

The Travesty of the Silver Kings

Recorded verbatim from the historical presentations on Calythia during the 55th annual Spiral Symposium as told by historian Quellam Eben.

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In the time of pre-Tearing Calythia where the royal families of Cybin still sat at the Silver Throne in the City of Rings (then known as Caendorim City) there ruled King Dei f'Custosa Cybin in the year 2.187 MA, 187 years before the Tearing. Dei wasn't a notable monarch save that he was the one that instated the most court wizards, loremasters, and even an Archmage (the name of the latter is lost to history). Spellweavers were always a staple of the court, but none to the extent that were present when Dei took the throne at 24. He seemed to have an insatiable desire to learn everything about magic and the nature of mana, even though for one reason or another he never picked up the art himself.

Around the same time Dei ascended the throne a clandestine organization that had been steadily recruiting members called the Hrryn'nag'Vangos ("Those That Defy" in Dwarven), a group of separatists that opposed the monarchy and the current status quo had become notorious enough that their presence became noticeable. For the first few decades they were simply a secret society comprised of various leaders and members of the crafting Guilds and fraternities that would discuss what was wrong with their current leadership and amass knowledge regarding various scandals and wrongdoings that were being committed by the royal house and the closely-related noble houses. In time, the Hrryn became an independent guild of its own.

The rest of Dei's rule marched onward. For a king he was more insular and took to public speaking less than his previous family members. He married a noblelady shortly after he took the throne. He and Queen Myryena had two children, a son named Deimis and a daughter named Meiya. Dei turned most of his attention to his son, grooming him into an image of himself. Interestingly enough it was instead Meiya that became talented in the arcane arts which is believed to be somewhat due to Dei's Archmage, who saw great potential in the young princess and took her under his wing.

King Dei's passionate hobby for the arcane eventually became an obsession,

spending days in the castle archives and traveling to the various Archseminaries across Alteir and leaving most of the day to day politics and duties to his wife. Always accompanying him was his small coterie of court wizards who eventually became known as the Silver Scholars. His studies eventually lead him down the path of the soul and the nature of life and death in regards to the flow of mana: Necromancy. In his travels he picked up a deaf but powerful and prescient oracle.

This nameless oracle eventually told him about a “cataclysmic flood, surging and ebbing the flow of the lifeblood of Alteir and bringing about a new history.” Along with his increasingly thorough and darker path down the lore of necromancy the king also became fixated in studying this prophesy with his court Archmage. By now Dei was in his forties, his son almost twenty. Meiya, the youngest, had become personally detached from her father and spent most of her time hard at work and studying under the Archmage who had formally declared her his apprentice. Deimis was a squire that eventually became a knight, taking his place as one of the officers of Calythia's army.

By this time the Hrrn'nag'Vangos was making its move, having expanded and instating several meeting houses in the Doros and Caen (now known as the Ring) Priums. While still secretive and hiding behind the faces of the various crafters Guilds they were growing in power and affluence, biding their time and quietly starting to sow discord and unrest in the plebeian populace regarding the politics of the court.

The last decade of Dei's reign is what interests scholars the most. Some details are vague and patchy, filled with outrageous speculation and theories, but what is known is that his dual obsessions with necromancy and this prophesy of the end of the world came to a disturbing head. He determined that he needed to preserve himself and his family's legacy through this cataclysm, which this anonymous oracle had declared would happen in roughly 140 years. While it is argued that at this point Dei was insane, it is at least agreed upon that he had gained much insight and vast forethought from his amassing of knowledge.

