

to do (pre game)

- science thread for Aeris -- maybe this could be with the Vokers. I think Gerholt Volker should propose that he give up destroying Hollin and instead perform an empirical confirmation that reality depends on the observer, which he considers the ultimate experiment. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Relativity_of_simultaneity
- If the party gets rabies how can they get cured.
- Does Aeris have to fight anything to come back from the dead? Maybe enemies he killed already? That's a good idea.
-

questions for players

recap from last time

Last time we left off in the guano cave near the Welkin settlement Albrecht, where the party found that the vampires of Phyla House were suffering from a rabies epidemic. Soon after, Kajal rushed in to tell the party that the young Inkeri Leutwin had marshalled the Inkeri and some Welkins against Beowolf and were hunting the party. To avoid fighting 500 enemies, the vampire Desmond volunteered to take the party out by a secret exit.

treasure from last time

- Isra gains the power Immortal Slaying -- additional +2 against immortals.
- Krohn had the Orb of Contravention. The Orb of Contravention is a +2 orb with the daily power Afterclap. Afterclap turns an enemy's successful save into a failure as a free action. Outside of an encounter, the orb is cloudy, almost metallic grey. During an encounter, the orb glows with a warm orange and hums quietly, but crackles loudly when the +2 or Afterclap is used. Or, Aeris can instead choose any magical orb from the PH up to level 10.
 - Do I want to add one of Krohn's powers?

Escape route and rabid vampires

The escape route -- I guess it leaves through the harem -- they can see some sexy vampire chicks there but also some plain house business. It goes into another high ceiling cave with bats, and there they're attacked.

Diamus is the boss of the rabid vampires. He commands both lesser vampires and a swarm of bats. The party notices that two of the vampires, Diamus and Ludvik, carry silver weapons.

These are silver weapons that some previous amateur adventurers attacked them with, and now Diamus and Ludvik carry them sarcastically.

One of the weapons is a parrying dagger +2.

common powers

Blood in the Water

Once the first enemy is wounded (or bloodied?), all of the vampires get a Rabid Energy move and attack that enemy as a free immediate action.

Rabid Bite

A basic bite attack, but transmits vampirism + rabies if the victim doesn't save.

Claw

This is the basic melee attack.

Rabid Energy

Daily power: move anywhere on the map.

Diamus: Fear

I guess diamus can do this at will Like MERP nazgul - suffocating fear -- maybe this can be unique to Diamus. Stuns or causes the target to run. Close burst. Save ends.

Vampiric Rabies seizure -- Necrotic Attack

The vampire has a seizure in which he writhes, spins, and flips around in a blur. The seizure ends with a necrotic burst attack.

Bats

Vampirism and Rabies

If the characters get rabies or vampirism, how are they going to cure it? I haven't thought about this at all. Rabies they need to cure immediately or it will kill them -- curing vampirism they can do back in Hollin.

Possible fight with Inkeri

If the party wants to fight with the Inkeri outside the cave, they'll be destroyed but the animal spirits can materialize and save them.

Brother

So, apparently Aeris will raise his brother, who will then be appalled at the situation. What is his brother's name?

The brother's would would have wandered, presumably ultimately finding Gibb park. But, he could have other valuable information from 15 years or so of wandering the spirit world...what information would he have? Information about his parents? He would would have wandered back there.

He's upset that Aeris dug him back up and carried his head around as a totem. Maybe he would like it back himself.

Parents

Derek wrote:

“He was the son of a fisherman in a **very small fishing village** [my emphasis] somewhere (around? nearish?) Hollin.”

and:

“Young Aeris dragged the body until he found a woodcutters hut, buried his brother's body as best as he could...”

So, I assume if Aeris was old enough to drag his brother's body and bury it, he was old enough to remember the name of his village and his parents' names. So, it wouldn't be hard to track them down.

Ask Aeris for his parents' names and the village name.

Admiralty civil war

The characters return to Braddock to find the waterfront burning, and many gunships blasting at each other on the river. I guess marines are fighting over buildings on the waterfront, like the admiralty buildings. powder stores could have been exploded causes huge damage in the city. Prisons would have been loosed in the city...so possibly even Horst. Even the press gangs are split.

They discover that Krill came back on the pell mell and accused Burns of witchcraft, splitting the admiralty and causing a giant war. In this confusion, Aeris can try to make a power grab.

Immortality

Derek writes:

“Aeris wants to become a lich, rather than try to control the entire supply of greencake. That was his ultimate intention with Isilde, and he would propose a deal with Isilde: Make him a lieutenant of the necropolis and gain all the books and knowledge in the city, in return for the secret of lichdom.”

I think he should do this first, then leverage being a lich to overrun Hollin.

Agreement with Ishild

Aeris wanted to offer Ishild access to the books in Hollin -- the Oracle Grimoire would be the motherlode, and that obviously appeals to the Volkens as well.

Also, now that Ord is looking for the Ninety-Nine in Hollin and Ishild is one, I think Ishild should explicitly turn Aeris on Ord. This could be the end of the mini-campaign.

Phylactery

How will this get made? By Raven House folks at the forge? What would Aeris like the object to be?

