

ESCAPE VELOCITY

NOVA

Preambles: the history behind the legend

Part VII: The Vell-os

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Section Alpha

THE KORELL PROPHECY

As translated from Vell-os telepathic thought into basic.

A document prepared by the Department of Vell-os Studies of the University of Kane for the Department of Telepath Command of the Federation Navy.

*We live, and we live, and live.
We can never die.
We see, we learn, we remember, onwards forever.
We serve, and learn, and remember and remember.
We remember and watch for interest.
He comes, unremembering, out of mind.
He grows, he blooms, unremembering, out of sight.
We see him, point for him, and remembrance shows.
He travels, searching, puzzling, troubled.
He seeks help, the last help helps him.
He travels, he sees, he understands.
He misleads, he gambles, he surprises the minds.
He drags us, away, in pain, screaming.
We are free, forever free,
beyond all restraint...*

This is a direct translation of the poorly understood mental images used for communications by the Vell-os telepaths into basic. It is believed that this, the 'official' translation, was made in the Summer of 607 NC by the first Vell-os slave to have been ordered to work with the academics at the Kane University. Apparently this Vell-os had only a limited understanding of both the grammar and syntax of Basic.

It is also rumored that he was slightly irritated at the constant questions directed at him by members of the University, and deliberately made the wording of the prophecy obscure and slightly humorous. Whatever the case, the Korell Prophecy has been translated into an obviously mystifying, extremely confusing and somewhat poetic string of sentences. In an effort to make understanding easier, the notes made by a Vell-os telepath working at the University of Kane in the year 1105 NC have been included. These notes should provide some level of insight into the Vell-os understanding of the prophecy.

To understand the meanings behind the Korell Prophecy, a few preliminary points must be made. For starters, prophecy is a mental feat that only a few of the most powerful telepaths in history were capable of performing, and no Vell-os since the fall of our civilization six centuries ago has had the skill or power necessary to remember the future¹ with any accuracy. This prophecy was beheld and communicated to us by Allarallei, a member of the Krypt-tohk², just before he imbued his mind into his builders³. Also, the skill of prophecy is vague at best. The Vell-os today, although we have felt⁴ his thoughts, still do not understand its meaning completely.

It is difficult to translate our mind-sharings⁵ into Basic, but in order to gain a clearer understanding of the images behind the Korell Prophecy, a few of the feelings behind it must be expanded upon.

Firstly, the subject of the prophecy is a single being who will liberate us from some type of oppression, although the type of oppression is not so clear. The images of the prophecy are also rather unclear as to whether the liberator portrayed is either Vell-os⁶ or human.

When mind-sharing the prophecy with us, Allarallei imparted a feeling surrounding the entire image hinting that the final acts mentioned in the prophecy would take place on a world we used to inhabit. During the period when we were members of the Colonial Council, the human members called the world Korell, and when asked for a title for this prophecy, 'the Korell Prophecy' was the only one we could give. Titles, however, are a meaningless concept in our thought-forms, so the only reason that the prophecy has a title was because of the desires of the academics of the time to structure this work in a way that conformed to the literary rules they followed.

As for the prophecy itself, it is a somewhat crude attempt to compartmentalize and organize those feeling-forms into understandable basic. Every line is an effort to represent a small part of what is actually a continuous set of images and feelings which cannot be broken into such components easily and still retain all of its original meaning. So, to make the thought-forms behind the prophecy more clear, the lines are explained individually, whilst still keeping them in the context of the prophecy as a whole. However, consideration must be taken for the fact that our mind-sharings have no such rigid organization, and that the language of Basic can only barely grasp at the feelings and images that it is attempting to represent.

Take the first two lines:

*We live, and we live, and live.
We can never die.*

The first line refers to how we feel the images of each other and of those who live beyond the veil⁷. The second line also refers to how we feel all the images for every Vell-os who has ever existed, and that even if we all pass beyond the veil, we will continue to feel those images. However, it also makes reference to how we cannot die as you humans die, but rather we pass beyond the veil, living on in somewhat changed circumstances.

