



MAZING DVENTURES

RISE OF THE RED GOD



BY JASON VEY

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2013

MAZING ADVENTURES

RISE OF THE RED GOD

AN AMAZING ADVENTURES MODULE BY JASON VEY

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THE RISE OF THE RED GOD



AN AMAZING ADVENTURES MINI-CAMPAIGN BY JASON VEY

INTRODUCTION

Somewhere deep in the jungle lies an ancient temple, a temple built by a lost civilization and dedicated to a long-forgotten god. Likely a deity of the Thurian Age, tens of thousands of years before our time, the Red God still sits at the heart of the temple, now decrepit, crumbling, and suffering from years of neglect. But what secrets of ancient knowledge still reside within, undiscovered and little-touched by the millennia that have quietly passed it by? What treasures may still be hidden behind the stones and beneath the altars of the place?

There's only one way to find out...

Welcome to The Rise of the Red God, our first “super module” for the **Amazing Adventures** Pulp Roleplaying Game! This adventure was originally released as a single module, “The Temple of the Red God,” which was also run in streamlined form as “The Crystal Gates of Thuban,” at Gen Con 2013. Thanks to the incredible support we got for our Kickstarter to expand **Amazing Adventures**, we offered as a stretch goal to expand this module into an epic, world-spanning Trilogy. This is the result of those labors, and we offer it with much thanks to all of the supporters of the game.

The Rise of the Red God takes our valiant PCs deep into the heart of the jungle to seek out an ancient

and forgotten relic from an evil cult of days long gone. It reaches back to the Thurian Age, over 30,000 years ago, and includes undead, demons, evil cults, and even, potentially, dimensional portals leading to other worlds!

Following the apparent defeat of the evil within the Temple of the Red God, our heroes return to civilization only to discover that something has followed them back. As the cult of the Red God rises like a plague to threaten civilization as they know it, the players must face off against powerful, dark magic and otherworldly foes from the dawn of time, and must race against the clock to defeat the rise of the evil Blood Imperator, a deity from another world who seeks to enter ours and enslave all of humankind.

CHARACTERS

This adventure is designed for player characters of 4th to 6th level, with characters reaching levels 8-12 by the time the adventure is finished. It is best if the heroes are somewhat seasoned and have made something of a name for themselves, either as experts in the occult or in investigating unusual cases. If you have played through “The Heart of Yhtill,” in the core rulebook and its direct sequel, “Day of the Worm,” this should set your characters up nicely, as they have already been offered work



by the Allies as OSR agents investigating potential Nazi threats, and are known to have stood against great odds. In short, the President and J. Edgar Hoover will vouch for their credibility.

BRIEF OVERVIEW

The first Episode in our three-part serial takes a somewhat different tack than those we have previously presented, being in some ways less action/adventure oriented, and far more exploratory, Lovecraftian and horrific (though there are plenty of fisticuffs and gunfire to go around!). It can lead the characters to the edge of sanity and possibly beyond, and they may be left wondering if the rewards were worth the risk. Parts Two and Three continue the horror, but ramp up the action steadily as our heroes seek to uncover and stop the ruthless machinations of the Cult of Ornduhl, and save humankind from a thousand years of Hell. One thing is certain; they will return to civilization (those who survive) with stories to tell!

CASTLES & CRUSADES

Clever readers will note that there is a Red God in **Castles & Crusades** as well. It is our intent that the evil deity in this module be the same Red God, Ornduhl, and there are possibilities in these three episodes for characters to end up in the default C&C setting of Aihirde. Castle Keepers who wish to use this module in their games can do so—really it is just a matter of transplanting locations to corresponding ones in Aihirde, and allowing the portals to transport characters to Earth instead! This particular module could very easily be used with **Castles & Crusades**—the CK need do very little besides pick it up, place the temple somewhere in the world, and go!

Sanity rules are not used in C&C, so these can be imported from AA, can be ignored, or can be replaced with Wisdom Saves against fear effects at a CL equal to half the maximum SAN Loss (thus, a SAN Loss of 1/1d6 would require a Wisdom save at CL 3). Fear effects should result in a penalty to all checks equal to the CL of the save. Such effects are not cumulative, but are at the worst possible result. Thus, if a player fails a CL 3 save, he suffers -3 to all checks; if he later fails a CL 5 save, he does not suffer -8, but suffers -5, the greater of the two results. If at any time a character *succeeds* at a save, the fear effects vanish. The Cleric spell “Remove Fear” will also alleviate these effects.

ERA

The nice thing about the **Rise of the Red Gods** is that it can be set in just about any era or subgenre of pulp you like, from the 1920s to the modern era. Note that modern forensic technology and things like cellular phones will fundamentally alter the investigative aspects of Episode Two, so GMs should keep that in mind and prepare accordingly. Likewise, if you choose to set this adventure in a much earlier time period, say, the 17th century setting of swashbuckling adventure or the Victorian Era, you will want to adjust for somewhat longer travel times, making alterations to the timeline of the Episodes as needed, and remove anachronisms like the F.B.I. and mentions of World War II organizations and societies from the mix.

The default assumption for this trilogy is to set it in the mid-to-late 1930s, as with our prior two adventures. Setting the scenario anywhere from 1920 through 1945 should work with few to no changes, though before 1935 the F.B.I. was known as the B.O.I. (Bureau of Investigation).

SURVIVAL IN THE WILDS

Since the first adventure in our serial takes place in the jungles of Peru, the second partially in the wilderness of the United States, and the last sends the characters globetrotting to the mountains of Tibet, there is a chance that the PCs may have to brave the elements for a period of time, depending on the approach and actions they choose. Surviving in the harsh environs of nature is no small thing. While as GM you could easily boil the adventure down to a few SIEGE checks using a Background, Knowledge, or the Raider’s Survival Class Ability, if you intend to make a true adventure out of this, playing out the specifics of the journey could make for an intriguing game. This section will explore a few of the dangers you may want to work into your adventure, using appropriate checks to avoid them when they crop up.

In general, Survival checks will suffice to accomplish the things that the PCs need to accomplish. Keep in mind, however, that even a Raider may be unfamiliar with certain types of terrain. For example, a Raider who has spent most of his career digging in Egyptian Tombs might be an expert at desert survival, but could still be a novice in the jungle, requiring higher CLs to his checks. Likewise, while the two environs may seem passingly similar, surviving in the jungle is a very different proposition than surviving in a forest or wood environs.



As with all things in **Amazing Adventures**, remember rule zero: this is your game, and the information below should be looked upon as a set of guidelines and potential hazards, not gospel. For an ordinary, untrained person, survival in the jungle is an unlikely prospect at best. For seasoned adventurers, the chances are a bit higher, and GMs should keep that in mind when calling for checks against the hazards of nature.

GETTING YOUR BEARINGS

For one thing, getting oriented and finding a trail can be next to impossible when the thick rainforest canopy overhead blocks out the sun or the desert winds cover your tracks behind you, and given that the untamed jungle or unexplored desert will have far fewer visible trails than the woods in Europe or North America. For this, any characters with the Tracking Generic Class ability will have an edge over those using basic survival skills. GMs should reduce the CL for checks to find one's way in the untamed wild by anywhere from 2 to 5 if a character has the Tracking ability.

SUSTENANCE

The first order of business in any survival situation is finding water and food. For PCs in this game this should require two Survival checks: the first one will guide the group to what seems to be potable water or edible substances; the second will determine just how consumable the substance is. Water in the jungle, for example, can be full of bacteria and disease; likewise there are many roots, trees, and fruits that may look similar to edible fruits we know, but could be a deadly poison or even infested with parasites. The second survival check will enable the characters to call upon the knowledge needed to purify the water they find, or test the food for edibility.

Without food, a person can survive for up to three weeks. Every three days without food a character goes, he must make a Constitution check with a cumulative -1 penalty for each failed check. Failure means taking 1d4 points of Constitution damage and suffering from fatigue (or exhaustion, if already fatigued). If a character reaches Con 0, she dies.

Without water, however, a person can die within three days. Each day that a character goes without water, a Constitution check must be made at a cumulative -4 penalty for each failed check. Failure means taking 1d8 points of Constitution damage and suffering from fatigue (or exhaustion, if already fatigued). If a character reaches Con 0, he dies.

Constitution points lost in this manner are restored at a rate of 1 per hour of rest, after the character begins eating and drinking regularly.

INSECTS AND VERMIN

The next most lethal challenge to avoid in the wild are insects and vermin—Malaria and other diseases are carried and easily transmitted by mosquitoes, leeches, and other such creatures and that does not even take into account venomous insects and animals. The jungle and rainforest are particularly dangerous in this manner. For each day spent in the jungle there is a cumulative 10% chance of any given PC being bitten by an infected vermin or by animal. For the desert or temperate climes this chance is 10% cumulative per week.

A successful survival check will reduce this chance by 10% each time increment (day for jungle, week for desert or temperate), plus an additional 10% per each 5 above 15 the result of his check is. For example, a Raider who gets a survival check result of 25 reduces the chance of being bitten that day by 30% (10% for 15, plus 10% additional for 20 and 25). Round these check results down. If a character is bitten, see the disease rules in **Amazing Adventures**.

ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

Falling trees and branches, avalanches, and landslides form deadly dangers in the wilds. GMs should treat these as they would traps—a Trap Finding check can help to avoid these perils, as well as a Survival check. The CL for this check can range from 0 to 10, depending on how sudden and unexpected the GM wishes the peril to be.

In addition, rivers, lakes, ponds, and streams can contain far more dangers than the possibility of bacteria. Leeches live in stagnant pools, and rivers and lakes can contain such horrors as piranha, crocodiles, poisonous snakes and even stingrays.

HEAT EXHAUSTION AND HYPOTHERMIA

Characters will likely suffer from heat exhaustion in the jungle or desert. If a character unfamiliar with the jungle does not stop to rest every hour of hard travel, GMs should apply the rules for fatigue and exhaustion (**Amazing Adventures**, p. 167). Constitution checks must be made every hour that the character does not rest, at a cumulative CL of 1. Failing such a check means the character is exhausted. Characters who continue to push themselves after they reach the Exhausted stage and fall unconscious as a result will begin to suffer the





effects of heat stroke; until they are cooled down, which requires a successful Medicine check at a CL equal to that of the last failed Constitution check (a Survival check will suffice, but at +2 to the CL of the check). Each hour that the character suffers from heat stroke he takes 1d4 damage to his Constitution score; if Con ever hits 0, the character dies.

The same rules apply to frigid climates, but instead of developing heat exhaustion the character will develop frostbite and hypothermia if he does not take specific and proper precautions to keep warm and dry. In this case, in addition to fatigue and exhaustion the character begins to lose feeling in his or her extremities, suffering a cumulative -2 to all physical tasks for each failed save. After two failed saves, she also begins suffering a cumulative -2 penalty to mental tasks as she becomes delusional.

Constitution points lost to heat exhaustion and hypothermia return at a rate of one per hour, once the character is cooled down (or warmed up) and stabilized. Any nerve damage suffered from hypothermia can become permanent. If the character has lost more than half their Constitution score due to hypothermia, the score is reduced by 1d4 permanently.

BEASTS OF THE JUNGLE

This is the danger that most players will assume to be the most common and deadly—animals encountered in the jungle. These can range from mundane creatures like constrictors, venomous snakes, and crocodiles to more rare and “pulp” encounters with such creatures as Snake Men, oozes or even dinosaurs (all of which are detailed in the **Amazing Adventures Manual of Monsters**).

Earlier it was mentioned that creatures such as piranha and stingrays can be found in the waterways of the jungle. These creatures don’t have full write-ups in **Amazing Adventures**, but here is a stat block for the stingray:

STINGRAY *(These rays have HD 2d8 (8 hp), AC 15, and move 40 ft. (swim). Their saves are Physical. They attack by sting for 1d6 damage plus poison. Their special abilities are a Class 2 poison requiring 2 saves, with a failed primary save resulting in illness (-1 to all checks and combat for 10 minutes), and secondary save failure resulting in 1d4 damage and triple illness effects for one week.*

Generally speaking, a stingray will attack once and flee; they are not aggressive and don’t generally attack unless threatened.

Piranha, on the other hand, are far more aggressive and lethal, and attack as a school, or *swarm*. Complete rules for swarming creatures can be found in the **Amazing Adventures Manual of Monsters**.

And now, without further ado, let us dive into the thrilling tale of the Rise of the Red God – a Serial in Three Parts!



EPISODE I: THE TEMPLE OF THE RED GOD

In this introductory episode of our serial, we take a step aside from the recommended formula outline in the **Amazing Adventures** core rulebook. Unlike in our previous adventures, we have not used the set “Four Act” plot in this scenario, though “A Different Location” and “A Different Item” certainly apply to this adventure in the form of the temple itself, and the Codex Sanguinus, the focus of our heroes’ expedition. This adventure is what is known as “location-based”; it is entirely centered around the location in which it takes place, and the plot is driven by exploration and character actions, rather than by events put in place to drive the story forward.

The positive aspect of a location-based adventure is generally that all the GM needs to do, to get player characters involved, is get them to the location. The down side is that there are few events in play to move the story along—it requires the PCs (and the players, obviously) to possess the drive and desire to find their treasure or solve the mystery at hand. There are very few things to stop PCs from “taking off and nuking the site from orbit” in this type of adventure, save for the fact that it’s not very pulp to just cut and run! GMs preparing to run PCs through this type of adventure may wish to have a few ideas on hand to keep things in line if things seem to be going bad.

All that being said, location-based adventures are often what pulp stories are all about! This is the very definition of discovering the lost city (or temple) and coming back with gold and glory. Any pulp hero worth his salt would be ashamed to cut and run from this kind of opportunity!

A NOTE ABOUT LETHALITY

The Temple of the Red God has the potential to be an exceptionally lethal adventure. GMs should read the entire module carefully, weigh the power level of the creatures herein against the power level of their party, and adjust accordingly. For example, instead of a 10 HD vampire with the powers of a 6th level Arcanist, Farri could be a Wight with the powers of a 3rd level Arcanist. Our Succubus could have the default hit points for a Succubus, or even be suffering a bit from a recent attack by invading natives or other adventurers. Keep in mind, however, that Farri and Martika are going to show up as continuing adversaries, so don’t make them too weak!

Another solution is to hand out Fate Points like candy and encourage players to spend them as such. This, however, may not always be desirable as players might expect you to do the same in every adventure. As always, a balance must be struck, but keep in mind that many of the monsters encountered herein range from five to ten hit dice and almost all are demonic or undead in nature—this is not an adventure for brand new characters, and running PCs of lower than fourth or fifth level through it could be especially lethal, without some modifications being made in advance.

By far the simplest means to tone down the adventure is to make all of the undead within the ruins Ghouls, Skeletons, and Zombies, and reduce Farri to the level of a Wight with three levels of Arcanist, or to a basic Vampire with no special Arcanist levels. Such a modification would lessen the potential world-

SANITY IN THE TEMPLE OF THE RED GOD

If any adventure scenario was ripe for the use of Sanity rules, this one is. It’s a horror scenario at its core, full of undead, ghosts, vampires, and other abominations that can slowly drive even the most stout-hearted man mad. If GMs wish to run this adventure and have not incorporated the Sanity rules (**Amazing Adventures**) into their games, it is suggested that they use a quick-and-dirty “fear of the unknown” system, whereby when encountering the unimaginable, PCs have to make Wisdom-based saves at a CL equal to half the hit dice of the creature, or at a sliding scale of CL 0 for sudden surprises all the way up to CL 10 for such horrific sights as bloated, slimy tentacled horrors (the GM should set the CL based on his or her best judgment). A failed Wisdom save results in the character being stunned and unable to move for 1 round, and suffering -2 to all actions for the next 1d4 rounds, from sheer terror. Rolling a 1 on this save should result in any manner of extreme reactions (based on how far down the player rolls) from crying, to screaming and running in terror, to losing control of their bowels and/or bladder. Again, GMs should use their best judgment in these cases.





altering consequences of the adventure, but a good GM will always find a way around that!

Perhaps the curse which binds Farri to the Temple also weakens him and Martika, and if freed, their powers increase exponentially. Not only is this a convenient means of powering down the initial encounters, but it makes for a shocking surprise when they encounter these two later and find them far more threatening than in their first showdown!

For higher level parties, this adventure could be scaled up by not only adding more monsters and allowing certain monsters such as Farri and the Succubus to have (more) Fate Points, but secret doors, concealed rooms, and collapsing walls that cause the group to become separated. There's little to bring fear and terror to a campaign like your PCs discovering that they came as a group and ended up alone in the dark...

Finally, remember that Martika is a demon, and Farri is a vampire. This leaves all kinds of room for their return, even if they are defeated. Perhaps Farri, when finally staked, is clever enough to use his shapeshifting powers to make it appear as though he has disintegrated, when in reality he has just turned to mist and slithered away. Like all demons, if Martika is killed, she is merely

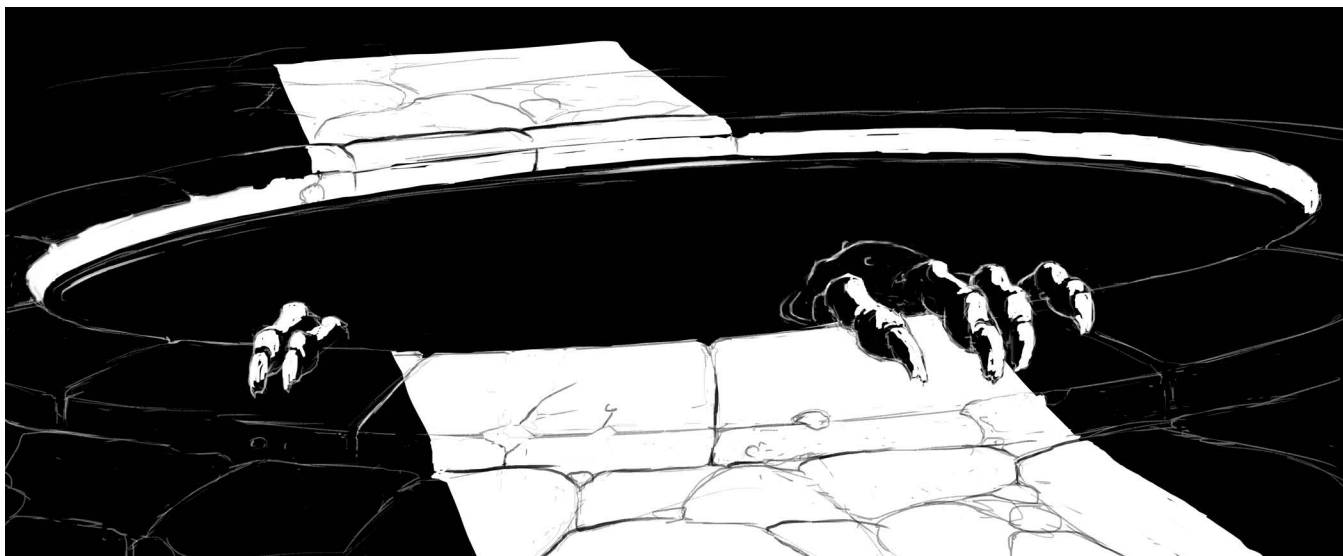
banished back to her home dimension. Certainly Farri, a highly-powered sorcerer, can re-summon her from Hell in the future.

