

L I M I N A L

PRODIGAL SON A Case Note for Liminal

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Background

The Heirs of Osbehr, an ancient werewolf gang in Yorkshire, are facing pressure from the Jaeger family to join them. In desperation, the Heirs have made a deal with a vampire coterie in Saltaire to put the Jaeger family in their place.

One Heirs of Osbehr gang member, Mark Northcott, has acquired several books from the library of his father, Sir Tatton Northcott of Sledmere. From them he has learned of the knife of Lethe, an artefact with which he could raise the Wolf's Head, legendary werewolf outlaws who are rumoured to still hunt as ghosts. Mark has learned the location of the knife is in a Ghost Realm accessed through Castle Market, a grimy closed down indoor market.

The market is a place of geomantic power and watched by the Jaeger family. They must never know the significance of the place. Even worse, though, the Saltaire vampires have found out about it.

Mark Northcott tried to tell his father, but his father would not listen. Now Sir Tatton believes his son is in trouble, and hires the Crew to find him; they are not of the Council of Merlin, and so can be trusted with family business.

The Hook

A senior Council of Merlin magician, Sir Tatton Northcott, is now dying of cancer, and wants them to find his estranged son, Mark Northcott. Mark has fallen out with his father and joined the Heirs of Osbehr, a minor werewolf pack. He called his father, and Tatton slammed the phone down when Mark made demands. But Sir Tatton now realises, Mark was in trouble. Through divination, he has learned that Mark can be found in an abandoned farmhouse outside the village of Thornhill.

Sir Tatton also has missing books from his library, and does not know how they could be missing; the wards were not triggered, and they should in the presence of anyone other than the Northcott family.

Sir Tatton has not yet realised that his son took the books. The missing books refer to the Wolf's Head, the Knife of Lethe, and Sheffield Castle. A really astute player character who Sir Tatton allows to view the library might be able to gain some clues with a Lore skill test.

The Personal Touch

If the sample player character Naomi Fletcher from the main rule book is in play, Sir Tatton Northcott has a good idea they are innocent but their master is guilty. He might hint that, and even hint more information might be a part of payment.

Sir Tatton Northcott

Sir Tatton Northcott is a senior magician in the Council of Merlin, and a superior upper class man in his seventies. He is not a powerful magician, but has considerable wealth, and the respect of his colleagues. His main drive is preserving that respect and the family name; he does not willingly talk about what happened to his only son, Mark, who he threw out when he showed no talent for magic and instead became a werewolf.

His family duty is to guard the barrow, but it has been quiet all his life; most of the wards there have lapsed, though they would alert him to any intruders. Sir Tatton has now been diagnosed with cancer, and seeks to make amends before the end of his life. He wants to find his son -e has nobody else now.

Drive:	The family name
Physical Skills:	Awareness 2
Mental Skills:	Business 2, Education 4, Lore 4
Social Skills:	Conviction 3, High Society 4, Rhetoric 3
Traits:	Countermagic, Rich, Ward Magic (Personal Ward, Stone of Truth), Geomancer
Endurance:	8
Will:	11
Damage	Warded walking stick: aim and fire with Lore, one shot, d6+4 damage.

First Location: Thornhill

Thornhill is a village in west Yorkshire dating back to Anglo-Saxon times. King Osbeht died here fighting Ivar the Boneless's Saxon invasion, and his grave is here. A werewolf gang, the Heirs of Osbeht, one of the most ancient gangs in Britain, makes its home in the area. They were recently almost wiped out by an attack by vampires.

An abandoned farmhouse at the edge of the village was their base, and is now a place of slaughter. There are still bodies in the farmouse, some of which have been drained of blood. A search of the area discovers a broken silver dagger, encrusted with blood. But while the player characters are investigating, they hear a pained howl in the distance.

Assuming they pursue, they find one injured werewolf, Omar Lewis, fighting off two ravening vampires armed with silver knives, like the one found in the house. If the player characters are not swift, Omar has already lost the fight, and lies dying as the vampires turn on the heroes.

Vampires

Drive: Thirst for blood
 Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Melee Combat 3
 Mental Skills: Education 2
 Social Skills: Rhetoric 1, Taunt 3
 Traits: Brawny, Night Sight, Quick Reflexes,
 Rapid Healing (Weakness: Silver)
 Limitation: Weakened by Sunlight, Vulnerability (Garlic, Mirrors)
 Limitation: Obligated (to Ariadne, see below)
 Endurance: 11
 Will: 8
 Damage: d6+3 (natural weapons or silver knife)

Omar Lewis

Omar Lewis is a boy of 17, a diviner, and werewolf of the Heirs of Osbeht.

Drive: Reform the heirs of Osbeht
 Physical Skills: Athletics 1, Awareness 1, Melee 2, Survival 2, Vehicles 2
 Mental Skills: Lore 2, Technology 2
 Social Skills: Charm 2, Conviction 2, Streetwise 2, Taunt 1
 Traits: Rapid Healing (Weakness: Silver), Night Sight,
 Shapechanger (massive wolf form),
 Divination (haruspicy – divination through inspecting the entrails of animals)
 Endurance: 13 (17 as wolf)
 Will: 10
 Damage: d6+1 (knife or natural weapons in wolf form)

The Lead

Omar will talk if the player characters try to save him. If the player characters got to him quickly, he is still conscious, and can be saved with a Healing skill test, though he will still need time to recover; he will not regenerate the wounds inflicted by silver. If they delayed, a Healing skill test will give him a few more minutes to talk, but it is otherwise too late.

Information Omar can pass on includes:

- Vampires attacked and killed many of the werewolves, but Omar hopes others could have survived, though they are being hunted.
- The vampires appeared to be after Mark Northcott.
- Mark Northcott plans to raise the Wolf's Head to strengthen the gang with supernatural power. Omar always thought it was a bad idea.
- Mark Northcott has gone to Castle Market in Sheffield to gain access to an other-worldly realm, wherein is kept a treasure associated to the Wolf's Head, the Knife of Lethe.

Complications: Castle Market

The Jaeger family know that Castle Market is a place of power, and keep an eye on it. This is even easier now it is derelict. Notably, Mark Northcott sneaked his way past the watchers.

Castle Market

The Castle Market building is just outside Sheffield City centre, by the banks of the River Don. The oldest part was the fish and vegetable market, built in the period between the First and Second World Wars, but the bulk of the building was constructed in the early 1960s. It has two main floors, and a gallery above the main area, which all contained shops when the market was open. A which featured both stalls and shops accessible from the street level when the market was open. An office building stands on top of the whole structure.

It closed in 2013 and demolition began in 2015. The name of the market comes from the fact it was built on the site of Sheffield Castle, perhaps most famous for the fact that Mary Queen of Scots was held prisoner there for 14 years. It was razed during the English Civil War, after Royalists holding the castle surrendered to the besieging Parliamentary forces.



Jaeger Gang Watchers: Sean Daley, Zabeer Hussein

Drive: Loyalty to Jaeger family
 Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Melee 3, Survival 2
 Mental Skills: Lore 1
 Social Skills: Streetwise 2, Taunt 3
 Traits: Brawny, Rapid Healing (Weakness: Silver), Night Sight, Rage, Shapechanger (massive wolf form)
 Limitation: Uncontrolled Anger
 Endurance: 14 (18 wolf form)
 Will: 8
 Damage: d6+3 (knife or natural weapons in wolf form)

The watchers are on edge because a large group of vampires is around- eight of them in total. They initially think the player characters may be their servitors. Without the player characters, the werewolves are in big trouble. With them, they can take the vampires together.

Ariadne

Ariadne is an ambitious young vampire who has recently moved to Saltaire with her associates. She was the one who spoke to Mark Northcott and made and broke the deal, seeking the power for herself. She now leads the group in Castle Market. She has a surprisingly modern attitude for a vampire, and is powerful for one who assumed vampire form within the last decade.

Drive: Ambition to be a power in the vampire world.
 Physical Skills: Athletics 4, Awareness 4, Melee Combat 3, Shoot 2
 Mental Skills: Business 1, Lore 3, Education 2, Technology 3
 Social Skills: Charm 1, Conviction 3, Taunt 4
 Traits: Brawny, Frightening, Night Sight, Quick Reflexes, Rapid Healing (Weakness: Fire)
 Limitations: Weakened by Sunlight
 Endurance: 16
 Will: 10
 Damage: d6+3 (natural weapons, pistol)

Ariadne's Brood (seven vampires)

Drive: Demons in human form
 Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Melee Combat 3
 Mental Skills: Lore 1, Education 2
 Social Skills: Taunt 3
 Traits: Brawny, Night Sight, Quick Reflexes, Rapid Healing (Weakness: Fire)
 Limitation: Weakened by Sunlight, Vulnerability (Garlic, Mirrors)
 Limitations: Obligated [Ariadne]
 Endurance: 15
 Will: 8
 Damage: d6+3 (natural weapons)

Final Location

The player characters need to find the entrance to the "otherworld", which is easy enough with Omar Lewis' suggestions, but otherwise needs a relevant test. The entrance is behind the basement toilets and a door with a faded "staff only" sign, and stinks of urine. The realm is actually a small hidden Ghost Realm, taking the form of the old dungeons of Sheffield Castle. One cell is where the player characters enter the realm.

As is often the case with Ghost Realms, the issue is not so much getting in as getting out. A character who succeeds in a Lore test will know that Ghost Realms of this kind are bubbles of the past, and the way to escape is to find a hint of modernity which has intruded into the world of the past. A room to room search finds one of the cells is lit by an electric lightbulb. An Awareness test in this cell finds that the bars on the window are loose, and climbing out takes the characters back to Castle Market.

If the player characters fail either the Lore test or the search, they are trapped here, and lose d6 Will before they may try again. Anyone reduced to zero Will is trapped here forever as a ghost.

Fortunately, the object of the player character's hunt is also here. Another cell serves as a treasury. Most of the treasure here is ghostly, and will dissipate if removed from the realm, but an old bronze knife there is genuine.

Also present in the treasury is Mark Northcott, now mad with grief and power. Mark Northcott is determined to raise the Wolf's Head as soon as he can with the knife, to get back at the Saltaire vampires. All he needs is a human sacrifice...the player characters might do.

Mark can be dissuaded; this is possibly more of a social than a physical challenge, though he is tough and is prepared to fight.

- Drive: Vengeance at all costs!
- Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Melee 4, Survival 1
- Mental Skills: Lore 4, Education 2
- Social Skills: Charm 2, Conviction 4, Streetwise 1, Taunt 2
- Traits: Supernatural Strength, Rapid Healing (Weakness: Silver), Night Sight, Rage, Shapechanger (massive wolf form), Monstrous Toughness
- Endurance: 19 (23 wolf form)
- Will: 12
- Damage: d6+5 (knife or natural weapons in wolf form)