Ritual

Monster Manual says about becoming a lich:

“A mortal becomes a lich by performing a dark and terrible ritual. In this ritual the mortal dies, but rises again as an undead creature.”

That's simple enough. However, our ritual will require that multiple immortals from Hollin come together to perform the ritual, which will involve:

- Make a phylactery -- perhaps Raven House could do this. If the phylactery is made crazy robust enough, it will become a major task for the party to destroy it later.
- The immortals performing a dirge in which they give Aeris advice about dying, being dead, returning from death, the meaning of immortality / being undead.
- The immortals sacrifice Aeris, then prepare his body "Embalm" style.
- Aeris' spirit returns to his dead body; perhaps this requires a skill challenge for Aeris

Optionally:

- kill a god
- kill an innocent as party of the ritual
- cannibalism

The dirge has verses giving Aeris welcome, warnings, instructions, and protections.

- Welcome
 - Fairy: Welcome to the family of immortals.
 - Lich: You'll gain immortality, but also the cold wisdom of those who have died -- nothing is meaningful in the face of your own non existence.
 - You can do something important that one lifetime is not enough for.
- Warnings
 - Vampire: life as an immortal is bittersweet: all things pass and all is vanity, despite your immortality
 - God or demon: you cannot survive the death of the universe, which is an illusion
 - Lich: protect the phylactery
 - Vampire: the community of immortals is a game of thrones
- Instructions
 - Lich: Normal mortals who die are confused like a newborn without parents. They have no chance to find their way in the afterlife. Thus, these instructions will help guide his soul back to the dead body.
 - Head's up on what they'll do: kill him, then Embalm the body.
 - A head's up on being dead.
 - Lich: actual instructions on coming back...does Aeris have to do a spell check or fight something on the other side to come back?
- Protections
 - Lich: bonuses for the skill challenge to come back or challenge
 - Maybe they give him a protective amulet
 - Some protective spell that will allow Aeris' soul to remember his name and what he's doing, and the instructions.

When this happens, does Aeris' soul go to some other plane and have an adventure of some kind there? Fight a monster that kills him and makes the black dragon appear?

- giving up your humanness
- the fact that the universe is not a welcome home for humans
- accepting death in life
- being willing to bet everything on the phalctery / thus giving up your own hope
- now becoming an inhuman prey animal
- giving up hope of fellowship with other people
- life is just one instant in eterninty, the life of the universe is ust one instant in eternity
- give up your humanness to become something more important.
- Grander hope would be the that the phalactery could survive the death of the universe.
- I guess you would gain the wisdom of someone who died, I always thought that was kind of interesting. Also, although you become immortal, you just become that much more aware that all things pass, eventually the universe will pass along with anything you accomplish. "Wisdom of the deathbed" is accepting the code reality that life amounts to nothing, that nothing is meaningful in the face of nonexistence. However, the lich contrasts with the hapless dead, who's souls become like babys wandering in the world but with no parent to take care of them, no ability to comprehend what's happening to them.

Where are they going to do it? I guess anywhere Derek wants. Possibilities: MEade hospital morgue, Aeris' apartment, City of the Dead cistern, divine prison.

Immortals

This would include the gods (ninety-nine, nature gods like the winds), undead, vampires, fairies, witches, hapless souls, souls from other planes. Presumably they would all want something from Aeris for helping with this.

Aeris comes back from the dead

What is he going to encounter there? I think its should be guided by Aeris' expectations. If Derek doesn't have a lot of detail right away -- also ask if he expects to see people he knows, places, demons, ethat?

It's non existence -- so it's just black, maybe a skill roll jsut to be come concious in death? Maybe in the black, it's like a sensory deprivation tank -- you imagine little stimulouses in all senses -- little stimulouses grow until they become totally real to the person. Among these you have to find the one that corresponds to coming back (I guess some of the distrations could come from dreams -- look up some archtepal dreams on the web). Maybe he could see his parents or brother there. You can't tell whether you're in horror or totally serene.

- Receiving knowledge about one's life and the nature of the universe.[23]
- A decision by oneself or others to return to one's body, often accompanied by a reluctance to return.[20][23][24]

Maybe the fantasy should be driven by Aeris' expectations of what would happen.

I guess the one that corresponds to coming back is the lord of the liches -- in D&D mythos this would be orcus, but we can do something more interesting. Maybe this person questions him to find out what he's going to do. The person is like an androgynous featurless huaoid -- like a manican -- so that Aeris can't get any clues about what this person wants to hear. Maybe he asks Aeris some kind of profound paradox question?

Then maybe he goes to a hell city like the one in Skyrim and can wander around the place looking for the exit. It would be a city built from Aeris' thoughts or experiences -- maybe a mix of Hollin, Hilde, Highpyre, Helltown, mines, Tolland Wood, Renhannes. Maybe it's Hilde, but in the middle of the city, there's a giant pyramid or pinnacle crashed down on things with a temple on the top. Or, maybe he's back in the woodman's tent .. maybe the woodman's tent is what's at the top of the temple.

