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# Adventure Background

Balack Giolan, a member of Friula's bibliotori, has long been intrigued with the odd women working the Ghostlight Reef, extracting its hallucinogenic dream coral and delving its depths—places his own hardened mercenaries fear to explore—to secure the ebonsrib squid-ink for trade for blood and bone. For some time, he's been scrying upon their leader, Hislargat, trying to gauge her true purpose among the reef, which is known to hide vast treasures from ancient cities lost to the cataclysm that long ago shattered the shores of the golden coast. His curiosity recently paid off. His scrying revealed the strange red-skinned creature's companions had uncovered several chests from the dangerous waters over a week ago. The chests contained several intact tomes and other treasures. Seeking to gain the ancient items for himself, he hires a group to discreetly recover the objects from a Hislargat's island base.

The reef tenders, red hags from Verryane, have been searching the waters for over a century, looking for the lost palace of their former queen, Arligathas, who collected vast knowledge and many artifacts within her city of Talitheos. A cataclysm sunk the island city many ages past. Blood Mother Margase, an ancient and powerful red hag druidess from Ver-

WHAT'S A "STRONGER TABLE?"

Groups with six players, or with an Average Party level (APL) of 7, should be considered a "stronger table" for convention situations. An APL8 table should only use the higher CR encounters in the recommended convention sequence.

### FOR CONVENTION PLAY

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Use these recommendations for convention play:

- 1. Add in "Introductions and the Streets of Friula"
- 2. In Part One, when approaching the reef, the party encounters either the aboleth or the chuul, but not both.
  - \* For stronger tables apply the advanced template to the chuul, or give the aboleth an additional 4 skum raiders (*Pathfinder Bestiary 1*). (CR 8)
  - \* Very strong tables might simply face both the chuul and the aboleth in a single encounter. (CR 9)
- 3. In Part Two, when approaching the ziggurat, the party encounters the worgs, the grass cloakers, or the giant eagles.
  - \* Use the worgs if the group simply marches inland. (CR 7, 4 creatures)
  - Use the cloakers if the group attempts a stealthy approach, but change the number appearing to 4. (CR 7, 4 creatures)
  - \* Use the giant eagles if the group flies to the ziggurat or otherwise evades the first two options. (CR 7, 4 creatures)
  - \* If the players seem to need additional challenge, consider increasing the number of foes in each encounter to 6, and make these CR 8 encounters.
- 4. In Part Three, do not have additional hags in the ziggurat unless directed by the strength-scaled encounters below. Hislargat has either sent them to acquire new servants after having sacrificed the old ones, or left only her trusted lieutenant to remain behind and help her as she studies the tome. For the encounter within the ziggurat, use the following:
  - \* For weaker groups, room Z14 is occupied by two red hags (CR 8). The blood weird ritual has failed.
  - \* For most groups, room Z14 is occupied by one hag (Hislargat), a blood weird and a yeth hound. (CR 9)
  - \* Strong parties find room Z14 occupied by Hisgarlat (Advanced blood hag stats) and a blood weird. (CR 9)
  - If they require further challenge, add one more red hag, (CR 9+, 8,800xp ), or a red hag and a yeth hound. (CR 10)

Convention play usually accommodates three combat encounters in a 4-hour slot with roughly three and a half hours of playing time. Adjust accordingly. This adventure has sandbox-like aspects which could distraction a party. Keep the island's ziggurat the group's focus with an impending storm which will drive their vessel out to sea and leave them at the mercy of the returning red hags.

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rayne, tasked them with finding the staff of Arligathas. It is one four items she needs to complete her quest for godhood.



The adventurers must brave the dangerous Ghostlight Reef and its inner Dead Man's Ring, home to kelpies, giant squid, and a coal-black aboleth the locals call Dark Willy. Once past the reef, the PCs must locate Hislargat's island; bypass the island's prowling worgs; sneak past the dangerous grass cloakers guarding the clearing in front of the ziggurat, and avoid the ziggurat's giant eagle aerial guardians; and then infiltrate Hislargat's ziggurat.

If the PCs fail, they become just another blood sacrifice to Hecate, the dark force the red hags venerate.

# Adventure Hook

The adventure assumes the PCs receive a job offer from Balack Giolan, one of the openly ruling bibliotori in Friula, to acquire the ancient tomes the reef tenders have uncovered. He offers up to 15,000 gp for their recovery, and provides the party with a *wand of cure light wounds* (25 charges) to help them survive the dangers. Alternately, the PCs might be members of this organization and have learned of the reef tenders' discovery themselves.



The stone spires of Friula thrust skyward over the shore, casting their shadows over a massive barrier reef. In Old Verrayne, the wealthy and powerful luxuriated in private keeps along the golden coast, stretching from Friula to Capleon in the South. The great mystic orders built their monasteries on these quiet waters, undisturbed by imperial roads.

When the cataclysm that destroyed Caelmarath and seven other Magocracies shattered the shores of the golden coast, only Friula remained. Though it was not unscathed, exiles and refugees poured into Friula and took up residence in ancient towers abandoned by the elves. Soon after, a few dared to explore the ruined coast, abandoned keeps, and monasteries, bringing their treasures back to Friula. Within a decade, Friula housed more books, scrolls, and records than any city outside of the Magocracy and the temples of Thoth- Hermes.

Friula's great wealth of knowledge has attracted scholars, arcanists, and secret-seekers from all corners, and with this success has come great suspicion from its neighbors. A city of exiles and refugees that invites Mahroti arcanists to trade tomes – and allows ships of the Magocracy safe harbor! – cannot help but unnerve Verrayne and Trombei.

# The Bibliotori

A closed, cabal of collectors called the bibliotori rules Friula. While they guard the city's repositories of books and scrolls, they also compete tirelessly to expand their own private collections. Entry into the cabal is by invitation and extended only to those who can add substantially to the cabal's collections.

No one knows the exact number of bibliotori, but currently 12 members serve openly to administer Friula's government and act as diplomats. In addition to the powers of government, the bibliotori work closely with rogues and various guilds to expand their collections and to spy on their enemies.

The bibliotori do not control the Great Library and often find themselves in conflict with Keeper Lynnean and with Ulsavus the Golden Voice, the bardic loremaster. Ulsavus is not afraid to speak out and use his popularity to raise the public ire when the bibliotori cross his wishes.

# The Ghostlight Reef

The Ghostlight Reef shimmers incandescently, pulsing gently beneath the waters surrounding Friula. Sailors must navigate a narrow channel to reach the city's quay, or watch the tides and approach along the shore. Many sailors are lured to their doom by beautiful kelpies, or pulled under by giant squid that inhabit the reef. While sailors call it the Ghostlight Reef, the red hag tenders of the reef know it by a more ancient name: Tholeachrus.

