisdom (survival) checks they can discover that food and water seem plentiful. There is a freshwater stream about an hour’s walk into the jungle, and edible tropical fruits growing on trees: coconut, pineapple, passion fruit, bananas, and others are easy enough to find, as are a wealth of animals, including such dangerous creatures as venomous snakes like mambas which could present a deadly threat to unwary characters.

As they explore the jungles, they come across the wreckage of a shredded Japanese Zero fighter, and the horribly mutilated body of the pilot, which has been torn apart and partially devoured by...*something*.

Just then there’s a strange ululation unlike any animal cry the heroes have ever heard, and out of the brush leaps a *dinosaur*. The creature is bipedal, covered in feathers and about the size of a Bengal tiger with wicked claws on its arms and back legs, and a mouth filled with needle-like teeth. Any characters with a background in paleontology will recognize it as an *Austroraptor cabazai* but, depending on the era in which you are running, may have different reactions. Characters from the 1940s, for example, may be amazed that Huxley was right, and it has feathers. If you’re running a modern game, it looks like a feathered version of the “velociraptor” from *Jurassic Park*.

**AUSTRORAPTOR** (*Unaligned M Beast*) HP 9 (HD 2d8), AC 12, Spd 40ft. Str 11 Dex 15 Con 11 Int 6 Wis 12 Cha 5. Perception 18(+3/advantage). Acrobatics +4, Stealth +4. Bite +4 (1d8+2), Claw +4 (1d6+2). SA Multiattack (claw and bite), keen senses (advantage on perception), pack tactics (advantage on attacks if at least one ally within 5 ft.), lightning speed (dash as bonus action).

A running battle ensues, with more beasts joining the fray, until at last an explosion rocks the land, blowing dinosaurs left and right, and a voice cries out from the right,



"This way, quickly!"

The heroes catch sight of a man in the distance, who frantically beckons to them, and then runs. As they follow the voice, they catch sight of a man moving through the brush. He's far ahead of them, so they can't get a good look, but he spoke English with an American accent, and he's always just within sight, as though he's leading them, not trying to lose them. Finally, they follow him into a cave and catch him diving down a narrow passage. The dinosaurs are close behind, but the heroes can follow through a passage that's too small for the beasts to follow.

## GM'S NOTES

If the players seem intent on fighting their way out and going it alone instead of heeding the call from their apparent savior, add more *Austroraptors*, then throw in a *pterosaur*, and culminate in a *T-Rex*. If that doesn't get them running, the game is probably a loss.

**PTEROSAUR:** (*Unaligned large beast*) HP 26 (HD 4d10+4), AC 13, Spd 10ft, 80ft (fly). Str 16 Dex 17 Con 13 Int 2 Wis 14 Cha 10. Perception 14(+4). Beak +5 (2d6+3), Talons +5 (1d6+3). SA Multiattack (beak and talons), Keen sight (advantage on Perception with sight).

**T-REX:** (*Unaligned huge beast*) HP 136 (HD 13d12+52), AC 13, Spd 50ft. Str 25 Dex 10 Con 19 Int 2 Wis 12 Cha 9. Perception 14(+4). Bite +10 (4d12 +7 and grappled (Escape DC 17) and restrained. Can automatically bite creatures grappled in this way), Tail +10 (3d8+7). SA Multiattack (bite, tail; must be against 2 separate targets and can't be grappling to bite).

## ACT TWO

Following their rescuer, the heroes emerge into an underground living space, crudely appointed with supplies from the crashed plane. There before them, wearing the tattered remains of a civilian pilot's uniform, is a man that's clearly been here for quite some time. While not exactly an old man, his clothes show signs of at least a decade's worth of wear and his beard is full, long and scraggly, as is his hair.

"Welcome," he says. "Been hoping for years for someone to come looking for me. I'd given up hope. You folks got a plane to get us out of here or are you stuck, too?"

The man's name is James Nesbitt, and he's the pilot of the broken down fuselage on the beach. He has been here for years, surviving day by day, and has just about given up hope. After establishing identities, he tells the heroes that he's seen the remains of the *Zero* as well, but knows nothing about it; the only other person to come through here and survive that he knows of, is working for some sort of occult society and deliberately came here. It's been all he can do to survive on his own.

If they tell him the truth about their arrival here, he'll look suspicious for a moment, before shrugging and say, "Not the strangest thing I've seen, or heard, for that matter. Hell, you see that maelstrom up in the sky? That's what put me down here, and I was just on a cargo run."

The other non-native, Nesbitt says, goes by the name *Rameses*, and has managed to befriend the natives here, a primitive tribal society that *Rameses* has somehow equipped with technology that's strange and frighteningly advanced, with weapons unlike anything he's ever seen.

*Rameses*, he says, has been tearing apart the island for ten years looking for some sort of mystical gizmo, a power source that could run some sort of ancient science that's hidden somewhere at the heart of the island. All he knows is that it has something to do with some sort of doomsday device. *Rameses*, it seems, is a member of some organization called *Chimera*, and is out to sell the secrets of this weapon to the highest bidder, after staging an apocalyptic demonstration.

When Jim first got marooned here, *Rameses* tried to recruit them. "The usual promises," Jim says, "Money, power, the obvious, 'I can get you home' garbage. Needless to say, I turned him down, and my own Private Little War began. I tried for a long time to stop it, but we never

## THE RINGS OF THE RED GOD 19



found the base, and I was really starting to give up hope. 'Til you all came, that is. Now that you're here, though, maybe we can do something. I can get you to the last general area I saw them in big numbers. Who knows? Maybe from there we can make something happen."

If the characters seem suspicious, Jim will explain his enthusiasm away as having hope for the first time in ten years. A DC 10 Wisdom (insight) check or sensing by anyone with any sort of empathic ability (natural, magical, or psychic) will seem like he's being very sincere. This is a patriot who wants to protect the good ol' U.S. of A. and finally has hope that he might see the home shores again.

**JIM NESBITT** (*NG human raider*) HP 32, HD 5d10, AC 15, Spd 30ft. Str 11, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 12; Perception 14 (+4), Athletics +3, History +5, Investigate +5, Survival +4; Air-based civilian vehicles +6, Archaeologist's Tools +5; .45 pistol (+6; 1d10+3; double tap) or combat knife (+6; 1d6+3). SA Ace (civilian aircraft), Cryptolinguist, cultural chameleon, natural explorer (jungle), jack of all trades, secrets of the ancients, scale, extra attack, 6 fate points. He carries his knife and pistol, a canteen, a backpack with 150 feet of cable, and a satchel with 25 sticks of dynamite which may or may not be sweating nitroglycerin, because "you never know!" Jim is not all there.

## GM'S NOTES

Chimera was first introduced in the adventure module *Ashton and the Augments* and is included here to broaden the connections to other enemies of the heroes. Rameses would just as easily fit as a member of the Red God cult (or even as a member of the cult of the Red God *inside of Chimera*) if you wish to keep things all focused squarely on the battle against Ornduhl/Sang-Xiu. Indeed, if you're running these adventures as part of one huge overarching campaign (See the **Appendix**), introducing Chimera here and having a Red God cultist as an infiltrator within the organization could help to tie everything together, thematically. Chimera is, after all, something of an apocalyptic cult—its leader wants nothing more than to die and while he holds no specific ill will towards humanity, he'll destroy the multiverse to do it if he has to.

**REGARDING JIM NESBITT:** he is, in fact, an ally for the PCs in this particular adventure. They are likely to be very suspicious of them after their recent encounters in Part One, but he will be a stalwart ally and guide on the island, and may even sacrifice himself to save them, if needs be. He is true to his word, if a bit unhinged. He can also be quite useful as a replacement character, should one of the heroes meet their demise through the course of the campaign. Simply give the player the stats as presented here and allow them to flesh him out as they see fit (he should just need a Background).

## ACT THREE

After being driven out of their hideout, our heroes are on the hunt. Jim leads them deep into the heart of the jungle island, evading dinosaurs and horrific monstrosities, until they eventually come face-to-face with yet another of the Rings of Brass and the apocalyptic cult seeking to use it for nefarious ends.

## ATTACK ON JIM'S HIDEOUT

The heroes' respite with Jim is to be short-lived, as their battle in the jungle has been noticed, and Rameses' people have tracked them down. While they discuss their situation, the hideout is surrounded. It's left to the GM exactly how this event proceeds—they may call out that the headquarters is surrounded, and everyone should come out with their hands up. They may actively charge into the hideout guns a-blazing. They may drop a grenade (smoke, gas or explosive) to flush the heroes out.

Regardless, a confrontation with the natives under Rameses' command occurs. After a few rounds of activity, Nesbitt leads the heroes into a secret tunnel he's dug at the back of his hideaway, tossing a stick of dynamite behind him to collapse the tunnel as they go.

The tunnel leads deeper into the jungle, and Nesbitt reveals that he knows where the enemy are digging for whatever they're looking for and sets off to lead the heroes into the depths of the jungle, all the while pursued by their enemies.

It's important that, though this particular section of the adventure be portrayed as an action-packed chase through deadly jungles, that the heroes eventually lose their pursuers. As they head through the jungle, they are following trails that only Jim seems to be able to see, though he does take the time to point things out.

**ISLAND NATIVES** (*LE Medium Humanoid (Human)*) HP 33 (HD 6d8+6), AC 13, Spd 30ft. Str 11 Dex 14 Con 12 Int 10 Wis 13 Cha 14. Perception 11(+1). Deception +4, Religion +2, Stealth +4, Survival +3. Tesla gun +4 (5d6+2 lightning) or electro-knife +5 (1d6+2, plus 1d6 lightning). SA Multiattack (2 attacks); Dark Devotion (advantage on saves vs. charm or frightened).

## INTO THE JUNGLE

After losing their pursuers and after a while longer, they come to an area where they can see more signs of activity. "This is where they've been concentrating their activities lately," Jim says. "I think they've tracked their element, whatever it is they need to power their weapon, here."

At length they come to the top of a bluff, overlooking a valley that seems to be buzzing with activity. Jim motions them to stay low, and gestures below, where at least

twenty people, all of Pacific island descent, buzz around what appears to be an archaeological dig.

“This,” Jim says, “is new, though I can’t claim to have looked in on ‘em for a few weeks. Being all alone I’ve been more concerned with survival than stopping them.”

There appears to be the top of some sort of ruin visible, having been partially excavated, with access allowed into the subterranean structure through the roof. What is perhaps most shocking is that the natives seem to possess strangely advanced technology, bordering on alien, though their garb is very simple.

How the PCs proceed is up to them at this point. A direct assault is not the best idea, as there are easily two dozen people down there, mostly armed with futuristic-looking weaponry which a gadgeteer with a DC 15 Intelligence (science) check will identify as, effectively, Tesla guns, and their knives as electrified blades.

The best way to investigate will likely be to wait until dark. They will note iron trunks being removed from the dig at several intervals throughout the day. The trunks appear to be heavy, are about 3 feet long, 2 feet high and 2 feet deep, and require two stout people to carry. If the heroes wish to check out the dig, their best bet is to wait until dark. Another option could be to try and follow the natives back to their base, though Jim will suggest at this point that they check this out first. After all, if this is what they need to power their weapon, taking it out would serve their purposes.

If the heroes decide to wait until dark, they can easily stealth their way in and even get inside the dig. After dusk, the majority of the workers depart, leaving only six guards around the perimeter. Inside, they will find what appears to be an ancient and simple temple, of a single room, about 40 feet square, with strange religious iconography which the heroes will recognize as that of Sang-Xiu: Ornduhl, the Red God.

A strange, blood red glow permeates the temple, which the PCs can trace to a hole dug into the ground at the far end of the temple. Within the hole appears to be a naturally occurring deposit of a strange ore that glows red. Any gadgeteers in the party who think to check for it will note an odd radiation coming from the ore; arcanists using *detect magic* will note that it is actually magical radiation, but *old* magic.