BACKGROUND

Many millennia ago, during an epoch known as the Thurian Age, shining empires lay spread across the world, founded of barbarians, civilized men, and dark sorcerers. These were the days of Atlantis and Thule, the days before the First Great Cataclysm that wiped all evidence of the first great civilizations from the world. To most, the Thurian Age, and the age that followed, are nothing more than legends shrouded and lost in the inky mists of time. But if one looks hard enough, some beacons still exist of those days when men first claimed the world as his own. In those days, our world shared bridges across the void of time and space with certain other worlds, and alien influences flowed back and forth across the gulf of space. This was the beginning of magic, sorcery, and the corruption that comes with such power.

Among these legends exists a dark pantheon of creatures, some described only by their color and that which they symbolize. Beings such as the King in Yellow inhabit this pantheon of alien men-





aces, far older and more ancient than even the Great Old Ones feared by scholars. Thankfully, these beings (save the King in Yellow) have been long-since forgotten.

Among the greatest of their pantheon, a creature more devoted to greed, lust, chaos and destruction than even Azathoth himself, is about to make its presence known again. This creature, known in ancient times as the Crimson Caliph (or Khan), the Blood Imperator, and many other names, will in our day be called simply the Red God. A lord of the restless dead, the creator of gemstones and the poison with which these glimmering jewels infect the human heart, the Red God Ornduhl sought to make war upon mankind and the gods themselves, for he desires power and dominance over all.

Long ago was Ornduhl banished back to his home plane of existence, and on Earth for tens of millennia, the Red God has been forgotten, an alien deity from another world, expelled to the fog of time. But now, through a quirk of fate, one of his ancient temples has been unearthed.

THE DIARY OF SIR JONATHAN WALTON

The Temple of the Red God sits deep in the jungles of South America, so merely reaching the site is a near-suicidal trek, which is why the temple itself has lain undiscovered for so very long. The PCs in this scenario are the focus of an expedition into the wilds after the discovery of mysterious letters and journals handed down from another explorer who, having delved into the jungle in search of artifacts, never returned.

Sir Jonathan Walton, a famous archaeologist, disappeared about ten years ago while seeking what

he claimed to be the greatest find in history: proof of not only a lost civilization, but of an entire lost age of humankind. He delved deep into the jungles of South America in search of his proof, and was never heard from again. Now, it seems, his journal has reappeared in the dusty markets of South America, sold by a young tribal boy seeking to obtain money for sweets. The diary is extensive and outlines Walton's entire expedition to find what he claims was a great temple dedicated to a forgotten mad god in a civilization tens of thousands of years old. The only thing the diary doesn't explain is where to begin the search, but if the party could find the young boy, perhaps he could show them where he obtained the diary...

The PCs should absolutely encounter Sir Walton at some point, be it as a zombie, ghost, shadow or vampire haunting the temple. In the case of him being a ghost or shadow, the PCs will likely find his body somewhere amongst the ruins. The GM should choose just the right moment to spring this shock upon the PCs. What if they find Sir Walton alive and at work in the temple, only to discover at the episode's climax that he is either a vampire himself, or a thrall to one of the creatures therein?

The Diary of Sir Walton, while it serves mostly as a hook to get the PCs involved, is an important part of the adventure, even if it is not the hook used to get the characters involved. They should at some point find the diary itself, which outlines Sir Walton's trek to find the Temple, information about the Codex, and perhaps a few ominous final entries that detail his gradual descent into madness before the entries abruptly end. Sir Walton will appear at least once in later episodes, and the journal acts as a good setup to foreshadow his in-



volvement.

SETUP

Wherein the heroes are called to investigate disappearances at an archaeological dig of historic importance.

Read the following text to the players:

As the plane roars over the Peruvian mountains and takes a sudden dip into a deep valley which opens to a wide plateau, your first site of the ancient Incan city is breathtaking. The ruins are in amazing shape, and it's apparent that the archaeological team has set up a home base of sorts in these ancient buildings. You don't see any actual dig site from here, which only adds to the mystery of your summons. As a renowned adventuring guild, it's not unusual for you to be called to dig sites encountering danger or problems, but this particular call has been full of mystery and "need to know."

A makeshift landing strip has been cleared on what was once a main thoroughfare of the city, and the pilot brings the Curtiss T-32 Condor in for an expert, if bumpy, landing.

As you de-board the plane, you are met by valets—actually university students serving as assistants on the dig—who take your bags, promising at your warnings to take good care of them. A man who appears to be in his mid-fifties approaches you and extends his hand in greeting. He has stark white hair and gray eyes, small, wire-framed glasses are perched over a bulbous nose, and a massive ash-colored moustache hides his upper lip. He is clad in khakis, long sleeves and long trousers with boots, which would seem an odd choice given the sheer heat, but you all are aware of the dangers of animals and insects in South America.

"Good afternoon! I'm Dr. Charles Merriweather from the University of Louisiana. Thank you for coming! Shall we get indoors where it's quiet and we can talk?"

Dr. Merriweather leads you into a large building, which has been converted into an office and apartment of sorts. The shade combined with the placement of the windows creates a condition that immediately cools down the air by a good ten to fifteen degrees, so it's not quite as sweltering. The professor's bed in the corner is unmade, and the room is littered with maps, charts, notebooks, and photographs, some of which depict the city you now occupy, and others that are unfamiliar. The professor motions you to a large table and bids you sit down. He offers you water or cognac, if you prefer something stronger, and after serving your drinks, he gets down to business.

He sits, opens a dossier on his desk and looks down his nose through his glasses at the file, before addressing you further.

"Yes," he says, "Well, first, thank you all for coming, and I do apologize for the mystery. Given the Nazi menace, we had to keep things quiet; cabling you was simply not secure enough. I am told that your guild is expert in investigation of ruins, tombs, and other such finds of historical significance, and in dealing with unusual dangers. You come highly recommended: President Roosevelt and J. Edgar Hoover themselves vouched for your group. Unfortunately, I'm afraid that in the interest of security, I was unable to secure much in the way of details about your various areas of expertise. I'd like to invite you all, before I get into the meat of the expedition, to tell me a bit about yourselves."

Allow the group to introduce themselves, describe their characters and reveal whatever information they like about their skills and abilities. When they are finished, Dr. Merriweather continues.



“Excellent,” he says. “It seems that we do indeed have the skills necessary to undertake the expedition at hand.”

He leans forward and says, “I’ll be frank with you, Gentlemen: Several months ago, a journal surfaced on the black market, which eventually made its way into our hands. This journal has been authenticated as that of one Sir Jonathan Walton, the noted archaeologist who vanished ten years ago. It outlines his quest to discover an ancient temple dedicated to a forgotten deity he called the Blood Emperor. While the journal was extensive, it did not give us the exact location of the temple. Still, an expedition was put together to research the finding and see what we could find.

“About a week ago we uncovered, several miles from here, the entrance to an ancient underground temple, the likes of which we have never before seen, and which doesn’t match anything we know about the Incan civilization that dominated this area for so many hundreds of years. We believe this to be the temple of which Sir Walton spoke. We descended into the entry area of the temple and began to excavate the entry way. We didn’t get far, but I believe that somewhere in that temple is a tome called the Codex Sanguinus which last surfaced in ancient Rome under the reign of the Emperor Nero, and was said to be ancient even in those days. If this is so, it means that the deity represented by this temple was worshipped the world over. Imagine, the same book found on the other side of the world, detailing a civilization and worldwide religious cult lost to the annals of history! Of course, if the Nazis got wind of this discovery, they would send their own teams to root out the secrets hidden within. There are rumors of a society operating within Hitler’s inner circle that is obsessed with ancient occult secrets. We are determined to get whatever artifacts reside in that temple before they do.

“But that is only part of the mission we ask you to complete. The other reason behind your summons is more sinister, I fear. On the second day after discovering the temple, when we finally had the doorway cleared for entry, people began to disappear from our dig site. Since getting off of the mountains is next to impossible on foot, we cannot imagine that they have abandoned the dig. Thus far, ten men have vanished, every one of them while investigating the temple, or the night after emerging.”

He produces several photographs, which he spreads out on the table. Then he places before the characters some odd castings of footprints, roughly the size of human feet, but with only three clawed toes.

“We took these castings from footprints found around our camp on the third and fourth nights, after the last disappearances took place. We have no idea what kind of creature could’ve made them, but our biologists believe it to be bipedal with a gait not dissimilar to that of homo sapiens—human beings. Further, the tracks are accompanied by the tracks of our own men,” he indicates such on the photos, “and seem to lead back to the temple.”

He takes his glasses off and leans forward for emphasis.

“Gentlemen,” he says, “I believe there is something in that temple. Something that invaded our camp in the night, so silent as to draw no attention, and has taken our men back inside. Our dig has ground to a halt. Our people are not accustomed to dealing with this sort of threat, and we need men such as yourselves to descend into that temple, find our men be they alive or dead, and discover the nature of the threat we face. From there we can decide how to proceed. As I said before, when we cabled for assistance, your group came recommended by the highest authorities. Can we count on you?”

Allow the players to ask any questions they like. Dr. Merriweather will be forthcoming in his answers and honest, but the truth is he doesn’t know much more than he has already said. He’s skeptical; he believes in science and part of him thinks the tracks are the work of a clever human menace wearing oddly-shaped boots, although the size and proportions of the tracks don’t point to a human

foot inside a boot. He only knows that his people—and he—are scared to death to continue the dig until they know what’s going on inside that temple.

When the PCs are satisfied, Dr. Merriweather leads them to the temple entrance. The professor and a small contingent will make camp nearby and await the PCs’ return.



THE TEMPLE

The Temple of the Red God is a huge structure situated deep in a dense jungle, but is a structure which is constructed mostly underground, so that it does not rise very high above the Earth: perhaps, 1.5 stories at most. Within, however, the expert construction and gradual slope give it the appearance of being far bigger on the inside than it is on the outside. This, of course, is due to the fact that as the characters descend, the temple is built downward into the earth.

Its above-ground area is constructed of a strange, rust-colored stone, similar in color to red brick, but with the consistency of granite. It is obviously a temple constructed for the reverence of ancient pagan gods; and there are bas-reliefs all around the entry arch in the form of horrific pre-human demon creatures and of priests that appear to be a strange, degenerate cross between humans and serpents. Once, its interior was guarded by a barrier in the form of a heavy wooden door, but eons of neglect have caused this door to rot away; now it is nothing more than moist, decaying and moldy timbers hanging from the hinges, and can easily be pushed in or pulled down.

The temple is octagonal in shape, and inside, an entry hall leads to a Nave leading down the center of a Great Hall, which ends at a Rood Screen that hides the Sanctum Sanctorum area, where resides the massive statue of the Red God itself. Around the Great hall is a crumbling balcony overlooking the temple.

Alternately, by going right or left from the entry hall leads to an ambulatory which allows one to circle the outside of the temple. From the ambulatory there are two other entrances to the Great Hall, and two staircases leading up into the balcony area.

ENCOUNTERS IN THE TEMPLE OF THE RED GOD

The Temple of the Red God is cursed—thousands upon thousands of acts of unspeakable evil were committed here, and the taint of that evil remains in the temple's ruins. Indeed, while some areas of the temple are visibly crumbling to bits, others seem quite well-preserved, and the structure is far from uninhabited.

The former priests who served here have been cursed never to die, and still haunt the place as ghosts and ghouls, starving for the flesh of the living. The High Priest is still here as well, animated as a greater undead with horrific powers, a vam-



pire. He will protect his treasure at all costs...or so it might seem, until he allows the PCs to simply walk away with it. Finally, the souls of tortured victims haunt the place as various undead creatures, namely shadows, ghosts, and allips.

In the jungle surrounding the temple encounters can be had with snake men, jungle pygmies, giant carnivorous apes, giant snakes, and other assorted jungle wildlife such as great cats. Full statistics for all of these creatures, as well as other types of undead and horrific creatures from beyond can be found in **Amazing Adventures: Manual of Monsters**.

A note about the Ghouls and Ghosts

Note that the ghouls and ghosts in this place are not undead, but degenerate, cannibalistic humanoids who were once men and women but were de-evolved to their current state through the dark rituals of the Blood God. They are tens of thousands of years old because the black energies of this place have sustained them, and as such when they die they will quickly mummify and turn to dust, but they are not undead. This may shock any arcanist who tries to use her Turn Dead spell on them, but after the first battle with a group of the creatures, a Knowledge (Arcana) check will reveal the truth based on the fact that the creatures bleed normal, red blood and seem to breathe.



MONSTER STATS

Since many of the monsters could, should, and will appear at various places throughout the temple, we have included stat blocks for various types of undead and other creatures in the GM's reference pages ([Appendix 2](#)) at the end of the module instead of slotting them directly into the module text. Only certain unique and "named" monsters have stat blocks in the appropriate place in the text; however, these are repeated in the GM's reference pages for completeness' sake, making it easy for the GM to have a single source for all of his monster statistics.

KEYED LOCATIONS WITHIN THE TEMPLE OF THE RED GOD

1. NARTHEX (ENTRY HALL)

The entry hall is accessible through the front door, which is long rotted and barely hanging upon its hinges. It can be easily ripped away with a basic CL 0 Strength test. The entry hall itself is a barren room, seemingly rectangular in shape, with a doorway directly across from the main entrance leading to the temple proper, and doors on each of its eastern and western walls. These doors lead to an ambulatory passage which circumnavigates the majority of the lower temple.

2. AMBULATORY

This crumbling passageway circumnavigates the majority of the temple, though the rear portion (approximately a third of the temple) is inaccessible in this manner, as the rear portion of the main floor houses the kitchen (area 9), rectory-barracks (area 10), and chambers of the high priest (11) as well as the passage to the Sacrificial Dungeons (12). From two points in the ambulatory, one can access the balcony, which will allow a look down into the temple proper. The ambulatory is almost constantly haunted by shadows, allips, ghouls and ghosts, and presents a narrow, difficult passage in which to do battle. At the end of each side of the ambulatory are secret doors leading to the rectory-barracks and kitchen areas, respectively. These doors, however, have fallen into neglect over the millennia and are easily spotted with a basic CC 0 wisdom check (PCs may add +2 to this check due to the general state of wear). Along the walls in the ambulatory are paintings of horrific acts of cannibalism bloodletting, and other unimaginable

sanguinary rites in honor of the blood god whose temple this is. If using the Sanity rules, seeing these walls should result in a Sanity Check, with failure resulting in a loss of 1d4 points of sanity.

There is, hidden within the temple ambulatory, a dimensional portal that can take adventurers to other places in time and space; the temple itself is multi-located on Earth and on many other worlds, a testament to the power of the mad god it was designed to venerate. This portal, however, is difficult to find and even more difficult to activate, so it is not likely that the Player Characters will stumble upon it (unless the Game Master wishes it so!) Statistics for the portal itself are not provided; it is added as a bit of whimsy in case the GM wishes to throw a real surprise at his PCs (perhaps even running a crossover with **Castles & Crusades** where they can gather more information about Ornduhl and his cult)! It's possible that wherever they end up, the temple is intact and they find themselves doing battle with dark cultists or the dreaded serpent men of the ancient world. But the treasures found all those thousands of years ago could hold value beyond reckoning (the eyes of the Red God alone would be worth a fortune)....

3. BALCONY

This area, a good 20-30 feet off the main floor, allows one to look down into the temple itself, viewing the Great Hall and Nave. It is impossible to see into the Sanctum Sanctorum to view the Axis Mundi or Red God itself from here; nor can one see the kitchen, rectory-barracks, chambers of the high priest, or down into the ambulatory. This balcony is constructed only for worshippers to view the great hall area during ceremonies. As with other areas of the temple, undead haunt this area; mostly encountered here will be shadows and ghosts.

4. GREAT HALL

This area is the main worship hall of the temple. The chairs and benches that once formed aisles of seating for worshippers are nothing more now than piles of rotted rubble, which could at the GM's discretion hide all sorts of nasty horrors, but could also hide valuable treasures...

A. NAVE: The Nave is the central walkway from the main door of the great hall to the sanctuary. It is the most likely path for the PCs to take in ap-



proaching the Sanctum Sanctorum and Chancel. While it appears to be clear and open, there are of course, dangers present. Along either side are the piles of rubble described above; these may hide a sleeping ghoul or two, could certainly be home to shadows, and may even trigger the appearance of a ghost—the maddened victim of a former sacrifice to the Red God. This ghost attacks without mercy or quarter, all the while screaming at the PCs to get out while they still have their minds and lives intact.

5. SANCTUM SANCTORUM / CHANCEL

This is the location of the idol to the Red God himself, a massive, demonic creature of the Deeper Dark now left crumbling and in decay. Still, the area radiates a palpable aura of evil and corruption, and PCs will be uneasy and terrified for inexplicable reasons the entire time they remain in the Sanctum. At the back of the room, behind the statue of the Red God, there is a doorway leading to the private chambers of the high priest.

A. AXIS MUNDI: The Axis Mundi is the central point of any temple (not necessarily in a physical sense, but spiritually speaking). It is, quite simply, a large dome, tower, or pillar that serves to symbolically connect the underworld, the earth, and the heavens together in one thread. In the Temple of the Red God, the Axis Mundi serves as the power center for the entire structure. While it does not physically act as a support structure, if it is destroyed (no mean feat, incidentally), the mystical backlash could be akin to dropping a magical atomic bomb on the area. In this temple the axis consists of the two pillars on either side of the Red God, with a heavy velvet curtain stretched between them, which hides the statue from view.

Before the curtains is a square pool, ten feet to a side. This pool is full of foul, cloudy water overgrown with various varieties of brown and green algae. It is possible to skirt around it, but the way is narrow and slippery and only one PC can move at a time. Within the pool are hiding 3 Snake Men. Disturbing the waters will open a character up to attack by the creatures, who will pull the character down into the water in an effort to drown him. If this happens, in general a character can hold his breath for 1/5 his Constitution score in minutes before he needs to begin making Constitution saving throws each round at a cumulative +1 CL, or lose consciousness, breathe in water, and drown. If pulled out of the water within 1d4 rounds of losing consciousness, a character with

the Medicine Generic Class Ability can use the ability to attempt to revive the drowning victim. Checks to do so are made at the last CL of the failed Constitution save. At the GM's discretion, the water could also expose characters to disease, per the rules in **Amazing Adventures**.

Each of the pillars is covered with arcane script written in a lost, forgotten tongue that could be deciphered by a Raider using his cryptolinguist ability, or an Arcanist using a simple Intelligence Check (at +3 because of the Arcanist's assumed arcane background). The CL for this check is 5. If using Sanity rules, any character with a Knowledge skill in Forbidden Lore can automatically read the language on the pillars. The scriptures talk about the cult, the devotees of the Red God (the closest actual translation would be the "Crimson Caliph"), of his prophesied return to consume the blood of all mankind. It mentions the Blood Codex, which Arcanists with the Knowledge skill Forbidden Knowledge might, with a CC 18 check, recognize as something mentioned in the ancient lore of the Old Ones as the Codex Sanguinus, which last appeared in Rome during the days of the emperor Nero, but was said to be far more ancient than that, and which vanished in the great fire of Rome. The book is said to contain all of the stories and mythology of a lost pagan deity named Ornduhl the Red (or Blood) God. It would seem that this very temple was devoted to the same lost god.

B. THE RED GOD: The first time PCs look upon the image of this lost god of the Deeper Dark, a Sanity Check is required at an additional CL of 3 (beyond normal San-based CL); failure means suffering 1d6 SAN. If not using the Sanity rules, characters should make a Wisdom check at CL 3. Failure indicates that for the rest of the module the PCs are at -2 to all actions from having their very sanity rocked.