For centuries, elves and humans alike have made



sacrifices to the reef, adding blood and bone to its ancient structure. None remember why. The reef extends deep into the earth. Some say it touches another world, and that it is a conduit between planes.

Sailors spin a lot of wild tales—especially about Dark Willy, the reef's resident aboleth—but what is known is that the tenders of the reef harvest dream coral, a powerful hallucinogenic drug, and ebonsrib, a highly poisonous squid-ink. When enchanted, ebonsrib produces an indelible, deep black valued in glyph and ink magic.

The reef also provides the city of Friula with an abundance of fish and the makings of the valuable Friulan scarlet dye.

# Red Hags

Also known as blood hags, red hags are the most cunning and longest living of the hags. Their crimson-colored skin is leathery, and their facial features are sharp, with high foreheads, pointed ears, and long noses. Unlike their hag kin, they are not horrid to look upon, and some have even been considered oddly comely in their own right.

Red hags are more sociable than their kin, and even live in small communities of 200 or more. In ancient times, they settled together in larger clusters, ruling small cities throughout Old Verryane. They have a deep connection with all elements of nature, and often make their homes in deep forests, caves, or along coastlines.

Red hags are known as blood hags because they crave humanoid blood. Like vampires, they can directly drain this from victims (done through their claws), benefitting from the victim's life source just as vampires. Red hags participate in blood sacrifices, perform ritualistic blood magic, and venerate Hecate. They all answer to a hierarchy, of which the current leader is Blood Mother Margase, an ancient druidess of Verrayne.



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#### RED HAG

### **XP** 2,400

NE Medium monstrous humanoid Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +18 Aura siphoning aura (30 ft., DC 17) CR 6

#### DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 17; (+3 Dex, +8 natural) hp 66 (7d10+28) Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +11 Defensive Qualities SR 18

#### OFFENSE

- **Spd** 30 ft., swim 30 ft.
- **Melee** 2 claws +11 (1d4+5)
- Special Attacks blood drain
- Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th)
- At will—summon monster I
- 3/day: charm monster, summon monster III
- Spells Prepared (CL 7th; concentration +13)
  - 4th—dispel magic, flame strike (DC 20)
  - 3rd—call lightning(DC 19), cure moderate wounds, greater magic fang\*
  - 2nd—barkskin, flame blade, flaming sphere (DC 18), heat metal (DC 18), warp wood (DC 18)
  - 1st—cure light wounds, endure elements, entangle (DC 17), faerie fire (DC 17), jump, longstrider
  - 0—detect magic, flare, mending, resistance \*already cast

#### STATISTICS

Str 19, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 18, Wis 22, Cha 13
Base Atk +7; CMB +11; CMD +24
Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Great Fortitude, Intimidating Prowess
Skills Bluff +6, Craft (alchemy) +13, Craft (sculpturing) +10, Diplomacy +7, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (nature) +11, Intimidate +13, Perception +18, Sense Motive +9, Stealth +10, Swim +14; +8 racial bonus to Swim
Languages Common, Giant
SQ amphibious

#### ECOLOGY

#### Environment any

**Organization** solitary, coven (3 red hags), hags are the more sociable of the hags and convene in small communities

Treasure double

ALL HANKS

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Blood Sense (Su)** A red hag's claws are barbed and contain hollow needles within. A red hag can use them to suck blood from a grabbled opponent; if the red hag establishes or maintains a pin, it drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution damage. The red hag heals 5 hit points or gains 5 temporary hit points for 1 hour (up to a maximum number of temporary hit points equal to its full normal hit points) each round it drains blood.
- Siphoning Aura (Su) Red hags can radiate an aura in a 30-foot radius as a free action that causes a creature to bleed from its mouth, nose, eyes, and ears. Affected creatures must succeed on a DC 17 Fortitude save each round or take 1 point of Constitution damage from blood loss. Once a successful save is made, targets cannot be affected by an individual hag's aura for 24 hours. The save DC is Constitution-based.
  Spells A red hag casts spells as a 7th-level druid, but cannot substitute prepared spells to cast summon spells.

# Introductions

This adventure takes place along the Friulan coastline. To get to the reef tenders' island, the characters must first bypass the dangers of Ghostlight Reef and Dead Man's Ring.

For convention play, it begins in Friula, where the party is hired for its task...

#### INTRODUCTIONS AND THE STREETS OF FRIULA

Gathered for various reasons in the city-state of Friula, the PCs receive an invitation to Balack Giolan's home. Giolan is one of the city's 12 rulers, all of whom are known members of the cabal of bibliotori (See Bibliotori page 5). Once the PCs arrive in Giolan's luxurious mansion, his servant brings them to Giolan's personal study, where they are seated before his mahogany desk. Balack is a finely dressed, railthin, dark-haired man with a pointy beard and odd purple eyes. Read the following:

"Greetings. I've invited you here because you have a well-earned reputation for tackling dangerous tasks discreetly and--most importantly--successfully. I am in need of such services, and will pay handsomely for you to acquire certain items that have recently come to my attention. Before I proceed with the information, I must request your secrecy in this offer and its details, as I do not wish competition in acquiring them. Do you swear me that, one and all?"

Giolan pushes a black book across his desk and motions for them to swear upon it. Its title reads, *Balfour's Book of Binding Oaths*. Internally, the book is filled with gibberish, but outwardly it detects as magical, emitting a strong enchantment aura (thanks to a *magic aura* spell). Giolan does not allow anyone to study it closely. The PCs feel a tingling wash over their hands as they swear the oath, but otherwise feel no different.

"Good. Good. 1 appreciate your professionalism. Recently, the reef tenders in Dead Man's Ring, a most dangerous part of the Ghostlight Reef, have recovered some chests from the sea, some of which contain ancient books and scrolls. These are the items 1 seek. I have no further information about them, but do know they hail from one of the lost cities now lying upon the ocean floor. The reef tenders have since ferried these treasures on their island home, and I wish you to infiltrate their home and bring them to me. I'm offering 10,000 gp."

If the PCs ask questions about the reef tenders or their island, Giolan knows little about them, other than they've worked the reef as long as anyone recalls. They are secretive and good at culling things from the sea, including squid ink and dream coraland lost treasures. If the PCs need a boat, he recommends they negotiate with Captain Lymie Jamus at the docks (Diplomacy 18 check and at least 350 gp), who owns the sloop, *The Second Star*. He also says they may gain more information about the reef and the reef tenders from the sailors frequenting the dockside taverns (See Part One: The Ghostlight Reef for information checks).

