

to do (pre game)

questions for players

- Anything special they want to do before the campaign wraps up?

recap from last time

The last game that Derek was here (I think) the party rushed to the coliseum to rescue Gafur, possibly the last rightful descendant of the Caliphate's Ninety-Nine gods.

Two games ago:

Escaping the coliseum, the party was attacked by Gafur's owner Alim and the Directorate, the inquisitors who exiled Ord. Ord met his animal spirit, the djinn temptress Waifa, and she offered to make Ord the Caliphate's king if he would betray the party to her. At the Sun's Anvil, djinn told the party that Krohn and the djinn high court had imprisoned Krohn's father and god, the Ninety-Nine's Malik.

Last game:

Ignoring dire warnings from the Witches' Chorus, the party entered the Void Prison at the Well of Life. They found the Ninety-Nine's Malik there, and escaped when Ord and Kasskar defeated the prison's Divine Lock. The Malik marshalled the angelic Annur and the Sun's Anvil djinn. Returning to al-Watan, the party and the Malik defeated Krohn and his djinn allies in a final confrontation at Krohn's citadel...and that's where the party is now.

Ord's thread wrapup

The Djinn submit

Still in Krohn's dias room, Krohn's Djinn allies submit to Ord and the Malik.

Philosopher's stone

Have the characters roll a DC 20 perception check (3 of the characters have Perception 10, so there's at least a 7/8 chance they'll succeed on this):

Beowolf: ?

Jaris: 10

Kasskar: 10
Ord: 10
Prosper: 4

Whoever succeeds finds a door in the dias room, which just looks like the wall, and leads to one of Krohn's bedchambers. On a dresser there, they find a clear glass filled with a deep green tincture. The liquid continually swirls almost like it's alive. Shadowy black wisps rise out of it, and it smells strongly of greencake. The party realizes that this is the "Philosopher's Stone," which gives immortality, and is extracted by re-centrifuging huge masses greencake. Krohn must have used most of the world's greencake to make this one dose.

Who if anyone will drink it? If Ord doesn't want to drink it, maybe Waifa appears to tempt him.

Need a description of what happens if they drink it. Maybe I should look in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde for some hints of the experience.

There party also finds additional chests of greencake, again amounting to about 150K gp. Give the characters one last dose of cash, jewels?

The Minaret

The Malik takes Gafur and Ord to the top of the highest minaret in the Citadel, which looks down on the city's central square. As the Malik, Gafur, and Ord look down on the square, the Annur come up the stair behind them, then fly down into the square, and the people there stop to stare at them with wonder.

Malik blows the minaret's horn for about 5 minutes, and the square slowly fills with more people curious why the horn is sounding at this unusual time. When he has the people's attention, the Malik shouts that Krohn was a pretender and has been defeated. He says that as the last remaining true heir of the Ninety-Nine, Gafur will rule the Caliphate. The Malik says that Ord is the champion of the Ninety-Nine, that Ord will command al-Watan's guard, and that the Annur will be Ord's personal guard. Most of the people in the square turn to look at each other and talk incredulously at the announcement, not sure whether to believe it, but a few run from the square to spread the word.

Looking down at the upturned faces in the square, Ord is surprised to see two familiar faces looking back at him, the Inkeri shaman Kajal and the "midwife" Wren.

Kajal and Wren

As the players will remember, the party last traveled to Hilde to press Beowolf's claim to leadership of the natives there, the Inkeri. There, Beowolf defeated the chief of the Knarr clan,

Faering, in single combat. After defeating Faering, Beowolf claimed leadership of the Knarr clan and ordered Faering to continue leading them as his steward. But later Leutwin, another Inkeri, turned the Dempster Sea clans against Beowolf. They trapped the party in a cave full of rabid vampires, but the party escaped the cave and Hilde, living to fight another day.

Now, Kajal says that since the party left Hilde, Leutwin has brought more Inkeri clans to his side and has fought cruelly to subjugate Beowolf's clan, the Knarr. Beowolf's steward Faering has led the Knarr in a valiant resistance, but the Knarr are just one clan, and their defeat is imminent. Of course, Leutwin is fighting Faering because he is Beowolf's man, and if Faering goes down Beowolf's claim to lead the Inkeri might be finished.

Kajal says Beowolf's last chance is to find Lethe's Star, the Inkeri crystal that once lit Highpyre throughout Hilde's 6 month winter. Resetting it in Highpyre's tower will awe all of the Inkeri and make Beowolf's claim incontestable.