Maybe senses aren't the same. e.g., maybe he doesn't see intensity but sees range maps. Or, maybe there's just a fog that obscures everything, with, e.g., fireflies in it. Maybe he sees himself there, or the party, mirror of Galadriel style.

If he fails in the death challenge, he can't go back. He has to beat the thing to come back.

Attacking the Grimoire, High Hill

Get greencake and books there, and also have a base on High Hill. I guess I can create some other critical necropolis infrastructure on High Hill. Maybe the high point of the city is there, maybe want that to put the generator there.

The oracle members there would summon some spirits to help defend the oracle.

Further chaos

Aeris can then multiply the chaos by opening up the divine prison and other prisons. Maybe someone (e.g., the Volkens) already did this. Aeris can e.g. free some prisoners if they agree to work for him.

Can he loose some disease in the city? Maybe the thing that Gerholt was working on was related to mass death, e.g., biowarfare in the city. Obviously this would make things easy for

Aeris.

Flood the city? Would it be possible to do this by dumping debris into the river? Or, maybe it's time for an "ultimate destruction" spell from my list -- the tornado that Kasskar had a vision of or similar -- or a firestorm. Firestorm could be caused by powderstore explosions.

It seems like as the Angel of Death, Kidu could be instrumental here.

Aeris' actual enemy?

At this point Aeris has a bunch of potential allies, ways to cause destructure, but who's actually going to provide the challenge to him (besides the other PCs)? Ammiral and Reinhardt? An Admiralty Hero we haven't seen yet? Gregor / Wren / the Ninety-Nine? This would be good because it could lead to Ord's minicampaign. Souls from Hereward? Fairies? Other city states?

Aeris possible allies

- The evil PCs
- The vampires
- The Volkens -- they can tell Aeris he needs to work his magic from High Hill -- the power center. They can also help invade the Grimoire, since they're former members. Gerholt will want to re-raise his brothers.
- Ishild
- Lebrecht
- One side or the other in the admiralty -- Krill -- would want Aeris to raise the first Krill.
- his own undead creations
- souls from emptying the divine prison. Maybe in the case of Heath prison, Aeris can free them if they agree to work for him.
- Ninety-Nine in Hollin.

At this point it almost seems like Aeris could set up his own council of evil in the city. I think it might make sense for the players to also make some temporary evil characters at this point to play during Aeris' minicampaign.

Aeris revenge goal

I believe Aeris is still somewhat iffy about what reasonable revenge goal he could have. Let's assume it's to turn either Braddock, the City of the Dead, or some specific site into his necropolis. Specific sites? How about Meade Hospital? Heath Prison? The Oracle Grimoire?

The Admiralty? High Hill? The Mooncalf / Market Street? The Whipsaw? The sanctuary -- this is appealing since Gibb Park is right next to it, with lots of generic souls.

What about fortifications in the city? Basically there aren't modern ones. There are Lofton Castle, the prisons, and then I guess the Admiralty would have some kind of Bastille-like secure storehouses maybe. The opium maze of the Mooncalf might actually be the best location -- also you can imagine this becoming a permanent necropolis for Aeris. Would he try to block Braddock off from the river, maybe by sinking some ships there or collapsing a bridge?

City of the Dead

If the characters go back to the cistern in the City of the Dead, they find Gerholt Volker is there and he has deduced what has happened.

--

Aeris' rituals cost 100 to just reanimate a soul, so he'd be able to reanimate 1,500 souls; or > 180 gp to summon, so he'd be able to reanimate and control < 834 level 1 individuals.

At level 6 he doesn't have the ability to "trap" a soul into a body that becomes reanimated -- he has to do that as a ritual, which is 10 minutes each rather than a daily power each -- they're daily powers.

Volkers

There are multiple ways that the party can come in contact with the Volkens:

- Volkens can attack the party when they return
- Ishild can tell them
- Gregor can tell them
- They've reclaimed the cistern or Meade hospital

He could strike a deal to lead the party to the Volkens so the Volkens can attack them.

OK, so the Volkens can also team up with Aeris to do...what? Help Aeris do something even larger? Bring more greencake from the Oracle? Attack the Oracle?

Probably key for the Volkens is to help Aeris raise the dead faster en masse -- right now he can do it only moderately effectively because he needs 10 minutes each. Maybe they build some kind of wide field generator that can raise the entire city of the dead.

Maybe Aeris can figure out that some of the equipment in the cistern will do what he wants.

It seems like the Volkens' goal could be to attack the Oracle, which they would want to get Aeris' greencake to do. It would maybe make sense for Ord because the Oracle could have its own stash of greencake.

Mass Rising

Where does Aeris want to raise the dead? What will they mass of dead attack?

Special undead character

Is Aeris interested in raising a meaningful undead character rather than generic characters.

Post game summary

The party defeats rabid vampires while escaping the guano cave, but Aeris contracts vampirism. They return to Hollin and find that Krill has returned to accuse Burns of witchcraft, causing a split in the admiralty and chaos throughout the city. Seizing on the chaos to start his revenge on Hollin, Aeris kidnaps the parents who abandoned him and reveals that his burlap bag implement contains his brother's skull.