After learning about Dark Willy (see page 6) and his proclivities, if the party desires, they can find a number of tales, bards, and playhouses in Friula with



a Diplomacy (gather information) check, DC 25. Every 100gp spent reduces this DC by 3.

This bulk of this adventure takes place along the Friulan coastline. To get to the reef tenders' island, the characters must first bypass the dangers of Ghostlight Reef and Dead Man's Ring. Once the party is done with their business in Friula, proceed to **Part One: The Ghostlight Reef** 

# Part One: The Ghostlight Reef

If the characters attempt to use Diplomacy (gather information) to learn about the Ghostlight Reef and Dead Man's Ring while in Friula or elsewhere along the coast, consult the following skill table for lore. While characters are traveling near the Ghostlight Reef, they have a 20% chance of encountering one of the following wandering monsters per half hour. Once they are within Deadman's Ring, add +6 to the roll, as they are bound to encounter Dark Willy or one of his minions:

### GHOSTLIGHT REEF WANDERING MONSTER TABLE

ROLL (1D10)	CREATURE
1-3	Giant squid, Pathfinder RPG Bestiary
4-5	Kelpie (1d4)
6-7	Sharks (1d4+2), Pathfinder RPG Bestiary
8-9	Dark Willy's chuul minion, <i>Pathfinder</i> <i>RPG Bestiary</i>
10	The aboleth Dark Willy (see A1)

### GHOSTLIGHT REEF LORE TABLE

SKILL	DC	BENEFIT
Diplomacy (gather information)	< 5	It glows. Other than that, you can't find out anything about the Ghostlight Reef
	5	A sea creature called "Dark Willy" claims the Ghostlight Reef and Dead Man's Ring. Kelpies and giant squid also inhabit the area.
	10	Dark Willy is an aboleth who has several kelpies working for him.
	15	Dark Willy has a chuul pet.
	20	The red-skinned reef tenders are some type of sea hag relative.
	25	Dark Willy will grant you passage for a good secret. A bard claims to have befriended Willy with a rendition of scenes from a popular Friulan play he'd been performing in.
	28	The reef tenders are a blood-sucking race called the red hags.
	30	The ancient city Talitheos lies somewhere out beyond the reef. It is rumored to yet contain many treasures, both magical and mundane.
Knowledge (local)	< 5	All local Friulans know about Dark Willy, and why he has that name.
	10	The unusual reef tenders accept blood in exchange for their ink, dyes, or dream coral. They do not accept animal blood, however. No one knows what they do with it.
	15	The reef tenders live on an island within Dead Man's Ring. A cataclysm destroyed some very rich cities out beyond the reef. Treasure hunters are always diving for loot; most find their deaths instead.
	20	The reef tenders also accept slaves in payment for their goods.

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# A1. NAVIGATING THE GHOSTLIGHT REEF & DEAD MAN'S RING (CR 3-5)

Glowing rocks jut up from the ocean, making passage here quite dangerous. Beyond the barrier's Friulan edge, you can see an interior coral ring the locals call the Dead Man's Ring. The best dream coral lies within its realm, and sunken treasures are said to abound in the waters below it. Getting there is, of course, the problem. Only the odd, red-skinned reef tenders dare to travel there.

### **ROCKY REEF HAZARD (CR 3 OR 5)**

This area houses a reef barrier. Sailors attempting to clear the area must bypass the sharp coral rocks protruding at various heights both below and above the waterline. Sailors navigating the Ghostlight Reef must succeed at three consecutive Profession (sailor) checks at DC 15, moving at half speed, to safely clear the reef. If no one in the group has this skill, allow the players to roll for the crew and use a Profession (sailor) skill of +6.

Movement faster than 1/2 speed causes a -4 penalty per <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> increment (being -8 at normal speed) and reduces the number of checks necessary by one. Sailors failing by 5 or more on any attempt ground the boat, causing 2d6 points of hull damage. Rolling a 1 on this check punctures the boat (assume a critical hit), and it begins taking on water. If the boat becomes grounded, the PCs need to make a DC 15 Strength check to dislodge it. The chuul is most commonly found in this area and arrives if the boat becomes grounded.

Deadman's Ring is more dangerous, and requires three Profession (sailor) checks be made at DC 18. If no one in the group has this skill, allow the players to roll for the crew and use a Profession (sailor) skill of +6. Additionally, speeds greater than 1/2 movement through this area cause a -3 penalty per <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> increment (being -3 at three-quarters speed and -6 at normal speed). Increasing the speed of the boat reduces number of checks necessary by 1 per <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> increment. The rocks here cause 2d6+2 damage. The aboleth often lurks in this region and arrives if the boat becomes grounded.

### DARK WILLY AND HIS MINIONS (CR 7+)

The aboleth Gorzilokith is the self-proclaimed master of the Ghostlight Reef. The local sailors call the coalblack, thin, tubular-shaped creature "Dark Willy"—a derogatory term reflecting the male body part his head and his long, thin body resemble, especially when he is mostly submerged. For this reason, the creature is always referred to as a "he."

Gorzilokith is aware of this ridiculous name the sailors have dubbed him/her, and so the creature enjoys eating them, Intimidating or dominating them, or merely crashing them to their deaths with illusions. Of course, a few folks know about Dark Willy's penchant for secrets and love of entertainment. (The sea can be so very lonely at times, after all; the creatures he associates with just don't have much culture to speak of and are mostly boring). Characters with such knowledge can attempt to gain safe passage from him for a trade. Above all, Dark Willy most values secrets about the bibliotori. However, entertainment will do in a pinch. Dark Willy especially enjoys scene recitals from current-running plays (though being told the story behind the play in an enthralling manner suffices). Additionally, he can be serenaded with popular Friulan songs. The GM should allow players some leeway with whatever entertainment they attempt. Dark Willy is very fickle, though, so only a DC 20 check at Perform (act, oratory, sing, or the like) gains the PCs unhindered (one-way) passage. He requests at least two performances for passage.

ABOLETH, HP 84, PATHFINDER RPG BESTIARY
P. 8; DARK WILLY HAS HALLUCINATORY TERRAIN
AT WILL INSTEAD OF ILLUSORY WALL.
MINIONS (1D8 NEARBY KELPIES) HP 38,
PATHFINDER RPG BESTIARY 2, P. 172; 1
CHUUL, HP 85, PATHFINDER BESTIARY P. 46

**TACTICS**: Dark Willy uses his spell-like abilities to harass sailors navigating the reef. With hallucinatory terrain, he creates images of clear passages in areas of extreme danger, or blocks otherwise safe passages with rising rocks. He has a programmed image of himself rising up menacingly out of the water whenever a boat passes Dead Man's Ring's entrance. Seeing this image usually causes the crewmen to waste a few rounds of spells and missile weapons. The subse-



quent noise alerts Dark Willy to the visitors' arrival, whereupon he may choose to send a *projected image* of himself instead of torturing the crew in person. The image uses *dominate monster* against the crew. He may also call upon his chuul and kelpie minions to aid him, if necessary.