Kajal says that it's night on Hilde now, and Beowolf's green comet Noreste is dominating the whole sky.

Kajal and Wren say that the Star is under The Fangs. The Fangs are three mountains at Hilde's north pole, which when seen against the sky from near the city of Bruegel, look like three identical spikes. When you reach them, there's a cavernous entrance into the ground between them, and that's where Lethe's Star is. Since the Fangs are at the pole, the party will have to be prepared for a very difficult journey on dog sleds...Faering will have the sleds and dogs prepared when the party reaches Highpyre.

Travel to Highpyre

Does Burns captain the ship?

I assume the party takes the Wayward to Hilde. It's winter, so constant night sets in as the Wayward gets closer to Hilde. In the night, the way is lit by starlight, and also by the green comet Noreste, whose tail now reaches almost all the way across the sky. The Wayward approaches Highpyre using the same route the Hedgepeth did in the party's first visit to Highpyre. The ship goes from the Bellem Sea the surrounds Hilde; to the Aden Sea, where the party encountered the shipwrecked Dowager before; to Lief Bay, where Highpyre is. Since it's winter, the Aden Sea and Lief Bay have dangerous grinding ice, and it's hard work for Burns to find a way through the ice floes.

Eventually the ship reaches Highpyre. Description from Adventure 006:

Highpyre staddles the Pollard River where the river empties into Lief Bay, and you can sail up the river several hundred yards to where there are some damaged but usable

docks and get out.

As you sail up, you can see that the city is a completely burned, flattened ruin (show them the picture). It looks like it was a city of about 50K people, which surprises you given the inhospitable location here. You can see a few features -- two broken bridges that used to cross the river, and a broken tower on the east side.

Beowulf investigated this tower the first time the party visited and didn't find anything there. But, this was the tower that originally held Lethe's Star.

However, now the Knarr clan, led by Beowulf's steward Faering, are there to meet him and they have the dog sleds.

Travel to the pole

From here, the party travels up the Pollard River on dog sleds, headed for the earth's north pole. On the first journey, the party followed the Pollard to the hell town Bruegel where they found the meteor Noreste. As the party approaches the hell town Pollard that they visited before, it's 24 hour night, but there's an aurora borealis, and against it they can see the three Fangs that Kajal and Wren described on the horizon.

Bizzarro Hollin

The party has a difficult journey, with some of the dogs dying and being eaten to preserve food. However, they eventually reach the foot of the fangs. From here they can see that the two outer fangs are closer, and the the middle fang is a further mountain. Traveling between the two outer ones and towards the third, they do eventually come to a cavernous entrance. It's a hellmouth-like opening with sulfuric-smelling steam coming out of it.

After the enter, they take spend a day or so navigating and mapping the caverns inside, looking for some indication of where the Star might be. Often, they can feel the entire cavern rumble like an earthquake. Eventually, they find an open slit in a cavern wall, wide enough to go into, and they're surprised to see a shaft of gray light coming out of it.

When they enter, they can't see anything except the light source, a gray sphere in the distance. As their eyes adjust a little, they can see that a kind of crude natural stair goes down, in the general direction of the light.

As they go down, you're surprised to see that the natural stair widens and becomes an actual street, or even avenue. On either side of the avenue, there are many graves, more grand monument buildings in various states of disrepair, and a few buildings that look like crude

homes. If they investigate, they find various strange things like gravestones with nonsensical text on them, or text that goes off the edge of the gravestone. Some of the homes or monuments have no doors. One of the monuments has no doors, but has an iron porticullis that doesn't open, and you can see through the bars a person pacing aimlessly. He occasionally runs into a wall, which prompts him to stop and pace aimlessly in a different direction. The rumbling is stronger here than in the cavern above. After this, the party occasionally comes across a person walking in a similar manner on the avenue itself; these people don't acknowledge the party.

Following the avenue towards the light, the party eventually reaches a wall with a high opening or gate in it. At this moment, the ground rumbles strongly, knocking some of the party prone, and the gate explodes as a monstrosity heaves through it. In the gray light, you can see a scaly white dragon that has a face with two halves that look like they weren't fit together quite right. The two legs on one side are flippers instead of legs, and although it moves by half-flopping around, it's quite shocking how fast and powerfully it can move. It has white pupilless eyes, which look like they might be vestigial. The squeeling sound it makes is a mix of fury, confusion, and pain.

