

High level

power: glacial earthquake?

to do (pre game)

questions for players

- Does Aeris have a concrete plan for revenge? His parents seem like obvious targets for revenge. But generally, how wide of a net does he want to cast? Wipe out humanity? How about the party?

recap from last time

This is game 21. At the end of game 19, Beowolf had defeated the young shape-changing Inkeri Belwe at the Inkeri camp in Hollin.

So, at the start of last game, game 20, Beowolf took Belwe's loot. This amounted to Belwe's +2 hide armor and 1000 gp in Belwe's tent, which the party split (so Aeris make sure to write down your 250 gp). I believe Beowolf decided to use his 250 gp share to rebuild the Winter Wolf. Then, the Inkeri reverend Kajal gave Beowolf extensive advice on taking control of the Inkeri, including political leadership, religion, and reclaiming Inkeri resources on Hilde from the great trading cities.

But, Beowolf's parents had still not been found, so the party turned to finding them. In the course of doing this, Ord was targetted by the Hobnail assassin Hubbard, who the party defeated. As a kind of trophy, Kasskar adopted Hubbard's redcoat-like coat and tall Gangs-of-New-York-style hat.

Soon after, Maycott, a man from a shadowy organization called Chill Touch, offered to give the party the critical information if Kasskar and Ord would commit to an unspecified task of rightful vengeance for Chill Touch in the future. Having Kasskar and Ord's signatures in blood, Maycott told them that a Hobnail named Bering had dumped them into the divine prison Narshasa in revenge for the party killing the Hobnail Auld there.

Going to the divine prison, the party couldn't distinguish Beowolf's mother from Lahar, a personification of death mimicking her. To solve the problem, they had the Hollin Oracle summon Lahar to the oracle's Grimoire, where Kasskar killed him using Word Without Warning. Returning to Narshasa, the party defeated the prison guardian Katamayan and freed Beowolf's parents.

With Beowulf's parents freed, we now presumably turn to (1) possibly taking revenge on the Hobnail Bering, who Maycott said has taken up in the prison hulk Intractable, and (2) going to Hilde to press Bewolf's leadership claims.

The Intractable

If the party asks around about the Intractable before going there, they find that it's a prison hulk where prisoners are held before being transported to a penal colony on Hilde. It's managed by a private company, and prisoners are treated extremely poorly there -- like a floating concentration camp. With a little more poking around, they hear that the company is sympathetic to the hobnails and under their thumb.

When the party goes to the Intractable, they find that it's an old warship in poor repair. It's about the same length as the sloops-of-war you've encountered before, Hedgepeth and Durst, but it's taller with three cannon decks instead of one. A gangplank goes up to the main deck. On the main deck, you can see a few apparent bodies wrapped in cloth, with a meniel tending them. If the party asks where the bodies come from, the persons tells them typically a few prisoners die a day and their bodies are found by the others in the dark corners of the lower decks.

Inside the ship, you're immediately struck by the darkness, heat, bad air, and crowding. There's light coming from the cannon holes, but much of it is blocked by the crowd of prisoners; there aren't normally torches burning because the air is bad down here and torches burn oxygen. Because the air is so bad, many of the prisoners continually pant, struggling to breath.

As far as the prisoners themselves, because of the heat, many of the prisoners are shirtless or naked. Even in the low light, you can see that many of them are underfed or ill. On each deck there are a few prisoners shouting, crying, or wringing their hands.

The party got a description of Bering from Chill Touch, and they don't find a person like that on any of the cannon decks. Continuing down to the bilge (where water collects), they pass a few toughs sitting on the steps, they find Bering in the water up to about his waist, seemingly in thought. There are a few lackeys around waiting on him. Bering has a large Horst tattoo like Auld did. When the characters come in, he comments that he can smell Hilde on them. When he finds out who they are, he says bitterly that Burns and Krill were the ones who dumped him in the penal colony.

Bering

powers related to Hilde

powers related to tattoos / hobnails

powers related to darkness of the Bilge / shadows / dropping under water -- allow him to move without opportunity attack? Let's use dropping under the water as, you have to end your turn above the water? Going under lets you evade opportunity attacks?

Otherwise, I'll just use

Lackeys: Amundsen, Conner, Howe

Back at Inkeri Camp

The party has to go back to the Inkeri camp to talk to Kajal and figure out where to go on Hilde. There, they find Kajal talking with the three elders. Kajal reminds him that one of the things they have to do, presumably the first thing, is get a talisman that will let the party travel on the interior of Hilde. But, the elders break in and say, there are n of them, and traditionally they represented the sovereignty of the different Inkeri clans. To get a talisman, it will be equivalent to taking the sovereignty of a clan, and that's not going to be easy.