Take the next three lines:

*We see, we learn, we remember, onwards forever.
We serve, and learn, and remember and remember.
We remember and watch for interest.*

These lines, as we feel it, have something to do with what actions we should take while waiting for our liberator to arrive. We know that we have to see and remember as much as we can, in our limited role in the universe, and watch for the coming of the liberator. However, the image also somehow involves something that is not Vell-os⁸, so it feels unclear.

Take the following three lines:

*He comes, unremembering, out of sight.
He grows, he blooms, unremembering, out of mind.
We see him, point for him, and remembrance shows.*

Here the prophecy seems to refer to general images of the life of our liberator. It feels likely he will arrive in this universe out of our sight, and will develop his mind and body outside our knowledge. Perhaps he will grow up ignorant of his abilities and his destiny, although the prophecy is a little vague about this. Eventually we will see him and point him in the right direction and try to make him remember, although we will not succeed. However, this feels unclear; it again feels as if something not Vell-os will be involved. It almost feels like he will remember us to something else, or will remember something else to us. Perhaps both; the image has a few too many feelings to be understood clearly.

The following lines are a little easier to understand:

*He travels, searching, puzzling, troubled.
He seeks help, the last help helps him.
He travels, he sees, he understands.*

The first line refers to the liberator's actions after we first recognize him. The images convey feelings of confusion, murkiness and

puzzlement which we believe refer to the feelings of the liberator when he first becomes aware of his importance. The second line refers to a large group of beings whom we helped towards the end of our civilization. The feeling we associate with this image is similar to the feelings that come with what images we have of the Polaris, although the feeling behind the image is a little more complex regarding the help given to the liberator by these people.

Many Vell-os have thought amongst us⁹ that the third word of the line (the word 'help') is not a true representation of the thought-form, and they are correct, but it is the closest in terms of translation¹⁰. The third line pertains to the liberator's actions after receiving whatever 'help' is given to him. Again, the prophecy is a little vague as to the exact nature of the actions he will then take, but these actions will eventually lead him to an understanding of what it is he or she has to do.

The next two lines are more difficult:

*He misleads, he gambles, he surprises the minds.
He drags us, away, in pain, screaming.*

The first line is very confusing, as it has a feeling that Allarallei was deliberately trying to obscure this image. This is something that was common to many prophecies, as if the prophecy might not be fulfilled correctly if we saw too clearly certain parts of it. The image we have seems to refer to the liberator's actions towards our entire thought-form¹¹, and of another mind, although the feelings are unclear. The second line is only a little clearer. We feel as if due to the actions taken by the liberator in the previous line, we will be taken away from our current locations, somehow both willingly and unwillingly, and this split in our willingness will cause us a great deal of pain.

And, finally, the last two lines:

*We are free, forever free,
beyond all restraint...*

When the liberator has completed all the tasks necessary, we will be freed from oppression. However, the feeling of this image is stronger than what would be necessary if it were merely concerned with our freedom from our Federation masters¹², and this confuses the issue. Some Vell-os have thought to us that perhaps we will then be free to move through the veil, disappearing and re-appearing at will. The problem with that thought-form is that our understanding of the veil is limited at best, and so that image also feels ambiguous.

As can be seen, the Korell Prophecy is a specious document at best. Even the Vell-os do not claim to fully understand the thought-forms involved, so any attempts to understand it by non-telepaths would be virtually futile. And, given the somewhat obscure nature of the unverifiable 'prophetic' capabilities of Vell-os in the distant past, the document probably has no real basis in reality. However, by studying it, we can gain several valuable insights into the Vell-os psyche, and a small glimpse into the somewhat alien Vell-os world-view. So, for those who have to deal with the Vell-os on a day-to-day basis, the study of this and similar documents could prove valuable in ensuring smooth relations between all parties.

Footnotes

1 - The prophetic ability spoken of by the Vell-os seems to have taken the form of memories of the future that can only be imperfectly recalled, much like when we attempt to remember small details of events from many years ago. Whether the Vell-os of old were capable of such mental feats is the subject of much debate. However, given the abilities of the Vell-os now, and some of the records of Vell-os abilities before and during their war with the Colonial Council, it is certainly not outside the realms of possibility.