Wren heaves a sigh, and says tiredly, "It's the Prodigy, the monster that violates the natural order. This is the creature that destroyed Highpyre."

The Prodigy

It breathes napalm. If it presses to create a particularly furious burst of napalm, napalm also starts to spray out of lesions in its head and throat, so napalm sprays out at kind of random directions.

It has powers that explain why it destroyed Highpyre with fire -- one of its attacks is to seize up and writhe, which then causes a hellfire or napalm Burst *1,000* area of attack. I guess it should go out from the prodigy like a sphere of destruction. The sphere destroys nearby structures and leaves them charred. The light from it can also be blinding. It causes an earthquake as well, which has a chance of knocking characters prone. The scream can also be an attack.

The Blind Idiot God

The party continues down the avenue toward the gray light. They go through the gate that the Prodigy destroyed, and enter a more urban area with houses and businesses on either side. Like the graves and monuments before the wall, many of these buildings have some nonsensical structural deformity. Eventually, they reach a large abandoned square on the water, with an apparent meat market, clothing fair, and food fair. There's a merchants hostelon the

square, which strikes the party as looking like the Mooncalf. You realize if you haven't already that you're in a kind of Bizarro Hollin.

On one side of the square, lying on the ground next to one of the meat market stalls, there's a naked man, apparently fit fully sleeping. He moans in his sleep and often turns violently. A very disturbing cold chill goes through each of your bodies. Wren whispers hoarsely, "Our universe is the dream of a Blind Idiot God. This is his avatar -- his image of himself in the dream. Aeris could have destroyed all of reality by waking him here, but his ambition wasn't that hateful. Don't wake him."

The Kraken

Ahead, past the square, the party can now see that the gray light is Lethe's Star, housed in the top of a high tower in a flooded river, roughly where Lofton Castle would be in Hollin. There's a giant kraken at the tower's base, with its tendrils wrapped around the tower. It's hungering after the Star's power, trying to use its tendrils to heave its body up, but it can't reach the star. Who knows how long this has been going on.

A high bridge leaves the square and goes over the river toward the tower. But, it ends abruptly at its highest point. Instead Beowulf can swim into the river, swim under the surface to the tower's entrance, and then come up out of the water in the spiral stair inside. Going to the top of the tower, he can take the Star, which is surprisingly cool to the touch. It's about the size of a bowling ball.

Highpyre

Notes on the Inkeri from when he first met the Inkeri in Gibb Park:

Inside the party finds a few greybeards. They stand up, and one says "Welcome. I am Ormir, and these are Gomme and Ernhurst. [They would look suitably old-barbarian like. What abandon Inerki cities would they be from.] We are three elders of the Inkeri, and this is Kajal. [The mystic who prompted the Inkeri trip to Hollin when Noreste when developed the bright tail.]

Many younger men come into the tent late and make themselves comfortable in an outer circle. Ormir introduces three of them as Belwe, Leutwin, and Asger.

A third young Inkeri, Asger, stands up in his spot in the outer circle and says. "What Belwe and Leutwin say is true, but beside the point. Notice that Beowulf is left-handed -- not human."

At this a murmur goes around the tent. Belwe draws his sword and says, "Ormir, Gomme, Ernhurst, and reverend Kajal. Asger speaks correctly. Beowolf is left-handed and inhuman, and I claim my right to kill the abomination now in single combat."

Now when the party returns to Highpyre, they find that Faering and his men have spent that time partially rebuilding the tower and the bridges over the river. The tower isn't complete but a frame has reached the full height. Faering's Knarr clan is camped out around the tower.

But, the clans that Beowolf's traitor Leutwin have rallied are camped out on the other side of the river. When, the party arrives, those clans cross the river to confront Beowolf. Beowolf met several Inkeri in Gibb Park in Hollin when the Inkeri came there: the graybeards Ormir, Gomme, and Ernhurst; the angry young Inkeri Leutwin, Asger, and Belwe, who Beowolf killed in single combat; and the mystic Kajal, who now travels with Beowolf.

Leutwin confronts Beowolf, saying that he is not Inkeri, and that Leutwin now challenges him to single combat. The young Inkeri Asgar, who accused the left-handed Beowolf of being not human in Hollin before, repeats that claim now and says that it is blasphemy for Beowolf to carry Lethe's Star. Asgar, says that he will kill the inhuman Beowolf, but Leutwin objects, saying it is his right as leader of the Inkeri clans.

The graybeard Ormir says that Beowolf killed Belwe but also Belwe's animal spirit in Hollin, so Leutwin will fight Beowolf with the graybeard's support.