Jim is just about ready to drop a few sticks of dynamite down into the hole, when the PCs should make a DC 14 Wisdom (perception) check to notice that the guards have also entered the room; failure means that they are surprised and lose initiative. Success means combat proceeds as normal. These guards have no intention of capture or question. They know who Jim is and they want him and his allies dead.

If Jim gets hit in battle, there’s a 10% chance his dynamite will explode, dealing 10d6 damage to a 20-foot radius, 5d6 to the next 10 feet, and 2d6 to the next five feet. Those in the blast radius can make a DC 13 dexterity save for half damage. It will also start bringing the entire temple down around their ears, and it’ll be a rush to get out. GM’s should make this dramatic, requiring several Dexterity saves at DC 13 to avoid taking 1d10 damage from falling debris, followed by a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check to climb back out.

Jim, of course, dies if his satchel explodes while he’s wearing it. A body doesn’t survive that, no matter how many Fate Points they’ve got to spend.

After the battle, it’s time to find the secret base. They can attempt to track their foes, but in the dark, and picking out a single track among all the activities that have gone on here requires a DC 18 Wisdom (survival) check to track. Their best bet is to try to follow someone from the dig to the base, which they can do shortly after dawn.

**Troubleshooting:** If there is more than an hour left in the scenario after the battle, the last of the natives activates a trap; the rope and ladder are cut, the room slowly begins to fill with acid, while an allosaurus is set loose from a hidden panel in the door. Build tension while letting the players figure a way out of it and roll with whatever they come up with.

**ALLOSAURUS** (*Unaligned huge beast*) HP 95 (HD 10d12+30), AC 15, Spd 50ft. Str 22 Dex 14 Con 17 Int 2 Wis 14 Cha 9. Perception 15(+5). Bite +9, Reach 15ft (3d8+6; medium or smaller victims DC 14 Dex save or swallowed whole; swallowed victims grappled and suffer 1d8 acid per round, but may automatically damage the creature from the inside), claws +9, reach 10ft (3d8+6). SA Multiattack (2 claws and bite), grapple (if both claws hit, creature is grappled (escape DC 16) and restrained. Allosaurus can’t claw while grappling but may automatically bite and swallow (no save) grappled victims on the following round).

## ACT FOUR

The heroes track the villain at length to his lair, which appears to be a second temple of similar design to the subterranean one where the dig was taking place, but this one is well-kept, above ground and in use. If the characters have played through *Rise of the Red God*, they will recognize the general design of the temple, which matches that of the Temple of the Red God (see that module). They will need to infiltrate the temple and locate their enemy, who is in the basement, which instead of being a vault like their prior temple encounter, is a circular room with a throne-like chair at one compass point, containing an elaborate set of runic controls. Surrounding the room are a series of eight circular mirrors with brass frames inlaid

with blood-red runic markings that don't resemble any Earthly runic language known.

The room is occupied by eight natives sporting Tesla guns, and one American, sitting in the throne and working the controls. As soon as the heroes enter, he scowls, "I will not have you ruin my operation!" and he fires at them with a .45. The final battle begins.

**RAMESES** HP 42, HD 5d10+10, AC 15, Spd 30ft. Str 11, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 12; Perception 14 (+4), Athletics +3, History +5, Investigate +5, Survival +4; Air-based civilian vehicles +6, Archaeologist's Tools +5; .45 pistol (+6; 1d10+3; double tap) or combat knife (+6; 1d6+3). SA Ace (civilian aircraft), Cryptolinguist, Cultural Chameleon, Natural Explorer (Jungle), Jack of All Trades, Secrets of the Ancients, Scale, Extra Attack, 6 Fate Points.

**ISLAND NATIVES** (LE Medium Humanoid (Human)) HP 33 (HD 6d8+6), AC 13, Spd 30ft. Str 11 Dex 14 Con 12 Int 10 Wis 13 Cha 14. Perception 11(+1). Deception +4, Religion +2, Stealth +4, Survival +3. Tesla gun +4 (5d6+2 lightning) or electro-knife +5 (1d6+2, plus 1d6 lightning). SA Multiattack (2 attacks); Dark Devotion (advantage on saves vs. charm or frightened).

During the battle, Rameses activates the throne, and the heroes can clearly see through a red mist in one of the mirrors, the oval office, and President Roosevelt sitting behind his desk. Rameses orders his troops to get through and kill the President. The stakes just got higher as Rameses and his troops charge the portal.

The battle could actually carry over into the Oval Office itself. The dramatic twist at the end is that Jim has been wiring the entire throne room with explosives, and at the end, he blows the whole thing up, along, apparently, with himself, to ensure nobody gets their hands on this weapon. Of course, if Jim is currently being used as a player character, this twist can be replaced with one of the island natives blowing up the room in a suicidal effort to take out the player characters. Regardless, this disaster means

that even if they've managed to get through into the Oval Office, the PCs aren't getting home any time soon...

**FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT** (32<sup>nd</sup> President of the United States) HP 27 (HD 5d8+5), AC 14, Spd 30ft (wheelchair). Str 8 Dex 9 Con 12 Int 15 Wis 15 Cha 17. Wealth 16. Perception 12 (+2). Deception +4, Insight +6, Intimidation +5, Persuasion +5. Sv: Wis +4, Cha +5. .45 handgun +1 (1d10, double tap). SA Force of Personality (2/rest; DC 13; Exalt, Demoralize, Charm, Enthrall, Everyone Has Secrets), Mental Manipulation (Wis save or 1d4 psychic and victim disadvantage on next attack, Connected, Inspiring Words (d6); Society Etiquette (advantage on wealth checks).

## EPILOGUE

In a twist ending, the fate of Rameses is left ambiguous; either he vanishes during the final battle, after it, or the heroes get word later that he's disappeared from custody. They'll also have to explain themselves after showing up in a running gun battle in the President's Oval Office, but if they've managed to save his life, they'll be promised Congressional Gold Medals for their service to the country in defeating a foreign agent seeking to create chaos and sow terror within the borders of the United States.

Unfortunately, just as the battle comes to its conclusion and the heroes (hopefully) manage to save President Roosevelt, the plan to blow up the lab comes to fruition. The heroes will see through the portal that sent them here, Jim setting off his explosives, or will see one of the natives preparing to do so, and will realize that if this explosion is set off, the damage could easily bleed through and destroy the entire Oval Office.

As they move to stop the saboteur (or their misguided ally), there's another flash of light and a strange vortex surrounds the heroes. It's all a complete replay of what happened in Turkey, and this time, when the light fades, the heroes find themselves in an utterly alien landscape...

# EPISODE SIX: PLANET OF DARKNESS

**Brief Synopsis:** *The heroes find themselves suddenly transported to another world of super science and barbarism. They must race against time to stop the Nazis from getting hold of advanced weapons technology while finding a way home themselves.*

## ACT ONE

As the vortex fades once again, the heroes find themselves in the direst straits yet. They are now on the rooftops of a city with strange and alien architecture, spires, crystalline buildings, arcs and curves, architecture that doesn't resemble any city on Earth that any of them have ever seen, though mixed in among very mundane buildings which look, at newest, of an Edwardian, "Old World" style.

The air is filled with a sharp, noxious, reddish-yellow haze that makes their eyes and noses burn, and it hurts even to breathe, though they can breathe and after a few minutes they start to get used to the harsh, acidic air. It's almost as if the entire planet is shrouded in some sort of dense smog, but they can't see any industry to create such a miasma. Far off in the distance, a strange sort of airship can be seen drifting through a blood-red sky, and the crumbling remains of what was clearly a once great tower sits, almost on the horizon. Strange creatures soar in the air, and judging from their apparent distance, they must be huge.

It's brutally, almost unbearably hot here, and it's hard to tell for certain, but the ghost of the sun in the East says that it appears to be dawn. Once again, the brass portal that brought them here is nowhere to be seen.

## A RUINED WORLD

Welcome to Aihilde, but several thousand years after the Gonfod apocalypse has rocked the world. The air is indeed toxic, as the collision of the planet's two moons into the surface has not only turned the planet on its end over a period of centuries, reversing its orbit and robbing it of its magnetosphere, it has created a runaway greenhouse effect.

The air here is indeed toxic, and characters who don't do something to filter their breathing (simply wrapping a bandana around one's face will do the trick) will suffer 1 level of exhaustion per day, until they acclimate to the environs (about 2 weeks in). Remembering that exhaustion is recovered after a long rest, they will, then, be constantly at 1 level of exhaustion (as soon as they recover a level, they gain a new one) for their first two weeks on Aihilde/Venus.

As the heroes survey their surroundings, they start to notice that the towers and spires of the place are cracked and crumbling, the fantastic vista they first experienced at a glance, a façade to cover the worst kind of urban decay they've ever seen. Worse, it's deadly quiet here, as though there's not a soul living in the city.

It also turns out within an hour or so that it's not dawn at all—it was dusk and the sun is sinking below the eastern horizon (a factor of the planet rotating the opposite direction relative to the Earth). The stars in the sky, however, look strangely familiar, though still alien. There is no sign of a moon anywhere. It's something that any scientific character will be drawn to ponder, but which right now they cannot put their finger on, though with a DC 18 Intelligence (science) or Wisdom (survival) check will reveal that the orientation of the stars matches those in the Sibylline Codices and on the temple wall from the Temple of the Red God. It's a small leap of logic, then, to conclude that they are on the planet the Codices name as Aihilde...and that planet is Venus...millions of years in the past.

## ACT TWO

*The heroes are attacked in the streets, get to know their new temporary home, and discover an ancient enemy is here, in the flesh.*

## ATTACK IN THE STREETS

Whether they decide to descend to the city streets below or try to navigate the rooftops, the same thing happens: the heroes are suddenly attacked by a group of strange warriors wielding primitive weapons and magic. Three appear to be distinctly human, if anachronistic; two are shorter, very slender and possessed of an unearthly sort of beauty with angular features and almond-shaped eyes, silvery-blond hair, crystal blue eyes and ears that come to points. Their stats are as follows:

**CAPTAIN JONAH BLUESTRI** (LG Human Fighter 3) HP 20 (HD 3d10), AC 18, Spd 30. Str 15 Dex 12 Con 10 Int 10 Wis 10 Cha 12. Perception 11(+1). Athletics +5, Intimidation +1. Sv: Str +4, Con +2. Long sword +5 (1d8+5 (magic)), dagger +4 (1d4+4), or Eldritch Blast Pistol +5 (1d10+2 Force Damage; double tap). SA Dueling, Second Wind (1d8+2; 1/rest), Action Surge (1/rest), Crit 19-20. Challenge 1 (200 XP). He wears +2 chainmail and carries a +2 longsword, dagger, eldritch blast pistol (add Dex and Cha to hit; 1d10+Dex+Cha bonus damage), 300 gp in coin and jewelry.)

**ANGELA BLACKWITH** (NG human cleric 5) HP 29 (HD 5d8+6), AC 18, Spd 30ft. Str 14 Dex 11 Con 12 Int 16 Wis 14 Cha 18. Perception 12(+2). Deception +6, Persuasion +6, Religion +5. Sv: Int, Cha, Wis. Mace +6 (1d8+4). SA Channel Divinity (1/rest: Turn Undead (destroy CR 1/2), Preserve Life (heal 25 hp to targets in 30', divided as she wishes)), Improved healing (healing spells cure extra 2+spell level hit points). Spellcasting (Save DC 12; +4 attack) Cantrips – guidance, resistance, sacred flame, thaumaturgy; 1-level (4 slots) – bless, command, cure wounds, detect evil and good, sanctuary, shield of faith; 2-level (3 slots) – calm emotions, hold person, lesser restoration, prayer of healing, spiritual weapon; 3-level (2 slots) – Beacon of hope, create food and water, remove curse, revivify.

She possesses a robe with a cowl, an expert-made light mace, 3 scrolls: #1 has three spells (purify food/drink, create water, light), #2 has three spells (light, detect evil and good, cure wounds (1st level)), #3 has two spell (bless, cure wounds (1st level)), 5 potions: 3 x healing and 2x resistance, assorted scroll components such as inks, scroll paper, quills and cases, physician's healer's kit and herbs. She carries a +2 mace, +2 cloak of protection, chainmail, scroll of curse, and 240 gp worth of jewelry and coin.)