He along with his Silver Scholars, his Archmage, the oracle, and the finest golemancers from all of Alteir devised an ambitious and highly questionable plan: Find a way to create a golem that can bind Dei's consciousness and soul to its essence and form. The chances of this going horribly wrong and Dei becoming trapped mindlessly or destroyed indefinitely were high, so as an extra precaution Dei and his brilliant team also contacted a powerful entity to aid them in this

endeavor. The identity and nature of this entity is lost. Popular theory names it some kind of archfiend, others some kind of elder spirit. The price for such a request was high. The exact details of this pact are also unquantified, the only one that seemingly survived in the texts was that the Cybin line would have to pay tribute to this entity for the next four generations. Thus binding himself and his family to this being it was agreed that himself and his descendants, as long as they abide by these strictures, would be able to perform this elaborate Soul Ritual.

The first golem was built and completed when Dei was almost 60. A grandiose creation of soulsilver mithril, gold, and tytium, it was a veritable fortress in which Dei's essence and mind would be cloistered in until he would awaken after the Tearing. The ritual ended up a success, and the current King for all intents and purposes “died” allowing his son, now in his early 30s, to ascend the throne.

This cycle stayed unbroken as Deimis fCustosa Cybin, then his eldest Cineros, then Maigar, and finally Mirigos all became ageless and sequestered within their silver sarcophagi to await the end of the world. Many things happened in this time period, most notably the separatist guild the Hrrn had become a mighty force indeed. In the middle of the reign of Cineros they made themselves more widely known to the commoners and directed the people of Calythia towards a common enemy: The Cybins. Civil war in earnest did not start until right when Maigar ascended, who declared official conflict with them and intended to stamp them out. Through decades of maneuvering, biding and amassing allies and an army from the ranks of the populace across all four Priums, the Hrrn were well-equipped and prepared for it. Maigar was grievously maimed in battle with them when he was only 36 and nearly died from his wounds before the ritual to transfer his soul was complete. Thus ended his short 11 year rule, forcing his only son Mirigos who was only a teenager at the time to take the crown.

It should be noted that since Dei's reign, Calythia's royal house has always had an Archmage. The populace as a whole knew that no less than 10 different individuals have served such a position, but they were wrong the entire time. It is now known that the Archmage that served in Mirigos' time was actually the exact same individual that had served under King Dei. There is a solid theory going around Alteir's current scholarly circles that this unknown mage was actually a lich of some kind, and that his role in everything that transpired since Dei was deeper than was once believed. What had happened to his original apprentice, Princess Maiya, was unknown; all records of her seemingly disappear around the time Dei becomes bound to his golem. The Hrrn suspected something amiss regarding the

Cybin's trusted Archmage, but never got to the bottom of it.

For the rest of Mirigos' tumultuous reign, Calythia was torn apart by war. He became a surprisingly competent tactician, and was able to push back a lot of the progress that the Hrrn had achieved previously that locked the entire region into a cold, quiet stalemate of over twenty years. He became one of the more outwardly ruthless and unforgiving monarchs of the Cybins, and he might have been able to triumph by the end of his rule, save that two things acted against him: Mirigos came down with a wasting disease, although none know why or how exactly. He was always a sickly individual, born with more than one congenital condition and fighting with his health for his entire life so likely his extreme sickness was simply a result of him losing an ongoing battle. The second event came when through either treachery from the inside or simply coincidence. The Hrrn found out about the pact and the silver golems that held the souls of the previous four kings, and also where these inert constructs were being held. They sent a small but skilled force to assault a key point in the Cybin's castle. Frantic, dying, and desperate to preserve himself and damn the rest of his subjects and family, Mirigos ordered the Silver Scholars and his Archmage to transfer himself to the last golem built right as the Hrrn soldiers were storming his keep. None know what happened to the Archmage or even the Silver Scholars, as they were gone by the time the soldiers had reached that special antechamber.

As a form of mockery and a grim reminder of the greed of the monarchy, the Hrrn crafted vast stone spires through the mountain pass that linked the Ring Prium with the Doros Prium. There they magically sealed the golems inside emotionless stone likenesses of the kings that held them, fated to stand there eternally. It became known as the Pass of the Silver Kings and they are one of the only artifacts of Calythia that survived the Tearing. To modern day Calythians it signifies the former glory of their ancestry and the hubris of their past.