When the characters first see Willy (likely via the programmed image), describe him as such:

A menacing, tentacled beast rises from the sea. It has a sleek black, tubular-shaped body and a slightly bulbous head with red eyes. It lashes out with its tentacles and begins chanting something... From the looks of the creature, you can guess you've encountered the infamous Dark Willy.

# Part Two: The Red Hags Isle

After the PCs defeat or deal with Dark Willy, they can proceed to the red hags' island. Upon reaching it, the characters have a 30% chance of encountering one of the following wandering monsters per half hour. The further the characters enter the forest, subtract 6 from an encounter's d10 roll (meaning the characters are more likely to encounter the guardian worg):

### **ISLAND WANDERING MONSTER TABLE**

ROLL (1D10)	CREATURE
1-6	(See "Guardian Worg")
7	1d6 wights, Pathfinder RPG Bestiary
8-9	Basidirond (1d2), <i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary</i>
10	Quickwoods, <i>Pathfinder RPG</i> <i>Bestiary 2</i>

### THE ISLAND

When the PCs manage to safely navigate Dead Man's Ring, read them the following:

Up ahead lies the three-mile-long, kidney-beanshaped island. A thirty-foot-wide channel cut in the coral-rock marches along the sea, guiding your boat toward the island's beach.

If the PCs stay in the channel, they arrive safely to the beach (unless encountering a wandering monster). Attempting to take an alternate route, subjects the PCs to more CR5 rocky reef hazards and doubles their chances of encountering wandering monsters. On a DC 25 Perception check during the boat's approach, the PCs spot smoke rising from the forest's center, and they can see the tip of a structure rising just above the trees.

## THE BEACH

Seaweed mars the beauty of the beach's white sand. A stack of 30 or more crab shells lie 10 feet up the shore, but there are no signs of a cooking fire. A set of deep, larger-than-man-sized footprints leads off into the woods ahead, and nothing but forest stretches before you.

An ogre fisherman left behind the crab shells. He preferred eating them raw, so he had no campfire. The ogre later met his fate at the hands of the island's prowling worgs when he went to the woods (his footprints) to relieve himself and be on his way into the forest's interior. The worgs consumed all but a few bones of him.

PCs can easily follow the footprints to the woods. Continuing to follow them into the woods requires a DC 15 Survival check. The worgs attacked the ogre just 100 feet into the forest, that area being a favored prowling ground for the worgs. As such, there is a 70% the characters encounter the creatures if they follow the path. On a Perception DC 18 check, the party members spot a large, bloodied bone just off the trail they are following.

The hags' skiff lies hidden beneath cut branches just 10 feet into the forest to the left of the ogres'

trail (Perception DC 20 to spot). They have not taken it out in a few days, as they have been busy preparing dye and poisons within their workshop. A few of their sisters are out to sea, further exploring the ruins they located.

### **GUARDIAN WORGS (CR 7)**

If the intelligent worgs have spotted the party traipsing about the island and have not themselves been seen, they first use their favored ambush tactic of pretending to be a humanoid calling out for help to lure the party to them. GMs should have the worg decoy emulate a raspy male voice (a lost sailor):

"Hello? Hello? Is anyone out there? I've fallen in a hole and broken my leg." He pauses. "Hello? Hello? I've been trapped on this accursed island for days, and now I've fallen in a hole. Help me! Please! Don't let the wights get me. Please!"

If the PCs try to ask him questions about who he is, then play along with the ruse and have him answer back until they arrive or refuse to fall for it. Either way, the worgs attack. With each response from the party, have the worgs make Stealth rolls. With two successes, the creatures are in ambush position and gain a surprise round.

Four large, dark-furred wolves standing four feet tall circle the party. The creatures are easily 350 pounds of pure muscle. Saliva drips from their maws.

These creatures can also appear as wandering monsters throughout the adventure. They travel in groups of four, and howl for other packs to join them if they become entangled in losing battles. They are friendly and loyal to the red hags, who often feed them exsanguinated bodies. The worgs know these particular red hags work directly for Blood Mother Margase, and that is very strong incentive not to reveal anything about the red-skinned women to the party. The worgs would rather die at the party's hands than at the ancient hag's.

#### ADVANCED WORG

**XP 800** 

NE Medium magical beast

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +13

CR 3

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, +4 natural hp 34 (4d10+12) Fort +7, **Ref** +8, **Will** +5

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft. **Melee** bite +9 (1d6+7 plus trip)

#### STATISTICS

Str 21, Dex 19, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 14 Base Atk +4; CMB +7; CMD 19 (23 vs. trip) Feats Run, Skill Focus (Perception) Skills Perception +13, Stealth +11, Survival +8; Racial Modifiers +2 Perception, +2 Stealth, +2 Survival Languages Common, Goblin

# Part Three: Approaching the Tiggurat

### Z. THE OUTER ZIGGURAT

Over 150 years ago, the red hags enslaved the island's monster population and forced the creatures to build this hilltop ziggurat temple for their thenruling priestess of Hecate. Hislargat came to the island 50 years later, after the priestess' demise, and she has since taken over its leadership, tasking the ziggurat's red hags to seek out ancient treasures for Blood Mother Margase, their reigning queen who resides in Verrayne. See page 17 for maps of the structure's interior.

The hill and temple rise a total of 120 feet from the forest's surface and rest in the center of a clearing. A grove of trees rings the hill's bottom at a distance of 25 feet.

This section on the ziggurat covers the outer ziggurat itself (**Z0**), the clearing (**Z0-A**), the hill (**Z0-B**), and the aerie (**Z0-C**).





When the PCs view the hill from the forest, read the following:

A rounded 60-foot-tall hill rests in the center of a grassy clearing beyond. A three-level ziggurat of tanned mud-brick rises from the hilltop, ascending another 60 feet high. The ziggurat ends in a flat, garden-covered rooftop with 15-foot-tall trees growing from it. Ivy and other vines cling to the upper level, and between each level lie well-tended gardens of trees, plants, and various herbs and flowers. Smoke rises from western side of the roof.