**SERGEANT MERLIK TERRNER** (LG Human Fighter (Gunslinger) 3) HP 20 (HD 3d10), AC 17, Spd 30. Str 11 Dex 16 Con 10 Int 10 Wis 10 Cha 12. Perception 11(+1). Athletics +5, Intimidation +1. Sv: Str +4, Con +2. Scimitar +7 (1d6+5 (magic)), or Flintlock Pistol +6 (range 10'/25', 1d10+2). SA Archery (Ranged weapons), Second Wind (1d8+2; 1/rest), Action Surge (1/rest), Sharpshooter (DC 13; Shooting Dice 3d8: Called Shot, Disarming Shot, Knee-cap); Quick Draw (+2 to Initiative). Challenge 1 (200 XP). He wears a metal buckler and full chain suit, and carries a +3 scimitar, a brace of short flintlock pistols (1d10 each) and has 100 gp worth of jewelry coin and other possessions.) For complete details on the Gunslinger Fighter Archetype, see the *Amazing Adventures* core rulebook, **Appendix C**. Merlik has 12 pistols and can reload 3 per turn.

**GALEN MERKMEN** (CG Blood Elf Ranger 6) HP 40 (HD 6d10), AC 18, Spd 30ft. Str 16 Dex 18 Con 14 Int 12 Wis 12 Cha 10. Perception 15(+4). Athletics +6, Bowyer +4, Nature +4, Religion +3, Stealth +7, Survival +7. Sv: Str +6, Dex +7. khopesh +8 (1d8+7), Longbow +7 (1d8+4; 150ft/600ft). SA Favored Enemy (Orcs, Ungern), Natural Explorer, Dueling, Colossus Slayer (+1d8 if enemy below hp max; 1/turn), Primeval Awareness, Extra Attack. Blood Feeding (when deal damage in melee, gain temporary hp equal to damage dealt; as Blood Elf); Spellcasting (Wis; DC 11, +3 Spell Attack): 0-level: Friends (as Blood Elf), 1-level (4 slots) – Charm Person (1/day, as Blood Elf), Cure Wounds, Ensnaring Strike, Hunter's Mark; 2-level (2 slots) – Invisibility (1/day, as Blood Elf), Spike Growth. He wears +2 leather armor and shield, and carries a +2 khopesh, 2 potions of healing, magitech longbow (20 fire bolt capacity), pack, hunting gear and 25gp.) For more on Blood Elves, see *The 5<sup>th</sup> Edition Player's Guide to Aihrde*, p. 15.

**MAISIE INALLU** (CN High Elf Rogue 3) HP 21 (HD 3d8+3), AC 14, Spd 30ft. Str 8 Dex 15 Con 12 Int 10 Wis 13 Cha 12. Perception 13(+3). Acrobatics +6, Sleight of Hand +4, Stealth +6. Sv: Dex +4, Int +2. Short sword +5 (1d6+3), Eldritch Blast Crossbow (+5; 1d10+5 force damage; double tap). SA Sneak Attack +1d6, Cant, Cunning Action, Fast Hands, Second-Story Work. Challenge 1 (200 XP). She wears leather armor, and carries a short sword, eldritch blast pistol crossbow (see Jonah, above), sundry gear, and has 300 gp worth of goods and coin hidden in her room.)

During the battle, one of them shouts a battle cry that is something like, "Invaders! You won't take us the way you took Lucius!" This should reveal that these people were attacked by the Thules when they came through, and their leader is grievously wounded. They assumed the PCs were more of the same.

If this doesn't give the heroes pause, they're forced to ally together when ten winged demon-like creatures attack from the skies:

**DEMONS** (LE Medium Fiend): HD 6d8+6 (HP 37), AC 15, Spd 30ft. Str 17 (+3) Dex 15 (+2) Con 13 (+1) Int 15 (+3) Wis 14 (+2) Cha 14 (+2). Saves: Str +6, Dex +5, Wis +6. Perception 15 (+5), Stealth +5, Survival +5. Multiattack: Bite 2d6+3 piercing and Claw 1d8+3 slashing. Multiattack (2 claws and bite), Consume soul (those killed can't be raised), feed (gain 1 HD/3 victims killed), Pass without trace, Spell-like abilities (Save DC 15). At will – change self, levitate, minor illusion, misdirection; 1/day – charm monster, dimension door, fear.

Eventually, the attackers will get the heroes off the street and into a safe area inside of the buildings, where they can catch their breath and figure out what's going on. Not long before the heroes arrived, this group was engaged in a brutal battle with cultists of the Red God. The cult viciously attacked and badly wounded their leader, Lucius, who is bedridden. Angela, a skilled healer, tried to treat his wounds, but healing magic has become notoriously unreliable; scholars debate whether it's due to the strange radiation in the air, or because most of the gods are dead.

## WELCOME TO GRAFIKA

The heroes are in the ruins of the city of Grafika, once a city in the Hanse City-States, on a dying world called Aihrde. Once it was a vast and civilized world permeated by great sorcery and all manner of wondrous creatures organized into thousands of civilizations and empires. Then, a few centuries ago, there was a war between the gods, and the slaughter laid waste to the entire face of the world—east became west, north became south, and the global temperature soared. Billions died. Even now, the once-vast oceans are nearly dried up, and no one knows how much longer the planet even has.

The magic that once powered everything in the world has faded, and become highly unreliable, with magical artifacts sought out to power the few magical technology devices they have.

Since the time of something the locals call the "God War," only Ornduhl, the Red God, remains alive, and he now occupies the world in physical form, ruling what's left of Aihrde with an iron fist, using his servitors and cult to hunt down those who still fight for freedom. If these enemies the heroes talk about are this bad, they may well have thrown their lot in with Ornduhl.

The demon-like creatures that attacked the heroes were minions of Ornduhl, the Red God, who walks the world, and is responsible for the destruction that has laid waste to the world. These are the resistance forces who stand against his demons and undead.

As for how the heroes got here, the freedom fighters will posit that it sounds like the device was one of the Rings of

# GRAFIKA

**CASTLE DIRBILD**

**THE CUDGEL**

**IRON WORKS**

**PULING BARB**

**RABBIT PIT**

**ROTHGUT**

**COURTYARD**

**TOWN HALL**

**THE HUBB**

**FORUM**

**IMPALEER PRISON**

**OLD TOWN**

**BAT ROOST**

**TEMPLE ROW**

**CASTLE**

**RUINS**

**CAMP**

**TEMPLE**

**LITTLE AUFSTRAG**

**RUINED WALL**

**NOTE: BLACK BUILDINGS DENOTE OCCUPIED PORTIONS OF THE TOWN**

# GRAFIKA

**CASTLE DIRBILD**

**THE CUDGEL**

**IRON WORKS**

**PUKING BAR**

**RABBIT PIT**

**ROTHGUT**

**THE HUBB**

**COURTYARD**

**TOWN HALL**

**FORUM**

**IMPALEER PRISON**

**OLD TOWN**

**BAT ROOST**

**TEMPLE ROW**

**CASTLE**

**RUINS**

**RUINED WALL**

**LITTLE AUFSTRAG**

**CAMP**

**TEMPLE**

**NOTE: BLACK BUILDINGS DENOTE OCCUPIED PORTIONS OF THE TOWN**



Brass, dimensional portals that allow passage anywhere in the multiverse if their secrets are known. They were once hidden all over Aihilde, but if there are even any left, it's certain that Ornduhl's forces would have control over them. The freedom fighters have theorized that Ornduhl has become trapped on this world, and seeks to escape back into the Void, where he could regain his full power.

## DEFEATING THE RED GOD

Though magic is fading, the Resistance has been working on a ritual to trap the god between dimensions, but the final calculations escape them. Science-y heroes will be able to help work it out as it's celestial mathematics. In addition, the copy of the Sibylline Codices they possess will have important clues to unlock the missing pieces of the puzzle. It will take several weeks to completely work out the details, and then they will need to work out a plan to actually get to the Red God to perform the ritual. It's a dangerous and deadly prospect, but the rebels believe it worthwhile.

In the meanwhile, the Resistance agree to send out patrols to try and locate the enemies of the heroes, and to see if they can help find them a way home.

## GM'S NOTE

The heroes are on *Aihilde*, the house fantasy campaign setting of Troll Lord Games. Aihilde is, in fact, Venus, millions of years ago. This was explained earlier in our adventure and is hinted at for the players in the very first adventure in our campaign, **Oracles of Destiny**, wherein the players find in the Sibylline Codices indications that *Aihilde* as an ancient name for Venus.

This version of Aihilde exists centuries or even millennia after its own apocalypse, known as the Gonfod by inhabitants. It is a world that is slowly, inexorably dying. It has been struck by its own moon, which was hurled out of orbit by unknown means. In the mythology of Aihilde, Ea-Raena, the moon, chases Ea-Vette, the sun, around the world in an eternal race. The current inhabitants will believe that Narrheit, the lord of nightmares, tripped Ea-Raena on her journeys, just to see what would happen.

Regardless, the impact unleashed global destruction, slowly turning the entire planet upside down and reversing its orbit accordingly. It has also cost the planet its own magnetosphere, and its atmosphere is escaping, being replaced by clouds of methane due to a runaway greenhouse effect. It is, in short, slowly becoming the Venus we know today.

There is far too much to detail about Aihilde to present in this single adventure module. It may well enhance the GM's game, however, if you possess the **5e Player's Guide to Aihilde**, and/or the **Codex of Aihilde**, from Troll Lord Games, which outlines the distant past of this world (the "modern day" of the campaign setting itself).

A copy of your 5e Fantasy **Monster's Guide** and **Player's Handbook** or access to the **5e Systems Reference Document** can greatly enhance your ability to flesh out this city (and world if you like) by adding additional nonhuman races, monsters, character classes, and the like. Simply add magical and high technology to the mix, and alter the setting to present it as a post-apocalyptic fantasy world, and go!

## GRAFIKA

Grafika is a ruined city. It never was one of the great cities of Aihilde, having always been a haven for thieves, assassins, and renegades, a place that is very much a wretched hive of scum and villainy. It has no real walls and is surrounded by ancient ruins. In the distance on the horizon, the crumbling tower the heroes saw is identifiable as the ruins of Aufstrag, once the living embodiment of Hell on Aihilde, and inhabited by Unklar, the Horned God, who was cast out at the end of the Winter's Dark many tens of thousands of years ago.

Entering the town is as easy as walking in and out. Finding campsites is easy as well, especially given the town's largely dead and abandoned status. Enough wood remains in the rubble to provide a good sized fire. The few remaining people move about the ruins of the town, including outlaws, thieves, destitute people, scattered orcs (yes, orcs!) and the like.

The new acquaintances the heroes have met are a rebellion of sorts that stands against the forces of Ornduhl, seeking to cast down the Red God and restore some semblance of freedom and civilization to the dying world.

## ENCOUNTERS IN GRAFIKA

Encounters in the ruins are frequent. The town is a mixture of wildlife and human habitation. A large population of black bears stalk the ruins as do innumerable dogs and cats. Lycanthropy runs rampant in the town and there a number of these beasts stalking the ruins. Simple John (see the Bald Cap below) is the largest and most dangerous.

Consult the following chart. Roll a d6 six times during the day and 4 times at night. On a roll of 1 there is an encounter. Choose from the list below or roll 1d20 to determine the nature of the encounter.