The Red God itself is a massive statue, easily twenty feet in height, depicting a creature whose head appears to be a bizarre cross between a Chinese dragon and a traditional demon, and whose body is very similar to that of the Buddha or the Hindu god Ganesh. It is constructed of some sort of blood-red stone which the PCs are unable to identify, even with exceptionally high Intelligence Checks. The eyes of the statue are hollow pits; it is obvious that once, long ago, the sockets held something which has since been removed. Scaling the statue to investigate is possible; a CL 5 Wisdom check will note that there are chips of



ruby still embedded in the sockets—the statue’s eyes were once massive gems!

Before the statue is a square pool, the same size as the bowl held in its hands. This pool is full of foul, cloudy water overgrown with various varieties of brown and green algae. Within the pool are several (1d4) zombies who fell in and have not been able to climb out. Disturbing the waters, however, will open a character up to attack by the creatures, who will pull the character down into the water in an effort to drown him. If this happens, in general a character can hold his breath for 1/5 his Constitution score in minutes before he needs to begin making Constitution saving throws each round at a cumulative +1 CL, or lose consciousness, breathe in water, and drown. If pulled out of the water within 1d4 rounds of losing consciousness, a character with the Medicine Generic Class Ability can use the ability to attempt to revive the drowning victim. Checks to do so are made at the last CL of the failed Constitution save. At the GM’s discretion, the water could also expose characters to disease, per the rules in *Amazing Adventures*, page 179.

Held in front of the Red God in its gigantic clawed hands, is a round bowl ten feet to a side, filled with a putrid black ichor that moves and sways on its own. This ichor is in fact a black pudding, and will attack anyone who moves close enough to investigate. Furthermore, touching the statue in any way summons 1d8 ghouls to the chamber; these arise from the piles of bones on the floor and emerge from the deep shadows in the room to attack en masse. Still worse, 2d4 Snake Men (*Manual of Monsters* page 69) are hiding in the shadows behind the Red God, and they will also attack. Note that they do not have 3-toed feet if the PCs check.

BLACK PUDDING: (*This ooze has vital stats HD 10d10 (55 hp), AC 3, move 10 ft. Their primary attributes are Physical. They attack by Acid (3d6). Their special abilities are Acid, Constrict, Split, Immunity (full): Cold and Electricity*)

SNAKE MEN: (*these reptilian humanoids have vital stats HD 2d8 (9 hp), AC 15, Move 30 ft., 40 ft. (swim). Their Primary Attributes are All. They attack by 2 claws (1d3) and bite (1d8) or by weapon (sword 1d8). Their special abilities are Alter Form and Tremorsense*) **XP:** 33

GHOULS: (*these degenerate humanoids have vital stats HD 2d8 (8 hp), AC 14, move 30 ft. Their primary attributes are Physical. They attack by 2 Claw (1d3), Bite (1d6). Their special abilities are Paralysis, Darkvision 60 ft. SAN*) **XP:** 46

6. KITCHEN

This room was once the kitchen for the temple. It still contains trunks, cabinets, barrels, and wood-burning stoves. Unfortunately, after tens of thousands of years, there is little of value left in this room—even the wine in the barrels has turned not only to vinegar after this long, but is outright toxic (treat as a Type 2 poison as in *Amazing Adventures*), should any characters decide to drink the foul-smelling liquid). Bread has long since turned to dust. About the only thing of value here are some old spices that have long since lost their potency, but may be of interest to chefs and chemists seeking to reverse engineer the recipes, and a set of scrolls detailing ancient recipes for beer and wine.

However, the kitchen does house a trap door that leads to the sacrificial dungeons (see area 9).

7. RECTORY-BARRACKS

Probably one of the more dangerous areas of the temple, the rectory-barracks once housed (and still house) the majority of the acolytes, priestesses and temple prostitutes that held service here. Now, however, the women who served here have been turned into something far worse: demonic and undead abominations seeking to corrupt and devour the living. There are four zombies, now little more than a few strands of muscle and sinew hanging off of clattering bones, attacking a beautiful young German woman at the command of a raven-haired, pale woman—a wight.

Unbeknownst to the PCs, the beautiful German woman (she will actually identify herself as Austrian and display bitter hatred of the Nazi regime if given the chance) was once a high-ranking priestess of the Red God, but has now been turned into a succubus, a demonic creature who lives to corrupt the souls of men, stealing their souls after she mates with them. Having sensed the PCs’ entrance, the Succubus has taken the form of the young Austrian beauty and concocted a story of being conscripted as a valet to a German officer (who is now, of course, dead). She will seek to corrupt, mate with, and destroy any male members of the party one by one. The vampire and zombies are completely in her thrall, and are attacking her at her own command.

WIGHT: (*this undead has vital stats HD 4d12 (26 hp), AC 15, move 30 ft. Her primary attributes are Physical. She attacks by Slam (1d6). Her special abilities are Create Spawn, Energy Drain, Darkvision 60 ft. SAN 1d4/1d6*) **XP:** 224



MARTIKA, THE SUCCUBUS: *(this extraplanar demon has vital stats HD 6d8 (hp 72 – she has drained several males of their life essence over the millennia), AC 18, move 30 ft./60 ft. (fly). Her primary attributes are Mental. She attacks by 2 claws and a bite (all 1d4). Her special abilities are Create Shadow, Improved Grapple (automatic bite if both claws hit), Rake (after bite, extra 2d6 damage as she tears away), Life Drain (2d10 Con damage or love - requires mating, see Appendix 1), spell-like abilities (at will): Alter Self, Clairaudience/Clairvoyance, Command, Darkness, Detect Thoughts, Emotion, Fog Cloud, Hypnotic Pattern, Influence, Sleep, Suggestion)*

8. HIGH PRIEST'S CHAMBERS

Of all the rooms in the temple, this particular area seems the most well kept, as if it has been in regular use for eons and never left to rot with the rest of the temple. Altrus Farri, The high priest of the Red God will be either here or in the Sacrificial Dungeons below. If the PCs enter during the day, the priest will always be in the dungeons. If they enter at night, there is a 50% chance he will be here and a 50% chance in the dungeons; regardless, Altrus' strategy for dealing with the PCs is detailed under the description for Room 9, the Sacrificial Dungeons. Martika the succubus is his consort and when he is encountered she will back his play; she, too, would like to leave these dungeons and be unleashed upon the world.

Before this happens, however, she will try to lure the PCs away from any area she knows the priest to be, until she has drunk the soul from at least one or two of the group.

Kept in this room is a veritable library of journals dating back thousands upon thousands of years, many written in papyrus or other forms of ancient parchment and rolled into scroll tubes, defining uncountable and unthinkable rituals designed to bring chaos, disorder, and destruction to the world. These notes include ancient calendars, astrological and astronomical notes tracing the positions of stars tens of thousands of years old—depicting a completely different looking sky. They are full of prophecies and predictions regarding events both wondrous and catastrophic dating to the Thurian Age in the past, and thousands of years into the future.

If using Sanity rules, just paging through these notes requires a Sanity check at a SAN loss of 1d6/1d8. Taking any amount of time to read



and study them in detail results in a SAN loss of 1d10/2d10. However, the notes contained herein certainly are enough to grant a character who studies them a Knowledge skill in Forbidden Lore.

The room itself is not without its dangers, of course. All of the scrolls and codices here are coated with a contact poison which does no harm to Farri, of course, as he is already dead, but which is a Strength 6 poison to anyone who touches it.

A Traps check at CL 5 will detect the poison before anyone touches the scrolls and codices. Thus the scrolls must be handled with utmost care and touched only by those wearing gloves. Anything the PCs have access to in the field that would neutralize the poison would likely also destroy the information in the scrolls themselves. Arcanists, Raiders, and any characters with a Background in myth and legend, religion, archaeology, or similar, would be loath to allow such lost knowledge to be destroyed, even as dark as it may be. The codices and scrolls will need to be moved back to civilization for a proper cleaning and preservation.

There will at all times be at least 1d4 Shadows in this room to guard the treasures while Farri is out.



ALIEN SKIES

While at first the group may assume that the alien configuration of the stars in the sky represents the way they may have looked tens of thousands of millennia before, this is not the case. The star charts and references to alien landscapes refer to the world of Aihrde, the default campaign setting for Troll Lord Games' flagship setting, **Castles & Crusades**. At this point, however, the heroes have no way of knowing this, and at best might put together that the documents refer to a connection to some alien world, and the portals needed to cross between the two.

9. SACRIFICIAL DUNGEONS

This enormous chamber, 120 feet long by 90 feet wide, reeks of blood and death, even after tens of thousands of years. A strange, dark energy permeates the room, of such strength that even those not of a mystical bent can sense it. Arcanists and Mentalists must make a SAN check in here or suffer 1/1d4 SAN loss just from the sheer amount of corruption in the air.

The room itself is dank, moldy, and hot. The unfinished stonework is covered with a viscous slime, and the floor is ornately tiled in designs of ancient, lost, and mystical origin. There are a number of flat stone tables and torture racks arranged in perfect rows, all with semi-rusted chains hanging from them. Some still contain skeletons and even corpses that long ago should've rotted to dust, but which somehow still seem...juicy. Similarly, chains adorn the walls, some with skeletal figures still bound within.

The missing workers can be found here; half are dead and the other half weak and apparently on the brink of death. Martika has brought them here as sustenance for both herself and for Farri, and both have taken turns feeding on the men, who are currently in a delirium of ecstasy and agony combined.

At the northwest corner of the room are a fireplace, long unused, a heavy, black cauldron filled with some sort of putrid, viscous fluid that cannot even be seen through, and a trunk. The trunk is trapped both with a mechanical poison needle trap (CL 10 to discover), and mystical traps which Arcanists and psychics may detect with a CL 5 Wisdom check. These mystical traps require the right incantations to be spoken in order to disarm

them and open the chest; failure to disarm the traps triggers a series of exploding runes which deal 10d6 damage to everything within 20 feet, including the valuable contents of the trunk, which would be destroyed. Attempting to use Dispel Magic to open the trunk requires a roll against a CL of 15—Altrus Farri is no slouch.

Deciphering the runes to “reverse engineer” the incantations is possible: this would require a Traps roll against CL 5 (to find all of the runes), a Spellcraft check against CL 10 (to decipher the specific magics used to enchant them), and a crypto-linguist check against CL 10 (to work out the languages involved). This would be a perfect opportunity for different characters to put their heads together and work as a team (See “Aiding Others,” AA p. 164). If no Arcanist is available, a psychic could attempt to sense the magic with a CL 10 Wisdom check, using her psychic senses. Finally, a Legend Lore check against CL 15 could be substituted for the Spellcraft check, to call forth ancient legends regarding this cult and intuit the types of incantations that would likely be needed. For close readers, this means that a particularly astute Raider could feasibly do this himself, though the CLs are extremely high.

The trunk contains various golden ritual implements, including bowls, wands, candlesticks, incense, idols, and ceremonial daggers. In addition, wrapped in velvet and well-preserved is the Codex Sanguinus, the Book of the Red God. See the Appendix for details on this blasphemous tome of evil and the pantheon of gods it represents.

At the southwest corner of the room a large cabinet stands, the door hanging open. Inside are ancient pokers, needles, chains, whips, clamps, and other tools of torture, as well as ceremonial robes, a pair of ornate ceremonial daggers inscribed with ancient mystical symbols and decorated with stunning gold beadwork on the grips.

The most startling feature, however, is the well-kept coffin that lies along the center of the west wall. The coffin sits on a dais and is surrounded by velvet curtains that are somehow kept clean of the mold and slime that fills the rest of the room.

This is the bed of Altrus Farri, the High Priest of the Crimson Caliph.

Under no circumstances should the party be permitted to simply open the coffin and stake the vampire. Altrus is the major adversary of this adventure, and he should be awake and present



wherever the PCs encounter him—this means he will not be encountered in his coffin, but may have only recently aroused from sleep, or may be preparing to enter his daily torpor.

Altrus resents the intrusion of the interlopers into his domain, and will not go down without a fight should they challenge him, though he will first attempt to parlay with the group. His desire is to leave this place and return the Cult of the Crimson Caliph to the world outside, and as such he will attempt to bargain with the group, offering them great and lost knowledge merely to take him with them. He knows the incantations necessary to open the chest, and he knows of other locations around the world sacred to beings of that deity's pantheon. These he will offer to the group for the simple price of taking him with them when they leave.

If interrogated about the men, he will admit that they were brought here, but he claims that they were in this state when found and he has been attempting to give them a new lease on life. He is, he claims, healing their wounds...after a fashion. The five dead ones, he says, were too far gone to do anything for when they arrived. The rest are touch and go. And of course the heroes can take them when they go.

If the group agrees to his proposal, Altrus will turn over the book and lead them out of the temple, with the book and the other treasures therein, and will bargain for which he allows the group to sell to museums, which they may keep, and which are his. He will not deny his great age, but neither will he submit to any sort of testing or reveal the details of his true nature (though naturally, the fact that he sleeps in a coffin in a basement provides a rather obvious clue).

He will not, obviously, keep his word for long. His ultimate goal is to spread the Cult of Ornduhl throughout the world and possibly summon the Red God's armies in physical form to the Earth. If he deems the group too much of a threat, he will mark them for death. This he can do in many ways—killing them in their sleep is an option, as is turning each of them in turn into his vampiric minions.

Of course, the preferred way to deal with them would be to induct them each into his cult, turning them into true worshippers of the Crimson Caliph. If he can entice one or more into reading the Codex, this is a distinct possibility for him. However, he also knows that discretion is the better part of valor and will, if he deems the risk too



great, simply take his leave, marking the PCs for further observation in the future.

If, however, the group refuses Altrus' proposal and combat ensues, the vampire will prove a deadly foe. This is especially true if the PCs still have Martika with them, but even without the succubus, Altrus can call upon shadows that hide within the room to aid him, as well as calling to life the corpses of the five dead workers, which are in fact vampiric spawn ready to leap to their master's defense. Each may also have an associated Shadow—his soul having been converted by Martika's kiss.

It is left to the GM exactly how many allies Altrus can call upon, but this battle should by no means be an easy one. Farri is a canny foe who knows how to escape to fight another day. He will not fight to the death; if the vampire takes 65 or 70 points of damage, he will feign defeat, using his ability to turn to mist to make it look like he has disintegrated into dust. He will then release his hold on the remaining vampiric spawn, allowing them in turn to become full-fledged vampires!



Even after Altrus is (apparently) dead, his minions will continue to fight; he is not a “load-bearing” villain and the temple will not fall in upon the heads of the PCs when he is defeated, but they will have to fight their way back out!

VAMPIRE SPAWN: *(these undead have vital stats HD 4d12 (24 hp), AC 20, Move 30 ft. Their Primary attributes are Physical. They attack by Slam (1d6) or by weapon. Their special abilities are Blood Drain, Energy Drain, Regeneration 1, Electrical Resistance (half), Vulnerable to Silver (does double damage), Daylight Vulnerability (-4 to all attacks, saves and checks in direct sunlight). If the controlling vampire is slain, the spawn becomes a full vampire with normal statistics.)*

VAMPIRE: *(these undead have vital stats HD 8d12 (48 hp), AC 20, Move 40 ft., 60 ft. (fly). Their Primary Attributes are All. They attack by Slam (1d6) or by weapon. Their special abilities are Blood Drain, Children of the Night, Dominate, Create Spawn, Energy Drain, Alternate Forms, Gaseous Form, Entourage, Electrical Resistance (half), Spider Climb, Vulnerable to Silver (deals double damage), Daylight Vulnerability (-4 to all attacks, saves and checks in direct sunlight).)*

THE HIGH PRIEST OF THE RED GOD

Altrus Farri, the High Priest of the Crimson Caliph, is a vampire who is well over ten thousand years old. He is more powerful than the normal vampire, as he also has the abilities of a Wisdom-based Arcanist. Fortunately for the PCs, he is not as powerful as one would think a vampire of his age should be. This is because he has spent millennia brooding in his temple, awaiting the day when he will find the means to escape and visit terror back upon the world.

Unfortunately for Farri, he is the victim of an ancient curse that traps him within the grounds of his temple, unless the Codex Sanguinus is removed from the temple by a human being who is either an innocent or of noble or pure heart and intention. For millennia beyond count, he has awaited for such a thing to happen. Thus, he will apply all of his wiles to convincing the PCs that he is not a threat, and get them to allow him to exit the temple with them, offering the book as payment for doing so. He will pretend that he must be escorted across the threshold to escape, so that if his negotiations fail, he can allow the characters to “abscond” with the book, neatly solving his issue regardless.



Farri is not aware at this time, but destroying the Codex is just as good as removing it from the temple; if the book ceases to exist as a whole artifact, it is no longer in the temple. Thus, if the PCs take the tactic of destroying the book, Farri will fly into a rage; however, when all is said and done, they are doing him a favor by destroying it.

For his part, Farri has multiple copies of the codex hidden away in secret compartments throughout the place—he has not put all of his eggs in one basket. These copies are not available to be found by PCs; they form a plot point later in the campaign. Nor do they count towards his curse; he has made these copies for his own use when he is able to rejoin the world: when Farri eventually escapes his tomb, he will bring his copies of the Codex with him.

Farri's particular brood of vampires has two main differences from normal vampires. Firstly, they do not take damage from sunlight, though they do suffer -4 to all attacks, checks and saves while in direct sunlight. Secondly, they are vulnerable to silver, taking double damage from silver bullets and weapons coated in or made of silver.

ALTRUS FARRI, HIGH PRIEST OF THE CRIMSON

CALIPH: *(This special vampire has vital stats HD 15d12 (97 hp), AC 20, move 40 ft., 60 ft. (fly), 20 ft. (climb). His primary attributes are All. He attacks by Iron Bastard Sword (+1 to hit, 1d8+4 damage) or Slam (1d6). His special abilities are Blood Drain, Children of the Night, Dominate, Create Spawn, Energy Drain, Alternate Form, Gaseous Form, Entourage, Electric*

Resistance (half), Spider Climb, Vulnerable to Silver (does double damage), Daylight Vulnerability (-4 to all attacks, saves and checks in direct sunlight)). He has all the abilities of a 6th level Wisdom-based Arcanist, and will have 50 MEP and the following spells prepared: (0-level): Blinding Flash, Detect Chaos/Evil/Good/Law, Detect Magic, Endure Elements, Message, Prestidigitation, Putrefy Food and Drink. (Level 1): Curse (reverse Bless), Command, Cause Light Wounds, Faerie Fire, Obscuring Mist. (Level 2): Armor, Charm Person, Darkness. (Level 3): Animate Dead, Cause Serious Wounds, Spiritual Weapon.)

