

Foreword

Several years ago, I found a discussion thread on a forum for fans of Katherine Kurtz's Deryni works; the thread's subject was proposed film versions of some of the books, starting with *Deryni Rising*. Someone suggested only doing the first trilogy (*The Chronicles of the Deryni*), and I had to disagree on the thread. I even started spilling parts of what follows before I could restrain myself.

While I know Ms. Kurtz does not object to fan fiction (indeed, there's quite a bit of it posted at this same site), I could not bring myself to write a full-fledged sequel novel out of this material. I guess I'm reluctant to trespass on another's turf, and I'm not sure I could write as well as she does (To this day, I don't understand why I find her books nearly impossible to put down, when I read and enjoy many other books seemingly as well and can stop at the close of a chapter in nearly all of those cases.). Just because I have a degree in English doesn't mean I can write.

Still, this material was just too satisfying to lose, so I wrote it down (in pencil, sadly) in a notebook. That notebook has since become damaged, so I've finally converted it into a digital file, some three or four years on. I still think it's just too good to lose. Perhaps that's my vanity talking.

I think I may also be granting myself a little license because of something Ms. Kurtz said about her view that any movies made from her books would be separate things. Although I'm sure the publishers will want to put out new editions of the books in association with the films, it is true that film and print are two rather different media. I did have a movie firmly in mind when I conceived this; much of it looks like a movie in my head when I think about it. So maybe I wasn't poaching on her preserve when I wrote this stuff down, and perhaps it's actually worthwhile to recopy and preserve it.

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Introduction

This sequel was devised in response to a thread on potential films of the Deryni works at the website The Worlds of Katherine Kurtz (<http://www.deryni.net/>). Portions of it appear in one of my replies to that thread. It is in fact structured with cinematic considerations in mind, including:

Bringing closure to the myth arcs. This is not to say that all of the characters' problems will be completely solved at the end of this installment. (If anything, one of the themes underlying this is the idea that social contracts require sustained effort for their maintenance.) Rather, events will proceed to a place where the audience can feel satisfied to leave the characters to continue on their own (Call it a sense of closure.). Kurtz has already been writing events that trend in this direction: Duncan receiving absolution for entering the priesthood in secret, Kelson freeing Liam of his fealty and offering an alliance of equals, the plans to found the *scola*, and Duncan's openly magical consecration of the Camber chapel. Thus, this effort follows on from what came before in the canon.

Reviving plots from books prior to *Deryni Rising*. The films' audience will include not only long-time fans, but also many people who've never read any of the Deryni works. (It is hoped the the films will prompt more people to read the works set earlier in the timeline, of course.) Bringing plots and plot points from Camber's time and its aftermath will inform viewers, lends background depth to the films, and serve as a "shout out" or insiders' reference to fans.

Treat the fans. Some settings and plot points are designed in part to cater to the books' readers. I have intentionally shown places not seen, and hitherto offstage events, as well as seeking to include favourite characters. Some characters not seen or little seen in the twelfth century Gwynedd/Torenth environs will return, though the reprised roles are justified by the plot.

Playing to film's strengths. Since film is a visual medium, I have tried to incorporate scenes with strong visuals. That said, I don't feel this is any great departure; many of the events

depicted so far by Kurtz read like cinematic scenes, or at least seem to lend themselves to film. While filming informs this proposed installment particularly, it doesn't, in my view, violate the storytelling norms already well established in the series. I also have a slight preference for film as opposed to television, at least for an initial viewing of the material; there's something about a great large screen in a darkened room that focuses the attention on the visuals which other viewing devices don't necessarily provide.

Key Principles

Follow the two Myth Arcs: Gwynedd-Torenth relations and human-Deryni relations. While I'm not reaching for happily ever after here, I am looking for a good place for the audience to take their leave of these characters.

Retain multiple plotlines. They're part of the books, especially the later ones, and audiences have come to expect them.

Ground events in the canon, including the *Codex Derynianus*.

Adhere to realistic limitations, especially in regards the magic.

Dates

I have set no specific dates for the events that follow, although some of them are keyed to projected events from *King Kelson's Bride* (set in 1128) and the *Codex* (which notes events through the year 1130). Perhaps the outside limit is King Liam's planned return to Rhemuth to receive his knightly accolade from Nigel Haldane in 1132.