1. Insane monk
2. Gang of 2-12 Rogues (4th-8th level hooligans)
3. 2-12 Wolves
4. 1-8 Zombies
5. Merchant/Tradesmen
6. 4-16 Ungern (see below)
7. 1-4 Fiends (Demons/Devils/Other – GM's choice)
8. Vampire

9. Orphan
10. Jules from *Pulp Fiction* as a bum
11. Bear, black
12. 1-6 Ghouls
13. Tinker
14. Werebear
15. Werewolf
16. Wererat
17. Mummy
18. Shambling Mound
19. Nightgaunt
20. Angel (GM's choice)

**UNGERN** (LE Medium humanoids) HP 16 (HD 2d8+6), AC 15, Spd 30ft. Str 18 Dex 11 Con 16 Int 10 Wis 14 Cha 9. Perception 12 (+2). Stealth +8, Claws +6 (1d4+4), Gore +6 (1d8+4), scimitar +6 (1d6+4), longbow +3 (1d8+4, 150/400). SA Able Tactician (advantage on attack rolls if 5' from ally), Multiattack (claws, sword, gore); darkvision



60ft, Spell resistance, camouflage (Advantage on Stealth), master archer (advantage on ranged attacks, add str bonus to damage) Immune to cold. Challenge 1 (200 XP)

**UNGERN SERGEANT** (LE Medium humanoid) HP 21 (HD 3d8+6), AC 16, Spd 30ft. Str 18 Dex 13 Con 16 Int 10 Wis 14 Cha 9. Perception 12 (+2). Stealth +8, Claws +6 (1d4+4), Gore +6 (1d8+4), hand axe +6 (1d6+4), morningstar +6 (1d8+4), longbow +3 (1d8+4, 150/400). SA Able Tactician (advantage on attack rolls if 5' from ally), Multiattack (hand axe, morningstar, gore); darkvision 60ft, Spell resistance, camouflage (Advantage on Stealth), master archer (advantage on ranged attacks, add str bonus to damage) Immune to cold. Challenge 1 (200 XP).

## DISTRICTS OF GRAFIKA

Grafika consists of 5 districts in Grafika, 4 small townships or districts loosely connected at the Hubb. The districts, who rules them, how they are organized, as well as notable persons are outlined below. The five districts of the town itself are only loosely connected in the Hubb, an extraordinarily violent and dangerous cesspool of humanity.

The population of Grafika fluctuates tremendously, though there are generally around 700 people living in and around the town. Caravans pass through frequently, causing a surge in population. Presently about 30 mercenaries are encamped outside of the town.

## GM'S NOTE: THESE NAMES LOOK FAMILIAR!

The names of the NPCs in Grafika will look hauntingly familiar to GMs who have played through our **5e Fantasy** adventure **A10: The Wasting Way**. This is deliberate. The Gonfod has had strange effects on time and space in Aihrde, causing some people to blink back into existence who have been long dead, albeit with new lives and slight changes to who and what they are. The characters described in here are indeed the same people featured in that module, only very slightly altered. Some basic rogues are now Crna Ruk assassins with special abilities. An ogre is now a gigantic (size Huge) mutant with double his prior hit dice, and so forth.

## THE HUBB

The Hubb occupies the center of Grafika. It constitutes the marketplace, the old town hall, a litany of taverns, pubs, whore houses and the like. It has the largest market of the Five Districts and attracts the bulk of the caravans that travel along the east-west roads. Everything in the Hubb is centered around the town square. Its occupied streets sprawl out from there. The Hubb does not officially end, but rather peters out in the ruins. There are no fortifications.

The Hubb is alive night and day; people up drinking and carousing, murdering and filching. The Guards patrol to the four points (see map) and go no further.

It is filthy with no regular clean up nor any kind of order beyond that provided by the guards.

**Total Population:** 250 +/-

**Human:** 150 +/-

**Orc:** 15 +/-

**Hobgoblin:** 10 +/-

**Ogres/Giants:** 10 +/-

**Gnome:** 5 +/-

**Dwarf:** 20 +/-

**Other (Elf/Halfling/Ungern/Etc.)** 30 +/- (most elves are Blood Elves from the Plains of Achrothos)

**GOVERNMENT:** Idius Branfeeter rules the Hubb. He is a chaotic evil, retired 14th level knight. He carries a large iron headed +5 mace wherever he goes. It is named the Long Arm.

**MILITARY:** Idius commands a guard of 50 mercenaries called the Fettermen. Branfeeter and the Fettermen are each outfitted with chain, shields, swords and spears. He can call upon another 20 lightly armed individuals.

**ECONOMY:** Nothing is manufactured in the Hubb, but everything is available. It has a thriving marketplace where armor, weapons, food and tac, harness, livestock, human and demi-human chattel and even some minor magics are available.

**RELIGION:** Idius is a member of the Cult of the Swords, a brotherhood of warriors. No other religion is noted.

**LANGUAGE:** Common or the Vulgate

**MAJOR GUILDS:** The Crna Ruk have a station house here. Several minor thieves' guilds as well as Muddles Inc.

**FETTERMEN X 50** (CN Human Fighter 3) HP 20 (HD 3d10), AC 16, Spd 30. Str 15 Dex 13 Con 10 Int 10 Wis 12 Cha 8. Perception 11(+1). Athletics +5, Intimidation +1. Sv: Str +4, Con +2. Morning star +4 (1d8+4). SA Dueling, Second Wind (1d8+2; 1/rest), Action Surge (1/rest), Crit 19-20. Challenge 1 (200 XP). They wear chainmail and carry maces and 40 gp in jewelry and coin.

The Fetterman are not honor bound, nor are they knights or even men of that class. They are mercenaries, some of them belong to the Cult of the Swords, most do not. They are not fiercely loyal to Idius but are to coin.

## THE TRADING CENTER

There is no regular market or store in the Hubb, this place has come to replace that of a normal economic center. People come here to trade and sell goods. Most of this is purloined from once place or the other. Many things can be purchased here though the price might be somewhat inflated. Also, many deals can be struck, and information

can be found. The place runs by tradition. A tradition of basically sell what you can for what you can before someone takes it. Jibla Three Fingers has a strangle hold on the place as he acts as an intermediary for many who live here. His henchmen try to keep things in order and demand a small tax from others who sell here. He has several assassins who ensure that those who disobey him or fault him pay a high price. Most people don't question him as the semblance of order brings respectability to Trading Center.

Jibla Three Fingers dwells on the edge of the Trading Center in a ramshackle 2 store house. Here his 12 henchman and several women dwell as well. He pays Idius a tithe each month to run the Trading Center.

**JIBLA THREE FINGERS** (LE Human Rogue (Crna Ruk assassin) 9) HP 66(HD 12d8+12), AC 18, Spd 30 ft. Str 10 Dex 16 Con 12 Int 11 Wis 12 Cha 12. Perception 14(+4). Deception +5, Religion +4, Stealth +7. Sv: Dex +7, Int +5. Whip +9 (1d6+5 and target grappled and restrained (Escape DC 15); cannot attack while grappling), Dagger of Venom +8 (1d4+4; DC 15 Con or 2d10 poison and poisoned 1 minute; use poison 1/day), Light Crossbow +7 80/320 (1d8+3) piercing. SA Sneak Attack (1/turn; 5d6) Speedy Strike (advantage on initiative). Deadly Strike (advantage on first attack if foe hasn't acted and deal max damage on hit). Bonus action: sneak attack one target even if already used. Spellcasting (Cha; DC 13, +5 attacks). 0-level (at will) eldritch blast, poison spray, vicious mockery, 1st level (4 slots) charm person, hellish rebuke, sanctuary, 2nd level (2 slots) alter self, invisibility, spider climb. He wears +3 Studded leather armor, +2 bull whip of entanglement, dagger of venom, and carries 4d6x100 gp worth of diamonds, rubies, emeralds, sapphire and pearls in a strong box in his house, which is locked and trapped (DC 17 for each; poison needle trap deals 4d6 poison (Con save DC 15 for half)).

**HENCHMEN X 12** (CN Medium Human) HP 32 (HD 5d8+10), AC 11, Spd 30ft. Str 15 Dex 11 Con 14 Int 10 Wis 10 Cha 11. Perception 10 (0). Intimidation +2. Short sword +4 (1d6+2), Heavy crossbow +2 (1d10; 100/400ft.). SA Multiattack (2 sword); Pack tactics (advantage on attacks if ally within 5' of foe). They wear leather armor, iron shot boots, and dark green cloaks. They have 2d12gp. Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

## THE TOWN HALL

This place was once the town hall and seat of power. It consists of a large palace, a walled courtyard and several rooms that abut the courtyard. Now it is a shell with little left standing. Idius makes all official ruling here, using the courtyard to do so.

The powers that be in Grafika meet here every once in a while, to hammer out differences. As often as not, the differences are hammered out with sword and axe. In front of the place is an execution site, gallows and chopping block. There are also several bodies here and usually a

pile of heads heaped in one of the corners of the courtyard, the Forum.

## **THE FORUM**

It is often called the Corpseyard because executions, duels and fights often occur here. There are also weekly 'gladiatorial bouts' where prisoners are forced to fight one another. The courtyard is surrounded by many buildings, most of which have fallen into the ruin. There are a number of punishment devices set about the courtyard, a corpse hanging from a hanging pole and several men in a tub of water, left here as punishment for some wrong.

## **THE IMPALED GRIFFON**

The Impaled Griffon is a massive four story building with two wings extending to either side; beyond that is consists of a series of houses and storerooms arranged in a haphazard manner at its rear. A large sign in front has a drawing of a griffon with a lance through it. Windows stretch all around the tavern, including the lower floor and on the dormers of the attic. The central portion of the tavern is open for the first three floors, allowing patrons to see up and down to the other floors. Noise and light spills out of the place and the revelry inside can be heard blocks away.

This is Idius' establishment; he keeps "court" here on the 2nd floor. There are always six guardsmen on the floor as well as his personal bodyguard, a large sallow faced man called Gnat.

This is an unsavory place and quite unsafe, attracting a wide range of people, both those passing through as well as local patrons that come in every night. There are no rules here and fights are common throughout.

Inside the place is always crowded, full of people drinking, smoking, eating, gambling, whoring, thieving, singing and all other activities that make a bar come alive. It is open 24 hours a day. There are a regular crew of bouncers that keep the establishment safe . . . they do not interfere with personal fights.

## **NURGLE'S HEAD TAVERN**

This massive stone building is located on the courtyard. A bar over the front door has the head of a troll hanging from it; its spiked to the board and burnt at the edges, so that only the head regenerates. Its mouth is perpetually open, and it howls groans of pain throughout the day and night. When it does grow beyond its burnt head someone from below comes out and lops off the growth. Nurgle's is a rough tavern, with fights occurring day and night. More often than not a body or three lies in the alley next to the tavern. The bouncers here are mean and foul tempered and, encourage the peace with the threat of violence.

The tavern is full most of the time with various people from around town. The men of the Hirten are often found here. There are prostitutes aplenty and other pleasures of the body to be found. Beer and food are cheap, but not very good. One can also rent a room - for what it's worth.

The establishment is run by a half ogre, named Urgidtremp, who is fat and mean. He and his retinue of surly louts keep the place running and everyone on their toes. Should fights erupt they either join in or just watch and take bets. Should the fights become too destructive, they intercede and throw everyone outside and force them to fight (but continue to take bets).

**PERSONS OF INTEREST:** One of the prostitutes/slaves is Emma, a daughter of the Mardocs Ascalon. This wealthy merchant family is a major pillar of the Imperial network in the south. Her safe return would bring the party a reward of 20,000gp. She lives in a small room with four other girls behind the kitchen. Should the characters become known to her, she attempts to befriend them and says a reward is in the offing should she be returned. She is shy and scared, 22 years old and uncommonly attractive with long dark hair and dark, round eyes.

## **THE CUDGEL: GUDGEROT**

The Cudgel is a filthy cesspool of ramshackle buildings, rubble-strewn streets, and moss covered walls. Weeds and bramble dominate. The Cudgel is home to about 1200 miserable souls. It possesses no marketplace, only a central square called the Rabbit Pit, a smattering of nasty gut-rotting taverns, some iron works and a plethora of buildings where people make hovels and call them homes. Not a single street winds through the Cudgel that is not carpeted in debris. Maneuvering a wagon through here is next to impossible; small carts and hand carts are the norm.