The ziggurat's bottom level stretches 130 feet wide, and its top level, the smallest, is 60 feet wide. Three sets of 20-foot-tall mud-brick steps climb the ziggurat at each level. Lush plants and red flowers flank the walled steps. If the PCs succeed at a DC 25 Perception check on viewing the ziggurat from the forest, add the follow-ing detail:

From the ziggurat's top to bottom, rivulets of red lines snake throughout its tan surface, appearing much like arteries. On the rooftop, a giant bird moves about the foliage.

The bird is a giant eagle, and the rooftop actually serves as home to an aerie of 4, two of whom are currently asleep (see area **Z0-C**). One giant eagle is Hislargat's trained pet, which remains alert for trespassers. If the PCs seem persistent about reaching the ziggurat, the pet squawks loudly to inform the red hags they have visitors (DC 15 Perception to be heard). The other eagles try to eat PCs.

**GM's NOTE:** If the characters are observing the ziggurat from the edge of the woods, then in the second round of observation, have them roll a



Perception check (DC 10). Alternately, you can have them roll this check when they come within 60 feet of the center of the clearing. On a success, they hear a curious buzzing noise. Successful listeners must then make a DC 14 Will check or become intrigued by the buzzing and begin moving to the clearing's center (likely within 12  $\frac{1}{2}$  feet of them from any edge of the forest. The grass cloaker flock is emitting the noise (see area **Z0-A** for more information).

### ZO-A. THE CLEARING (CR 9)

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Ankle-high grass grows like a thick carpet in front of the hill. The area is otherwise empty. Beyond the clearing lies a visible path up the hill.

Unless the characters use obscuring magic or great stealth to cross the open clearing, the rooftop eagle (area **Z0-C**) may notice them (Perception +15). The giant eagle alerts the other three eagles if the characters fly toward the ziggurat, whereupon the giant eagles fly out and dive-bomb the trespassers, pulling up just short of attacking them. Their intent is to warn the PCs away, but they fight if attacked. Any combat noise may alert the three red hags within level 1 (DC 15), one of which exits the secret door to check on the ruckus (if the PCs have a line of sight on the door, allows them a DC 20 Perception check to note this during their fight). See page 9 for locations

### **CREATURES**

The clearing is not as clear as it appears. Eight grass cloakers inhabit it, each marked with a C on the map. The guardian worgs are well aware of them, and skirt them whenever they must approach the hill, growling and howling during their advance to drown out the buzzing (giving them a +2 to their Will save). This is not always an effective method, so the worgs travel in close packs too large to easily engulf. The eagles also give the grass cloakers wide berth, flying above the reach of their buzzing.

Four cloakers reside near the clearing's center, and another four others rest closer to the trail's entrance, per the map.

#### GRASS CLOAKERS (8)

GRASS CLOAKER CR 3 XP 800 CN Large Aberration Init +8; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

#### DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size) hp 34 (4d8+16) Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +6

CR 9

#### OFFENSE

**Spd** 20 ft.

Melee bite +6 (1d6+4), tail slap +2 (1d8+2) Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft. (5 ft. with bite) Special Attacks engulf, entrancing buzz

#### STATISTICS

Str 19, Dex 18, Con 19, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14
Base Atk +3; CMB +8; CMD +22 (can't be tripped)
Feats Alertness, Combat Reflexes<sup>B</sup>, Improved Initiative
Skills Disguise +6 (+14 as grass), Perception +9, Stealth +11, Swim +11; Racial Modifiers +8 Disguise to appear as any type of outdoor surface, especially grass
Languages Common
SQ camouflage

#### ECOLOGY

**Environment** any temperate plains, forest, grassland; swamps and bodies of water

**Organization** solitary, pair, mob (3-6), or flock (7-12) **Treasure** standard

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Camouflage (Ex)** Since a grass cloaker looks like normal grass when at rest, a DC 20 Perception check is required to notice it before it attacks for the first time. Anyone with ranks in Survival or Knowledge (nature) or Knowledge (dungeoneering) can use either of those skills instead of Perception to notice the creature
- **Engulf (Ex)** A grass cloaker can try to wrap a Medium or smaller creature in its body as a standard action. The grass cloaker attempts a grapple that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and bites the engulfed victim with a +4 bonus on its attack roll. It can still use its whiplike tail to strike at other targets. Attacks that hit an engulfing grass cloaker deal half their damage to the monster and half to the trapped victim.

Entrancing Buzz (Ex) A grass cloaker can emit a curious



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infrasonic buzzing noise as a standard action that attracts living things within a 60-foot spread. Creatures hearing the buzzing for two consecutive rounds must make a Will save (DC 14), or the intriguing sound causes them to seek out and investigate its source, whereupon the grass cloaker attempts to engulf it.

Grass cloakers are immune to these sonic, mindaffecting attacks. A creature that successfully saves against the grass cloaker's entrancing buzz cannot be affected by that same creature for 24 hours. The Will save is Charisma-based.

The grass cloaker has a pancake-flat, circular body 10-15 feet in diameter, with multiple eyestalks placed at intervals around its circumference. It has a wide maw teeming with thin, needle-like teeth in the center of its upper side. The grass cloaker can mimic virtually any outdoor surface, from parched and cracked dirt with a scattering of rocks (partially retracted eyestalks) to windswept grasses.

Grass cloakers lurk in grassy areas, using their camouflage and entrancing abilities to catch unwary prey. A grass cloaker is almost impossible to distinguish from its surrounding terrain as it lies in wait for possible victims.

More than one grass cloaker can occupy a territory. When they do so, those without prey remain hidden, waiting for victims escaping their neighbors to stumble upon them in their flight. If multiple adversaries attack an isolated grass cloaker, nearby grass cloakers attempt to sneak up on the attackers and engulf them from behind.

### **TREASURE**

The grass cloakers have no treasure.

### **ZO-B. THE HILL**

A worn path meanders up the hill toward the ziggurat. Foliage and undergrowth grow heavily up the rocky hill and beside the path, but not upon it. The path leads to a set of walled, mud-brick, 20-foot-tall stairs...which lead to another set...and finally another.

The red hags keep the trail freshly marked to make passage easier for their unknowing sacrificial victims to enter the ziggurat. If their soon-to-be victims can survive the grass cloakers, then they are surely worthy of sacrifice, after all.

The trail's path is devoid of monsters, but the PCs may be overly wary after dealing with the grass cloak-

ers and the eagles. Be sure to play up their paranoia, requiring Perception checks every few minutes to encourage the mood.

### TERRAIN

Though the hill is rocky and thick with undergrowth, the provided trails allows for <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> movement rate.

# ZO-C. THE ROOFTOP AERIE (CR 7)

A small tree garden rings the top of the roof, climbing to a height of 20 feet. Somehow they are growing out of the ziggurat itself, but the mud-brick remains intact, not breaking from their roots. A large bird nest is visible between two of the larger trees.

