

In response to a question from Dante about the "prophecy" he has received, Farinata explains that what the souls in Hell know of life on earth comes from seeing the future, not from any observation of the present. Consequently, when "the portal of the future has been shut,"^[24] it will no longer be possible for them to know anything.

necromancy steps

As I see it, there are five increasingly difficult steps in the scientific or Dr.-Frankenstein-style necromancy:

- Embalm
- Reanimate, but without intelligent action
- Summon a soul
- Force a soul to inhabit a body to allow intelligent action
- Have the necromancer rather than the soul control the reanimated body.

progression

I found two rituals in the Player's Handbook for calibrating how fast the "scientific" necromancy progression should be: the level 1 *Gentle Repose* and the level 8 *Raise Dead*. *Gentle Repose* is basically equivalent to the level 1 *Embalm* I propose below. *Raise Dead* is more powerful than the level 3 *Reanimate* I propose below, because it returns the creature's soul to the body and gives the player control of the body; but less powerful than a later ritual we'll have would give the necromancer control over the reanimated body.

But, in our campaign it takes a year for a PC to gain five levels. So, we'll plan to get to the necromancy equivalents of *Raise Dead* before level 8.

You can add the Embalm, Lightning in a Bottle, and Reanimate rituals to your spell book based on what you saw the Volkens do and the equipment you confiscated from them. From watching the Oracle you guess that the next ritual will be one to summon a spirit -- right now you know it can be done with a Greencake libration and ritual pit, but you're not sure how yet. You don't have any idea yet how to trap a soul in a body or take control of a reanimated body.

Further progression beyond these basic rituals would let the necromancer do the steps using magic instead of the scientific apparatuses and ingredients; and do them as daily powers instead of rituals. To accomplish some necromancy beyond what the progression says your level can do, we can also set up some mini-campaign that would accomplish a spectacular one-time feat of necromancy, maybe with help from NPCs.

The power of all of these rituals will be limited by the fact that they can't affect creatures/spirits/souls of level more than the ritual caster.

rituals so far

Embalm

Level: 1

Category: Restoration

Time: 1 hour

Duration: special

Component Cost: 10 gp for embalming fluid.

Key Skill: Heal (no check)

Prepare a corpse for reanimation by removing the stomach, intestines, lungs, liver, and brain; and replacing the blood with embalming fluid. The corpse must be from a person of level less than the caster.

A special forceps is used to remove the brain through the nostrils, and a mechanical pump is used to replace the blood with embalming fluid, which can be an arsenic salt fluid or formaldehyde. The forceps and pump can both be found at hospital morgues.

Lightning in a Bottle

Level: 2

Category: Restoration

Time: 10 minutes

Duration: instantaneous

Component Cost: None.

Key Skill: Heal (no check)

Store electrical charge from lightning in a Leyden jar, for use with Reanimate. Part of mastering this ritual is learning how to construct Leyden jars.

Reanimate

Level: 3

Category: Restoration

Time: 10 minutes

Duration: instantaneous

Component Cost: 100 gp for adrenaline and natron salts.

Key Skill: Heal (no check)

Reanimates a corpse. The corpse must have been previously prepared with *Embalm*; must be treated with adrenaline; must be in a natron salt bath, and must be electrically shocked. The lightning can come from a lightning rod, leyden jar, or other mechanism. The corpse must be

from a person of level less than the caster.

If a soul has not been recalled to / trapped in the body, the reanimated body will be walking dead that will attack the nearest living. If a soul has been recalled to / trapped in the body, it will control the body unless the body is also *controlled* (a more advanced ritual) by the reanimator.

Summon

Level: 4

Category: Exploration.

Time: 10 minutes.

Duration: Soul converses until dismissed by the summoner.

Component Cost: Gold for buying the greencake -- exact amount required depends on level of soul summoned.

Key Skill: Religion (no check)

The caster can summon (1) a specific soul if the caster knows the soul's name and plane, or (2) a random soul of a specific level from a plane. Some information about specific souls is held in e.g. the Hollin Oracle's grimoire. The caster's level must be greater than or equal to the soul's level. The value in gold pieces of the greencake required to summon a soul of level n is equal to (the cost of magic item of level n) / 2. So, for example:

- level 1 soul: 180 gp
- level 2 soul: 270 gp
- level 3 soul: 340 gp
- level 4 soul: 420 gp

Trap

Level: 5

Greencake cost is the same as Summon.