This area of town has a group of misfit ogres, orcs and ungerns as well as some goblins. They raid and pilfer, several hundred strong. They are generally used as mercenaries or hirelings for dirty jobs. Few people go to this side of town because it is so filthy and dangerous. As a general rule, everyone here is simply ignored. The ogres are useful as mercenaries and are quite willing to join in any raid or fray which sounds even remotely promising. Most of the building are abandoned and burnt out and the characters can rest in a building, should they desire.

Gudgerot runs the Cudgel. He rules as a tyrant. He has no council or advisors. Any announcement is called "Gudgerot's Law." To violate Gudgerot's Law is punishable by death. Many of the denizens use the battle cry of Gudgerot's Law as an excuse to justify murder or theft. There are constant brawls in the streets and murders in the ruined houses.

Business is carried out by migrant tinkers who come from the other districts with carts carrying items to sell. These

range from dirty clothes to highly prized wine, weapons, bits of armor, food stuffs, maps, information and just about anything else. It is against Gudgerot's Law to bother or harm a tinker. This is very common knowledge and if anyone is seen doing so, shouts for Gudgerot rise from all quarters. He comes personally with his gang to punish those who molest the tinkers.

**Total Population:** 120 +/-

**Human:** 20 +/-

**Orc:** 70 +/-

**Ungern:** 20 +/-

**Hobgoblin:** 10 +/-

**Ogres/Giants:** 10 +/-

**Gnome:** 5 +/-

**GOVERNMENT:** Gudgerot is a massive (size category huge) 15d12+45 HD ogre (AC 15; 143 HP; +10 to hit in ranged and melee). He rules as a tyrant.

**MILITARY:** Gudgerot commands a troop of some 40 ogres, a mad giant and a motley collection of some 30 orcs and other humanoids.

**ECONOMY:** There is small trade by tinkers; armor and weapons manufacture.

**RELIGION:** None.

**LANGUAGE:** Common or the Vulgate

**MAJOR GUILDS:** The Tinkers Guild

## THE PUTRID BARN

Gudgerot the ogre owns the Barn that lies within a stone building, two stories high. A ladder leads down 15 feet into the common area; the first floor of the building collapsed long ago, and the tavern sprang up in the hole it left behind. The second floor is gutted, and all the windows blasted out. The roof is covered in blackened soot.

A large beer keg that holds up to 15000 gallons of beer dominates the back wall. It offers the only drink served in the Barn. It is served by half a dozen gnome barkeeps. The common area is a pot load of tables, chairs and debris heaped randomly about the room. A huge fire pit dominates the center of the room whose filth belches up and out the second floor windows.

The tavern is always crowded, packed with people of all races. It is noisy, smoke filled, and has garbage on the floor. A number of finely worked statues sit around the tavern, and many lie broken on the floor. The statues are mostly of orcs, ungern and the like.

A small door leads to the kitchens. It lies behind the keg. The kitchens are owned and run by a family of gnomes, the Crowbills. They are fierce, angry lot who do as much

fighting and gut cutting as any rogue or thief. Their chief is Jeckle Hacksaw. He's also the main cook and provides the patrons with whatever the gnomes have bought from the tinkers. A wide variety of meat is offered on the menu. Jeckle owns a small basilisk that he keeps on his shoulder. It is usually hooded. however, whenever a patron gets out of line, he pulls off its hood, exposing anyone nearby to the petrifying power of the basilisk.

## PERSONS OF NOTE

### The Good Beggar and Guild

The Barn is home to the Good Beggar. A human, old and wizened, he dwells by the fire pit on a three legged stool. He rarely leaves the tavern, sleeping there on the floor. He is a friend of Chief Jeckle Hacksaw, who gives him the floor.

The friendship is not accidental, for The Good Beggar is master of the Beggar Thieves. This guild roams the Grafika ruins. The Good Beggar holds court here, seeing to the administration of his guild. There are always four 8th level rogues in the tavern with him and a dozen more of varying levels he can call on in short order.

## THE TOWER OF ROTHGUT

This large tower is located in the Cudgel. Once part of a larger structure that has fallen into ruin, the tower now houses little more than a brass bell. At least once a week, the bell mysteriously sounds, ringing loud and clear across the Cudgel. Few know what dwells within the tower, though it is widely believed to be occupied by the ghosts of the priests who lived in the adjacent temple. The sounding of the bell, it is said, is their moaning for their lost gods.

The tower itself is 120 feet high and about 40 wide at the base. It consists of one long flight of stairs that wind around the inner tower until they come to a hatch in the ceiling above. The center of the tower is not hollow but rather it consists of multiple lateral and horizontal supports that hold up the stairs. The beams are in relatively good shape and anyone who attempts to climb them can do so with ease (DC 15).

But the tower is occupied. In years past when the city was sacked the priests of Unkar gathered here in the tower in a last ditch attempt to save themselves. They failed, as knights and paladins broke through the door and put them all to the sword.

As priests of a banished god, their souls had no house to which they could flee. So they lingered, evolving into a morass of twisted nightmare known as a shelkerow. This creature attacks anything that enters the tower within 1d8 rounds. It looks like a black smoke and occupies the crevices and dark corners of the tower. When it attacks, it coalesces into a huge tendril of black smoke. Any *detect evil* cast in the tower reveals evil everywhere.



**SHELKEROW** (NE Large Undead). HP 65 (HD 8d10+16) AC 17 Spd 30ft (fly). Str 10 Dex 16 Con 15 Int 12 Wis 16 Cha 15. Perception 12(+2). Life Drain +6 (2d10, plus reduce max. HP (DC 15 Con neg) until long rest. SA Improved grapple (on successful hit; escape DC 15/round; automatic life drain); Resist acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder, nonmagical weapons; Immune necrotic, poison, charm, exhaustion, grapple, paralysis, petrify, prone, restrain; darkvision 60ft; incorporeal, sunlight disadvantage.

The creature's treasure is hidden in the bell tower above. It consists of a set of +3 leather armor, +4 thieves' tools, a flame tongue short sword and a pouch with 200gp. The ringer of the bell is made of iron and brass that is held to the stem with a small peg. Noticing this requires a successful Wisdom (perception) check (DC 15). Pulling the peg drops the bell from the stem and reveals a hidden compartment. The gem in the compartment is worth 4,500 gold pieces.

## IRON WORKS

The iron works is a 20000 square foot stone warehouse turned smithy. Here are some of the best craftsmen in the region, they make just about anything one could want, from weapons to wagons. The building's floor plan is open, with half a dozen fire pits, numerous counters, worktables and benches, chains from the ceiling hooked to pulleys hold all manner of arms and equipment. It is noisy and hot.

The Iron Works are busy outfitting Coburg's army. They have orders for thousands of weapons and have hired extra help. Most of their goods go to the Priest and his gathering mercenaries.

There is no one central person in charge, but any number of smiths to speak to: MacCune, Herne, Dennehy, Canning, Regan, Carlin or Dedrem. They are all humans here and employ mostly humans as assistants.

They can make any kind of armor and will do so, despite their large orders from Aufstrag. They charge 5% higher than the normal price. Masterwork weapons can be made here as well as silver coated weapons and armor.

If questioned about the armor and gathering mercenaries any one of them speaks plainly (because they are under the protection of the ogre). They speak of a number of camps spread throughout the north where someone called the Undying One is gathering troops for his invasion of the southlands.

There is one inner building within the Iron Works, it's a large structure, it's where the Tinkers Guild is located.

## THE TINKERS GUILD

The Tinkers Guild consists of 74 tinkers. These humans, half orcs and gnomes have banded together to keep an eye on who is where, selling what and when. They travel throughout Grafika, carrying a great deal of equipment and supplies.

Their main house is in the Iron Works and is about 3000 square feet. Here the tinkers gather to discuss matters important to them, mend carts, trade goods amongst themselves, and store goods. The office is run by a thickly muscled man with thinning hair named Kite. He wears thick eyeglasses and talks slowly. Despite this, Kite is very smart and knows just about everything that goes on in Grafika. He never gives out information unless paid handsomely for it.

## RABBIT PIT

The Rabbit Pit is where Gudgerot holds court. In the center of the Pit lies a large heaping pile of stonework and masonry upon which his chair sits. Here the Ogre sits and rules over all those in the Cudgel. He can be found here most days and nights; he is usually drunk. He likes to eat, drink, and cause pain.

With him are a band of his giants and ogres. They are filthy, foul-mouthed, mean-spirited and evil-tempered.

**GUDGEROT** (CE Huge Giant) HP 143 (HD 15d12+45), AC 15, Spd 40. Str 21 Dex 10 Con 17 Int 8 Wis 10 Cha 7. Perception 10 (0). Great club +10 (3d6+5) or rock +10 (3d8+5; 30;120ft). SA darkvision 60ft. Challenge 4 (1,100 XP).



**OGRES, 20 CE** *Large Giant*) HP 59 (HD 7d10+21), AC 11, Spd 40. Str 19 Dex 8 Con 16 Int 5 Wis 7 Cha 7. Perception 8 (-2). Great club +6 (2d8+4). SA darkvision 60ft.

**GIANT, STONE, 4** (CN *Huge Giant*) HP 126 (HD 11d12+55), AC 17, Spd 40ft. Str 23 Dex 15 Con 20 Int 10 Wis 12 Cha 9. Perception 14 (+4). Athletics +12. Hurled Cow +9 (4d6; 60/240) or rock +9 (4d10+6; 60/240ft). SA Darkvision 60ft, stone camouflage, rock catching (DC 10 Dex).

**TREASURE:** Gudgerot's treasure consists of 350gp, 12,000sp, gems worth 1000gp; a *cloak of the manta ray*, a +2 shield, boots of climbing (grant advantage on Acrobatics or Athletics checks to climb), and a *spear of wounding* (as a sword of wounding, but a spear), His drinking has hindered his accumulation of wealth.

## PERSONS OF INTEREST

A paladin, captured by some goblins and sold to the Ogre, hangs on a crossbar in the middle of the Rabbit Pit. His hands and feet have been cut off and his eyes gouged out. He hangs on by a thread of life. No one pays much attention to him anymore so the characters can ostensibly get away with talking to him for some time before getting the attention of someone. The paladin is free to speak.

The paladin's name is Albern of the House Lambrick and his tale is a sorrowful one; he is a knight in the service of the King of Augsburg, holding lands and title in the River King's domain. He traveled with a band of crusaders across the Luneberg Plains to the Gray Pools in quest of the Unicorn. Legends relate of a magnificent beast that dwelt in those swamps. They skirted north until they came to a great, long causeway that stretched across and into the swamp. There lay a dragon who questioned them and wondered at their purpose. He did not like their answers and attacked, killing everyone but himself. He fought on but the dragon lifted him on high and dropped him in the swamps. There the goblins found him, broken and wounded. They brought him here and sold him to the Ogre. Here he sits, waiting to die.

The paladin is not seeking aid or help as he considers his position to be just punishment for his sin of vanity in thinking he was powerful enough to find the unicorn. He will pass-on any information that he can to help others.

If queried about the dragon, he can tell them it is an old white dragon, mildly tempered, and fond of talk. It dwells upon the steps of the Causeway that leads to Aufstrag. The dragon has a great love of silver and may take that for payment to cross into the swamps.

## CASTLE DIRBILD

Castle Dirbild is just outside of the ruins of Grafika. Its massive stone walls and looming square keep dominate the rubble of the district. Few live here, and those who do crowd around the castle itself, making homes for themselves out of the rubble. This whole region of Grafika con-

tained the long barracks that housed the towns soldiery. The paladins of old ordered the walls pulled down and the streets torn up. The bodies of the fallen were piled along the streets, where they sank slowly into the mud. The burned husks of houses and the rubble of fallen walls remain, lining the muddy streets. On occasion, the bones of the dead are uncovered.

Dirbild built the castle some years ago, much of it from the stone of the roads. The structure is plain and undecorated. Around this edifice, various inhabitants gather, clinging to their miserable lives in the shadow of their master. There are two areas of interest here: Dirbild Castle and the Bald Cap Tavern.