Plot Threads

The plot threads are here somewhat separated for clarity, though in the finished work, they will be interwoven.

The Schola

- Kelson's new *schola* is set up as part of the basilica complex, St Hilary's-Within-the-Walls, Rhemuth.
- Several conflicts are brewing right from the start:
 - The Servants vs. the Camberian Council:
 - Each group believes it has a more direct connection with Camber and his time
 - The Council has had no other body in competition with it until now
 - The Servants seem to have picked up more archaic practices (like the ordeal Kelson endured); not to say such things don't work, but that they are actually older than Camber and may hearken to the *Airsid*. It's not clear that they know which is which.
 - Both the Servants and the Council have lost information over the centuries
 - Comparisons of their ritual practices could lead to disagreements much like those that split the Healer into rival orders (Gabrielites, Vanarites).
 - Kelson vs. the Camberian Council
 - The Council has been operating secretly for basically all of its existence, while Kelson would like to see it be more open.
 - The enforcement of discipline among Deryni will be needed, in part to prevent both an abusive magocracy and another round of fear-based anti-Deryni persecution
 - While there's something to be said for openness, it's also true that there is some power in mystery (this is a medieval society with high levels of religiosity, and Kelson has played the divine right of kings card himself).
- ✓ Likely antagonists in a Servants/Council conflict include Ban-Aba Jilyan, Brother Michael, and Rhidian against Laran and possibly Arilan (given his Church position)
- ✓ Likely mediators include Kelson and Araxie, Sofiana, Azim
- ✓ It's unclear whether the Servants will continue to maintain their isolated base at Saint Kyriell's; it's also unclear just how much of their way of life they will share with outsiders, since they share the touchy empowerment of the borders (per Dhugal in TqfSC).
- ✓ Much depends on the identity of Vivienne's successor
 - ✓ Matyas has been proposed, but he'll be busy learning statecraft and dealing with the ongoing threat from Teymuraz.
 - ✓ Kelson was offered a seat once (or at least approached about one), but he has not accepted. Not only is he occupied being king, he may not wish to make any further commitments that would compromise his sworn duties as king.
- ✓ The Council is known to be conservative, particularly in the past. That said, there is beginning to be some turnover in the membership (Azim's addition, Sofiana's return), while other current members are ageing (Barrett, Laran).
- ✓ The Council is not known to work well when distracted or confronted with multiple problems. A new emergency, or more trouble from Teymuraz could prevent them from making progress.
- ✓ The Council opposed Kelson's partial empowering of Nigel, and Kelson contemplates the same for Araxie (per KKB). This conflict may spill over into the work of the schola (especially if he also empowers Rory as Viceroy Meara).

Comments:

The Schola (contd)

- *Conflicts (cont'd)*
 - The Church will likely have much to say about what goes on at the *schola*:
 - Vetting texts for doctrinal orthodoxy, which will be difficult when so much fear and inaccurate information has been spread for so long about the Deryni and their powers.
 - Will the Servants revert to a religious order under the authority of the Church? The Church may wish to regain such authority, but the Servants may see any tests of their orthodoxy as a pretext for more persecution.
 - Will the Church start any new orders primarily for Deryni? Will they revive older orders like the Gabrielites and the Michaelines? Expect much discussion on both sides of these questions.
 - If a new Healers School is still contemplated, and the twelfth century people learn about the dissections that went on in the tenth century, will such be permitted again?
 - Mind Reading, Truth Seeing, and the seal of the confessional will be discussed, at the very least.
 - The frequency of the display of Deryni auras in the Mass: conflict between those who want to allow it generally so as to accustom people to it and those who prefer a “go slow” approach to the fears of the populace.
 - What to do about the ruins of Saint Neot's? Dispute over leaving the place as is, rebuilding and reconsecrating entirely, and perhaps a compromise that leaves some memorial of its destruction behind (specifically the message in the destroyed Portal).
- ✓ A great deal will depend on what is unearthed and where. There are also more recent anti-Deryni texts to deal with (one such written in the past thirty years, per *Childe Morgan*).
 - ✓ The potential for regular dissections will be particularly squick-making, and any structural provision for them (like the tables and drains of yore) will likely need to involve lay craftsmen. It seems likely some of them or their families might object to any such construction work at St. Hilary's....
 - ✓ According to the Codex, Kelson has a commission (chaired by Morgan) that seeks to either restore to dispossessed Deryni families the actual lands they lost, or else grant new lands of the same value. Will the Church do the same for old Deryni orders? How will it respond if it is found to have gained lands from the persecutions (forced donations and such)?
 - ✓ Under what terms will seminarians be permitted to study at this new schola? Will Arilan openly recruit, or will he remain in the shadows? And what of those seminarians he has in the pipeline? Do they reveal themselves or not?
 - ✓ Will the Church consult with that of Torenth for guidance on how to run the schola and orders with Deryni membership? The Torenthi hierarchy must be headed by a Deryni mage because the *killijálay* is an arcane rite, but I think they have a rule that the top hierarchy must be evenly split between Deryni and ordinary humans so that no one side can out vote the other. Will the western Church take a page from their book and make such provisions (this would be a good time to do that)?
 - ✓ Since there has been much turnover in the hierarchy in the past seven years, does the Church have enough people in the system to replace any more losses due to death?