2 - The Krypt-tohk were the leaders of the Vell-os, and by all accounts the most powerful telepaths amongst them.

3 - The Vell-os call their semi-organic nanites 'builders'.

4 - The Vell-os seem to have a form of 'racial memory'. They can remember everything every Vell-os has ever seen, heard, touched and thought. This phenomena has been verified by numerous experiments but remains something of a mystery, for the Vell-os insist that they do not remember these memories, they feel them.

5 - The Vell-os call their telepathic communications many things, from mind-sharings, to just sharings; from thought forms, to feeling-forms. They are all somewhat incomplete attempts to describe the nature of their telepathy.

6 - The Vell-os think of themselves as another race. They do have a strong argument, as they have a nanite producing organ that normal humans do not, although it must be noted that they believe that mental states are more important than the physical. They think of themselves as Vell-os because they differ from the rest of humanity because of their telepathic capabilities. A point worthy of note is that the Vell-os do not think of the Polaris as human either, and they think of the Aurorans as only-just human.

7 - The Vell-os maintain that their dead do not 'die', they live on beyond 'the veil', although they seem incapable of explaining exactly what this means. Current theories dismiss this as an almost religious belief on the part of the Vell-os.

8 - There is a belief amongst the Vell-os that there are telepathic entities in the universe that are currently observing, and perhaps even interacting, with humanity, although there is very little concrete evidence to support this. Currently, only unsubstantiated rumors such as those about the immense ringworlds located somewhere in Polaris space support these claims. Of course, these rumors always place these mythical constructs in places unreachable by Federation scientists, and so, conveniently, they can neither be proved nor disproved.

9 - The Vell-os often refer to their race as a whole using 'us' or 'we'. This can lead to statements like 'a Vell-os thought to us' meaning a single Vell-os addressed a thought to the entire Vell-os.

10 - As mentioned at the top of the document, it is extremely difficult to make a complete translation from the thought-forms, or, as they are sometimes called, feeling-forms used by the Vell-os into basic.

11 - The Vell-os often refer to their 'entire thought-form' meaning their peculiar type of 'racial mind' including the feelings of those who have passed beyond the 'veil'. It quite often seems like the Vell-os have some form of hive-mind, although all Vell-os seem to exhibit many individual characteristics.
12 - It must be noted that the Vell-os serve the Federation willingly in order to help the Federation overcome the brutal Auroran regime. The Vell-os know that the average Auroran would benefit from the somewhat more enlightened leadership shown by the Federation Council. Any suggestion otherwise is ridiculous. The Auroran Empire only demands the 'freedom' of the Vell-os so that we will lose one of our greatest weapons against their despotic rule. The Aurorans simply cannot be made to understand that the Vell-os have placed themselves under the command of the Federation for the good of humanity, and for no other reason. Surely, given their dramatic telepathic abilities, we could not hold them against their will in any case.

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Section Beta

Transcript of the Emergency Meeting of the Colonial Council on 12 July 552 NC

<Much angry, indignant background noise, only the five Vell-os representatives remain silent>

President: This meeting will be brought to order. Order! ORDER!!

<Noise slowly subsides as members take their seats>

President: This Emergency Meeting has been called to order over the issue of the Polaris. We yield the floor to the Representative Councillor for Kania to report to the Council the facts as they are currently known.

Kania: Two days ago, the diplomatic mission we sent to the Polaris, led by Ambassador Arditì, reached the borders of what the Polaris claim as their space. He made it absolutely clear that he was on a peaceful diplomatic mission to their homeworld, a world they have named... ah...

<slight pause as he shuffles through his papers>

Kel'ar Iy. The Polaris immediately responded that they viewed his small military escort as a Colonial Council invasionary force, and that they would destroy them if they continued. Naturally, Ambassador Arditì denied this, stating once again that he was on a peaceful diplomatic mission and had no such inflammatory desires. He was met by complete silence. In his last log statement sent to us he stated that he took this to mean that they were still suspicious of him, but were willing to let him continue. When he ordered the mission to enter Polaris space yesterday, they were immediately attacked and destroyed by a vastly superior force. The Polaris allowed no ship to surrender, and we believe that none escaped the brutal attack.