In the center of the roof sits a 15-foot-tall, 20-foot-square wooden stand with a metal grating cover. Metal torch poles rest at either end of it. Below the grate lies a mud-brick cistern bearing red-black stains. A three-inch hole rests at its center. Hollow, metal tubes run from the cistern to the plants, as well. The trees growing on the rooftop are an unusual species that garners nourishment from blood, which the red hags supply to them via their rooftop blood rituals. The trees are normal plants, not monsters.

### **CREATURES**

If the PCs have not yet encountered the giant eagles, they can be found here. One rests in the nest with 3 good-sized eggs. Two others rest atop a nearby tree. The fourth, Hislargat's pet, sits atop the metal grate, picking at the remains of meat stuck between the bars.

GIANT EAGLES (4), 26 HP, (*PATHFINDER RPG BESTIARY*).

These particular giant eagles are Neutral creatures with evil tendencies; thus they try to consume the characters.

### TREASURE

The giant eagles have no treasure.

### DEVELOPMENT

The PCs can attempt to break open the cistern to enter the ziggurat:

ZIGGURAT CISTERN: BREAK DC 25, HARDNESS 8, HP 140.

A 10-foot-wide, mud-brick shaft lies beneath it,



descending to the bottom level. The shaft runs 50 feet and ends 10 feet above the blood weird's pool in the sanctuary below (area **Z14**). The noise, however, would alert the red hags in the workshop (area **Z1**) to their presence.

# Part Four: Hislargats Tiggurat

### THE ZIGGURAT

See page 17 for layout of the ziggurat. Unless otherwise indicated, the following information applies to all walls and doors within the structure.

MUD-BRICK WALL 2 FT. THICK; HARDNESS 15; HP 240; BREAK DC 40; CLIMB DC 15. MUD-BRICK DOOR: 4" THICK; HARDNESS 8; HP 40; BREAK DC 22.

# LEVEL ONE

The outer ridge of between **Level One** and **Two** is 15 feet wide, and is plant covered. The hags utilize the plants in their alchemical concoctions. The vines covering the western side hide two Small-sized holes (Perception DC 35 to note from outside), which Hislargat uses to send and receive messenger ravens.

## **Z1. ENTRANCE**

The secret door (DC 25 Perception) to the first-level of the ziggurat lies midway-up within the right-hand wall of the stairway leading to the rooftop. It is locked (DC 28 Disable Device). The door opens to a small hallway leading into the hags' workshop area.

# Z2. ALCHEMICAL WORKSHOP (CR 9+)

Just inside the door, a 10-foot-wide wall splits the room in two. Both sides are filled with tables, various glass bottles, and numerous metal instruments some holding the glass bottles. A long shelf of bottled materials spans the northern wall.

A rank smell permeates the room; it appears to be emanating from the pot heating in the western fireplace.

If the PCs surprised the red hags, the women are at work within the lab.

In the western wall are two Small-sized holes, one above the barrels and the other above the table.

# CREATURES CR 9+ (7,200)

Three hags here are concocting various poisons, dyes, and inks within this lab.

### RED HAGS (3) HP 66

**TACTICS:** If prepared for the PCs' attack, the hags cast *bear's endurance* and *resist energy* [fire] on themselves, and then cast *summon monster III*. At least one initiates her siphoning aura, as well.

**TREASURE:** PCs spending any serious time searching through the workshop can find just about any plant-related material component on the back shelf. Additionally, the hags have 40 bottles of scarlet dye prepared, 20 barrels of dream coral, 20 vials of ebonsrib ink (combined value 10,000 gp).

# LEVEL TWO

The outer ridge between **Level Three** and **Two** is 20 feet wide, and is covered in shrubs and taller plants.

## **Z3. KITCHEN**

This room contains a fireplace (northwest wall); a table for eight; a preparation table; and a set of cabinets (south wall) which contains pots and pans, cooking utensils, and tableware. All items here are of average quality. Barrels of flour and water lie against the north wall. A rotting vegetable and a slicing knife sit upon the preparation table (western wall).

## **Z4. GUEST ROOM**

The red hags host the occasional guest from Verrayne, but the room is currently unoccupied. It contains high-quality furniture, including a bed, desk, plush sitting chair, and an armoire.

## **Z5. STOREROOM**

The room contains linen, cleaning supplies, lantern oil, candles, and a few tinderboxes.

# Z6-Z7. RED HAG QUARTERS (CR 0-6)

These quarters appear sparse like the servants' quarters, only their unlocked chests contain scarlet and sea-blue robes of good quality (10 gp each). Rooms **Z6** and **Z9** each contain a sleeping hag (in the bed farthest from the door).

**RED HAGS (2), HP 66** 

### TREASURE

The red hags have no treasure.

### **Z8. SITTING AREA**

This open area contains two round tables with chairs for four. Along the eastern wall rests a nicequality couch. Two plush sitting chairs rest near the couch's ends.

### Z10-Z13. SERVANTS' QUARTERS

The rooms to these doors are open, and their interiors are sparse, containing only two beds with bedside tables, and chests containing two mundane tunics each. The beds' coverings are in disarray, with some mostly lying on the floor. The red hags dragged their servants out of bed during the night and sacrificed them to fill the summoned blood weird's pool in the sanctuary below (area **Z14**). The hags gave the servants' bodies to the worgs and giant eagles.

# LEVEL THREE

The metal steps down to **Level 3** empty in the sanctuary (area **Z14**), just outside the sanctuary door. Unless the PCs are extremely stealthy, the steps reverberate with their weight, especially if more than one person uses them at a time (-2 to Stealth rolls per person descending).

### Z14. SANCTUARY (CR 7-9)

If the PCs descended the stairway, they approach the sanctuary from the southern archway. The room is lit by torches, which flicker along the cistern's cardinal points, providing the room's only light. A mud-brick shaft extends half-way from the ceiling, emptying into the cistern.

Four stone pillars rise from the floor to ceiling on



either side of the cistern. Black tapestries depicting ritual sacrifices hang on the eastern and western wall, breaking at the archways. A marble altar sits against the north wall.

### A marble cistern rests in the center of this redmarble-tiled room, and a red-skinned woman is staring into it, while her left hand lightly swirls the crimson liquid within. Torches flicker along the cistern's cardinal points, providing the room's only light. A mud-brick shaft extends half-way from the ceiling, emptying into the cistern. Four stone pillars rise from the floor to ceiling on either side of the cistern. Black tapestries depicting ritual sacrifices hang on the eastern

and western wall, breaking at the archways. A marble altar sits against the north wall.