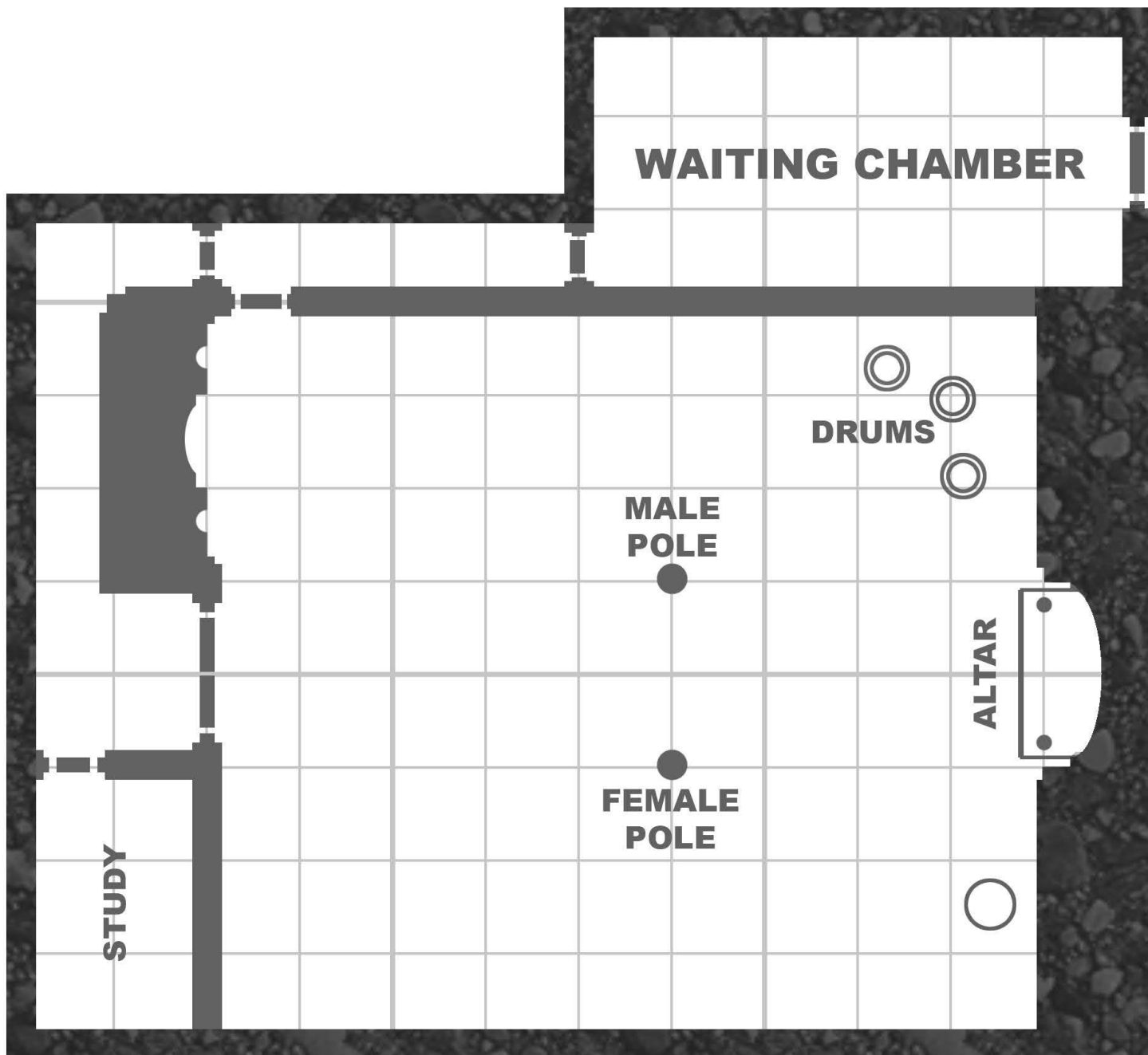
THE ILLUSION OF VICTORY

While the heroes may well emerge from this adventure victorious, there is no way they can truly win the day, unless they simply turn and walk away, leaving both Farri and the book behind. Farri will not allow this to happen. If the PCs endeavor to do so, he will seek to murder and turn them into his servants, just as he did Sir Johnathan Walton. He will then escape anyway, as the activity surrounding the temple has drawn attention, and eventually a young native will make his or her way into the complex, and be duped into removing the book so that Farri can go free.

THE CODEX SANGUINUS

For more information about the Codex Sanguinus, see the appendix on [page 45](#).





VOODOO TEMPLE



EPISODE TWO: THE RETURN OF THE RED GOD

INTRODUCTION

So, you have survived the Temple of the Red God, and your players are still asking for more, eh? Let's kick it up to the next level, then! This adventure forms the second of our **Rise of the Red God** trilogy, and pits the group against not-so-natural disasters, kidnappings, a dark cult on the rise, and the resurgence of a foe they'd thought vanquished. As they put the pieces of the puzzle together, they discover a rising global conspiracy to unleash an horrific supernatural threat upon humankind and usher in an age of darkness unlike any the world has ever known.

Where Episode One of our serial was a location-based exploratory adventure, in this episode we return to the more common four-act plot. This scenario combines investigation with high action, chase scenes, intrigue and just the right amount of supernatural terror to plague our heroes. It all begins with murder most foul, and a not-so-natural disaster of Biblical proportions....

ADJUSTING FOR PLAYERS

This adventure has the potential to be extraordinarily deadly, with multiple six- to eight-hit die undead appearing throughout. As the Game Master, you know your players, their characters, and what they are capable of handling. Never, ever be afraid to adjust the difficulty of an adventure so that it presents an adequate, but not overwhelming, challenge for your group. Reducing the hit dice of undead is one easy way of doing this, though it can require recalculating experience for monsters using the table on page 7 of **Amazing Adventures: Manual of Monsters**. Substituting the statistics of less powerful undead (but allowing them to keep any necessary intelligence as dictated by the story) is another quick-and-dirty way of adjusting.

In the end, always read the entire adventure and make adjustments before starting. Then, be prepared to make adjustments on the fly if the scenario is too easy or difficult for your players.

SETUP

Ideally this adventure takes place six months to a year after the heroes return from their adventure in Peru, and somewhere in the neighborhood of Halloween—the Day of the Dead. It is left to the GM to determine how this time has passed. If you

desire, run a few other adventures in the meantime that are completely unrelated to the machinations of the Red God. Give the PCs some space to build their legend a bit more, and to distance themselves from the horrors of the temple.

Alternately, if you choose to run this adventure immediately after the former, the time could pass relatively uneventfully. Allow each player to explain how his or her character has engaged their time. Have your players come up with reasons why the opportunities for adventure and exploration have been thin, and play up the boredom our adventuring heroes must be facing. The advantage to this approach is that the events of Peru will be fresh in your players' minds, so that they won't forget the details of what they've gone through, which will save you time in recapping as you go along.

ACT ONE

As the player characters are relaxing one day, either together or at their respective home bases (if they have such), they are rocked by the sudden news of the happenings in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. It seems that a horrible earthquake has rocked the city, followed by a strange phenomenon that scientists are unable to explain. The sky in Baton Rouge has turned a deep crimson in color, and the sun neither seems to rise nor set—a steady, even red light bathes the entire city, which was at first awash with chaos, and how has settled into a steady pall of quiet dread.

Even worse, bodies have been found at each of the four compass points in the city, ritually murdered. Police have yet to confirm that the murders are in any way connected to the strange events, but among the murdered was one Dr. Charles Merriweather, a distinguished archaeology faculty member at Louisiana State University.

If this does not spur the characters into action, one of them receives in the mail the journal of Sir Johnathan Walton, with a hastily scribbled note from Dr. Merriweather, reading, "It's not over. They're coming for all of us!" The post date on the package is a mere two days ago.

If the characters still are not ready to hop a plane to LSU, they are contacted by either their sources in the FBI (if they are working for the government) or by an independent client due to their reputation for investigation of unusual events, and hired directly.



BATON ROUGE

Arriving in Baton Rouge is an eerie experience. Nothing seems out of the ordinary as they approach the city, be it from air or land, but the moment they cross the border into the city proper, they are suddenly enveloped in a blood red twilight which seems to cover the sky as far as the eye can see. There is a crimson pall over the entire city, and the supernatural stench of corruption hangs in the air. Anyone entering the city must make a Sanity check at an additional +2 to the CL, suffering 1d4 SAN loss on a successful check and an additional 1d6 on a failed check.

If the heroes radioed ahead that they were coming, or have been hired as consultants, they are met at the airport by Detective Carl Vorchak, a fastidious man with a nervous facial twitch. If they have not radioed ahead, they will be directed to Detective Vorchak by the police, or will meet him at one of the crime scenes or morgue while they carry out their own investigation. If using the Reputation rules in **Amazing Adventures** (page 78) it is possible that the PCs reputation has preceded them.

Detective Vorchak is heading up the case for the Baton Rouge police department and frankly, is glad to have any insight into the bizarre phenomena. He secretly believes that there is a connection between the murders, the earthquake, and the red sky, but is too intelligent to blurt that out to a society that does not generally believe in the supernatural. He will, however, share his concerns with the heroes, given their reputation as paranormal investigators.

As the heroes talk with Detective Vorchak, who has already secured lodgings for them at a local hotel, they notice that he twitches while speaking and his eyes are a bit glazed and wild, like he is all but unhinged. They will come to notice that almost everyone they speak with in Baton Rouge has the same glazed, unhinged affect about them, as though something is slowly eating away at their sanity.

Detective Vorchak has the following information to share:

Each of the bodies was found at one of the four exact compass points of the city. One at the exact north, one at the exact south, one at the exact east, and one at the exact west.

Each body was completely drained of blood through a single puncture wound in the throat, through which, it appears, a tube was fed. The medical examiner was astounded at the lack of blood spilled in each case. The murders were done with expert precision.

Each body showed rope burns on the wrists and ankles, but there were no other contusions or signs of struggle.

There were strange symbols painted upon the bodies, presumably in their own blood. No one has yet been able to identify the symbols.

Det. Vorchak was examining Dr. Merriweather's body when the earthquake hit. The quake lasted 10 seconds and did moderate damage to the city center. Immediately after the quake stopped, as Det. Vorchak puts it, "It was like someone painted the sky, or like being underneath a glass dome while someone poured paint over the top! The red started directly overhead and just kind of... spread, until the whole sky was covered in it!"

At first, there were riots and people fled the town in droves, clogging the streets. After about a day of this, things settled down somewhat, but the town feels like a time bomb that could go off at any moment.

Two of the four bodies had with them copies of a new book that just recently hit the pulp markets. If the heroes ask to see a copy of the book, Det. Vorchak produces it. It is a mass-market paperback, with a red cover and black text. The name on the book is **Andanuth: The Book of Blood**. If the characters look inside, and if anyone took the time to translate any of the **Codex Sanguinus**, they will discover that this book is an English translation of that ancient text which they thought either well protected or destroyed in Peru.

Det. Vorchak is willing to guide the characters to the crime scenes as well as let them view the bodies, which have been at the morgue for the past two days.

THE CRIME SCENES

There does not seem to be anything unusual at the crime scenes, which have been professionally scoured by the police and F.B.I. Investigate as they might, the PCs find nothing new at these locations. However, any one of these could be the location where they suffer the Attack (see below).

If the PCs are successful in their investigations—a CL 4 Cat and Mouse check by a gumshoe, a CL 6 Tracking check by characters with that ability, or even a high (CL 8 or better) Wisdom or Intelligence check—they find a few additional pieces of evidence. Chicken bones are found scattered near one of the crime scenes, and an object that an arcanist, psychic, or scholar of myth, legend or arcane studies will recognize as a *gris-gris* bag used by practitioners of Voodoo.



MARIE LAVEAU

It is possible that one of your players is playing Marie Laveau (AA) or that they have encountered her in the prior “Heart of Yhtill” adventure (AA). If so, she can be of assistance. If she is being run by a player, a successful Spellcraft check (CL 1) will recognize the signature on the bones and *gris-gris* as belonging to her longtime rival, Dr. John Montenet, who she identifies as a houngan, or practitioner of black juju and her one-time mentor. Failing this check will just reveal that she knows the markings from somewhere but cannot place it right now. Allow her a new check daily until she recalls the information.

If Marie is an NPC, she can be cabled to come to Baton Rouge and will provide the same information (no check is necessary). Be careful not to let the PCs lean on her too much, especially if they have plenty of resources on their own. She can potentially be involved in another, equally dangerous case (which of course she can’t discuss) for the Brotherhood of William St. John and only available to consult with the PCs for a brief time.

Dr. John, she says, is known for practicing his dark arts in the swamps and bayous, though he is fond of lodgings in urban settings, close to local watering holes. He is a heavy drinker and a bitter man who drinks to forget his myriad bad business deals and mistakes over the years. The PCs will find him in one of these two places, but they will need more to go on, as the bayous are a large place to search.

THE BODIES

Investigating the bodies at the morgue may yield a bit more evidence. With a successful Intelligence check (CL 0), any character who examined the text on the pillars at the Temple of the Red God, or who looked at the original copy of the Codex Sanguinus, will recognize the symbols as being of the same arcane language that made up that prior writing. The exact meaning of the symbols, however, is impossible to divine without proper context.

It is not outside the realm of possibility that these symbols are ritually based, some sort of magic sigils or runecraft designed to empower a sacrifice or other pagan rite. If there are any psychics, arcanists or occultists in the group, they may sense a lingering whiff of mystic energy on the bodies, confirming that the sacrifices were mystical in nature.

THE PUBLISHER

Visiting the publisher of the book is possible, but turns up few actual leads. The publisher is a new, local small press named Pulp Dreams. Their offices are in the heart of downtown Baton Rouge. The PCs will be met by a receptionist, and after waiting for quite some time in the waiting room, are met by a stiff young woman, attractive but all business, with a tight bun, horn-rimmed glasses and lipstick that is far too red for her complexion. She introduces herself as Margaret Stilton, associate editor, and asks how she may be of service.

If the heroes ask to see the Editor-in-Chief, Margaret informs them that Mr. Felton is on holiday and not expected back for another week. Each PC should make a Wisdom Save at a CL of 8; on a success they cannot shake the suspicion that Margaret is somehow familiar, but they cannot place her. If they inquire, she will smile pleasantly and shrug, insisting that she’s sure they have never met before and asking again what she can do to help.

Regarding the book, Margaret seems genuinely shocked that it has been suspected of being connected to any recent crimes. The publisher received the manuscript anonymously a few months ago and simply thought it an excellent weird fiction novel to put on the market. It has been an excellent seller and royalties are delivered to a post office box via cashier’s check, per instructions on the original publication agreement, which was conducted via post. The author wishes to remain anonymous and she has never met them in person.

The book’s author, is on record as being Johnathan Walton. Margaret will show the PCs the contract itself if they present a court order; otherwise, she says they will understand if she has an obligation to protect her clients.

Clever PCs will remember that Johnathan Walton is supposed to be dead, and they have his journal. The plot thickens...

THE SUCCUBUS RETURNS

The truth is that Margaret is the succubus Martika, who escaped the Temple with Altrus the vampire. Altrus is currently posing as Pulp Dreams Editor-in-Chief Mr. Arthur Felton. She is being truthful when she says he is not in town—he is pursuing other avenues of distribution and preparing for the final stage of his plan. If the PCs



killed Martika in the original adventure, she has been summoned back from Hell by Altrus, who as mentioned previously, is a powerful sorcerer.

She will engage in her old tricks again, attempting to seduce one or more of the heroes who seem vulnerable to her wiles. Knowing that she has faced them before however, she will be more subtle this time, prodding them with urges that grow gradually stronger. At first they will just find her familiarity attractive. Then they will begin to feel protective. The connection will build.

THE ATTACK

Eventually, the PCs are going to be the targets of an assassination attempt. This will happen in one of three places: at one of the crime scenes, while investigating the bodies, or en route to the publisher (but not while they are at the publisher). While they go about their activities, a masked man steps out of the shadows, into the room, or drives up in an automobile, and opens fire with a Thompson sub-machinegun. Check for surprise (AA p. 169) and conduct combat normally; however, the thug will escape to dive into a car and take off.

This should lead to a mad chase through the streets using the vehicle rules in the core rulebook on page 181, or the expanded rules in the **Amazing Adventures Companion**. Unfortunately for the heroes, it is all a setup. More thugs will assault them as they give chase, firing from windows, closing in with multiple vehicles and the like in a concerted effort to take out the characters. There should be at least five thugs to each hero in this battle, requiring the adventurers to pull out all of their cleverness and skill to survive.

Eventually, the police will join the fray, which will bring the attack to a quick end as the thugs scatter to the four winds, hurling smoke grenades that bellow crimson smoke, to cover their escape. The characters are rewarded with another copy of the Codex, dropped by one of the thugs during the assault.

THUGS: *(These 2nd-level humans have vital stats HD 2d8 (8 hp each), AC 13, move 30ft. Their primary attributes are Physical. They attack by Pistol 1d8, Tommy Gun 1d12+2, or knife 1d4. Their special abilities are back attack, case target, hide, lingo, listen, move silently, as a second level hooligan). XP: 60 each.*

ACT TWO

Martika will naturally recognize those who defeated her not so long ago, and will go into panic mode, attempting to set a trap by luring the characters to the swamps of Baton Rouge and having them killed. Her plan, however, is much more intricate than that—it is a ploy to gain the PCs trust and accept her as an ally.

THE FEMME FATALE

That night, as the characters return to their hotel with precious few leads in the case, one of them (preferably during a moment alone) hears sobbing and cries of “help me!” from a woman as clacking footsteps on the pavement grow louder. There, around the bend comes Margaret, who runs right into the arms of her erstwhile rescuer. Hot on her heels are two African-American men in native costuming with ornate daggers in hand. They skid to a halt when they see the hero, and attempt to flee.

FOOTRACE

If the PC chooses to give chase, roll a d4. The result of this die roll is the number of successive checks that one side must win to escape (the cultists) or catch the enemy (the hero). Both sides must make Dexterity checks (the two cultists are at a +3 for a head start at first); whoever succeeds by the highest margin wins the check, and the other side gains a cumulative -1 to the next round's checks. Each win wipes out prior penalties (except in relation to the +3 head start, which is permanently reduced with each win of the hero's).

If the hero catches one of the cultists (use the same stats as thugs, above), interrogation is a possibility. While they will not give up information easily, they can eventually be persuaded, with the right tactics and Charisma checks, to reveal that they are part of Dr. John's cult which has turned to worship of a new aspect of Baron Samedi called Ornduhl, the Loa of Blood and Greed. They operate out of a church hidden in the Bayou and are out to open the gates and let Ornduhl through. And if it means saving their own lives, they will reveal where the church is located.

COMFORTING MARGARET

If the cultists escape, or the hero opts not to chase them, Margaret falls into his hands, sobbing and thanking him for saving her life. She turns up the charm to its fullest, now, and the hero will have to save against her wiles or wind up in bed with a Suc-



cubus, who will gladly feed on him and begin the process of enslaving him to her will (see Appendix, [p. 42](#)).

The next morning (or after the bedding, at least), she will reveal that she was attacked after leaving work, kidnapped and taken to a location in the bayou where these men tried to sacrifice her in some sort of Voodoo ritual. She thinks she can remember where it happened and is willing to guide the PCs there.

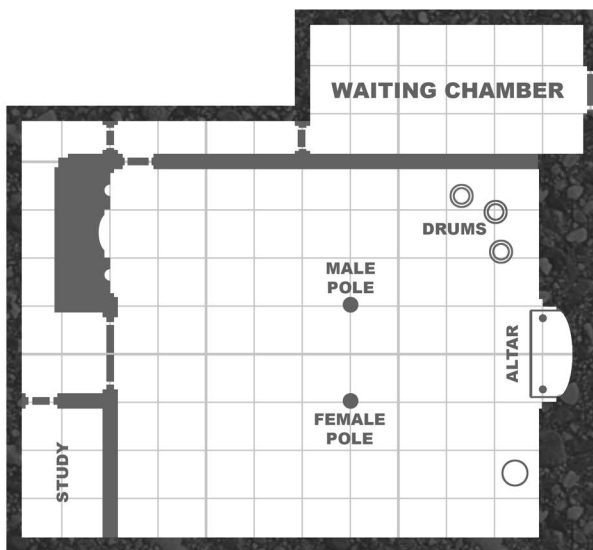
OUT ON THE BAYOU

The PCs track the cult to their Bayou headquarters, either with information from one of the cultists or with Margaret as a guide. There they find a ramshackle shed, rather large, with lights flickering inside.

Upon entering, they find the place empty, but with candles burning. The trappings of Voodoo are everywhere; medicine bags, shrunk heads, Voodoo dolls, Loa poles, the works. Any character familiar with the trappings of the religion can make an Intelligence-based check to determine, however, that the trappings seem hastily and somewhat randomly placed. Some are in the wrong positions, others in the wrong places. It almost looks like set dressing.