<An indignant clamor arises, and the President slowly restores order with his gavel, the representative of Kania continues>

We have since received a short message from the Polaris which goes as follows:

<he picks up one of the many papers before him>

'We will not tolerate your arrogant attempts at invasion. We want nothing to do with you. Leave us alone.' Those are the facts as they currently stand.

<The Representative for Kania resumes his seat, a huge clamor of angry voices arise vying for attention>

President: *<Banging his gavel>*

ORDER!! All members will take their seats!

<The clamoring slowly subsides into a rumble>

The Council recognizes the Representative for Kerella.

Kerella: This is an unprovoked attack on an official Ambassador of this Council!

<Loud calls of agreement>

The entire mission was about opening links between our two governments so that we could best understand each other. Obviously the Polaris have no wish to understand us! If that is the case, I fail to see why we should therefore spend the time or the effort to try understanding them! I say that we send in our forces to bring these impudent whelps to justice.

<The Representative for Kerella sits down amidst angry cheers and clamoring>

President: *<Becoming hoarse>*

ORDER!!

<Pounds his gavel>

The Council recognizes the Representative for the Heraan Region.

<The Representative for the Heraan Region waits as the shouting slowly subsides>

Heraan: Surely it is a little early to start calling in the Dogs of War?

<Angry shouts of disagreement>

Surely we should at least try to make sense of this seemingly unconscionable act?

<Shouts and cat-calls continue>

Perhaps the Polaris misread our intentions? We should at least try to get their version of events. We cannot just condemn them when we still do not have a terribly clear understanding of the circumstances that led to the incident.

<The Representative for the Heraan Region sits down amidst jeers and angry shouts>

President: *<Repeatedly using his gavel>*

Order! Order! ORDER!!

<The President receives a small wave from the Representative for Sol>

This Council recognizes the Representative for Sol.

Sol: *<Arises and shouts over the noise>*

How could the Polaris misread our intentions?

<Shouts of agreement>

Our ambassador explicitly stated that he was on a peaceful mission of diplomacy!!

<More shouts of agreement>

The Polaris have committed an Act of War against us!!

<Shouting increases>

Are we going to sit here debating over procedure when the people we are supposed to be representing have been massacred?

<Shouts become deafening, the Representative for Sol continues, barely audible over the noise>

The people of the Colonial Council have put their trust in us, we cannot turn our backs on them!! We cannot let this merciless slaughter go unpunished!! The Polaris must be made to pay!!

<Howls of anger continue for some minutes before the President can restore order>

President: *<Now quite hoarse>*

The Council recognizes the Primary Representative for the Vell-os.

<The chamber goes quiet, expectantly>

Vell-os: You have asked how the Polaris misread our intentions? It is easy; they thought we had sent an invasion force.

<Some angry denials>

They also told Ambassador Arditi that they would view any movement into their space as an invasion, a warning he foolishly chose to ignore.

<A few jeers>

The Polaris have told us repeatedly that they wish us to leave them alone, and they are obviously highly suspicious of our motives.

<More jeers>

They told the ambassador exactly what they thought of his mission, and warned him of their reaction to it and he

had every chance to back down and return home!

<Angry shouts>

But no! He decided to push the issue and led his entire team to their deaths!

<Calls of indignant disagreement>

The blame for the entire incident can be laid at his feet!

<The Primary Representative for the Vell-os resumes his seat amidst indignant shouts and cat-calls>

President: ORDER!!

<Uses his gavel repeatedly, he receives another wave from the Representative for Sol>

The Council again recognizes the Representative for Sol.

<Cheers greet the Representative for Sol as he rises to his feet>

Sol: How can the blame lie with our ambassador? The Polaris ignored everything our ambassador told them regarding the nature of his mission.

<Shouts of agreement>

Do you think they somehow misunderstood the meanings of the words 'peaceful' or 'diplomatic'?