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The cistern's walls stand four feet high. The altar is dedicated to Hecate, whom the druidess and the red hags venerate. The hags no longer have a cleric among them, so the sanctuary is little used; Hislargat prefers to worship Hecate under the night sky. She is currently in the sanctuary observing her newest arrival: the blood weird, and enjoying some of the blood pool herself (with her fingers). Hislargat prepared for the creature's arrival by sacrificing her servants and others to provide enough blood for his pool. That is why **Level Two** is now practically devoid of life.

### **CREATURES**

The room contains Hislargat and the blood weird.

### HISLARGAT CR 7 WEIRD, BLOOD CR 7 (SEE PAGE 18)

**TACTICS** If Hislargat has had time to prepare, she has cast *barkskin* and *resist energy [fire]* upon herself. She attempts to use her *charm monster* ability on the PCs to get them to stop and listen to her and possibly negotiate. At first, she offers to pay off the group with the goods in **Z2**. If pressed, she might offer the PCs a set of different tomes to get rid of them, attempting to use Bluff to convince the party they are the tomes they seek. She has some very old (but mundane) texts lying on her study desk, and only a successful opposed Sense Motive or an inspection with a successful Knowledge (arcana) check DC 25







<sup>1</sup> SQUARE = 5 FT-

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LEVEL 2



LEVEL 3



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reveals they are not the ancient texts the group needs. If this is successful, she conceals the book while the group goes to remove their payment and departs immediately after the characters leave. Or, if the PCs attempt to negotiate, she is amenable, but wants to learn who sent them, as she doesn't like others spying upon her. If the PCs tell her honestly (she uses Sense Motive to determine this), she offers to give them a set of old tomes to trick Balack Giolan instead and to allow them fulfill their part of the agreement. Giolan does not know exactly what tomes the reef tenders recovered, after all.

If the PCs want to fight, she activates her siphoning aura, rouses the blood weird, and casts *flame strike*. Regardless, the blood weird attacks any PC getting close to its pool. He also uses his drench ability to extinguish the torches, as both he and the red hag have darkvision.

#### HISLARGAT

CR 7

XP 3,200

Advanced Red Hag NE Medium monstrous humanoid Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft, blood sense 90 ft..; Perception +20 Aura siphoning aura (30 ft., DC 19)

#### DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 15, flat-footed 10; (+5 Dex, +10 natural) hp 80 (7d10+42) Fort +10, Ref +10, Will +13 Defensive Abilities SR 18

#### OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft., swim 30 ft.
Melee 2 claws +14 (1d4 + 7 plus bleed and grab)
Special Attacks bleed (1d6), blood drain (1d4 Con)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th)
At will—summon monster I
3/day: charm monster, summon monster III
Spells Prepared (CL 7th; concentration +15)
4th—dispel magic, flame strike (DC 22)
3rd—call lightning(DC 21), cure moderate wounds, greater magic fang\*
2nd—barkskin, flame blade, flaming sphere (DC 20), heat metal (DC 20), resist energy [fire]
1st—cure light wounds, endure elements, entangle (DC



0—detect magic, flare, mending, resistance \*already cast

#### STATISTICS

Str 23, Dex 20, Con 22, Int 22, Wis 26, Cha 17
Base Atk +7; CMB +13; CMD +28
Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Great Fortitude,
Intimidating Prowess
Skills Skills Bluff +8, Craft (alchemy) +15, Craft
(sculpturing) +12, Diplomacy +9, Knowledge (arcana)
+13, Knowledge (nature) +13, Intimidate +17,
Perception +20, Sense Motive +11, Stealth +12, Swim
+; +8 racial bonus to Swim
Languages Giant,
SQ amphibious, trackless step

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Blood Sense (Su)** A red hag's claws are barbed and contain hollow needles within. A red hag can use them to suck blood from a grabbled opponent; if the red hag establishes or maintains a pin, it drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution damage. The red hag heals 5 hit points or gains 5 temporary hit points for 1 hour (up to a maximum number of temporary hit points equal to its full normal hit points) each round it drains blood.

**Siphoning Aura (Su)** Red hags can radiate an aura in a 30-foot radius as a free action that causes a creature to bleed from its mouth, nose, eyes, and ears. Affected creatures must succeed on a DC 17 Fortitude save each round or take 1 point of Constitution damage from blood loss. Once a successful save is made, targets cannot be affected by an individual hag's aura for 24 hours. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Spells** A red hag casts spells as a 7th-level druid, but cannot substitute prepared spells to cast summon spells

### WEIRD, BLOOD

#### XP 3,200

CE Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar) Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +14

#### DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+3 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size) hp 60 (8d10+16) Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +7 DR 10/bludgeoning

#### OFFENSE

**Spd** 40 ft., Swim 20 ft. **Melee** bite +12 (1d8+6 plus grab)



Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft. (5 ft. with bite)
Special Attacks drench, drown, siphon (1d4 Constitution, DC 16 Fort save)

#### STATISTICS

Str 19, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 16 Base Atk +8; CMB +13; CMD +26 (can't be tripped Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (bite Skills Bluff +14, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (planes) +12, Perception +14, Stealth +14, Sense Motive +8, Survival +8, Swim +12; Racial Modifiers +8 Swim Languages Infernal, Trade Tongue, Weird

SQ blood pool, reform, transparency

#### ECOLOGY

**Environment** any liquid-based outer or inner plane **Organization** solitary or pack (2-4) **Treasure** standard

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Blood Pool** A blood weird's pool is a bubbling, flowing mass of dark, rich, red blood. Creatures pinned underneath the blood are subject to drowning. See Drowning rules, *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*.
- **Drench (Ex)** The weird's touch puts out torches, campfires, exposed lanterns, and other open flames of nonmagical origin if these are of Large size or smaller. The creature can dispel magical it touches as a *dispel magic* spell (caster level equals weird's HD).
- **Drown (Ex)** If a blood weird pins a grabbed foe, it can fully immerse its victim in its blood pool. A victim completely immersed must hold its breath or drown. See Drowning rules, *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*.
- **Reform (Ex)** When reduced to 0 hit points or fewer, a blood weird collapses back into its pool. Four rounds later, it reforms at full strength minus any damage taken from fire-based spells and effects.
- **Siphon (Su)** A blood weird that hits a foe siphons off a portion of its blood. The victim suffers 1d4 points of Constitution damage each hit, unless he succeeds at a Fortitude (DC 16) save. The save is Constitution-based.
- **Transparency (Ex)** A blood weird is effectively invisible in its blood pool until it attacks. A DC 20 Perception check is required to notice it within its pool before it attacks for the first time.