I guess Kajal and the other elders can give Beowolf a summary of what the clans, their cities, their leaders are.

Knarr Clan camp

Sailing along the edge of an ice sheet, the boat can see some people from Knarr clan wrapping up a walrus's meat in its own skin, and they can give the party directions over the ice sheet to the Knarr camp.

The follow cracks in the ice or other features to the Knarr Clan camp. There, they find a camp similar to the camp in Gibb park, about the same scale.

Three Clans

The three antagonist clan are:

Knarr clan: City of Pulte, which is at the far end of the Pulte ice sheet on Hilde. The clan is now hiding out on the ice sheet proper. Sailing along the edge of an ice sheet, the boat can see

some people from Knarr clan wrapping up a walrus's meat in its own skin, and they can give the party directions over the ice sheet to the Knarr camp. This was Belwe's clan; his father in charge is Faering. Quest here it to beat Faering on the ice.

Byrthing clan: City of Hodge at the source of river on map. Now hiding out in caverns w reservoir under mountains nearby. This is Leutwin's clan; his father in charge is Ferja. Quest here is the animal spirit trial, which Ferja sends him on thinking he won't be able to do it.

Karvi clan: City of Busse in foothills on map. Now hiding out in a throat of the world thing. This is Asger's clan; his father in charge is Skeid. Quest here is a resource thing, and the party will find when the go to reclaim the resource that it's a guano cave infested by vampires or something.

I guess there are other cities / clans, but for now let's just beg off detailing them.

Ice Sheet

So, here we fight Faering, the chief...I guess he's a warlord. There's a reverend...Mirtis...he has the ability to call in the narwhal attacks. Younger sons of Faering...named...Kematian and Ferja...warriors by default, one can be a flanker like Kasskar?

Faering

Similar to e.g. Burns?

Hilde in general

How will the party get to Hilde this time? They could ask Burns again, or they could make more of a statement by forcibly taking a boat from the Inkeri camp, perhaps claiming Belwe's boat and crew. But...these were like longboats?

importance of Talismans is that the Inkeri can effectively travel across the interior of the planet the way bedoin travel across the desert, and strike unexpectedly. But the talismans also represent the sovereignty of each house...so Beowulf needs to break that. It seems obvious plotwise that these were taken in foreign wars and so at least one could be from the caliphate. But in general, what is the logic of how they work? Maybe each gives a god's protection...they were amulets that protected from general harm, not just the hilde time thing, so they could come from anywhere. I guess each Talisman would be different...one called a talisman, another called an amulet, another a charm, badge, ornament. Maybe these should have runes that Ord can uncover.

“upstart”

So, outline:

They go to the first house lord, this is the father of one of the three young Inkeri. He says he'll give Beowulf the talisman he needs if he'll do something...maybe Beowulf has to fight that lord or his champion to get it? If this fight is on the ice sheet, maybe there can be a wizard that brings killer whales from under the ice to attack through the ice...or maybe a narwhal. I guess they can meet outriders on the ice sheet who tell Kajal where the ice sheet camp. Maybe Beowulf should take the talismans from all the houses so that he controls everything, and give them to either the party or Inkeri of his own choosing. Was there a master Talisman at Highpyre that controlled all the other talismans?

He goes to the second house lord, the father of the second young Inkeri, who tells him to get the banshee animal spirit. To do this, he'll have to fight the dragon in the dry valley.

The third house lord wants him to help take back a facility of some kind, maybe greencake or maybe the vampire cave.

Hodge -- a former Inkeri city built in a cliffside off the Weyl River. The Inkeri from there are now hiding in a throat of the world-type camp high in the mountains above.

Pulte: former Inkeri city at the apex of an ice sheet. Now the folks are hiding on the actual ice sheet where probably now one would go.

X: another mountain city, the Inkeri from there are now hiding in a Lawrence-like cavern / former bat cave that they drove the vampires out of.

hiding on an island? In a dale? Around an underground reservoir? Inside an extinct volcano? On a plateau? hiding on a glacier on the other side of a crevasse.

Are there a mass of Inkeri hiding in an underground city?