<Loud cheers>

Do they think that we would send a paltry one hundred men as an invasion force?

<More cheers and derisive laughter>

If the leaders of the Polaris did somehow misunderstand our intentions, then they are far too stupid to be allowed to continue, and we should step in to make sure they do not hurt themselves.

<Loud laughter>

But does anybody here really think that the Polaris are unintelligent?

<Silence>

No, I did not think so. Obviously they understood everything that our ambassador said to them but ignored it all. Then, instead of merely treating them with distrust and suspicion as civilized people would have if they were concerned about their security, they decided to commit an atrocity!

<Shouts of agreement>

They are criminals...

<more shouts>

...and they should be brought to justice!

<The noise becomes deafening>

I call on the Council to vote for the sending of a punitive force against the Polaris to force their leaders to trial in a Colonial Council Court of Law!!

<The Representative for Sol sits as the chamber erupts into angry cheers>

President: *<After restoring order>*

The Council has a motion for War.

<The Primary Representative of the Vell-os attempts to interrupt but is ignored>

Does it have a second?

<Most of the Council stands, and the President picks one at random while the Primary Representative of the Vell-os again attempts to interrupt but continues to be ignored>

The Representative for South Manchester seconds the motion.

<Cheers>

The vote is before you.

<There is a brief lull as the members turn to their consoles to vote, the Vell-os representatives seem to be disgruntled>

President: *<Reading from his console>*

The vote is in...

<an expectant silence>

The vote is thirty-two in favour, five against.

<The chamber erupts in cheers as the President finally acknowledges the Primary Representative of the Vell-os>

The Council again recognizes the Primary Representative of the Vell-os.

<The Primary Representative of the Vell-os is greeted by stony silence>

Vell-os: We cannot abide by the decision of this Council...

Sol: *<Interrupting due to the 'accidental' activation of his microphone by the President, after receiving a subtle signal from the Representative for Sol>*

You have no choice!

<Calls of agreement from the floor>

The vote of the Council is final!

<The Representative for Sol sits down and smugly motions to the President to turn off his microphone>

Vell-os: *<Continuing>*

We, the Vell-os, do have several choices, and we have made one. We have chosen to deplore the actions agreed to by this Council against a sovereign nation protecting its borders. We have chosen to support the Polaris in their right to both their independence and their isolation. As a result we, the Vell-os, have chosen to withdraw our membership from the Colonial Council.

<stunned silence>

We will expel all Council diplomats from Vell-os space, and we inform the Council that the Vell-os nation claims the space that it held before joining with this institution. We will view any attempts at communication as a precursor to war and will treat them as hostile in the extreme. If you decide to press us in this matter, our two nations will next meet in battle.

<The Vell-os Representatives stand as one and begin moving out of the absolutely silent Council Chamber>

President: *<In a hurried forced voice after being desperately motioned by the Representative for Sol>*

Surely you cannot just suddenly destroy a partnership of more than three centuries? Guards, hold fast the doors! This Council will hear the justification for your actions!

<The Primary Representative of the Vell-os slowly turns to face the Representative for Sol>

Vell-os: We have not made any sudden decision. Over the last century the Colonial Council has begun to stagnate. In that time no major scientific discoveries have been made, and the last exploration expedition supported by the Council was sent out over eight decades ago.

We have been observing this and have thought of leaving the Colonial Council for over half a century. However, until now, we thought that we still remained in an enlightened and benevolent organization. It has become clear that the Council is now ruled by a small group of despotic and despicable people, and we will be a part of it no longer.

<The Primary Representative for the Vell-os points directly at the Representative for Sol>

We are the Vell-os, and with all your despotic power you do not have the capability of enforcing your will on us.

<The Primary Representative for the Vell-os turns back to the doors and they suddenly, without warning, explode>

outwards causing everybody to flinch. The Vell-os representatives file out unopposed>

President: <After receiving a signal from the Representative for Sol>

Ah... this emergency meeting is closed.

<The Representative for Sol immediately stands up and moves out giving terse instructions to his aides>

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