These creatures resemble a 10-foot-long, crimson serpent with glistening scales, dark red in color. Some have bands of black that spiral the length of their body. Their eyes are a deep reddish brown in color.

These creatures cannot exist without a large

source of blood. Casters summoning this creature must fill a large basin or font with the blood of slain foes or captives.

Blood weirds wait patiently in their pools for potential prey. When a foe wonders close, the weird lashes out and intertwines itself around the opponent. On the next round, it attempts to fall back into its pool, bringing its grabbed prey with it. Grabbed foes are either drowned or subjected to its siphoning attack.

### **TREASURE**

The four ancient tapestries here are magically kept mended, and are in excellent condition. They weigh over 400 lbs. each, but are worth 1,000 gp each.

### **Z15. SUNLESS GARDEN**

Several potted midnight-black plants lie haphazardly against the walls in this large area, their pots over three feet in circumference. Dirt and mud-brick are scattered throughout the floor.

Hislargat is preparing to place garden in this expansive area, but had not had time to fully prepare it. She





has been preoccupied with summoning the blood weird, a creature her red hag predecessors had kept within their temples to bring them knowledge and the goddess' good graces. She's found the creature to be somewhat temperamental, and has had to spend considerable time acclimating him to his new home.

### **Z16. SAND AND ROCK GARDEN**

Sand covers the entire floor in this room. Boulders and smaller rocks ring the room; a wooden rake rests against them. An oval, inset pool rests in the center of the room. Hislargat uses this as her relaxation chamber. She lounges in the pool or rakes the sand to calm her mind.

### **Z17. HISLARGAT'S CHAMBERS**

The secret door to this room requires a DC 25 Perception to locate. It is unlocked.

Unlike the spartan rooms above, this room is well appointed, containing an elegant four-poster bed with scarlet hangings, two handsome stuffed chairs, a teak armoire, and a table.

### TREASURE

The armoire is unlocked. It contains 12 fine robes (six sea-blue and six scarlet), a drawer of golden bracelets and a necklace with pearl inlay. These items are worth a total of 6,500 gp.

### **Z18. HISLARGAT'S STUDY**

The room contains a tome-filled bookshelf, a sitting chair, and desk with tomes stacked upon it. Vials of ink, a pen, and a parchment lie upon the desk.

### DEVELOPMENT

The tomes are in great condition, and many of them are several centuries old. Most of the books cover flora and fauna throughout the local regions and in territories that no longer exist, though she has four tomes on arcane magic (unusable to her and already copied in Verrayne) which each contain one spell lost to time (for the GM to flesh out). There are over 25 books, and each could garner 250 gp or more in the open market, just for their age alone. The books on arcane magic are worth 6,500 or more each to a collector. The open books on the table cover the inner and outer planes. A page is marked; it discusses the blood weird and the method for its summoning.

The parchment has the beginning of a letter upon it in an ancient language. It is Hislargat's account of the finding. She mentions she found the *Staff of Arligathas*, and is quite excited. Unfortunately, Blood Mother Margase's giant eagle companion came for it almost immediately upon its discovery, so she did not get to study it. He and a large flock whisked it away, back to Verrayne. She notes that the queen of the druids needs only three more items to make her ascension beyond this realm. She does not detail what those are.

### **Z19. TREASURE ROOM**

The secret door to this room requires a DC 30 Perception to locate. It is locked (Disable Device DC 30). It is trapped (see below). If the PCs killed Hislargat, she held the key. If the key is inserted in the door, the wards are temporarily dispelled.

### Door Trap: glyph of warding, blast glyph (5d8, electricity, DC 17 Reflex halves; DC 28 Perception/Disable Device).

This room is filled with statuary and four wooden chests and three rusty metal chests.

### TREASURE

The three rusty chests are the recent discoveries. They have been broken open. Each chest contains 10 clerical scrolls (all are 2nd-level scrolls; together, all the scrolls compose the first 30 2nd-level spells listed in the *PFRPG*). Additionally, they each hold five



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ancient books covering topics such as blood magic, sacrificial rituals, and planar knowledge. Each tome is worth 6,500 gp to a collector.

The four wooden chests are all locked (Disable Device DC 25). Chest One contains masterwork sacrificial implements (3,500 gp to a collector); Chest Two contains 12,000 gp in gold, gems, and platinum; Chest Three is trapped (see below), and it contains the following clerical scrolls: *raise dead, unholy blight, symbol of pain, regenerate, dimensional lock,* and *unholy aura.* The final chest contains. The final chest holds 8,500 gp in jewelry.

### **Z20. STOREROOM**

The secret door to this room requires a DC 20 Perception to locate. It is unlocked.

This room contains supplies for clerical rituals, candles, oils, sacrificial implements, and additional robes stored in chests. Some of the supplies are expensive items, so scavenging PCs could locate up to 1,500 gp worth of salable items on a DC 20 Appraise check.

### **Z21. EMPTY PRIVATE CHAMBER**

The secret door to this room requires a DC 25 Perception to locate. It is unlocked.

This room is empty. It was set aside for an assistant priestess who was to join the temple, but Hislargat never summoned her to the island after the high priestess died.

### **Z22. PRAYER CHAMBER**

Murals of the night sky cover the walls and ceiling. Large pillows are spread out in a circular pattern in the room's center. Tall, unlit candles in golden, five-foottall candlesticks circle the pillows. The former priestess used this as her meditation and private ritual room.

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### TREASURE

The golden candlesticks are worth 300 gp each.

# Concluding The Adventure

If the PCs successfully acquire the tomes, Balack Giolan pays them as agreed. He may additionally send further work their way, though his targets may include goodly temples hoarding or hiding knowledge in their vaults. He is a knowledge-greedy, rich man who finds ways to get what he wants, no matter the consequences.

If the PCs killed the legendary Dark Willy, their reputations do not soar to heroic proportions as one would think. Oddly enough, the Friulans truly bore an unusual love for the creature which has been the center of their tales—tall or truthful—for over a century. Things just won't be as interesting now. The disgruntled Friulans go out of their way to show their displeasure toward the characters, charging them more for goods or services, being rude and confrontational toward them whenever possible, or outright ignoring their presence. In short, the PCs become pariahs in Friula.

Then there is Blood Mother Margase. Once she learns the PCs attacked her minions and disrupted her plans to uncover further treasures from Talitheos, she sends minions out to deal with them.

Of course, if the PCs worked out a deal with Hislargat to provide Giolan with the other tomes present in her study, then the red hags may call on the PCs for assistance from time to time. They may even need their help acquiring the other items Blood Mother Margase seeks. And there is this dragon turtle Hislargat could use the PCs' help in eradicating if they agreed to negotiate with her...



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