This successful check will enable the PCs to avoid surprise and dive for cover when the shack is riddled with bullets from outside, and give them an extra round of action when the Molotov cocktails come in through the windows. It's a trap!

If the PCs did not make the check, they are surprised and lose their dexterity bonus to AC for the first attack this round. In addition, they are -2 to their checks to escape the burning building.



Getting out requires 1d4 successful dexterity checks by each character as the building bursts into flames. Each failed check results in 1d6 damage from heat and flame, falling timbers, or simply losing one's balance in the conflagration.

Outside, however, there are at least 2 cultists per PC waiting for them to emerge. Escaping the initial hail of gunfire will be like running a gauntlet; GMs should explain the situation and allow players to formulate a plan of action, even if it's blindly firing into the swamp as they emerge to hopefully lay down cover fire. Adjudicate the situation accordingly, but assume that each PC will be fired at a minimum of one time. If they came up with a good plan of action, they may return fire.

At this point, combat proceeds as normal, but at some point one of the characters, with a successful Wisdom check, will see a white man—exceptionally pale—in what appears to be explorer's gear, skulking in the shadows. If the character is a raider, socialite, or keeps up with archaeology, they will recognize the man as Johnathan Walton himself, just before he vanishes into the shadows.

THE REVERSAL

At a dramatically appropriate point of the GM's choosing—particularly if or when the fight begins to look bad—Margaret will reveal herself as Martika and, inexplicably, take the side of the player characters! At the very least this should, especially if one of the characters is in love with her at the moment, give her a chance to explain.

Her story is this: All she ever wanted was to go home. By killing her in the temple, the PCs allowed that. Then Altrus summoned her again, and bound her to his will. She now cannot leave Earth again until he is defeated once and for all, for he holds a charm that binds her to this reality. If killed, she will simply awaken within three days at his side. She offers her services as a powerful ally, if the player characters will simply agree to banish her home after they defeat Altrus.

She will confirm, if asked, that Johnathan Walton is now undead, a creature in the service of Altrus and connected directly to the Red God. Altrus has the ritual to create more like Walton, creatures called Squires (or Handmaidens, if women) of Ornduhl, different and in many ways more deadly than any undead the characters have ever faced. Even Martika does not know their full capabilities, but she knows they keep all of the abilities they had in life, and gain even more. They are bred to



spread their condition like a plague, building an army of soldiers for the Red God to strike out at the world when the time is right.

She knows that Altrus is planning to build a new Homeless House fortress for the Red God somewhere in the world, but does not know where. The copies of the Codex are from his own research and were hidden in the temple. He has brought them forth to spread the word of Ornduhl and build his cult across the world. When the cult has enough members and the fortress is completed, Altrus plans a ritual that will summon the Red God directly to this world, where he will walk amongst men and reign over all. If this happens, she says, humanity will suffer an eternity of darkness while Ornduhl changes the entire population into undead servants with the eventual goal of making war upon the native deities of his home plane.

THE CRIMSON SKY

The Crimson Sky, Martika says, was the first stage of the plan to resurrect the Red God. It feeds Altrus, and any other undead who takes up residence beneath it. Before long, the undead will flood the city and begin the conversion of the earth right here in Baton Rouge. In order to defeat it, they must track down the focus: Doctor John himself, who has sold himself and his people to the service of the Red God.

Martika had hoped to lead the PCs to Doctor John here, but it was not to be. She believes that they can track him to his whereabouts in town and put an end to what is going on in Baton Rouge, hopefully to at least set back Altrus' plans.

TROUBLESHOOTING

It is up to the players how they want to proceed, but Martika will fight furiously to escape if they attack her and certainly will not fight to the death. As a succubus she can fly and will take to the skies and escape if she is outmatched.

If this is the case and the heroes opt not to use Martika's help, searching the bodies of the defeated cultists reveals a small leather-bound journal including orders from Doctor John revealing much of the same information and instructing them to ambush the PCs to distract them from the ongoing plot. The cultists are to report back to him when they are finished, but there is no address or contact information listed.

ACT THREE

In this act, the heroes, possibly along with Martika, track Doctor John into the city, where they at last get a leg up on their enemies, but face overwhelming odds and find the tables turned....

Game Masters should ensure that this act takes place on the Day of the Dead (Halloween), as the final battle in the next Act takes place during the assault on Baton Rouge, scheduled for that day.

BACK TO BATON ROUGE

The heroes return to Baton Rouge. If they have made a deal with Martika, they have a powerful new ally and potentially a great deal of information to spur them on. A gumshoe, with the right Cat and Mouse rolls, can track Doctor John to his lodgings.

The self-styled Voodoo King is a heavy drinker, and it is not difficult to follow him through the dive bars of the city. He is renting a ramshackle apartment in the worst part of town, having fallen on hard times and signed away all of his money in bad business deals. Hitting the various local hole-in-the-walls will deliver a trail that will eventually lead to Doctor John's apartment. It will, however, also alert him to the movements of the PCs and while he is desperate, he's not stupid. He will not be home when they arrive. If the group is properly subtle in their investigations, and particularly if they have a gumshoe that makes good Cat and Mouse checks, they may avoid a major conflict. Otherwise, Doctor John will have left them a surprise.

DOCTOR JOHN'S

Doctor John has taken up residence in a ramshackle hotel that is located off the beaten path. If the PCs enter and search the premises, there is a wealth of information to be found.

THE BOOK OF SHADOWS

Doctor John's book of shadows is here, tucked under the mattress of the bed. It details the ritual to create the blood sky, which was the first stage in establishing Ornduhl's army of squires and hand-maidens. The mystical virus will spread like a plague through the city, culminating in an all-out assault on the Day of the Dead. When the undead have overrun Baton Rouge, they will spread out to other cities, creating an uncontrolled epidemic of these vile foot soldiers. Doctor John himself will lead the armies of the Red God to glory.



From what the book describes, Doctor John is the focal point of this spell—the conduit for all of the energy sustaining it. The book speaks of his “Becoming,” and his “Ascension” during the assault, and claims that he will direct all of the armies from a “blessed” location that will be corrupted to the worship of Ornduhl.

The notes also describe the talisman that Altrus holds which controls Martika—an amulet inscribed with the succubus’ true name. If the amulet is destroyed, the demon is freed from his control. If it is held, she can be permanently killed. An extremely powerful sorcerer could use it to bind and control her, but in game terms, this is a ninth-level Intelligence-based spell, and it is unlikely the PCs have the ability to call upon that kind of power yet.

All it says about the supposed fortress is that it is being constructed somewhere in the Far East.

THE NEXT TRAP

Unfortunately the PCs will not have the opportunity to stop and read the book. Doctor John has left another trap for the PCs—hidden in the closet and bathroom are six Squires of Ornduhl—the four sacrificed victims that started this mess to begin with, along with Sir Johnathan Walton. At an opportune moment, the undead will attack with all they are worth. For full information about the Squires of Ornduhl, see [page 41](#).

SQUIRES/ HANDMAIDENS OF ORNDUHL: *(These CE Undead have vital stats HD 7d8 (32 hp), AC 15, move 40 ft. Their saves are M. They attack by two claws for 1d4 damage and bite for 1d6 damage, plus Type 3 Disease. Their special abilities are Charm, Exalt, Embolden, Fascinate, Demoralize, Children of the Night, Damage Resistance (1/2 physical), Create Spawn.)*

ACT FOUR

This act is a breakneck race to take out Doctor John and put an end to the ritual before Baton Rouge falls prey to a plague of the undead.

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

The PCs have a lot of information at this point and putting it together can be tricky. Intelligence checks by Raiders, arcanists or any scholars of myth and legend can piece together, after reading the journal, that the location Doctor John is talking about is most likely St. Joseph’s Cathedral, a Catholic church that was originally built in the

1790s. The Church is located on North Street and such an old religious site would be a prime source of supernatural power upon which to draw.

THE ATTACK BEGINS

Unfortunately, as the heroes race to put together all of the pieces, screams tear through the streets. The attack has begun! It is now incumbent upon the characters to battle their way to St. Joseph’s, and face down Doctor John. If they have Martika with them, she can be a powerful ally in this fight. GMs should mix up the types of undead—after all, the Red God would not put all of his eggs in one basket. Detective Vorchak and the Baton Rouge Police may also be helpful, if the characters have cultured good relations with them. Throw different types of monsters at your heroes and keep the running battle fast-paced and moving. Remember, the assault is still in its early stages, so they should not yet face overwhelming odds.

Adding some difficult moral calls into the mix can add dramatic tension—for example, what if a young mother and her children is being set upon by minions of the Red God and screaming for help? How about if a teenager is trapped in a car while a small pack of undead try desperately to get at him? Be creative and give the heroes chances to demonstrate their heroism while remembering that the longer they take to get to the Cathedral, the worse the onslaught will get.

So long as the Red Sky remains, the poison from the squires’ attacks acts faster and their victims transform immediately. Instead of making a save every day, the infected must save every minute.

THE CATHEDRAL

As the heroes approach the Cathedral, a beam of fire shoots skyward from the steeple, and seems to set the sky ablaze. People in the streets panic, making them easy prey for the undead monsters, which attack with renewed gusto.

When the heroes reach the Cathedral, they will have to battle their way in. Doctor John has not gone unfortified; he has a contingent of undead waiting to protect him. Tailor these undead to the abilities of your group, but there should be at least several squires of Ornduhl and potentially some vampire spawn in their way.

The inside of the Cathedral has been violated in every way imaginable. Characters with strong faith will be disgusted and outraged at what they see—such



characters gain +2 to all attacks, saves and damage for the rest of the adventure, at the GM's discretion. Still, this is a Cathedral and any mystically-sensitive character will get the feeling that the church itself is struggling against the evil within—each character gains 4 Fate Points which must be spent before the end of the adventure, or they are lost.

THE FINAL BATTLE

Dr. John is in the bell tower—he is a disheveled-looking African American with wild hair and sheer madness in his eyes. He has defiled the room by throwing blood on all of the walls, and lit braziers in the room. As the heroes enter, he will make for the bell. If he manages to ring it, the deafening noise causes agony to the heroes. PCs must make a dexterity-based save to cover their ears; failure means they are -2 to all attacks and physical ability checks due to their equilibrium being completely off. The effect lasts 1d6 rounds.

In the shadows around the perimeter of the room are one squire of Ornduhl and one vampire spawn per character (including Martika, if she is present). This battle is not going to be an easy one. During the fight, the heroes may notice that Martika is not attacking Dr. John. If anyone asks her why, she will shout that she cannot go near him but she doesn't know why.

Dr. John is a powerful sorcerer who currently is half-possessed by the energy of Ornduhl the Red God (he views it as being “ridden” by the Loa). Still, he is vulnerable to attacks both normal and magical, and he is indeed the key to ending this whole mess. Because he is being ridden by the Red God's essence, he has access to more spells than a caster of his skill would normally have.

DR. JOHN MONTENET: *(This CE Possessed Human has vital stats HD 10d10 (55 hp), AC 19, move 30 ft. His Primary Attributes are Dex 15, Con 17, Cha 18. He attacks by spell, pistol for 1d10 damage, or knives for 1d4 damage. His special abilities are Spellcraft, Spells as a 12th-level Charisma-based Arcanist: 150 MEP; 0-level: Dancing Lights, Ghost Sound, Influence, Prestidigitation, Stun; 1st-level: Command, Charm Person or Animal, Darkness, Daze, Faerie Fire, Hypnotism; 2nd-level: Blur, Burning Hands, False Trap, Hypnotic Pattern, Invisibility; 3rd Level: Aid, Blink, Fear, Major Image, Bestow Curse; 4th Level: Animate Dead, Confusion, Emotion, Shadow Conjuration; 5th Level: Create Undead, Death Ward, Feeblemind, Shadow Evocation; 6th Level: Repulsion, Creeping Doom) XP: 1,900*

THE AFTERMATH

The moment Dr. John dies, a red mist emerges from his body and floats out through the steeple, where it merges with an unearthly shriek with the fire. Another earthquake rocks the city, and the red sky dissipates exactly as it appeared. If Martika is with them, she moves to congratulate them, and then screams in agony as her physical form starts to fade. “He calls me!” she cries. “I cannot resist! Please! I...” and then she is gone.

If they think to search Dr. John's body, they discover yet another journal. This one details a means by which Altrus Farri can be permanently killed. The instructions are largely written in code and will take some time to decipher, but the intent is clear from the start: Dr. John planned to betray the vampire and take his place as the chosen disciple of the Red God. Also on Dr. John's person is an oddly-shaped stake, a hand-drawing of which is also included in the journal alongside a drawing of a spear, showing the stake fitting between the spear's head and its shaft. A Legend Lore or spellcraft check with a CL of 6 reveals that the spear appears to be the Spear of Destiny, the holy lance that pierced Christ on the cross.

Emerging into the streets, the PCs are greeted by confused and terrified people, and many piles of dust, as the emerging sunlight destroyed many of the undead. Whether all of them were destroyed or not is anybody's guess, but if they ask around, some of the “crazed attackers” fled towards the bayou. Gunshots can still be heard in the distance. If they choose, the PCs can help play “cleanup,” but they will be well aware that it is unlikely they will be able to find and kill all of the remaining undead.

There is only one thing left: to find out where Altrus Farri is, and confront the vampire to put an end to the Red God's evil once and for all.



EPISODE THREE: THE RISE OF THE RED GOD

In this episode of our serial, everything comes to a head as our intrepid heroes have a final showdown against Altrus Farri, the high priest of the Red God, and attempt to close the portal he is opening high in the Himalayas in Tibet. During their quest, they will deal with the cult of the Red God, with mundane assassins, with horrific monsters, and with wise men who may help or hinder their efforts to slay the vampire once and for all. It all starts with the OSR and a telegram from a dangerous ally of convenience....

SETUP AND BACKGROUND: INTO DARKNESS

Following the events of Episode 2, the PCs have several options ahead of them. They may wish to research Dr. John's notes. They may wish to pack it in and head home. They may decide to look into news reports to see if there were any other strange occurrences.

NEWS REPORTS

With the right resources, they may discover reports of strange environmental happenings in other nations at roughly the same time as the one in Baton Rouge, indicating that what happened here was not a targeted or unique event.

DR. JOHN'S JOURNALS

Dr. John's journals are full of cryptic references to worlds within worlds, to energy from other dimensions, and to a "sister Earth," a "white world alongside our own." There is little of great use, as Dr. John was clearly mad. His writings are full of crazed ramblings and mad ravings. However, the encrypted journal he had on his person during the final confrontation does describe a means by which Altrus Farri can be defeated once and for all.

Decrypting the journal will require a few days' work and a Crypto-linguist check at CL 8. Alternatively, an Arcanist can attempt an Intelligence Check at CL 12 to do the same; the code is magical in nature but is coded in Doctor John's own shorthand, making it hard to decipher. Arcanists should be granted a bonus to their checks based on their arcane Background (AA).

The writings detail something called "The Well of the World," where there lies a magical pool. The Ash stake must be lowered into the pool by one who is mystically inclined, a certain incantation recited, and the right amount of mystic energy expended. In game terms, this is a fourth-level spell

available to any arcanist. There are, however, certain specific instructions left out—the book says that a mystical guardian of the Well can provide the remaining components to the ritual.

When the stake is properly consecrated, it must be attached to a holy lance (see Episode Two "Aftermath,") and then used as a weapon against Farri. Stabbing Farri with it will suspend his ability to change form, and lock him into a specific place, negating any form of supernatural escape.

THE HOLY LANCE

The decoded instructions in the journal verify that the spear in question is the Holy Lance, also known as the Spear of Destiny, is one of several artifacts, all of which are claimed to be the spear that stabbed Christ while he hung upon the cross. The most well-known of these artifacts is held in the Imperial Treasury at the Hofsburg palace in Vienna.

OCCULT LIBRARY

If the characters have access to an occult library (see **AA Companion**), they can determine that the Well of the World is said to be located somewhere in the mountains of Tibet. It is supposedly a shaft that runs through the entire world and contains waters of deeply magical power. The Well is supposedly guarded by a sect of Buddhist warrior monks who are seers of great knowledge and power. There are clues in the library as to the location of the well, which can be pieced together to find the location.

If there is no occult library in play, Dr. John's journals could have extensive research on the Well of the World, including a map to get there. It is a harrowing journey into the well, requiring a trek of a week or more into the heights of the Himalayan Mountains.

PACKING IT IN

Let's face it—this is not very heroic, but it is possible the PCs will want to give up and go home, due to the lack of any further clues. This is the time for them to receive the telegram (see below). Alternatively, if they have military contacts from prior adventures, their exploits over the past few days will almost certainly have been noticed and they might be called in to finish what they started.



THE TELAGRAM

At some point, the characters receive a telegram message. The message is simple, direct and to the point. It reads simply, “He is in Tibet. Homeless House—Red God Fortress—Himalayas. –M.” If the GM wants to keep an element of the mystic in the mix, he can have the message simply appear in their room, perhaps right in front of someone. Otherwise, the hotel will deliver the message to the heroes, saying that it was received at the local office and addressed to them.

Putting everything together, the heroes, it seems, have to steal the Spear of Destiny from the Imperial Treasury in Vienna, find the Well of the World and the monks who guard it, consecrate the spear, and then somehow find the fortress of the Red God and stop Altrus once and for all.

VIENNA OR ANTARCTICA?

The holy lance is a real artifact that is on display at the Hofburg palace in Austria. Some records indicate that it is really a copy of the original, however, and that Hitler had the real Vienna holy lance shipped off to Antarctica with a Nazi secret society. This secret society could be the Thules, if the PCs have tangled with them in earlier adventures, and if they are working for the military, intelligence reports could provide them this information. If your game is set in the late 1930s, it is left to the GM if he wants the PCs to infiltrate an Antarctic Nazi research base, or the palace in Vienna. Though we have not provided maps of the research base, a quick Internet search should turn up all you need to proceed in this fashion.

ACT ONE: TO VIENNA!

If World War II is in full-swing it may be tricky for the PCs to charter a flight to Vienna. If they have their own aircraft, are working for the government or can access the resources of a group such as the Society of William St. John (AA), this may solve many of their problems for them. Still, it is recommended that the GM allow the players to find a way to get there; otherwise there isn't much of an adventure! How they do it is up to you, and can be an adventure in and of itself.

When the players arrive in Vienna and secure lodgings for themselves, they have to plan how to get the spear out of the Hofburg palace. While the palace is open to the public for visitation and viewing of the artifacts held therein, stealing the spear is not likely to be a simple task. This is the time for any Hooligans and Acrobats in the party to shine.

The Imperial Treasury in the palace is accessed from the Swiss Courtyard and contains 21 rooms, full of incredible riches and artifacts dating back to the 15th century. In addition to the Spear of Destiny, the collection includes the Imperial Crown, Orb, and Sceptre of Austria, and the Imperial Regalia of the Emperors and Kings of the Holy Roman Empire, including the Imperial Crown of the Holy Roman Empire.

The collection is divided into two sections: secular and ecclesiastical. The Spear will be kept in the ecclesiastical section. The GM is encouraged to run fast and loose with the robbery. It is difficult to outline such an adventure in detail as the players will come up with their own plan of action, and may decide (depending on how much larceny is in their hearts) to abscond with more than just the spear!

Security will certainly include alarms and guards, as well as any other precautions the GM sees fit to put in place. This should not be an easy task, but it should be one with a real chance of success, as the players need the spear if they are to defeat Farri once and for all.