Same as Summon, except the soul is trapped inside a body that becomes reanimated. The soul takes control of the body.

If cast during an encounter, the soul leaves when the encounter is over.

Control

Level: 6

Greencake cost is the same as Summon.

Same as Trap, except the caster (not the trapped soul) controls the body's actions. Controlling

the body doesn't require any actions.

Reanimate (power)

Level: 5

Same as Reanimate ritual, except it's just a daily power. You don't need to Embalm or do other ritual preparation.

Summon (power)

Level: 6

Same as Summon ritual, except it's a daily power.

Trap (power)

Level: 7

Control (power)

Level: 8

Reanimate and Control

Summoner:

<http://www.eesomeink.com/dnd/summoner110.pdf>

questions

When I look at the stuff for necromancer and binder e.g. summon warlock's ally page 70 heroes of shadow, the summoned things also need to be controlled by the hero using their own actions. Is that a policy we want to keep?

How hard is it to do the thing?

I imagine abilities that are hard at low levels become easy at high levels. So, e.g., reanimating a body at level 4 might require a ritual, ingredients, and equipment, but maybe at level 10 would become a battlefield power.

Axis 0: how long do the reanimated creatures linger / attack?

Axis 1: Time and effort.

- You can do it routinely (e.g., during a fight) as an at-will, encounter, or daily power.
 - Summon Shadow Servant is a Wizard Attack 5 daily power.
 - Murderous Twin is a Wizard Attack 7 encounter power.
 - Soul Puppets is a Wizard Attack 15 daily power.
 - Horrific Shadow is a Wizard Attack 17 encounter power.
 - At level 19, the level 5 spell Summon Shadow Servant now summons a more powerful Shadow Wraith.
- You can do it as a ritual. I imagine the Volkens raised Haas, Ignatius, and Lebrecht as rituals; and that the Oracle summoned the spirit as a ritual.
 - **Gentle repose: level 1, preserve a body so that Raise Dead can be used later.**
 - **Speak with Dead level 6: Ask a corpse questions, ritual takes 10 minutes and costs 140 gp.**
 - **Raise Dead level 8: looks like this ritual takes 8 hours and costs 500 gp for heroic characters, 5K gp for paragon, and 50K for epic. So, this seems like a good benchmark for the costs of things.**
 - Linked portal: level 8 ritual.
 - Consult mystic sages, level 10.
 - Consult Oracle, level 16.
 - Planar Portal, level 18. So, I guess this is what the Oracle did.
 - Loremaster's Bargain: level 22 ritual, "You are granted a brief magical audience with a powerful entity who possesses the information you seek." I guess this is what the Oracle did.
 - True portal, level 28: go anywhere.
- You can only accomplish this as a result of a major quest, e.g., like a mini-campaign worth of effort.

Axis 2: Do you need stuff?

- You can do it without any ingredients or equipment, just innately do it yourself.
- You need an expensive ingredient like greencake. Making an ingredient could maybe be a learned power.
- You need an apparatus (like a lightning rod) and you also have to understand how to use it. "Using" an apparatus might be a learned power of its own.

Axis 3: What are you trying to do?

- Prepare a creature's body for reanimation.
 - This is equivalent to the level 1 Gentle Repose ritual. Except in Hollin, it requires replacing the blood with embalming fluid using the machine that Jennish has; and taking out the internal organs, egyptian style: the brain comes out through the nose using special forceps.
- Reanimate a creature's body.
 - If there is no soul in the body, it will be mindless and attack at random.
 - This is a level 4 ritual. It requires lightning and adreneline.
 - Thus, lightning rod or a charge stored in a leyden jar. However, maybe there is an apparatus that could generate electricity.
- Summon a soul.
 - This requires greencake. The Oracle ritual for this is similar to the one in the Odyssey.
- Trap a summoned soul in a creature's body.
- Make a reanimated creature do your will.
 - The Volkens used the probe apparatus to control Ignatius.

Axis 4: How powerful is the creature you're reanimating or the spirit you're summoning?

By default, you can do these things on a creature or spirit less than your own level. If the PC's level is (level of ritual + 3), they'll be able to do these things to creatures of level (PC level - 4) without a ritual or apparatus.

Player's Option: Heroes of Shadow

I actually like the Shadowfell idea, although my world doesn't really have it: "The shadowfell is a cold, grim place through which the spirits of the dead must travel on their way to the afterlife."

"...not all beings that draw strength from the Shadowfell are vile, black-hearted fiends. A few even dare to call themselves heroes, using the power of darkness to fight darkness."