**Total Population:** 1000 +/-

**Human:** 800 +/-

**Orc:** 0 +/-

**Hobgoblin:** 0 +/-

**Ogres/Giants:** 10 +/-

**Gnome:** 70 +/-

**Halfling:** 50 +/-

**Dwarf:** 200 +/-

**Elf:** 50 +/- (most of these elves come from the Plains of Achrothos)

**GOVERNMENT:** Hirten von Dirbild rules here. He is a 17th level human fighter. He styles himself Lord.

**MILITARY:** Dirbild commands a mercenary troop, the Baldheads, a mixed force of 320 archers, spearmen, and warriors. All are mounted. His personal guard, the Iron-tops, consists of 25 heavily armored fighters.

**ECONOMY:** None.

**RELIGION:** None.

**LANGUAGE:** Common or Vulgate.

**MAJOR GUILDS:** Baldheads

## CASTLE DIRBILD

The castle is small, consisting of a four story donjon, several small outbuildings, and three round towers. All this is contained inside an 18 foot high wall and surrounded by a moat. The moat is dry, but it is 10 feet deep, 20 feet wide, and lined with stakes.

The Donjon is an open structure and each of the four floors are open to the one below. Rooms are built to the sides, aside from the top floor. The first floor houses the guard. The second floor houses equipment and more guards. The third floor is the kitchen and storage. The fourth floor is Dirbild's residence. All 320 men can crowd into the structure in an emergency, but it normally only houses a garrison of about 50 men. There is a well in the inner bailey.

Guard is sporadically kept, as no one ever bothers the Balders when they are in residence. When raiding, about 50 Baldheads remain within the castle.

Outside the keep, a large series of stables and outbuildings have been erected to house the 400 horses they use for traveling and raiding. A series of low barracks have been built just outside the castle against the wall. These house the men and their equipment. The whole area is filthy with human debris and waste.

## **HIRTEN DIRBILD**

Hirten is not an evil man. He simply cares nothing for the authority of others. He cares for no one other than his own men and has absolutely no concept of property ownership other than his own. "Why does that lout have my gold," he is oft heard to say. Grafika is, for Hirten, a place of safety. The authorities and armies of the east, north, and west do not travel this far in search of anyone. It is too close to the Great Swamp. When in town, he and his men generally keep to their own.

Hirten can be approached by the characters. They must do so with respect and must not show weakness in his presence. If Hirten senses some utility in the characters, he may be willing to pass along some information about Grafika or the Great Swamp. He might even suggest a place to rest or provide some protection from others in town.

Hirten has a grudge against the Old Man on the Hill (see below). After some discrete inquiries, Hirten asks the characters to rob the Old Man on the Hill. He has, so Hirten explains, "an object of mine. A small piddly thing of little value, but mine anyway and I want it back." The object is a crown encrusted in gems. Should the characters retrieve this for Hirten, he will be very grateful.

He doesn't care for the Idius Branfetter. If for some reason the characters go to war with Idius, he will join them for the right price.

Should the characters be dismissive, rude or otherwise ungracious to Hirten or his captains, he will most likely try to have them killed. If the characters appear weak or dim-witted, he will most likely have them killed for their goods.

## **LITTLE AUFSTRAG**

Little Aufstrag is a large encampment built around a ruined temple of Unklar. It consists of a host of tents and hastily built long houses. Its occupants are the beginnings of army being assembled for the invasion of the lands of New Aenoch. The tents and buildings are built in an orderly fashion, horses are picketed or corralled, wagons, supplies and other material are stockpiled.

It is ruled by Linderin, a priest of Unklar in the service of Coburg the Undying. Sent forth to gather mercenaries, rally local orc bands, collect giants and trolls, Linderin is

the vanguard of the army. His camp is one of several set up on the northern fringes of the Grausumland.

Entry to the camp is forbidden unless one has a pass. To attain a pass, they must see the captain of the guard. However, the camp's sentries are not nearly as dedicated to their tasks as the priest would like. Entering in the enclave is easy if one is careful.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF LITTLE AUFSTRAG**

The real lure of Little Aufstrag is that a tunnel has been excavated from Little Aufstrag to the ruins of the tower itself, where Unklar's throne room still stands. This is the PCs' ticket to confronting the Red God once and for all; and the only relatively safe way to approach Aufstrag to stop the mad plans of the cult of the Red God and their secret patron, who is in fact the dark god Narrheit himself.

**Total Population:** 300 +/-

**Human:** 70 +/-

**Orc:** 150 +/-

**Hobgoblin:** 40 +/-

**Ogres/Giants:** 5 +/- (hill giants)

**Trolls:** 5 +/-

**Ungern:** 20 +/-

**GOVERNMENT:** The priest rules, but there is a clear military chain of command

**MILITARY:** 300 soldiers

**ECONOMY:** None

**RELIGION:** Ornduhl, the Red God (Corrupted by Narrheit).

**LANGUAGE:** Aenochian and Common

**MAJOR GUILDS:** None

## **THE GREAT TEMPLE**

At the heart of Little Aufstrag stands a large temple. The temple itself is a ziggurat built much in the fashion of all the temples of Unklar. Its exterior is burnt in places and in need of repair neglect. The inside is largely abandoned and burnt out. The rooms are in horrible shape, the stairways are clouded with debris. Linderin the priest is slowly rebuilding it but does not live in it.

The temple sits on the edge of the encampment, and functions as the southern wall. A watch is kept on top of the temple at all times by two cunalrur; six-legged and man-sized beasts who are swift runners and able fliers with thin bodies covered in light, fur-like feathers and possessing a raptor-like beak, gliding membrane under their arms, and a long, prehensile tail. The watchers are able to see great distances and make note of any coming and going from the encampment as well as any threats that might be coming. They possess a telepathic link with the priest, communicating with him at all times. Any threats

to them or the camp are broadcast to their master. It is beneath the temple that the tunnel to Aufstrag proper exists; the entrance to this tunnel has been excavated and is carefully guarded

**CUNALRUR** (LN Medium Monstrosity) HP 34 (HD 5d8+10), AC 15, Spd 40ft, 80ft (fly), Str 13 Dex 18 Con 14 Int 10 Wis 12 Cha 7. Perception 16 (+6). Claws +6 (1d6+4). SA Multiattack (6 claws), rend (+1d6 damage per claw if at least two strike a victim), pack tactics (advantage if within 5ft. of a non-incapacitated ally), truesight, telepathic communication, resist cold. See Appendix A.

## THE PRIESTS' TOWER

This priest's tower lies in a walled compound with a mansion, tower and outbuildings. The tower has been converted to living quarters. The mansion is three stories tall with windows all around it. The lower floor is constructed of stone while the upper two stories are constructed of wood and plaster. The roof is red slate. On the north side of the building, a large tower 80 feet high stretches up and above the surrounding area.

Several small buildings have been encased within the compound. A stable and several small peasant huts are currently used to house troops. A large warehouse provides a gathering point and storage area for the priest. A temple has been constructed in the inner courtyard. A tall 15 foot high stone wall wraps around all the buildings. A wooden parapet stretches along the interior of the wall and several small watch posts have been placed here as well.

The priest, 10 acolytes and 50 troops are here. The perimeter is fairly well guarded. Large dogs roam the interior courtyard.

The priest is an agent of Narrheit. He is trying to establish some base of operations in Grafika for invasion of the south and creation of a new empire. He has gathered several hundred mercenaries but has failed to make any traction in Grafika itself, as the bandits are most disagreeable. He would pay a mighty sum to have some of them killed. If he can find a manner of doing so, he would use the characters to this end. The characters may also find an unlikely ally in the priest if they are set upon by any of the other town masters.

## ACT THREE

Ideally, the heroes spend several weeks on Aihirde, living with the refugees, who rarely go out during the day when the sun beats down harshly on the world. At night the temperature is tolerable. During this time they will gather information and undoubtedly try to figure out a way home.

Eventually this will lead them to uncover the story of Ornduhl, that he is believed to reside in Aufstrag (which is surrounded by hundreds of demons—the flying creatures they saw in the distance), and that there is a tunnel

leading from Little Aufstrag to Aufstrag proper. Scouts may, now that they know what to look for, uncover information that devices matching the description of the Rings of Brass have been transported to the ruins of Aufstrag, for unknown purposes. It's left to the GM how to deliver this information, but it should be uncovered gradually through scouting and investigative missions, and not as a single information dump on the heroes.

If they haven't already, science-inclined characters may actually notice over the next few weeks (with a DC 18 Intelligence (science) or Wisdom (perception) check; reduce the DC by one each day) that according to the pattern of the stars in the sky, and comparing to other star maps they have seen related to Aihirde, the heroes have been transported to Venus, a few million years ago. The event which reversed all the compass points during their mythical "God War" actually flipped the poles of the planet, and started it rotating in the opposite direction.

Work on the "ritual," as they call it, requires activating and overloading the Rings of Brass, while trapping the Red God between worlds. It progresses quickly with the help of our PCs, and if they can find the god and his Rings of Brass, there is hope to get home. One or more heroes may in the ensuing weeks enter into a romantic relationship with one or more of our Resistance NPCs.

Scouts have been sent to track down information about Ornduhl and his cult, and one day, a single scout returns, seemingly out of nowhere. He is grievously wounded and desperate, with a warning that the forces of the Red God are coming—he managed to activate a teleportation portal to get home, but it is now burned out.

He managed to infiltrate Ornduhl's very base of operations and seen the Red God himself, ancient and decrepit, wired directly into one of the Rings of Brass, which is almost functional. His cult, he says, have made an agreement to bring the Red God back to their world and use his power to return the world to greatness, but he believes that there is something far more sinister at work: another god has survived, and seeks to use the Red God's power to restore his own, and spread chaos and destruction throughout the multiverse. Before he can reveal the identity of this new god, however, he expires.

## ENEMY AT THE GATES

Not long after, the enemy arrives at their gates. Some teleport directly in; others attack outside. This should be a running battle, and the GM should let your imagination run wild: create statistics for airships, invent magitech weaponry to outfit the rebels and cult, and allow for swashbuckling heroics as the heroes work not only to survive, but to protect the secrets of their ritual, which may be the only way to defeat Ornduhl once and for all, and get home.

Use the statistics for demons and cultists earlier in this adventure and draw from the variety of demon statistics

in the **Amazing Adventures** core rulebook. Bring undead into the fray (Ornduhl is a patron of the undead, after all) and even consider opening up your **5e Fantasy Monster's Guide** to access creatures like wyverns and other monstrosities and aberrations from that book.

## RUNNING THE BATTLE

As you run the battle, describe the events going on around the heroes; the battle is everywhere, and they are playing just one part of it. Create opportunities for heroism—perhaps a small refugee child is trapped in a circle of demons and needs to be rescued. Perhaps a group of cultists gets hold of the Codices the heroes need and they must stop them escaping. Perhaps they must barricade themselves in with Angela who is frantically trying to complete the ritual and defend her so she can complete her work. Again, let your imagination run wild and focus on keeping the action fast, furious, and exciting.

In the end, the resistance drives off the attackers, but at great cost; a few escape (possibly on an airship), and the remaining Resistance fighters entreat the heroes to follow them; it may be the only way for them to get home. Angela manages to translate the final runic sequence to overload the portal and trap Ornduhl in the Void just as the heroes depart, reminding them that the Red God must enter the portal before the runic sequence is activated; a second sequence will allow the heroes to escape home and overload the portal to keep anyone else from following through. But the whole thing must occur during a specific timeframe as the magical energies run wild.

She wishes them well, and then is shot in the back and disemboweled by a demon-servant of Ornduhl.