Ultimate return to Hollin: Jaris resolution

I'm really struggling to see what good thing for Jaris naturally comes out of the story line, since Jaris is so new.

I wonder if he should be confronted with the "fact" that to do something good to makeup for Aeris, Jaris has to continue living. E.g., raise some of the orphans that the firestorm created. Or, put some of the souls at peace?

Maybe he can figure out, resolve the mystery of the solaris people.

Beowolf's power animal

Description from game 23...actually there's not a lot of detail here.

Celendril, the White Drake of the Waste

After the fight with Vecassitrix, Beowolf's ears are still ringing from the quinine, and he's kneeling on the snow, still vomiting from the quinine. But in his exhaustion, he looks up, past the cliffside toward the horizon, and sees the spirit of a regal white dragon come to him, then disappear as he joins with Beowolf. This is Celendril, the White Drake of the Waste. With Celendril as his animal spirit, Beowolf gains Heroic Effort as an encounter power.

Kajal or an Inkeri chief can tell Beowolf that Celendril is traditionally believed to be the guardian of the Inkeri nation, who protected the Inkeri from the horrors of Hilde's waste. But now with Highpyre destroyed and the Inkeri in hiding, the Inkeri believe that Celendril was killed.

Campaign epilogue

I have a few last items as an epilogue, but first I'd like to know if you have any questions about the campaign, or want the characters to revisit anything that's unresolved.

Ask them what they think happens to their characters after the campaign.

Ord, Prosper

I think that Ord's epilogue already happened at the beginning of this game.

Does he try to hunt down any other Krohn's or try to find any more Ninety-Nine? What about the possibility that more Prospers could appear, how would he address that? What does he do with the current Prosper? Prosper thought he was sent by a guilty god. What Kelly does he think the Prospers are?

Prosper

Jaris, Kasskar

Ask Keith and Derek if they eventually go back to Hollin after Beowolf reestablishes Highpyre, or where they settle. Then remind Keith:

In game 20, the party was contacted by a man named Maycott, from an organization called Chill Touch. Maycott said that Chill Touch's purpose was to "maintain the balance of justice," and that they'd been aware of Kasskar since his parents were murdered. Maycott gave the party Chill Touch's intelligence that Beowolf's parents were in the divine prison Narsasha. In exchange, Kasskar and Ord's signed an "agreement" with Chill Touch -- actually just a blank page that Chill

Touch would fill in as their pleased, and Kasskar and Ord signed the agreement in their own blood.

Not too long after Kasskar and Jaris return to Hollin (or wherever they settle), Maycott comes to visit Kasskar, and brings Kasskar some very nice wine. He asks whether Kasskar can talk with him somewhere private. There, over drinks, Maycott says that originally Chill Touch wanted Kasskar and Ord to kill Kidu, the Gradskan Angel of Death. Maycott says that in fact, killing Kidu was the original purpose of Chill Touch's centuries-old organization.

But, he says Chill Touch has confirmed that Aeris killed the Angel of Death in the Royal Mummy Cache under the Mooncalf. He says that Kidu had protected the ancient Gradskan hoard under the City of the Dead. But now with Kidu dead, the hoard would be open to them, if Kasskar would agree to be their..."locksmith." Maycott says his goal is not to loot the hoard, but that there's something beautiful there that would interest Kasskar, and his friend Jaris.

They go at night, to a place like the place I saw with my guide in the City of the Dead in Cairo. Describe the iron gate with the caskets arrayed inside. Then with Kasskar picking the locks, they go in and downstairs, and indeed, find the ancient Gradskan hoard.

The hoard items aren't modern treasure. The hoard includes many wood carvings, and many iron age craft items. Some are very beautiful, but as a fence, Kasskar imagines they wouldn't bring much on the market. But, loitering among the hoard of treasure there, they meet three Hereward guardians. (**Insert** some description from before here.) Maycott says that on command, each of these three guardians will find one soul on earth, alive or dead, that they name, and escort it to Hereward.

So, Kasskar and Jaris should decide who these three souls would be.

There, Maycott says he works for a venerable organization called Chill Touch whose purpose is to...maintain the balance of justice. They've been aware of Kasskar since his parents were murdered and have seen the party's conflict with the Hobnails escalate. Chill Touch knows who burned the Winter Wolf and where Beowolf's parents are, and they can give Beowolf this information if Kasskar and Ord will commit to do some unspecified jobs for Chill Touch in the future. If they agree to this, the party should meet him back here in four hours.