PALACE GUARD: *(These 3rd-level LN humans have vital stats HD 3d8 (13 hp), AC 15, move 30 ft. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by rifle for 2d8+4 damage, pistol for 1d8 damage, or saber for 1d6 damage. Their special abilities are Take 'em down as a 3rd-level gumshoe, climb, hide, move silently, case target and listen as a 3rd-level hooligan, embolden as a 3rd-level socialite.)* **XP:** 164

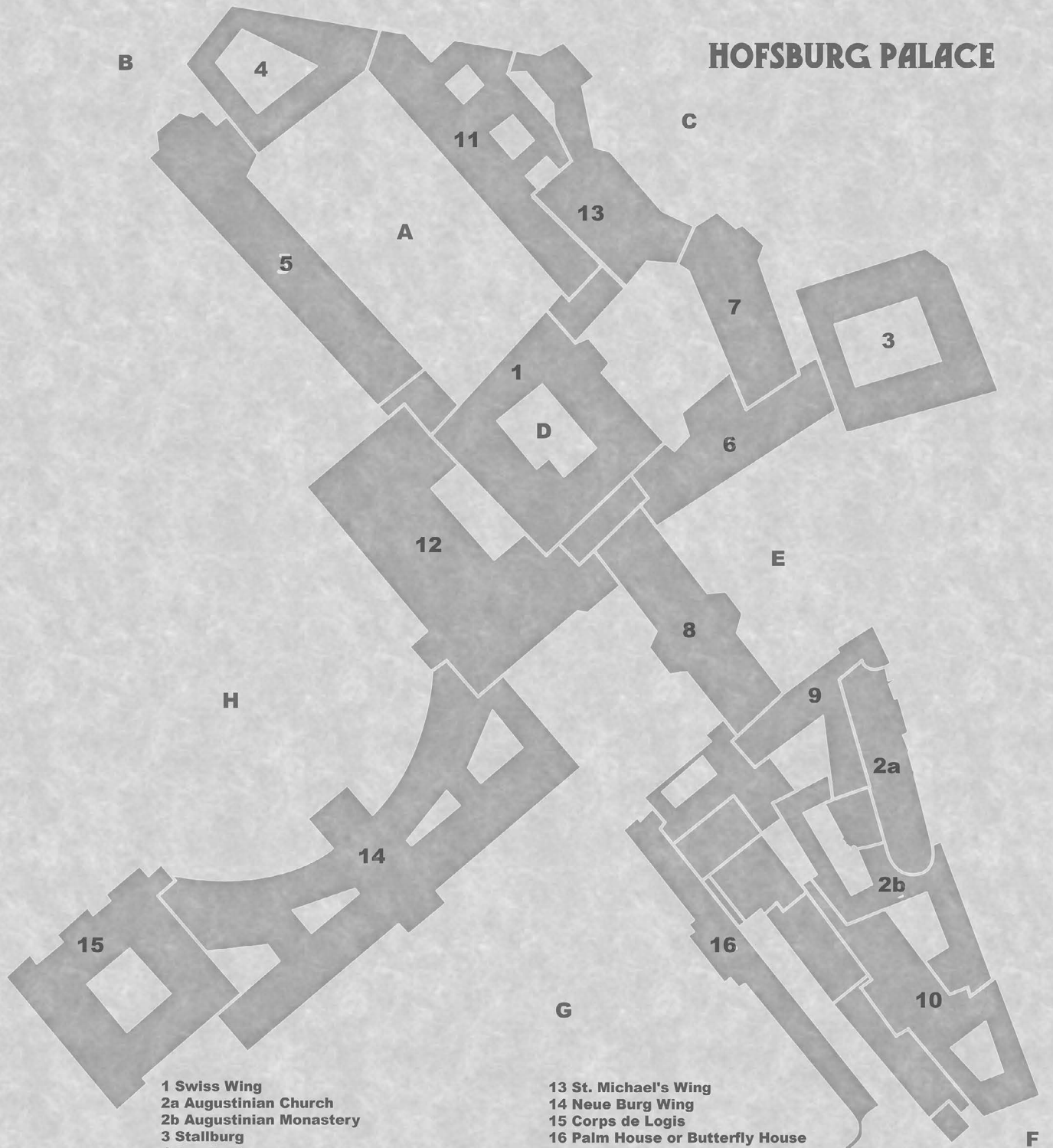
When the heroes acquire the spear, they will notice that the ash stake slots neatly into the bottom of the spear head, with the other end of the stake designed to be affixed to a spear shaft. Acquiring such a shaft should not be a problem—the magic of the spear is in the head, not the grip. Arcanists and psychics will notice that there is an aura of magic about the item.

THE ESCAPE

After they have the spear, the PCs will likely not want to hang around. This will especially be the case if they have killed palace guards (which true heroes will not do). The trick will be getting back to their aircraft and getting out of dodge. This could involve a foot race or mad car chase through the streets of Austria if the authorities are out to catch them, or any manner of intrigue or action at the GM's discretion. If you need statistics for



HOFSBURG PALACE



- 1 Swiss Wing
- 2a Augustinian Church
- 2b Augustinian Monastery
- 3 Stallburg
- 4 Amalienburg
- 5 Leopold Wing
- 6 Redouten Wing
- 7 Winter Riding School
- 8 Imperial Library
- 9 Augustinian Wing
- 10 Archduke Albrecht Palace (formerly Tarouca-de Sylva Palace)
- 11 Imperial Chancellory Wing
- 12 Festsaal - Festival Hall Wing

- 13 St. Michael's Wing
- 14 Neue Burg Wing
- 15 Corps de Logis
- 16 Palm House or Butterfly House
- A Internal Castle Square
- B Ballhausplatz - Ball House Square
- C St. Michael's Square
- D Schweizerhof - Swiss Court
- E Joseph Square
- F Albertina Square
- G Burggarten - Castle Garden
- H Heldenplatz (formerly External Castle Square)



police, the Palace Guard stat block will work fine; simply remove the sword from their attack methods, and only some of them will have rifles.

They could, feasibly, end up having to escape via automobile or on foot and find another means to get to the next stage of their journey. If they lose access to their aircraft, the Trans-Siberian railroad is always an option.

TROUBLESHOOTING

There are many ways that this scenario can go bad for the heroes. If the PCs fail to abscond with the spear, there are several possibilities. They may have been caught and arrested, in which case they will have to concoct a means of escape if the adventure is to be completed. This could be a good time for an unexpected ally to show up and get them out (OSR agents, for example, or a sudden bail out by the Brotherhood via one of the NPCs in **Amazing Adventures**).

Alternately, they may have escaped, but without the spear. If so, you could allow them to use the stake against Farri, albeit at a significantly lessened effect. Perhaps it stops him from turning to mist and negates his regeneration, but has no other effects. Then again, perhaps it simply does a bit more damage to him and the possibility of him escaping in the end still exists, making him an ongoing nemesis for further adventures!

ACT TWO: THE WELL OF THE WORLD

The next stage of the heroes' quest is to head for Tibet, find the Well of the World, and sanctify the stake so that they can assemble the spear for use against Farri. They must then somehow find his location, and they may be counting on Martika's help for that (which they will get). However, Farri has become aware of the heroes' activities and is not taking their intervention lightly.

ARRIVAL IN TIBET

The adventure does not cover the journey from Austria to Tibet, as there are too many potential variables in how the PCs will escape Vienna. GMs can make the journey as fun, harrowing, long or short as they desire. A trans-continental trip on the railroad can make for an exciting journey. Perhaps Thule or Red God cultists attack the PCs en route, leading to a running battle atop the train in

an effort to guard and protect the spear (or even just survive).

NO RAILROAD

Historically, in this period there is not yet a railway servicing Lhasa. You can either ignore this and allow railway access (it's your game, after all) or add another leg of the journey where the characters have to travel by car or chartered flight from China to the city. It's up to you!

Alternately, if the characters are traveling by air, they could come under fire from military aircraft, leading to a wild dogfight between the PCs in their unarmed aircraft, and fighters of the Third Reich! Such a battle could see the heroes hanging out the doors of their plane in freezing conditions, firing rifles and pistols at Nazi fighter craft. Remember, it doesn't matter if it isn't quite realistic. This is pulp adventure, not the real world, and you've already accepted the existence of a magic spear and spell-slinging occultists!

What is important in the end is that the characters reach Tibet. When they de-board the plane or train in Lhasa (the Tibetan capitol) their troubles begin almost immediately. Call for Wisdom checks (applying a CL of 7); success indicates that the group is being followed. The awareness is more of a feeling—catching movement out of the corner of one's eye. It is difficult to get a bead on who exactly is following them and there is a sense that it could be more than one person.

Eventually, there will be an attack. This assault is a coordinated effort by both arcane and mundane cultists of the Red God (use statistics for Acolytes and Thugs); there should be at least three adversaries per PC. The attack is bold and will take place in broad daylight out in the open. This will eventually lead to police intervention, and the PCs have little to worry about; there are enough witnesses to identify them as victims of the attack. Still, the local police do not like trouble in their streets and are eager to know the heroes' business in Lhasa.

THE POLICE, THE CULT, AND THE SUCCUBUS

There is no doubt that the cult has infiltrated the local police, and will report via their network of informants, back to Farri. Martika is also present in the city but she also knows how widespread the network is, and cannot yet risk revealing herself. She will help as she can, subtly, using her ability to change shape to assume the best identity for any



given time. When she can, she will reveal herself to the heroes, and explain the situation. She will join them as soon as the situation is convenient, and will be apt to appear at an opportune moment when they need help, but will avoid revealing her true form as she claims she is hiding from the scrying of Farri. To this end she will be prone to appear and disappear as the situation deems necessary.

If Martika has enslaved one (or more) of the PCs she will act affectionately towards her pets to maintain their devotion to her. Due to their separation from her, each character is entitled to make a new Charisma-based saving throw to resist the effects, but failure indicates they are still madly in love with the succubus.

A BREAKNECK PACE

The attack on the characters will not be the last. Rather than detailing each individual attempt on their lives, it is incumbent upon the GM to maintain the proper pace from here on out. Their activities will be continually monitored and there will be repeated assassination attempts upon them from here until the final battle against Farri. They should get the sense that they are racing against time, and that Farri is at least a step ahead of them. GMs should endeavor to present a sense of urgency, intrigue and danger from this point forward.

FINDING THE WELL

There are numerous Buddhist temples in Lhasa, and the instructions the PCs have is to begin at the Jokhang Temple, one of the most popular pilgrimage destinations in the region. When they arrive, speaking the proper code phrase (which must be pronounced correctly; a crypto-linguist check at CL 3 or an Intelligence check at CL 6 is required) gets the heroes into see the Llama of the temple, who will welcome them and question them extensively about their quest.

If the heroes are suspicious, they will get the sense (especially if they have any arcanists or mentalists in their ranks) that complete honesty is their best approach in this situation. The Llama is a mentalist with the ability to read their responses and determine their honesty and worthiness to undertake the quest. If he deems them worthy, he will direct them through an underground series of tunnels where they will meet a Sherpa guide to take them to the World Temple.

To add to the drama of the situation, the cult of the Red God could attack the temple just as the heroes are preparing to leave, requiring the monks to quickly secret the characters out.

If he does not deem the heroes worthy, he will refuse to help them further. He can be forced; as a Buddhist he is nominally pacifist, but he will repeatedly warn the characters that the unworthy are not welcome at the Well of the World, and their quest will be in vain.

THE MOUNTAINS

Travel in the mountains is long, difficult and treacherous. This might be a good time to call upon the rules for wilderness survival found on [pages 4-5](#). Having the Sherpa as a guide adds an additional +4 to any necessary survival rolls, and finding food will not be as difficult, as the guide is well-provisioned.

The Sherpa's name is Piao Zhao, and he is well-versed in survival. He also speaks very good English, though he sometimes trips up attempting to use common colloquialisms (though he makes a valiant effort to do so anyway!) He is a good-natured sort, very inquisitive but quite willing to shrug off any refusal to answer his questions. He seems joyful, detached and somewhat mischievous, a true Buddhist.

PIAO ZHAO: *(This fourth-level NG human raider has vital stats HD 4d10 (22 hp), AC 16, Mv 30 ft. His Primary Attributes are Strength 14, Dexterity 16, Intelligence 16. He attacks with Rifle for 2d8+6, revolver for 1d8, or sword for 1d8. His special abilities are cryptolinguist, disguise, legend lore, scale, survival, traps, resist elements, favored weapon (sword)).*

The mountain carries dangers beyond the elements, however. The Cult of the Red God has spread its vile influence throughout the Himalayas and the mountains are haunted not only by cultists but by undead of varying types. These can attack at any time, depending on how difficult the GM wishes to make the trek. In addition, the heroes will discover yet another creature of myth and legend is more real than they ever imagined.

THE LAIR OF THE YETI

About halfway into their mountainous trek, the characters are overtaken by a vicious snowstorm. Vicious, icy winds whip about them and the snow stings their skin in whiteout conditions. While trapped in the storm, characters suffer -4 to all at-



tacks and checks, and are blind (AA). Zhao leads them on boldly; survival checks by him and any raider in the group can keep everyone relatively safe from the horrific conditions.

After what seems like an eternity, Zhao finds a deep cave in which the heroes can take shelter from the storm. Upon entering, however, they find a nightmare scenario. Bones are scattered about the place, stripped clean with many broken and the marrow sucked out. A few baubles and trinkets are scattered about randomly: pocket watches, cooking sets, furs and skins, knapsacks. There really isn't much of value to be found—at best the characters might find a sword or firearm which will have a 50% chance of being rusted or corroded beyond use.

Not that it matters, because as soon as the characters enter, a roar erupts through the area and from a chamber deeper in charges a gigantic, 9-foot-tall monstrosity covered in grayish-white fur, with a fanged, simian head and a body rippling with muscles that seems somewhere between a human and a great ape. A round later, a second creature joins the first, swinging their meaty fists in rage and hunger at the PCs. These are the legendary Yeti, and this mated pair does not appreciate their home being invaded.

Retreating into the snow is a bad idea; the Yeti have natural defenses against such weather and will simply follow the heroes into a combat where they will be at a serious disadvantage. If they wish to survive this, they will need to stand and fight.

YETI: *(These CN Humanoids have vital stats 5d8 HD (23 hp), AC 15, mv 40'. They attack by 2 fists (1d10 damage). Their special abilities are Immune to Cold, Stun, Vulnerable to Fire, Resistance to Bludgeoning.) XP: 394*

THE WORLD TEMPLE

At long last, after a perilous journey through the mountains, the characters come to the World Temple, where they are greeted by the monks, who do not seem at all surprised at their arrival. They will be immediately be escorted to the temple Llama, Tung Ren, who welcomes them and bids them be seated. Any arcanists or mentalists in the group will sense great power and serenity in the old man. He will silently acknowledge their power with a nod before he begins questioning the group.

Ren will calmly and gently, but firmly interrogate the group. He wants detailed information about

everything they have been through so that he can gauge their purpose and dedication. If Martika is with the group, he will recognize her as what he calls a "Mara" and be less inclined to be helpful to the group, unless they can justify her help to his satisfaction (and even then, he will warn them not to trust her). He may choose to put them through tests of worthiness which could be designed with lethal cunning.

In the end, the GM should not make gaining access to the Well of the World easy. If you have any puzzles or traps that you have always wanted to try on your players, this is the time to pull them out. Alternately, a trial by combat could be in order, pitting the players against Buddhist monks (treat as pugilists of roughly the same hit dice as the players) in melee (no firearms permitted) combat. The PCs would, of course, not be required to win, but only to fight honorably and show mercy in the end, though he will not inform the heroes of the victory conditions.

TUNG REN, LLAMA OF THE WORLD TEMPLE

Ren is a powerful seer and arcanist, and can be a great help to the characters or a roadblock in their efforts, depending on how they interact and engage with him. He is a holy man of great influence, and it is said that while he appears ancient, he is far older still than he looks. No statistics are given for Ren, because it is not intended that he engage in battle. If he takes part in the assault on the temple, he should be observed in the background, performing great feats of magic and martial arts that are stunning to behold. At very least he is an exceptionally powerful mystic, though he is bound to the temple itself and will not join the characters in their quest. As they have their duty to perform, so does he, and that is to guard the Well and tend his flock of acolytes.

If the player characters request, insist, beg, or become outraged at his refusal, he will send several monks to support their efforts, but no more than five or six. These monks could become invaluable allies in the final act.

THE ATTACK

If the heroes prove themselves noble and worthy, they will be granted access to the Well, with Ren himself offering his services to help them complete the consecration ritual. Only one person may enter the hall containing the well with Ren, however. This





person is escorted deep into the center of the temple, where they emerge into a garden that is one of the most beautiful sights they have ever seen.

In contrast to the rest of the mountain range, the garden is sunny, temperate and green. At the center rests an ornate well which simply exudes mystic power, so much so that even characters not sensitive to magic can sense it. It is a feeling of utter peace and serenity. Ren calls it “the Soul of the World.”

For arcanists, this is a place of power, a nexus point for the dragon lines that crisscross the world. Indeed, just about anywhere they go in the temple they will be on a dragon line (AA).

Unfortunately, during the ritual, which takes 1d4 x 10 minutes, the temple comes under concerted attack by a small army of the servants of Ornduhl. The monks and heroes fight valiantly to protect the temple while their comrades.

BUDDHIST MONKS: *(These 4th-level NG human pugilists have vital stats HD 4d12 (26 hp), AC 15, move 40ft. Their Primary Attributes are Dexterity 18, Constitution 15, Wisdom 13. They attack by unarmed attack (1d6 damage). Their special abilities are Down and Dirty, Tough as Nails, Deflect Missiles, Fast Movement, Roll with Fall) XP: 294*

(Some of the monks have Mentalist abilities as well. These include any two Basic Psionic powers. Some of these monks may have Intelligence instead of Wisdom as a Primary Attribute. These monks have an XP value of 384.)

RUNNING THE BATTLE

The battle should be run in rounds of 10 minutes' time. Largely speaking, it takes place in the background. The monks are all pugilists of mid-level ability, with some mentalists scattered amongst them, and are quite capable of defending against cultists and undead. Allow the player characters to engage in one or two epic battles, or give them ways to be involved such as helping to secure a rampart or rescuing a monk who is about to be

overwhelmed. The tide of battle can thus be represented by the roll of a d20 for each side, adding +1 or +2 to the Temple's side for each encounter at which the PCs succeed, and +1 or +2 to the Red God's side for each encounter at which they fail. The winning side gains +1 to the next round's check, cumulative. The battle is won when either side gains four victories in a row.

If the Cult wins, they overrun the temple, which the monks will destroy as they flee into the mountains. The heroes may be shocked to discover that the monks of the temple have wired the entire place with dynamite, which they are more than willing to set off to keep anyone from discovering the secret of the Well. If this occurs, not only is the temple destroyed, but a massive avalanche buries the entire site under hundreds of feet of rock, snow and ice.

If the monks win, they celebrate the day, but warn the heroes that it is now more imperative than ever that they complete their quest, for this dark cult will stop at nothing to gain control of such a powerful mystic resource as the Well of the World. They present the players with a shaft that perfectly fits both their combined consecrated stake and holy spear. Ren will then perform a ritual of seeing, and give them a talisman which he says will guide them on their way to their final confrontation with Altrus Farri.

The Llama will also perform a divination for the heroes, which gives them a glimpse into their future; this manifests as each player being granted one Divination Point that they can spend any time before the end of the adventure. This Divination Point can be used in any manner that a typical Fate Point could be used, but is not subject to the normal one-per-round limit for Fate Points so long as the player announces that this is the moment which Ren warned them may occur.