About 98% of Antarctica is covered by ice that averages at least 1 mile (1.6 km) in thickness. I guess one or more of the Inkeri fugitive camps could be on an ice shelf over the water...I've added one on the map...let's call it the Kemp Sea there...the city that was abandoned was at the tip of the ice sheet, called Pulte. Underground city, my old "balibana"...maybe this was an Inkeri city but has been abandoned for a long time. Camp on an island. In a dale or gorge. City in a cliffside like adobe homes...let's call this one Klainer....now they could be hiding higher in the mountains...at the Throat-of-the-World-type location.

I guess the geography of Hilde isn't as simple as, the exterior is ok and the interior is a hellscape. The Inkeri must have some known safe trails over the interior of hilde, like animals have known paths to salt

licks.

Hiding in mountain caverns like Lawrence's folks...maybe these are guano caverns, they drove out the bats and vampires hiding there.

Another camp would of course be in the mountains. Another on a glacier proper...this would be at high elevation.

High mountains, dry snowless valleys, volcanos. Underwater lake sealed off. Inhabited by tropical and temperate life forms in the distant past. Blue ice. Ice that predates an atmosphere on Balaal? What created the atmosphere on Balaal?

Can the characters detach an ice shelf and send it floating away? "Pole of cold" Antarctica was only discovered in the 1820?!

This page http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heroic_Age_of_Antarctic_Exploration has a chilling list of how people died on expeditions.

Do they have to take dog sleds to the interior? Mules?

Hilde: Beowolf's animal spirit

I guess come to the temp camp on a mountain ridge, see the glacier below and have to trek over it to get to the dry valley. In the dry valley, the 200 mph winds can add to the surrealness of meeting the dragon.

I guess Kajaal can be Beowolf's mentor on this. I'm thinking the "animal spirit" could turn out to be not an animal, but a banshee that could add its wail to Beowolf's rage power, a major god of the Inkeri, or even the BIG. I guess a good plot device at this point would be if it was the angel of death (which could also add to Beowolf's rage), and then Beowolf would potentially be in conflict with Ord and Kasskar.

Default plan at this point: Beowolf has to go on some harsh trek to the interior where he would encounter a harsh trial and presumably be beaten; then in his weakened selfless form he is open to accepting the animal spirit, which comes to him e.g. in his daze. Maybe the animal spirit can ask him for something in return -- e.g., attack Chill Touch if it's the AOD.

Does Beowolf take a peyote- or spice-like drug to help with this? If it's quinine, then taking quinine in large doses would have a number of effects that could help lead to the daze -- enough effects (E.g., deafness) that I can essentially take my pick in the description. But maybe it would make sense to have some more fantastic symptoms.

I guess in general the Inkeri religion is about dealing with the horrors there, their gods help them survive and then in myth fight major horrors. Do they actually have BIG as a god? If Beowulf gets an evil god as an "animal spirit" then he'll have to argue it to the tribes...maybe that he's mastering that god and not vice-versa. I guess they would hold that their gods abandoned them or were defeated when Highpyre was destroyed.

I was planning to use a dragon as the baddie that burned highpyre but thinking this through it seems like it has to be a manifestation of the BIG else this campaign won't actually have its real climax.

I think the place where Beowulf goes to on the trial should be a place that's surreal because it reflects the BIG's confusion. And there they can be attacked by the dragon I guess...the dragon is known in Inkeri legend as "an agent of evil against man."

So, the main thing to plan here is where the trial takes them -- to a "scraped" nonsnowy part of the continent -- to an old outpost like Lawrence or to an Easter-Island settlement? Maybe to a bizzaro-Braddock...I think maybe that's the winner or that can be used in the final confrontation with BIG.

Hilde: greencake

It seems like the Inkeri cannot fight the major powers, but they could strike at their caravans' the way Lawrence's bedoin strike at Turkish rails. So, the Inkeri could cripple caravans and maybe cutoff greencake facilities that are not near the water.

Do they go looking for guano and discover vampires in the bat caves?

Hilde: political

OK, so looking at Hilde the other Inkeri cities could have been at the other major bay points just like Highpyre was. I guess it would make sense also to have some Throat of the World type location there.

Is there internal conflict between Inkeri tribes the same way the bedoin tribes fight each other? Maybe political unification should come first so that they can then go get resources? If he unites a few clans, then each will give him some men to do the thing.

post game summary

The party returns to Hilde to push Beowulf's claim to Inkeri leadership. They find the Inkeri Knarr

Clan encamped on the Aden Sea ice sheet, and Beowulf challenges their chief Faering for leadership. Beowulf defeats Faering with unseen help from the shaman Kajal, then orders Faering to continue leading the Knarr as his subordinate.

treasure given out

to do (post game)

- player questions to answer
- requests to send players after the game