## ACT FOUR

The heroes trail the villain to the headquarters of the Red God, who is largely de-powered and decrepit, and is connected to a portal, using his own divine power to make it work. This requires them to access the tunnel between Little Aufstrag and Aufstrag proper. When they emerge into the throne room, they see the following:

*Here stands the former throne room of Unklar the Horned God, from where he ruled for many long years. Today it sits in ruined, but is still massive, as big as the Bone Pit far below. A chamber lined with crumbling pillars holding up a vaulted roof, pillars built with the visage of dozens of ancient deities, carved from marble with such detail it seems they watch those who pass beneath them.*

*The throne itself is massive, built of wood carved from the trunk of a great ash tree, its roots are buried in the floor and its limbs rise to hold up a massive mirror that rides the wall behind the throne. Here at last, among at least a dozen or more cultists and demons, you see your long adversary, Ornduhl the Red God himself, but decrepit, emaciated, and*

*wired into a series of huge mirrors, surrounded by brass frames and etched with runes. The mirrors show no reflections, instead rapidly changing scenery to show a range of alien vistas and landscapes.*

The heroes have been expected, and a climactic battle occurs. During the battle, the high priest of the cult is revealed as Narrheit, the god of chaos and one of the Thousand Masks of Nyarlathotep, who has orchestrated this entire disaster, from the apocalypse that destroyed Aihrde to the imprisonment of the Red God.

When his plan is foiled, he releases the Red God as a distraction, and flees into a portal, destroying it as he does. If the heroes make to defeat Narrheit, he will point out that Nyarlathotep is eternal, and he will simply be reborn, but the Red God is already threatening their very world. For his part, Ornduhl, after one round of attacks, blindly flees into a portal, which sends him into Earth's past instead of trapping him in the Void.

## DEFEATING THE RED GOD

The PCs have no choice but to chase him through and must complete the ritual to trap him in a giant pillar deep in the jungle. The ritual is a form of rune magic that has been lost to the ages; it is a complex form of the Rune of Unmaking, which drains the life from the Red God, banishing him to a pocket dimension, where he will remain unless freed by equally powerful magic at a time when the stars are right and his dedicated servants perform a flawless counter-summoning ritual, which is also lost to time. The ritual itself requires four checks each from a mystically-inclined (Intelligence (arcana)) and a scientific (Intelligence (science)) character. Each check begins at DC 15 and reduces by 1 for each successive successful check. If they fail four checks before succeeding at four checks, the ritual fails, and the Red God is free.

This pillar then re-forms into an enormous statue of a demonic figure, clutching a bowl, and the heroes realize it as the centerpiece of the Temple of the Red God where they first encountered the cult of Sang-Xiu...thus creating a loop that millions of years later will lead into Rise of the Red God. The statue is enormous and would require Herculean effort to destroy, and even if they did destroy it, the Red God might simply be freed from the effort; it's impossible to say. In any case, they know they have spared the Earth a potential million years of tyranny from this dark deity.

The ritual then activates a Ring of Brass enabling them to return home to their own time.

**ORNDUHL, THE RED GOD (MANIFEST)** (LE Large Fiend) HP 241(HD 23d10+115), AC 21, Spd 50 ft Fly 80 ft. Str 21 Dex 15 Con 20 Int 16 Wis 15 Cha 21. Perception 12(+2). Deception +11, Insight+8, Intimidation+11, Persuasion+11. Fist +11 (1d10+5 plus 2d8 fire), Rotlen Sword +12 (3d6+6 plus 2d8 fire; on crit, Charisma

save (DC 19) or suffer imprisonment spell). SA Innate Spellcasting (Charisma; save DC 19; attack +11): At will – Create Undead, Fire Shield, 5/day – Confusion, Dominate Person, Stinking Cloud, 3/day – Ghoul Touch, Summon Elemental (fire only), 1/day – Earthquake, Maze, Meteor Swarm, Wall of Force. Summon and command 1d4 fiends of 8 HD or lower (1/day). Fear Aura (creatures in 30 feet Wisdom save (DC 19) or become frightened; new save each turn to end success and immunity to effect for 24 hours). Gaze of Madness (all in 60 feet that can see its face, Charisma save (DC 19) or affected by short term madness; if fail by more than 5, long term madness; if natural 1, indefinite madness. A creature can only be affected once/day). \* Burning Body (Any successful melee attack does extra 2d8 fire damage. Grappled creatures suffer 2d8 fire damage at the start of their turn. Magic Resistance. Multiattack (3 attacks; one may be a spell). Immune to Bludgeoning, Piercing and Slashing damage from any nonmagical weapon, acid, fire, cold, poison, Resist cold, lightning.

\*Use the madness rules from **Amazing Adventures**

**CULTISTS** (NE humans): HP 9 (HD 2d8), AC 12, Spd 30ft. Str 11 Dex 12 Con 10 Int 10 Wis 11 Cha 10. Perception 10(+0). Deception +2, Religion +2, Stealth +4. Dagger +3 (1d4+1) or pistol +3 (1d8+1/double tap). SA Dark Devotion (Advantage vs. charm/frightened).

*Some cultists may also be spellcasters* (Wis 12; DC 11; +3). Cantrips (at will): light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy; 1-level (4 slots): command, inflict wounds, shield of faith; 2-level (3 slots): hold person, spiritual weapon.

**DEMONS** (LE Medium Fiend): HD 6d8+6 (HP 37), AC 15, Spd 30ft. Str 17 (+3) Dex 15 (+2) Con 13 (+1) Int 15 (+3) Wis 14 (+2) Cha 14 (+2). Saves: Str +6, Dex +5, Wis +6. Perception 15 (+5), Stealth +5, Survival +5. Multiattack: Bite 2d6+3 piercing and Claw 1d8+3 slashing. Multiattack (2 claws and bite), Consume soul (those killed can't be raised), feed (gain 1 HD/3 victims killed), Pass without trace, Spell-like abilities (Save DC 15). At will – change self, levitate, minor illusion, misdirection; 1/day – charm monster, dimension door, fear.

**PRIESTS OF THE RED GOD** (LE Human Arc 6) HP 32 (HD 6d6+6), AC 15, Spd 30ft. Str 8 Dex 11 Con 12 Int 16 Wis 18 Cha 12. Perception 13(+6). Arcana +7, Insight +7, Deception +4. Sv: Int +7, Wis +6. Staff +2 (1d10-2) or dagger +6 (1d6+3). SA Death Domain (Channel Divinity 2/rest: Turn Undead, Command Undead; Destroy undead CR ½; Enhanced necromantic healing (heal 1d6 when kill with a necromantic spell)). Spellcasting (Wis; DC 15; Attack +8): 0-level (4) – acid splash, chill touch, ray of frost, sacred flame; 1-level (4 slots) – bane, command, color spray, expeditious retreat, hideous laughter, inflict wounds; 2-level (3 slots) – necromantic bolt (as acid arrow, but necromancy and deals necrotic damage), blindness/deafness, gentle repose, invisibility lesser restoration, ray of enfeeblement, suggestion; 3-level (3 slots)

– animate dead, bestow curse, call lightning, hypnotic pattern, mass harming word (necromantic; as mass healing word, but deals necrotic damage instead of healing), speak with dead

There are no stats for Narrheit given as the god of chaos and lord of nightmares has absolutely no intention of standing and fighting. He much prefers to escape to another world, take on a new face and a new identity, and continue to sow chaos and destruction throughout the multiverse. If the PCs decide to split up with some pursuing Narrheit, the most likely result is that they are simply lost forever, leaping through a portal that goes dark, and finding themselves alone in an inhospitable environ (possibly even un-survivable), facing an angry Great Old One.

His own cult could become an ongoing threat to the heroes, and he is an exceptionally active god across the many worlds of the multiverse. In Aihrdian terms, he is detailed in the **Codex of Aihrde** and the **5<sup>th</sup> Edition Player's Guide to Aihrde**, but across the multiverse, he is a Mask of Nyarlathotep, the Crawling Chaos, a Great Old One who serves as the living will of Azathoth. He is also part of the Shade Mythos, which will be detailed in future supplements.

## EPILOGUE

The heroes have (hopefully) defeated the Red God and managed to walk the paths of the Rings of Brass to get home. They may now have a new enemy in the cult of Narrheit, or their battle with the cult of the Red God may continue; after all, they have created their own problem by being the ones who trapped the god on Earth to begin with, and certainly remnants of his cult still exist in the world, waiting to cause future problems. As usual, the job is thankless; few know of their efforts, and they've saved the world only to pass once more into underground obscurity.

It is possible, however, that the Secret Service will track them down after a few days or weeks, offering them the very medal that the President seeks to grant them, in thanks for stopping his own assassination. For once, it's possible, the heroes may just get their due after all.

## THE RUINS OF ENDS MEET

As a means of continuing their adventures, it's possible that when the heroes step through the portal to what they hope is their own time, the heroes could, if the GM desires, find themselves in a strange small town that seems to be trapped in the 1950s (which could be very strange if they themselves are from an earlier time), and is filled with odd items, mystical portals, and hints regarding the Rings of Brass. This town is Ends Meet, Arkansas, and is detailed in **The Ruins of Ends Meet** adventure. It could also become a key to many future multidimensional adventures for the heroes.

# APPENDIX A: NEW MONSTER

## CUNALRUR (THE EYE UPON THE ROAD)

Man-sized, six-legged beasts, the Cunalrur are swift runners and able fliers. They have thin bodies, covered in light fur-like feathers. An equally lengthy, prehensile tail gives them advantage on dangerous inclines. They have thick, dark claws that serve them in their purchase in trees, cliffs and the like and can also act as weapons. They have a thin membrane growing between their hind and forelegs which enables them to fly or glide for great distances. Their brows are high, shaped more like a wolf's, but rather than a snout they possess an eagle-like beak. Whether climbing, flying or running, they display tremendous speed.

**Territorial Guardians.** Cunalrur are highly prized guard animals as they are highly territorial, possess exceptional vision, and have minor telepathic abilities. These allow them to function with a sort of hive mind, projecting images of what they see to other members of their pack or anyone else with whom they wish to communicate. Vocally, they produce only a hollow howl which is used only when they are in great pain or issuing a warning of danger to their pack or master.

**Non-Aggressive Packs.** As pack animals, the Cunalrur travel in groups of up to four. They reproduce asexually, laying 1-2 eggs about every two years. These they bury or ide in a secure place and leave them. The eggs mature on their own and hatch as a fully mature adult Cunalrur in 6-7 weeks, immediately seeking out others of their own kind to join a pack.

The Cunalrur are not particularly aggressive, but can be dangerous when hunting, cornered or otherwise forced to fight. They will rear up on their hind legs and use claws to grab the target, ripping and tearing viciously until the target is dead or they are removed.

### CUNALRUR

*Medium Monstrosity, Lawful Neutral*

**ARMOR CLASS:** 15 (natural armor)

**HIT POINTS:** 34 (5d8+10 HD)

**SPEED:** 40ft, 80ft (fly)

STR:	DEX:	CON:	INT:	WIS:	CHA:
13 (+2)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	10 (0)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

**Damage Resistance:** Cold

**Senses:** Passive Perception 16 (+6), Truesight

**LANGUAGES:** Telepathic communication

**CHALLENGE:** 2 (450 XP)

### Special Qualities

- **Rend.** If the Cunalrur strikes a victim with at least two claw attacks, the victim suffers an extra 4 (1d6) slashing damage per successful claw attack.

- **Telepathic Communication.** The Cunalrur can telepathically transmit visions of anything it sees, as well as empathic impulses to those with whom it has established a willing telepathic bond (usually its pack and/or master)
- **Pack Tactics.** Whenever the Cunalrur is within 5 feet of an ally, it gains advantage on all attack rolls, so long as that ally is not incapacitated.

### Actions

- **Multiattack.** The Cunalrur makes six claw attacks.
- **Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack.* +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6+4) slashing damage.

### The Cunalrur in Aihrde

*"They watch the road. They do not sleep, nor suffer from the wants of man. They watch and howl when they see something they do not like or trust."*

– Rhul-Eye of the House of Vian, Wizard

Unklar bred the Cunalrur upon the heights of his towers in Aufstrag after many of the wars were fought and he reigned over all of Aihrde. He labored long over them for is heeds in those days were great as his enemies were still strong, if scattered. So he set within them a great deal of his own power, and they bred upon it and flourished. For many long years they lived in the high perches overlooking the swelling swamps below.