In the end, if they are successful, the players will depart with the newly-reassembled Spear of Destiny in hand and a talisman that will guide them to Altrus Farri's Fortress of Ornduhl.



ACT THREE: THE GREAT BATTLE

The heroes journey through the mountains and come at last to the Fortress of Ornduhl, where they face a great (but not unexpected) betrayal and confront the vampire lord Altrus Farri for the last time. But will they return to the world victorious, or find themselves cast across the gulf of space and time...?

ACROSS THE HIMALAYAS

Our heroes must now undertake yet another grueling trek across the mountains, following the talisman given to them by Ren. As with their prior journey, the GM can make this as time-consuming, difficult or easy as he likes, but their steps should be dogged by cultists, undead and other dangers.

It takes two weeks' journey through the mountains to find Farri's keep. Zhao will happily accompany the characters to aid them in their quest, and contribute his skills as needed. However, the characters will need to forage for food and survival, as Zhao brought only enough provisions for the journey from Lhasa.

If they choose to return to Lhasa, they can resupply but this will add at least a week to their journey as they will need to descend and then re-ascend and find the path again. In addition, they do not know how far the journey will be at the outset (they have no way of knowing it is a three-week trip, just by following the pull of an amulet). Thus, they will have no idea of how many provisions to buy.

THE FORTRESS

The characters will see the fortress several days before they arrive. It is a walled structure with a gigantic, twisted central spire that stabs the sky like a great kris-bladed sword. The nearer they get to the structure, the more blighted the land becomes. The snow clears to leave behind a frozen, bleak landscape of cracked stone, positively infested with undead. They will certainly encounter more squires of Orndahl here, some culled from the local populace, others drawn from other realms, though the characters will have no idea how they got here.

If Martika is with the party, having joined them at some point in the past, she can give them an idea of the palace's layout and the disposition of Farri's forces (there is a small army available at his command and it grows daily). She will also inform the heroes that while Farri calls it the "Homeless House," it is not yet the fortress of Ornduhl, though

if Farri manages to open the portal at the heart of the place, the Red God's power will be unleashed upon the world. He is only one step away, and the heroes must stop him before he completes his vile ritual. She does not know what the final stage is, as he has played that very close to his chest, but she knows he is ready to perform the ritual.

THE TRUTH ABOUT MARTIKA

Martika, like a proper demon, has been filling the heroes with half-truths this entire time. What she told them about wanting to be freed from Farri's control is true. That she is under his control so long as he holds her true name is also the truth. However, Farri, to ensure her continuing cooperation, has cast a binding spell that does not permit her to return to her home world on her own. The dimensional portal that he is creating in the Homeless House fortress will allow her to step into her homeland and release her from the spell. The truth is, the spear that the heroes are carrying is not only a bane to Farri, but is also the key the vampire needs to open the portal. Martika is manipulating them all into place like pieces in a chess match, in hopes of taking control of the portal for herself.

THE TOWER

In order to reach the portal and defeat Farri, the group must somehow breach the walls of the fortress, make it to the central tower, and reach the top, where sits the spire of the world. Much like the Vienna heist, this will be a feat of serious difficulty, made all the more so because Farri knows they are coming.

However, keep in mind that the vampire *wants them to reach him*. They are carrying a weapon that can destroy him, yes, but the very same spear is the final piece to the puzzle of freeing Orndahl into the world. The portal itself will create a bridge between the Earth and the world of Aihirde, onto which Orndahl will be able to step and travel from one world to the other.

As the characters and any allies they have gathered at last enter the Portal Chamber, they will find Altrus Farri waiting for them, along with at least a dozen soldiers—squires of Orndahl, wights, shadows, vampire spawn and human acolytes. If Martika is not with the party, she stands at his side in her true form.

Farri will welcome them to his inner sanctum and



bid them to hand over the staff. He is not above gloating about how he has led them here from the first moment the met in the Temple of the Red God, so long ago, nor in revealing that the spear is the key to open the portal. If the characters do not give it to him, he will take it from them. He will, when they inevitably refuse, finger a talisman that hangs around his neck and say, “Martika, my love...fetch me the key.”

INTERRUPTING THE SOLILOQUY

There is nothing players love more than interrupting a villain’s soliloquy by attacking prematurely. In this case, however, such an effort will fail to catch the vampire off guard. His minions, all of whom have been holding their actions, will immediately intercept the attacker, and combat will begin.

Martika will go stiff for a moment, her eyes will turn as red as fire...and she will attack for the key. From this point on, it’s a full-on melee as all of the creatures assault the characters. Every so often Martika will briefly come back to herself and beg the PCs for help, to get and destroy the talisman. If they do so, she will regain control over her own actions, and join the fight on their side. Still, it will be no mean feat to get to Farri, who is surrounded by his minions.

The Talisman, however, can be targeted with a simple bullet to destroy it—it’s not a mystically indestructible artifact. Shooting the object will require striking AC 19—it is small and Farri is not exactly holding it up to be shot—but if the attack succeeds, it will shatter with a flash of red light, which will flow from the talisman into Martika. She will gasp, arch her back, face to the sky, and then relax, free of his control.

THE KEY

There are several ways this scenario can play out. Two of them involve the key being inserted into the portal opening, a gap in the wall of the room sized exactly for the spear. If Farri gets the spear, his next action will be to run for the wall to insert the spear and turn it.

If Farri does not get the key, but the battle goes badly for the heroes, as the characters are re-

peatedly beaten back by Farri and his minions (of whom there seems no shortage), Martika will, at a critical moment, request that the character who has the staff hand it to her. She can fly, she points out. If the hero hands her the staff, she will take flight...and plunge it into the wall, activating the shimmering portal to another world.

A vortex will manifest in the room, gale force winds that throw everyone and everything about. Each round, the PCs must make a Dexterity save to continue to act normally. This save begins at CL0 and rises by 1 each round. Failure means that the character is lifted into the air by the winds and if not somehow restrained or stopped, will be sucked into the portal the next round.

Finally, if the heroes are victorious and kill Farri, they have to face Martika, who is still intent on grabbing the staff and opening the portal for herself. If she succeeds, the situation will be similar to that above. When freed from Farri’s control, Martika will gain 4 hit dice (increasing her hit points to a total of 90 and her XP value to 2,850). Her goal, however, is to get home, just as she said, though she is not above taking any PCs with her, whom she has earlier enslaved to her will.

Even if she is defeated, Martika will, out of spite, grab the spear and hurl it into the wall as her final action, allowing herself to be drawn into the otherworld (and thus return to her homeland and resurrect), and possibly capturing the PCs as well.

WHAT, NO SPEAR?

If the characters have somehow failed to obtain the Spear of Destiny, or have failed to consecrate the stake, well, that’s partially why Farri has had minions following them this whole time. They have led him to the spear, and they have led him to the Well of the World. He will have managed to assemble the key, or whichever part the characters failed to obtain. This will require a bit more work on the part of the GM, but can make for an exciting final confrontation as the characters endeavor to close the portal by removing the key, or as they battle with Farri to be the first ones to assemble and use the spear for their own purposes.



DENOUEMENT

In which the heroes get no respect, or get far more than they ever bargained for...

HEROES VICTORIOUS

Assuming the heroes succeed in their task, they emerge from the tower to find piles of dust everywhere. There is not a whiff of mystic energy anywhere in the area, and not a sign of any undead. Any cultists and acolytes left are terrified and more than ready to surrender to the player characters, or flee into the mountains. When they return to Lhasa, they will find that nobody even noticed anything strange went on. Their activities in Baton Rouge have been scrubbed clean from news records, and even their government contacts (if any) will give them little more than a “good work” and a pat on the shoulder. It’s a thankless job, being a hero. But then, true adventurers don’t work for glory....

ALTERNATE ENDING

It is possible that one or more characters get sucked into the portal. The GM can rule, if he chooses, that before the portal closes, there is a great flash of light and when the heroes come to, they are face down on a grassy plain with splitting headaches. As they pick themselves up off the ground, they will see a man in ornate robes, chanting in a strange language, his hands raised towards a glowing blue circle in the sky. A surge of energy erupts from the man and the circle snaps shut. He then turns towards the heroes, a wizened and knowing smirk on his face, and says, “Dimensional portals. Nasty way to travel if you don’t know what you’re doing.” He points towards a frontier-looking settlement in the distance and says, “I’d head that way if I were you.” He turns to leave, then looks back over his shoulder at the characters and says, “And by the way, welcome to Blacktooth Ridge.”

The characters have wound up in the world of Aihrde!

TO BE CONTINUED...

This adventure is only the first part of our intended crossover between **Amazing Adventures** and **Castles & Crusades**. Watch for future adventure modules by Steve Chenault and Jason Vey that will further join the two, and reveal many more secrets and surprises about the connection between our world and the world of Aihrde!



APPENDIX: MONSTERS AND MAGIC

The monsters herein are excerpted from the *Amazing Adventures Manual of Monsters*, which contains well over 100 horrible creatures for your pulp game. We have included them here for those who do not own that book, and for your ease of reference. The sole exception is the Squire of Ornduhl, which is a brand new monster, created just for this adventure, and the Yeti, which is excerpted from the *Castles & Crusades Classic Monsters* sourcebook.

SQUIRES OF ORNDUHL

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1-10 **SANITY:** 1d4/1d6
SIZE: Medium **SAVES:** M
HD: 7d8 (32 hp) **INT:** Average to High
MOVE: 40 ft. **ALIGNMENT:** Chaotic Evil
AC: 15 **TYPE:** Undead

ATTACKS: 2 claws (1d4), bite (1d4) **XP:** 585+7 (809)

SPECIAL: Charm, Exalt, Embolden, Fascinate, Demoralize, Children of the Night, Damage Resistance (1/2 physical), Poison, Create Spawn.

These horrific creations are the undead servants of Ornduhl the Red God. Created from the exsanguinated bodies of normal human beings, initially by a dark ritual, they are irredeemable and evil in every way. Also called the Lonely Dead, they are constantly besieged by a feeling of emptiness that they can never fill, gaining brief respite from the hole in their hearts only when they kill for their lord. They carry with them all of the knowledge and skills of their prior life—including any class abilities (which increase their XP value accordingly). Still, these memories and skills are devoid of connection or emotion; there is no way to redeem a squire of Ornduhl by appealing to memories of their past lives. They are tragically sad and full of rage. They obey only the whims of their creator. Female versions of the squires are referred to as handmaidens.

COMBAT: The squires of Ornduhl are canny and clever; they seek to spread their numbers so their primary goal is to kill for their god. They will, however, retreat if they are outmatched. They will often attempt to use their natural abilities to their greatest effect, supporting each other while charming, fascinating and demoralizing their opponents and calling up on the beasts of the night to aid their efforts.

When their opponents seem at enough of a disadvantage, the squires will move in with their claws and teeth, seeking to inject the venom that will transform their victims into more of their brood.



EMOTIONAL MANIPULATION: squires have the abilities of sixth-level Socialites, save for Connected.

CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT: Squires are able to summon nighttime predators to their aid, having a special bond with these creatures. A squire can summon a swarm of bats, rats, or 3d6 wolves to their aid. This summoning can be done only once per day, but success is guaranteed. Summoned creatures arrive 2d4 rounds after being called for by the squire. These creatures obey the squire without question and remain until killed or released.

POISON: The claw and bite attacks of a squire of Ornduhl inject a venom that acts as a Type 4 Poison (see *Amazing Adventures*). The properties of this venom create one of the most unique features of the squires: they do not bleed. The venom in the system causes the victim's blood to boil and to evaporate, leaving a corpse that is completely exsanguinated but leaves no trace of blood behind.

CREATE SPAWN: If a character dies from a squire of Ornduhl's poison, they rise within 48 hours as a



new squire, entirely under the thrall of the Red God and his schemes. PCs raised in this fashion keep their normal Class Abilities in addition to those of the squire, and their Hit Dice replaces that of the Handmaidens, unless they are lower than 7th level, in which case they have a minimum of 7 HD.

SUCCUBUS

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1 **SANITY:** 1d4/1d6 (only upon revelation of true form)
SIZE: Medium **SAVES:** M
HD: 6d8 (27 hp) **INT:** High
MOVE: 30 ft., 60 ft. (fly) **ALIGNMENT:** Chaotic Evil
AC: 18 **TYPE:** Extraplanar
ATTACKS: 2 claws (1d4), bite (1d4) **XP:** 410+6 (530)
SPECIAL: Create Shadow, Drain Life, Improved Grapple, Rake, Spell like abilities

The succubus is a vile creature, an abomination of everything that is natural. Once human women whose lust and vanity were so great as to drive them to live depraved lives of manipulation, deceit, and even murder, these women are transformed upon their deaths into demons of the Deeper Dark: Succubi. For the rest of eternity, Succubi roam the mortal realms seeking to corrupt and debase men (and, in some cases, women), eventually devouring the souls of these people. The Succubus delights in nothing more than she does the absolute corruption of an innocent and has been known to take years or even decades to do so, feeding upon the misery and agony caused by the gradual change in her victim's nature.

The Succubus can be found in any part of the world, playing many different roles. They make excellent Madams in houses of ill repute. They often run opium dens and act if not as the heads of corporations, as the "power behind the throne," as it were, often maintaining a close bond with the corporate leaders of shadowy, powerful organizations. Their ability to drain the life of men, converting it into their own vitality, makes them powerful foes, and their high intelligence and canny nature allows them to develop resources unthinkable to most people. A succubus can be a dangerous foe indeed. Many may even have class levels added on to their base stats (adjusting their XP value accordingly)—Arcanist and Socialite are favorite classes of the Succubus.

In her natural form, the Succubus appears much as she did in life—generally a strikingly attractive female with pale skin and raven black or blood red hair. Her eyes are either jet black or deep crimson, and her lips the same shade. She has elongated, razor sharp ca-

nine teeth, diamond-hard, claw-like fingernails, and leathery bat wings extend from her back, enabling her to fly. From beneath her hair juts two small, rounded horns. In their natural form, Succubi prefer to be naked, to appear all the more shocking, and truly the contrast between the stunningly beautiful and the horrific otherworldliness makes the Succubus in her natural form a terror to behold.

In general, however, when encountered, the Succubus will be using her *Alter Self* spell-like ability to appear as a normal human female—often with very similar features to her own, but hiding her otherworldly attributes such as her fangs, black or red eyes, horns, and wings. Only when injured or in need of defending herself does the Succubus resume her true, horrifying form.

CREATE SHADOW: A succubus forever enslaves the souls of those victims she destroys through the use of her Drain Life power. These souls, she raises as Shadows (**Amazing Adventures**) under her absolute control. Defeating a Shadow under the command of a Succubus, destroys the soul forever...but some may argue that oblivion is a better fate than being enslaved to and hopelessly in love with a Succubus who has no more use for you save as a bodyguard or assassin.

DRAIN LIFE: When a Succubus wishes to exercise absolute control over her victim, or to drain their soul utterly, she mates with the victim. This mating can cause one of two effects, at the discretion of the Succubus:

The victim is completely dominated, as per the Charm Monster spell, save that the victim will be consumed by an all-abiding, passionate love for the Succubus, and this effect is permanent unless the victim makes a saving throw allowed by the Succubus commanding him to do something against his nature (as per the Charm Monster spell).

The victim suffers 2d10 damage to his Constitution score. If Constitution reaches zero, the victim is dead and cannot be brought back by any means, their soul forever destroyed. If the victim survives, Constitution damage is restored at the rate of 1d4 per day, but the Succubus can thereafter drain additional Constitution damage just by kissing the victim, at a rate of 1d6 per kiss. It is rare for a Succubus to kill from a kiss, however; she will always know how close the victim is to death, and will always wish to destroy the victim during the act of mating.

In either case, the victim may make a Charisma-based saving throw (CL 6) to resist the effect. Even



in the case of a failed save, if the victim survives initial Constitution damage, he may make a save every time the Succubus kisses him with the intent of draining further score. However, it should also be noted that the effects of the Succubus' drain life power are erotic and addictive. Indeed the pleasure gained when the Succubus mates with a victim or otherwise drains his life is nothing short of ecstatic.

For every point of Constitution drained from her consort, the Succubus gains 1d4 hit points. These gained hit points can raise her beyond her normal maximum. For this reason, some ancient Succubi maintain stables of devoted slaves who they drain slowly and regularly, leading them deeper and deeper into the dregs of corruption as the Succubus becomes ever more powerful. This is a dangerous game to play, as victims have been known to break the Succubus' hold over them, and destroy their erstwhile mistress when she least expects it.

The up side is that the Succubus has no real special damage or spell resistance, and can often be destroyed with lead or steel just like most mortal foes.

COMBAT: When revealed, the Succubus gives no quarter. She attacks viciously, attempting to latch on with both of her claws and tear at the throat of her victim.

Improved Grapple: If the Succubus hits with both claws, she automatically bites for an additional 1d4 damage—no roll to hit is necessary.



Rake: If the Succubus hits with both claws, after she bites, she tears away from the victim, dealing an additional 2d6 damage.

SPELL-LIKE ABILITIES: A succubus can use the following spells at will: *Alter Self*, *Clairaudience/Clairvoyance*, *Command*, *Darkness*, *Detect Thoughts*, *Emotion*, *Fog Cloud*, *Hypnotic Pattern*, *Influence*, *Sleep*, *Suggestion*

The Succubus in *Amazing Adventures*

There is a previous presentation of the Succubus in the ***Castles & Crusades*** sourcebook, ***Monsters and Treasure of Aihrde***. The version herein is very different from that one, is geared more towards the idea of a seductive, pulp demon, structured more along the lines of classical demonology (and yes, drawn from earlier RPG source materials). The author feels it more in line with the needs of this module, and with ***Amazing Adventures***. GMs should, however, feel free to use either presentation of the Succubus in their games, if they own the C&C book. Indeed, it may be that there are “subraces” of Succubus, that this breed of demon comes in different varieties and more variants could show up later in your game!

SWARM

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1 **SANITY:** 1/1d4

SIZE: Large group

SAVES: P

HD: 10d8 (45 hp)

INT: Low (animal)

MOVE: 30 ft., 40 ft. (if flying or swimming)

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

AC: 12

TYPE: Vermin

ATTACKS: Special

SPECIAL: Swarm (1d6/round), Alter Shape, Disease*, Poison*, Immunity to Physical Attacks*

XP: 600+10 (1050), 1050+10 (1500), 1200+10 (1650), or 1650+10 (2100)

*Not all swarms have this particular ability.

Swarms are dense masses of small creatures that would not be particularly dangerous in small groups, but can be terrible foes when gathered in sufficient numbers. For game purposes a swarm is defined as a single creature which takes up ten feet of space—gigantic hordes are actually composed of dozens of swarms in close proximity. A swarm has a single pool of Hit Dice and hit points, a single initiative modifier, a single speed, and a single Armor Class. It makes saving throws as a single creature.



Many different creatures can mass as swarms; bat swarms, centipede swarms, wasp swarms, locust swarms, rat swarms, piranha swarms, ant swarms and spider swarms are just a few examples.

COMBAT: In order to attack, a single swarm surrounds an opponent, who gets a single free attack on the swarm as a result. It can occupy the same space as a creature of any size, since it crawls all over its prey, but remains a creature that occupies a roughly ten-foot area.

ALTER SHAPE: Unlike other creatures, a swarm is shapeable. It can occupy almost any shape imaginable, and it can squeeze through any space large enough to contain one of its component creatures.

SWARM: A swarm inflicts 1d6 points of damage per round, automatically, to any creature that it currently surrounds. Once the swarm's hit points are reduced to half, this damage is reduced to 1d4. Reducing a swarm to zero hit points does not mean every creature in the swarm has been destroyed; rather, it means the swarm has been driven off or reduced to a level whereby it is no longer a viable threat.