There's a lot of fluff in here. Get in the habit of just skipping right to the spell description in the spell boxes. Pages 99-109 gives a bunch of new necromancer-like powers that any wizard can select. Pages 110-113 gives some powers that only wizards of the Necromancy and nethermancy schools can select.

There's not really a focus here on just raising undead as minions. A lot of the stuff is about doing necrotic damage, damaging the souls of your enemies, using knowledge of the dark to resist undead, stuff like that. A lot of them seemed based on the idea that there doesn't have to be a body/skeleton there already, the spell kind of creates this anonymous skeleton that then goes away.

Relevant things:

Restless dead

wizard attack 1: "Agitated bones break free from the ground to scabble and claw at your enemy." 1d8 + intelligence modifier damage.

Lifetaker

wizard utility 2: "You crook your figure and snatch a soul as it struggles free from its body. It screams as you draw forth its energy." "The target gains temporary hit points equal to his or her healing surge value."

Summon shadow servant

Wizard attack 5: "The shadows swirl and coalesce into a dark creature that awaits your command."

Murderous twin

Wizard attack 7: "You create a shadowy twin of your enemy, a murderous vestige that wreaks havoc on itself and its allies."

From Adventure 008 Haas writeup:

Aeris is going to want information from these guys. What does it take to raise the dead?

- Physical:
 - Electric shock; thus the copper wires
 - Adreneline; thus the tubes; these guys aren't sure how to get adreneline
 - The chemical bath, includes some natron-like salt, but they got it from a guy who's not there; also, it needs a ritual cast on it
 - They were also trying a respirator, but apparently the walking dead don't breath
 - They planned to put blood back in it, so they're surprised this even worked -- they had stepped out to get that machine
- Magic ritual
 - You need to cast a preparatory ritual on the body, this brings the ghost back to the body
 - They haven't figured out to *dominate* the resulting undead yet...that didn't occur to them

What are the various stages here

- Preserve a body mortuary style -- take out the blood, put in embalming fluid
- Reanimate a body
 - Without putting a soul back into the body, this will result in nonalert walking dead
 - Without controlling the body somehow, it may turn on the reanimator.
- Summon a soul
- Call a body's soul back to its body
- Control a reanimated body

<http://dungeonsmaster.com/2009/02/necromancer-heroic-tier/>

<http://dungeonsmaster.com/2009/10/necromancer-heroic-tier-2/>

Looking at the heroic tier ones, essentially none of them are Frankenstein-style necromancy.

With the launch of *Open Grave*, Wizards of the Coast have begun to release powers and rituals geared towards Necromancers. They have also announced that the Arcane Powers source book will have a Necromancer Paragon Path. While I'm glad that this is upcoming, I still believe they provided a disservice by not having any specialists in the first PHB.

Notes I'd made for adventure 11:

Process of raising the dead

Critical stuff to understand is what can Aeris learn from this place, these people? What do I think the process is for raising the dead?

- Prepare the body.
 - This can be similar to what the Egyptians did to preserve a body or to what a modern mortuary does.
 - Take out organs, add salts, natron, embalming fluid.
 - Spells.
- Call back the spirit.
 - This process can be like in the Odyssey: underground with pit, circle, libations, sacrifice.
 - This part can require the "heritage" greencake used as incense.
- Reanimate the body. So, the naturalists are only doing this part at the hospital, they bring the body from a spot they don't know of that's basically an Oracle site.
 - I guess this is a step the Oracle does not use.
 - The naturalists use electricity, adrenaline, and some mineral like a smelling salt. The electricity comes from the lightning rod or a capacitor, which Brunn can explain. The adrenaline is a critical ingredient, not understood by the characters.
 - See if there are any ideas for this in Frankenstein.

- Dominate the creature.
 - The naturalists failed to do this, thus Haas is able to revenge on them.

As his prize, Derek can take the machines and the other two bodies: the one lying on the surgical table and the one that Alaric and Volker are bringing in. Also, some of the chemicals etc.

So, in the course of gaining levels, Aeris can be building his own rituals to do these things. In particular, to dominate the character. Other non-obvious issues, like which bodies/spirits this can work with. So, even if he sees the rituals, he still can't perform them without being the appropriate level.

Remember that although Aeris is there for information, Haas is there for revenge. Also, maybe after the characters get a little information from Alaric and Volker, a "boss" can come in and enraged, he can coerce them to attack the characters.