Eventually, he trusted them to his outer works and in time they spread from there into the wider world where they flourished. They were prized by all manner of people as it was found that they could be hatched early and trained to a master, and thereby become the perfect guard animal. They always yearn for Aufstrag, though, as the species has a remarkable ability to pass its memories down through generations.



## APPENDIX B: AMAZING ADVENTURES MODULE ORDER

We accomplished a huge thing with the Kickstarter for **Amazing Adventures 5e**. During that Kickstarter, we managed to unlock almost the entire AA line, converted to the Fifth Edition mechanics. Even a great deal of the SIEGE Engine version of the **Amazing Adventures Companion** made it into the core book.

Among those things that were unlocked were every single adventure module that has been published for the game, as well as the three brand new adventures herein. There may be some that wonder if there is an official, canon order in which to play these adventures, and if they can string together to form a complete campaign.

The answer is, yes and no. While the adventures all use similar themes rooted in the idea of a meta-setting involving the Brotherhood of William St. John and certain villainous secret societies, the only ones that are absolutely designed to go together are *The Heart of Yhtill* followed by *Day of the Worm*, and *Rise of the Red God* with *Rings of the Red God*.

That being said, there is a logical order in which these adventures can be played which can indeed create an ongoing campaign. If you run the adventures in this order, you may need to adjust the challenge levels upward as your heroes gain levels. We leave that to you, but in general, increasing the number of monsters or increasing the hit

dice/hit points and attack damage of specific monsters will serve this purpose. If you own the **5<sup>th</sup> Edition Fantasy Game Master's Guide**, there are concrete guidelines for building encounters based on challenge level which will serve you well in this regard.

With all that being said, here is the suggested order in which to run all of the AA modules to date:

- 1 *The Heart of Yhtill* (**Amazing Adventures** core rulebook)
- 2 *Day of the Worm*
- 3 *Rise of the Red God*
- 4 *Ashton and the Augments*
- 5 *The Deeper Dark Trilogy*
- 6 *Rings of the Red God*
- 7 *The Ruins of Ends Meet*
- 8 *The Menace of the Serpent God* (Forthcoming)
- 9 *The Hellfire Murders* (Forthcoming)
- 10 *The Crystal Gates of Thuban* (Forthcoming)

We hope you'll stay tuned, as we have a lot planned for the future of **Amazing Adventures**, including more genre books (and support for other genres) and it should be an exciting ride!

## OGL

This book is published under the Open Game License (OGL) version 1.0a by permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. The Open Game Content appearing in this book is derived from the 3.0 System Reference Document, copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and the 5.1 System Reference Document, Copyright 2016 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All contents, excluding the OGL, is property of and copyright 2018 Troll Lord Games. All Rights Reserved.

**DESIGNATION OF OPEN GAME CONTENT:** The following is designated Open Game Content pursuant to the OGL v1.0a: all stat block information of characters, monsters, and traps that appears in the parenthetical following the character, monster, or trap, including the names of items and spells; and the general names of monsters, but not any unique named NPC, character, or monster, appearing in any table or preceding any stat block. Also, the following open game content related words, phrases, and abbreviations wherever they appear: Strength (Str), Dexterity (Dex), Constitution (Con), Intelligence (Int), Wisdom (Wis), Charisma (Cha), Class, Fighter, Ranger, Rogue, Assassin, Barbarian, Monk, Wizard, Illusionist, Cleric, Druid, Knight, Bard, Paladin, Race, Demi-human, Dwarf, Elf, Gnome, Half-Elf, Haling, Half-Orc, Hit Dice (HD), Hit Points (HP), Alignment, Lawful Good (LG), Lawful Neutral (LN), Lawful Evil (LE), Neutral (N), Neutral Good (NG), Neutral Evil (NE), Chaotic Good (CG), Chaotic Neutral (CN), Chaotic Evil (CE), Level, “to hit”, Damage, Experience Point, Saving Throw, Player Character (PC), Non-player Character (NPC), Turn Undead, Spell, Arcane, Divine, Magic, Spell Resistance, Item, Equipment, Armor, Weapon, Potion, Rod, Staff, Wand, Scroll, Ring, Wondrous Item, Artifact, Cursed,d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, d20, d%, round, and turn.

**DESIGNATION OF PRODUCT IDENTITY:** Product identity is not Open Game Content. The following is designated as product identity pursuant to OGL v1.0a(1) (e) and (7): (A) product and product line names, including Aihrde, World of Aihrde, Shades of Mist, Lands of Ursal, Darkenfold, Amazing Adventures, Solar Burn, Castles & Crusades, Victorious: Steampunk Adventure in an Age of Super Mankind; (B) logos, identifying marks, and trade dress; (C) all artwork, logos, symbols, graphic designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual representations; (D) logos and trademarks, including Castles & Crusades, Castle Keeper, SIEGE engine, Amazing Adventures, Victorious and Troll Lord Games, identifying marks and trade dress, or any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as product identity by the owner of the product identity, and which specifically excludes the open game content; (E) the story, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, depictions, likenesses, concepts, world and campaign descriptions, proper names of the characters, creatures, groups, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses, skills, items, deities, and special abilities other than those designated as open game content above, as well as places, locations, settings, and environments and their descriptions and other accompanying text, though not their stat blocks.

All text, artwork, and maps appearing in this book is property of and copyright 2018 Troll Lord Games. All Rights Reserved. Castles & Crusades, C&C, Castle Keeper, Troll Lord Games, and the Castles & Crusades and Troll Lord Games logos, and products published by Troll Lord Games are Trademarks of Troll Lord Games. All Rights Reserved.

OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a: The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc (“Wizards”). All Rights Reserved.

1. **DEFINITIONS:** (a) “Contributors” means the copyright and/ or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) “Derivative Material” means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) “Distribute” means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) “Open Game Content” means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) “Product Identity” means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) “Trademark” means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) “Use”, “Used” or “Using” means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) “You” or “Your” means the licensee in terms of this agreement.
2. **THE LICENSE:** This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.
3. **OFFER AND ACCEPTANCE:** By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.
4. **GRANT AND CONSIDERATION:** In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.
5. **REPRESENTATION OF AUTHORITY TO CONTRIBUTE:** If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/ or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.
6. **NOTICE OF LICENSE COPYRIGHT:** You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright

date, and the copyright holder’s name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. **USE OF PRODUCT IDENTITY:** You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.
8. **IDENTIFICATION:** If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.
9. **UPDATING THE LICENSE:** Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.
10. **COPY OF THIS LICENSE:** You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.
11. **USE OF CONTRIBUTOR CREDITS:** You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.
12. **INABILITY TO COMPLY:** If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.
13. **TERMINATION:** This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.
14. **REFORMATION:** If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.
15. **COPYRIGHT NOTICE** Open Game License v 1.0 Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

System Reference Document Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc; Authors Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

System Reference Document 5.1 Copyright 2016, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Mike Mearls, Jeremy Crawford, Chris Perkins, Rodney Thompson, Peter Lee, James Wyatt, Robert J. Schwalb, Bruce R. Cordell, Chris Sims, and Steve Townshend, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

System Reference Document Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc; Authors Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

**Amazing Adventures 5e: Solar Burn, Copyright 2020, Troll Lord Games; Author Jason Vey.**

**Amazing Adventures 5e, Copyright 2019, Troll Lord Games, Author Jason Vey**

**Amazing Adventures, Limited Preview Printing, Copyright 2012, Troll Lord Games; Author Jason Vey.**

**Amazing Adventures, 1st Printing, Copyright 2012, Troll Lord Games; Author Jason Vey.**

**Amazing Adventures, 2nd Printing, Copyright 2015, Troll Lord Games; Author Jason Vey.**

**Castles & Crusades: Players Handbook, Copyright 2005, Troll Lord Games; Authors Davis Chenault and Mac Golden.**

**Castles & Crusades: Players Handbook, 2nd Printing, Copyright 2006, Troll Lord Games; Authors Davis Chenault and Mac Golden.**

**Castles & Crusades: Players Handbook, 3rd Printing, Copyright 2007, Troll Lord Games; Authors Davis Chenault and Mac Golden.**

**Castles & Crusades: Players Handbook, 4th Printing, Copyright 2009, Troll Lord Games; Authors Davis Chenault and Mac Golden.**

**Castles & Crusades: Players Handbook, 5th Printing, Copyright 2009, Troll Lord Games; Authors Davis Chenault and Mac Golden.**

**Castles & Crusades: Players Handbook, 6th Printing, Copyright 2014, Troll Lord Games; Authors Davis Chenault and Mac Golden.**

**Castles & Crusades: Players Handbook, 7th Printing, Copyright 2017, Troll Lord Games; Authors Davis Chenault and Mac Golden.**

**Castles & Crusades Monsters & Treasure, Copyright 2005, Troll Lord Games; Authors Robert Doyel Stephen Chenault.**

**Castles & Crusades Monsters & Treasure, 2nd Printing Copyright 2007, Troll Lord Games; Authors Robert Doyel Stephen Chenault.**

**Castles & Crusades Monsters & Treasure, 3rd Printing Copyright 2009, Troll Lord Games; Authors Robert Doyel Stephen Chenault.**

**Castles & Crusades Castle Keepers Guide, Copyright 2010, Troll Lord Games; Author Davis Chenault & Stephen Chenault.**

**Castles & Crusades Castle Keepers Guide, 2nd Printing, Copyright 2015, Troll Lord Games; Author Davis Chenault & Stephen Chenault.**

**The Rings Of The Red God Copyright 2018, Troll Lord Games, Author Jason Vey.**



# MAZING DVENTURES 5E

RINGS OF THE RED GOD IS A SEQUEL TO RISE OF THE RED GOD, AND REPRESENTS AN EPIC ADVENTURE TRILOGY AND SOURCEBOOK OUTLINING THE PRESENCE OF THE RINGS OF BRASS ON EARTH AND THE TERRIBLE POWER THESE PORTALS THROUGH TIME AND SPACE REPRESENT. THE ADVENTURES HEREIN SEE OUR HEROES BATTLING TO CONTROL OR DESTROY THESE RINGS, WHILE VISITING ALIEN WORLDS AND UNCOVERING CONSPIRACIES THAT COULD AFFECT ALL OF REALITY!

- **IN ORACLES OF DESTINY**, THE HEROES MUST RECOVER AN ANCIENT TREASURE (THE SIBYLLINE BOOKS) BEFORE A DARK SORCERER FROM THE ORIENT DOES, THUS DOOMING THE WORLD TO AN AGE OF DARKNESS. NEXT, IN

- **ISLAND OF THE LOST**, A PLANE GOES DOWN, VANISHING OFF RADAR IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC. THE HEROES ARE CALLED IN TO SEE WHAT HAPPENED, AND DISCOVER A LOST WORLD TYPE ISLAND WITH SHOCKING SECRETS. IN

- **PLANET OF DARKNESS**, THE HEROES FIND THEMSELVES SUDDENLY TRANSPORTED TO ANOTHER WORLD OF SUPER SCIENCE AND BARBARISM WHERE THEY MUST RACE AGAINST TIME TO STOP THE VILLAINS FROM GETTING HOLD OF ADVANCED WEAPONS TECHNOLOGY WHILE FINDING A WAY HOME THEMSELVES. **PLUS:** INFORMATION ON THE RINGS OF BRASS, AN ENTIRE NEW PLANET TO EXPLORE, SURPRISES ABOUT TROLL LORD GAMES' WORLD OF AIHRDE CAMPAIGN SETTING, AND MORE!

ISBN 978-1-952379-05-5



TLG 78081  
\$12.99



1818 N. TAYLOR, #143, LITTLE ROCK, AR 72207

[WWW.TROLLORD.COM](http://WWW.TROLLORD.COM)

PRINTED AT CHENAULT & GRAY PRINT  
IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA