

ABERRACT

"Hwoosh! Just like that, everything was so white it felt purple-green. Like I could see through myself and the others. Then I looked back. Fico, Tanry, and the Bellweather were gone. We eventually collected most of them ... smeared out over a mile of regolith. Hard day."

—Avoid the Voidway, oral histories of a danger zone.

Beyond the things left by the builders and the gods, there are the aberrant artifacts, the aberracts. Perhaps they are the Maker's work? Perhaps the corruption of an unlord, such as Ill-Nano? Or are they something else entirely, a flaw in the cosmos, a portent of a future, a fragment of some other past?

Whatever else they are, the aberracts are zones of danger.

VOIDWAY LANE

Here something else moves through our space and time. Its colors are not our colors. Its numbers not our numbers. Its advent is not our advent. Flags inscribed with prayers flutter and tatter in the chaotic breeze, a smear of color, shattered bone, snapped wood, and lying new-growth mark a voidway lane.

At unpredictable, chaotic intervals, the 'advent' visits. Or perhaps our space moves through the 'advent'. Whatever happens, living matter in the voidway lane is suddenly and completely rearranged along its entire length. Sometimes, the new arrangement seems like a message, often like a mockery.

Rarely, pearls of shipmetal, whorls of shaved spacetime, a manna of edible soul-stuff, or other stranger stuff is left scattered along the voidway lane. Never enough to sustain an industry, but attractive to desperate scavengers and hopeful gamblers. Ever enough for another fool to end up scattered across the voidway.

CROSSING A VOIDWAY

"It is long seven miles, the serpent out of space. Look left, look right, look in, look out. Run, run, run! Leave a pendant in the sun. Oh, faster Jiri, faster. It's a viper, a heavenly one!"

—Orangeland Voidway County traditional.

The advent is like lightning from the blue, like misfortune with no curse to blame. Once a day, sometimes twice, rarely thrice. Perhaps the advent is drawn to minds, using them as beacons to navigate its strange design? Grim determination, cross the voidway, make the journey short, make your path straight.

O, traveler, roll should you choose to cross.

1. You decide. Then the voidway vibrates.
2. Your first step. Should the advent occur, save.
3. Nearly halfway through.
4. Quite almost out of the voidway.
5. Your last step. Should the advent pass, save.
6. Relief floods you. Through. Then the voidway oscillates.

This time, thus manifests the voidway.

- 1 The colors! The movement! The not! You are gone.
- 2 It carries you along, distributes you along the voidway.
- 3 Its passage throws you to the ground. Prostrate. Bleeding.
- 4 The roaring wind steals an offering, a gift, a substitute.
- 5 Strange lights, distant whistles. Bang! Thunder in the blue.
- 6–10 Odd. A breeze. Air pressure. Distorted gravity.
- 11–50 You taste a sixth taste, feel besides yourself. Nothing more?
- 51–00 There is no advent. You'd say it is but a legend, were it not for the bones, the scattered belongings, the broken dreams.

THIS VALUABLE DEBRIS

Edible soul-stuff. Kernels of undifferentiated universal soul. Restores lost attributes, wipes away hunger and fatigue, gives visions of the glory of the Maker. (€100/sp)

Pearls of shipmetal. The strongest, most inert of metals, but perfectly ductile if worked on a void anvil. (€20/sp)

Shaved spacetime. Whorls of extra time, extra space. Add an action to your round, room to your suitcase. Spend 1 life to unfold. Cannot be folded again. (€50/sp)

THIS STRANGER STUFF

1. Crystal teeth. Never wear away. Good for dentures.
2. Unicorn skull. Makes it easier to access another person's dreams.
3. Shards of alien light. Stay lit for weeks or months or years. Illuminate strange aspects.
4. Flesh of another time. Useful for biomancers who would make monsters.
5. False plant. Actually plastic, but so perfect, it could be alive. Also, generates electricity.
6. An incomprehensible. Entombed in amber, it would make a good paper weight.