DISEASE/POISON: Some swarms may have special abilities such as disease or poison, depending on the nature of the creature making up the swarm. This poison can range from a Type 1 to Type 5 poison, depending on the creature involved.

IMMUNITY TO ATTACKS: Killing a swarm is difficult; a base swarm has 10d8 hit points and depending on the size of the creature may be exceptionally difficult to fight with physical attacks. GMs should adjudicate this based on the individual swarm. For example, a school of piranha or a swarm of rats could potentially be fought off with physical attacks, while a swarm of wasps is unlikely to take much damage from swinging swords, and would require a cloud of toxin or perhaps fire to damage. If a swarm is unable to be affected by physical attacks, treat this as a Type 3 special ability on the monster experience points chart.

To damage swarms that cannot be damaged by normal physical attacks due to their size, a lit torch swung as an improvised weapon deals 1d3 points of fire damage per hit, while a lit lantern can be used as a thrown weapon, dealing 1d4

points of fire damage to all creatures in squares adjacent to where it breaks.

EXPERIENCE POINTS: Their XP Value is 600+10 for base swarms, 1050+10 for those with poison, 1200+10 for those unable to be affected by physical attacks, and 1650+10 for those with both poison and immunity to normal attacks.

YETI

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1 **SANITY:** 1/1d4

SIZE: Large (9')

SAVES: P

HD: 5d8 (36 hp)

INT: Low (animal)

MOVE: 40 ft.

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Neutral

AC: 14

TYPE: Humanoid

ATTACKS: 2 Fists
(1d10 each)

XP: 250+4 (394)

SPECIAL: Immune to Cold, Stun, Vulnerable to Fire, Resistance to Bludgeoning

The yeti is a mysterious creature living alone in the most desolate of arctic climes. They are tall, great creatures with snow-white fur. Their head is like that of a gorilla, but for its coloration. They are aggressive, territorial and ill-tempered. They thoroughly enjoy the taste of human flesh.

COMBAT: When attacking, the creature uses its great fists to pummel opponents. A successful hit incurs 1d10 damage. If a 20 is rolled on the attack roll, the victim must make a constitution-based save or be knocked unconscious for 2d4 rounds. Unconscious victims will then be automatically (no "to hit" roll needed) stomped by the Yeti, dealing a further 2d10 damage. The yeti cannot attack with its fist and stomp on the same round.

Cold-based spells have no effect on the yeti. It is, however, vulnerable to heat-based attacks and attacks using heat or fire will do 50% more damage than normal to the creature. Blunt weapons deal only half damage due to the thickness of the creature's hide and the blubber below.

The lair of the yeti will be littered with bones and the dead bodies of its past victims. These may be animal as well as human. Any items carried by past victims may be found here, but the yeti does not collect baubles or treasure.

The yeti speaks no discernable language.





THE CODEX SANGUINUS

This blasphemous tome of evil last appeared in Rome during the days of the emperor Nero, and vanished in the great fire of Rome, but is far more ancient than that. The book's origin reaches back at least 30,000 years to the Thurian Age (this particular volume is a somewhat newer copy, though still over ten thousand years old) and contains the stories and mythology of a lost deity of the Deeper Dark named Ornduhl the Blood God, also known as the Crimson Caliph and the Blood Imperator. It is dedicated to the rituals and worship of the cult of the Blood God. It is bound in blood-colored leather with golden hasps and a copper clasp holding it closed. The ink within is the brown of dried blood, and the thick, vellum pages have a smooth, unnatural feel to them. One wonders, when flipping through its pages, exactly what materials were used to create the bindings and pages...

The information within details the cult of the Blood Imperator. The Crimson Caliph, Ornduhl, seems to be the chief deity in a pantheon of ancient and evil gods dating back to the lost Thurian Age of mankind, when Atlantis and Thule warred for the fate of the world. It would seem that the cult of Thule was dedicated to the worship of this evil council of alien beings, while those barbarians of Atlantis worshipped deities closer to those known by mortal man in the following millennia. It references, in addition to the Crimson Caliph, deities such as the King in Yellow, the Gray Widow, the Violet Shade, the Emerald Sickness, and the Mid-

night Queen, amongst others. To those studied in the mythos of the Great Old Ones, the pantheon of the Blood God seems to be separate and distinct from that mythos, though the King in Yellow appears in both.

Other alien deities with names like Erde, The All-Father, The Shadow, and Unklar are named within this volume, and it references other, horrific alien worlds where the gods walk the land and deal directly in the affairs of mortals, where for many life is a daily struggle just to survive, where force of arms rules the day, and where strange species of myth and legend walk alongside humankind. Any raiders, arcanists, or scholars of myth and legend may theorize that this book could reference the origins of our own myths.

There are passages discussing gateways to and from these lands, and strange references to a world that lies alongside our own, forever in shadow and hidden in plain sight. It refers to this world as Aihilde, or "The White World."

The Crimson Caliph seems to be a deity of torture, pain, and the restless, lost dead who deals in necromancy and bloodletting. His cult believes that blood is life, and the taking of blood, especially through pain, is a path to true immortality and power. He is said, in times past, to have plotted against the other gods, and makes his home in a shadowy fortress called the Homeless House.

The Codex itself is full of blasphemous rituals, dark spells, and insights into the true nature of



the universe beyond that which can be quantified by the naked eye; merely skimming the book imparts a 1/1d4 SAN loss to the user, while detailed study inflicts 1d6/1d8 SAN loss, and a failed check means that the reader must make a Wisdom save at a CL of 25 or be converted to the cult of the Blood Emperor, and dedicated to the spread of his vile worship throughout the world, with an ultimate goal to return the cult to prominence amongst men, and return the dark gods of ages past to the world.

It is, however, useful to Arcanists as it contains references and in some cases formulae for spells of dark and powerful magic. In game terms, any spell that could reasonably be deemed a necromantic type spell, from Animate Dead to Cure Light Wounds, to Create Undead, can likely be found herein.

FLESHING OUT THE CODEX

The Codex Sanguinus, the spells it contains, and the pantheon at which it hints are directly tied to the default campaign setting for **Castles & Crusades**, and this adventure is designed as the first step in a crossover event between the two games. While the specifics of the Codex itself are not important to the overall adventure, some GMs may wish more information regarding what is contained therein.

In the forthcoming **Codex of Aihilde** is a section entitled “The Andanuth.” This section contains much of the mythology surrounding Ornduhl the Red God. References to the Gray Widow, the Violet Shade, the Emerald Sickness, and the Midnight Queen are invented whole cloth for this adventure and while they may be detailed later, are left to the GM to flesh out on his or her own. At the GM’s discretion, they could possibly be alternate titles by which ancient Earth peoples referred to some of the other deities detailed in the **Codex of Aihilde**, much as the Crimson Caliph and the Blood Emperor are Earthly titles for the Red God.

In addition, Troll Lord Games produces two excellent supplements for **Castles & Crusades** entitled

The Player’s Guide to the Haunted Highlands, and ***The Castle Keeper’s Guide to the Haunted Highlands***, both of which are compatible with **Amazing Adventures**, and which contain information regarding Necromancers, Necromantic Magic and Sacrificial Magic (HHPG) and a book called the Black Libram of Nartarus (HHCKG) which can flesh out the Codex.

The Black Libram of Nartarus can be used almost wholesale to flesh out the Codex, replacing Nartarus with Ornduhl—if you like, Nartarus can even become a different name for Ornduhl (an Earth name, perhaps), or an avatar of the same. Discrepancies between the two deities can be explained away by the Red God’s differing activities and focus on the two different worlds—Ornduhl had slightly different goals and/or methods on Earth than he did in Aihilde.

Further dark magics can be found in Troll Lord Games’ **Tainted Lands** boxed set, which could provide for an intriguing location for the dimensional portal located within the temple itself. Imagine your Raiders, Socialites, and Gumshoes suddenly transported to a dark land of fantasy and medieval technology, which is ruled by evils such as the Crimson Caliph. Such a land could hint at a darker world just beyond the horizons of the naked eye. Perhaps the Tainted Lands are a curtain between our world and the Deeper Dark of the Caliph’s pantheon—a border realm between Earth and Aihilde. Perhaps the denizens of the Tainted Lands are in fact the descendants of the ancient Atlantean/Thulian war. The possibilities are endless!

Finally, if you wish to keep your **Amazing Adventures** game completely grounded in our world, see the **Amazing Adventures Companion**, which includes rules for turning the arcanist into the occultist, a spellcaster whose magic is tied to the maddening energies of the Deeper Dark. The new spells in that book, and the rules for tying magic to corruption and sanity, could be the result of studying books like the Codex.



GM'S MONSTER REFERENCE

For ease of reference, here we have compiled all of the stat blocks for creatures encountered in this Episode, particularly in the case of monsters that appear multiple times throughout the module. Since the Temple of the Red God is haunted by—and littered with—such things as shadows, ghosts, ghouls, zombies, etc., it seemed appropriate to provide a quick reference to avoid page flipping on the part of the GM.

GENERAL MONSTER STAT BLOCKS:

ACOLYTES/CULTISTS OF THE RED GOD: (these 2nd-level NE humans have vital stats HD 2d10 (11 hp), AC 13, move 30 ft. Their Primary Attributes are Dex, Wis, Cha. They attack by pistols for 1d10 damage, knives for 1d4 damage, or Tommy guns for 1d12+2 damage. Their special abilities are Hide, Move Silently, and Spells: 12 MEP; 0-level: Dancing Lights, Ghost Sound, Influence, Prestidigitation; 1st-level: Bless, Command, Cure/Inflict Light Wounds, Invisibility to Undead) **XP:** 102

ALLIPS: (these undead have vital stats HD 4d12 (26 hp), AC 15, move 30 ft. (fly). Their primary attributes are Mental. They attack by Touch (ability drain). Their special abilities are Wisdom Drain, Babble, Madness, Darkvision 60 ft., Incorporeal. SAN 1d4/1d6) **XP:** 274

BUDDHIST MONKS: (These 4th-level NG human pugilists have vital stats HD 4d12 (26 hp), AC 15, move 40ft. Their Primary Attributes are Dexterity 18, Constitution 15, Wisdom 13. They attack by unarmed attack (1d6 damage). Their special abilities are Down and Dirty, Tough as Nails, Deflect Missiles, Fast Movement, Roll with Fall) **XP:** 294

(Some of the monks have Mentalist abilities as well. These include any two Basic Psionic powers. Some of these monks may have Intelligence instead of Wisdom as a Primary Attribute. These monks have an XP value of 384.)

GHAISTS: (these undead have vital stats HD 4d8 (18 hp), AC 17, move 30 ft. Their primary attributes are Physical. They attack by 2 Claw (1d4), Bite (1d8). Their special abilities are Stench, Paralysis, Ghoul Fever, Darkvision 60 ft., Vulnerability: Cold Iron. SAN) **XP:** 222

GHOSTS: (these undead have vital stats HD 10d8 (25 hp), AC 10d8 (25 hp), move 30 ft. Their primary attributes are Mental. They attack by Slam (life drain). Their special abilities

are Touch of Death, Frightful Moan, Telekinesis, Incorporeal. SAN) **XP:** 2,000

GHOULS: (these undead humanoids have vital stats HD 2d8 (8 hp), AC 14, move 30 ft. Their primary attributes are Physical. They attack by 2 Claw (1d3), Bite (1d6). Their special abilities are Paralysis, Darkvision 60 ft. SAN) **XP:** 46

PALACE GUARD: (These 3rd-level LN humans have vital stats HD 3d8 (13 hp), AC 15, move 30 ft. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by rifle for 2d8+4 damage, pistol for 1d8 damage, or saber for 1d6 damage. Their special abilities are Take 'em down as a 3rd-level gumshoe, climb, hide, move silently, case target and listen as a 3rd-level hooligan, embolden as a 3rd-level socialite.) **XP:** 164

SHADOWS (these undead have vital stats HD 3d12 (18 hp), AC 13, move 30 ft./40 ft. (fly). Their primary attributes are Mental. They attack by Incorporeal Touch (1d4). Their special abilities are Create Spawn, Strength Damage, Darkvision 60 ft., Incorporeal, Blend, Sunlight Vulnerability. SAN) **XP:** 104

SKELETONS: (these undead have vital stats 1d12 (7 hp), AC 13, move 30 ft. Their primary attributes are Physical. They attack by weapon (usually 1d6). Their special abilities are None. SAN 1d6/1d8) **XP:** 17

SNAKE MEN: (these reptilian humanoids have vital stats HD 2d8 (9 hp), AC 15, Move 30 ft., 40 ft. (swim). Their Primary Attributes are All. They attack by 2 claws (1d3) and bite (1d8) or by weapon (sword 1d8). Their special abilities are Alter Form and Tremorsense) **XP:** 33

THUGS: (These 2nd-level humans have vital stats HD 2d8 (8 hp each), AC 13, move 30ft. Their primary attributes are Physical. They attack by Pistol 1d8, Tommy Gun 1d12+2, or knife 1d4. Their special abilities are back attack, case target, hide, lingo, listen, move silently, as a second level hooligan.) **XP:** 60 each.

VAMPIRES: (these undead have vital stats HD 8d12 (48 hp), AC 20, Move 40 ft., 60 ft. (fly). Their Primary Attributes are All. They attack by Slam (1d6) or by weapon. Their special abilities are Blood Drain, Children of the Night, Dominate, Create Spawn, Energy Drain, Alternate Forms, Gaseous Form, Entourage, Electrical Resistance (half), Spider Climb, Vulnerability to Silver (double damage), Daylight Vulnerability (-4 to all attacks, checks and saves in direct sunlight)) **XP:** 2269



VAMPIRE SPAWN: (these undead have vital stats HD 4d12 (24 hp), AC 20, Move 30 ft. Their Primary attributes are Physical. They attack by Slam (1d6). Their special abilities are Blood Drain, Energy Drain, Regeneration 1, Electrical Resistance (half), Vulnerability to Silver (double damage), Daylight Vulnerability (-4 to all attacks, checks and saves in direct sunlight). If the controlling vampire is slain, the spawn becomes a full vampire with normal statistics.) **XP:** 1080

WIGHTS: (these undead have vital stats HD 4d12 (26 hp), AC 15, move 30 ft. Their primary attributes are Physical. They attack by Slam (1d6). Their special abilities are Create Spawn, Energy Drain, Darkvision 60 ft. SAN 1d4/1d6) **XP:** 224

ZOMBIE: (these undead have vital stats HD 2d8 (8), AC 12, move 20 ft. Their primary attributes are Physical. They attack by Slam (1d8) or grapple and bite (1d6 + 1d4/round—see special) or by weapon. Their special abilities are Slow, Feed. SAN 1d6/1d8) **XP:** 23

SPECIAL, UNIQUE, AND NAMED MONSTERS

BLACK PUDDING: (This ooze has vital stats HD 10d10 (55 hp), AC 3, move 10 ft. Its primary attributes are Physical. IT attacks by Acid (3d6). Its special abilities are Acid, Constrict, Split, Immunity (full): Cold and Electricity. SAN 1d8/1d10) **XP:** 2050

MARTIKA, THE SUCCUBUS: (this extraplanar demon has vital stats HD 6d8 (hp 72 – she has drained several males of their life essence over the millennia), AC 18, move 30 ft./60 ft. (fly). Her primary attributes are Mental. She attacks by 2 claws and a bite (all 1d4). Her special abilities are Create Shadow, Improved Grapple (automatic bite if both claws hit), Rake (af-

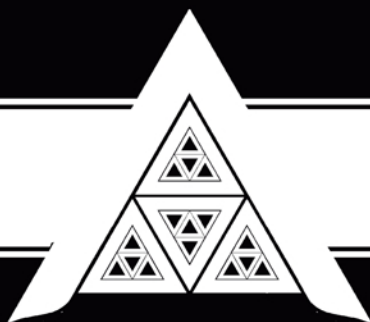
ter bite, extra 2d6 damage as she tears away), Life Drain (2d10 Con damage or love - requires mating, see p.43), spell-like abilities (at will): Alter Self, Clairaudience/Clairvoyance, Command, Darkness, Detect Thoughts, Emotion, Fog Cloud, Hypnotic Pattern, Influence, Sleep, Suggestion. SAN 1d6/1d8) **XP:** 600 (increased due to her increased hit points).

ALTRUS FARRI, HIGH PRIEST OF THE CRIMSON CALIPH: (This special vampire has vital stats HD 10d12 (65 hp), AC 20, move 40 ft., 60 ft. (fly), 20 ft. (climb). His primary attributes are All. He attacks by Iron Bastard Sword (+1 to hit, 1d8+4 damage) or Slam (1d6). His special abilities are Blood Drain, Children of the Night, Dominate, Create Spawn, Energy Drain, Alternate Form, Gaseous Form, Entourage, Electrical Resistance (half), Spider Climb, Vulnerability to Silver (double damage), Daylight Vulnerability (-4 to all attacks, checks and saves in direct sunlight).

He has all the abilities of a 6th level Wisdom-based Arcanist, and will have 50 MEP and the following spells prepared: (0-level): Blinding Flash, Detect Chaos/Evil/Good/Law, Detect Magic, Endure Elements, Message, Prestidigitation, Putrefy Food and Drink. (Level 1): Curse (reverse Bless), Command, Cause Light Wounds, Faerie Fire, Obscuring Mist. (Level 2): Armor, Charm Person, Darkness. (Level 3): Animate Dead, Cause Serious Wounds, Spiritual Weapon. SAN 1d8/1d10) **XP:** 4,535

Complete rules for Vampires can be found in **Amazing Adventures Manual of Monsters**, pages 76-78. The Succubus and Swarms will be detailed in the **Amazing Adventures Manual of Monsters**, but we have included them in the appendix at the end of this book for your reference.





"PULP: HARD-BOILED DETECTIVES, FEDORA-WEARING ACTION HEROES, AND STEAMPUNK GADGETEERS ROCKETING TO BATTLE WITH THEIR JET PACKS AGAINST BLOODTHIRSTY THULE CULTISTS OF THE THIRD REICH."

SOMEWHERE DEEP IN THE JUNGLE LIES AN ANCIENT TEMPLE, A TEMPLE BUILT BY A LOST CIVILIZATION AND DEDICATED TO A LONG-FORGOTTEN GOD. LIKELY A DEITY OF THE THURIAN AGE, TENS OF THOUSANDS OF YEARS BEFORE OUR TIME, THE RED GOD STILL SITS AT THE HEART OF THE TEMPLE, NOW DECREPIT, CRUMBLING, AND SUFFERING FROM YEARS OF NEGLECT... AN INTREPID GROUP OF ADVENTURERS ARE HIRED TO INVESTIGATE STRANGE GOINGS-ON IN THIS OLD TEMPLE. WHEN THEY ENCOUNTER AND STOP AN ANCIENT EVIL FROM RISING WITHIN, THEY THINK THE DANGER HAS PASSED. BUT THIS ENCOUNTER WITH THE ANCIENT AND ALIEN RED GOD ORNDUHL IS ONLY THE BEGINNING, AS A CULT ARISES WITH A SINGLE GOAL...

TO BRING ABOUT THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT AND USHER IN THE AGE OF THE BLOOD IMPERATOR. NOW, THESE SAME HEROES ARE ALL THAT STAND BETWEEN CIVILIZATION AS WE KNOW IT, AND A CRIMSON TIDE OF BLOODSHED, CHAOS, AND DESTRUCTION. ARE YOU UP TO THE CHALLENGE? WILL YOU BOW BEFORE ORNDUHL OR TAKE A STAND AGAINST THE RISE OF THE RED GOD?



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