If Beowolf agrees to carry this message to them, Maycott leaves, and after Maycott is gone, Beowolf notices that he's left an imp mask on the table.

When they meet Maycott, he says again that to get the information, Kasskar and Ord will have to commit to doing future unspecified jobs for Chill Touch. The jobs will be extremely dangerous, but they'll be just, just as killing Auld was. If they agree, Maycott pulls a piece of paper from his coat pocket, unfolds it, and puts it in front of the

characters. You can see that the paper is blank. Then, Maycott pulls a fountain pen and an elaborate dagger out of his other coat pocket, and asks them to sign at the bottom of the blank page in their own blood.

Kasskar

Kasskar returns home from the hoard. He's maybe making himself comfortable for the evening and drinking what's left of the wine Maycott brought. He hears a soft but rapid tapping on the door.

If he opens it, he finds the tinkerbell fairy Ivy in the hallway. She circles like Lassie trying to get him to follow her. If he follows her, she leads him outside, through the Market, across the Thoroughkill Bridge, and into Loftan Castle. She leads him down to the bottom floor, and there Kasskar finds about 20 orbs that all look identical to the phylactery that the party destroyed in the plane without time -- and they're laying neglected around the room. Kasskar hears a low hum, and traces it to a dim orange ball. The ball occasionally changes by itself between different states or moods: a silent, almost metallic grey; or a warm orange that hums quietly; or a hot orange that crackle loudly.

Roll insight to see if Kasskar can recognize it as the Orb of Contravention that Aeris took from Krohn.

Do last - Beowulf

I assume Beowulf becomes a great king of the Inkeri, goes on to further conquest, and rules until a very advanced age.

Ask him if he keeps Highpyre as his capital. Ask him specifically if Beowulf touches for the King's Evil, or something other kind thing where the everyday Inkeri folk can approach him.

Then, one day in Beowulf's old age, he's sitting on the throne Touching for the King's Evil (or whatever it is), there's a long line of sick folks coming up to Beowulf. Each supplicant bows before Beowulf so that Beowulf can touch their head, then turns up and faces Beowulf so Beowulf can give them a coin. Although he's busy doing the Touch for many people, a man in the line repeated catches Beowulf's attention, distracting him. Beowulf can't see his face, but something about his figure and gait are very familiar. He has a bowed back and leans on a staff in his right hand. Eventually the distracting figure reaches Beowulf and bows for the touch. After Beowulf touches him, he turns his face up to receive the coin. At this moment, Beowulf is stunned to see the man's face is identical to his own. And that's the ast shot of the campaign, roll the credits.

post game summary

Beowolf drinks Krohn's Philosopher's Stone tincture, becoming immortal. The party travels to Hilde, looking to find Lethe's Star and cement Beowolf's claim to Inkeri leadership. In a bizarre Hollin underground at the north pole, they defeat the Prodigy, the monster that violates the natural order, and see the Blind Idiot God, whose confused dream is reality. They find Lethe's Star, and reinstalling it in Highpyre's tower, Beowolf claims kingship of the Inkeri.

Epilogue summary

- * Ord free wills Annur, decides to return to 99.
- * Aeris faux-lacteries
- * Kasskar and Jaris find the Gradskan hoard...though he desires death, Jaris decides to continue alive and work toward fixing Aeris' evil.
- * Beowolf sinister

The Malik makes Ord Champion of the Ninety-Nine. He makes the angelic Annur Ord's personal guard, but Ord gives them free will using X's rune Doubt, and most go their own way. Ord resolves to spend his remaining years exploring the irradiated plane of the Ninety-Nine.

Chill Touch takes Jaris and Kasskar to the ancient Gradskans' hoard, where they find three Hereward guardians who will each take one soul, alive to dead, to the restful plane Hereward on command. Longing for death, Jaris at first suggests himself, but decides instead to continue living and atoning for Aeris' evil. They leave the guardians unused.

The fairy Ivy leads Kasskar to the Raven Forge. There, he finds Polaris's fauxlacteries and Aeris's Orb of Contravention, suggesting the party might have destroyed a fauxlactery in Kairos instead of Aeris's true phylactery.

Beowolf rules the Inkeri from Highpyre for decades. In the last shot of the campaign, the immortal, left-handed Beowolf is stunned to meet an elderly, right-handed Beowolf while touching for the King's Evil.

treasure given out

to do (post game)

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