Comments:

The Schola (contd)

- Other *schola* challenges:
 - Deryni texts: creating copies before the printing press, dealing with surviving partial manuscripts and texts that contradict each other are all time consuming and labour-intensive. Some owners or caretakers of texts may impose conditions on their use. Kelson will want to ensure an archive is protected against damage or destruction, especially that of the royal library.
 - Students, teachers, and student teachers: Since the persecutions are so close in time, there will likely be other people like Jehana who come to arcane study later in life. Thus, the students at the *schola* would have a very wide age range. Also, the population of Deryni is not large to begin with, so the talent pool is small. There are even a few in an awkward position akin to Dhugal's: he's gone until his teens without any formal training, yet he's one of the few who can Heal and would be expected to teach that.
 - Demand and supply: how many pupils with the place accommodate? Will they risk adding space outside the walls of Saint Hilary's, and if so how soon? If there are more pupils than they can handle, how will placements be decided? Definitely expect stress from staff trying to meet the demands of the project.
 - Xenophobia: Torenth had no such persecutions, so they have a bigger talent pool than Gwynedd does, but the centuries of hostility between the two countries is only just beginning to thaw. Expect debate over allowing them access to the *schola*, and a backlash if anything goes wrong...
- ✓ These items are here for background. The characters will be facing these issues (in addition to those intergroup conflicts mentioned earlier) from the start of this plot line.
- ✓ While they are background, these items are not trivial. They represent real problems and limitations on the characters.

Comments:

Domestic Gwynedd subplots:

- The search for Healers is slow.
 - Dhugal and Morgan have other responsibilities, including running their duchies. Duncan has more leeway as rector of the *schola*, but he must also assist Archbishop Cardiel with pastoral duties.
 - Warin de Grey, the only other known Healer, has not been seen for several years having disappeared after the immediate crisis of the war with Wencit was past. It's also not clear what Warin is; Morgan and Duncan probed his mind in the summer of 1121 but did not find he had the full range of Deryni powers. As the lack of Healer students becomes obvious, more inquiries are made into his whereabouts, but he has been gone for so many years (partly thanks to the press of other events) that the trail has gone cold.
 - With so few clues to go on, Morgan, Duncan and Dhugal are interviewed and probed by certain other Deryni in an effort to learn how to spot potential Healers. Recruiting these other Deryni is also a slow process, complicated by the lingering lack of trust between the de Corwyn cousins and the Camberian Council.
 - Laran ap Pardyce himself a physician, takes a great interest in the Healing ability. He does not prove to have the ability himself, and is both disturbed and jealous over that fact. He is persuaded to contribute other medical knowledge to the schola (especially in re drugs).
 - With so few Healing students on hand, some effort goes into researching how Healers were trained in the past (*Annales Queroni*), and some new ideas for including more mundane skills like surgery, leading to discoveries and disputes.
- ✓ This subplot should be introduced early, especially as it feeds into others below.
- ✓ Azim asserts that healing must be taught in the *schola* late in *King Kelson's Bride*. He is Precentor of the Knights of the Anvil as well as a member of the Camberian Council, so he has knowledge and power to bring this about, as well as useful Eastern contacts.
- ✓ Warin is mentioned from time to time after his disappearance, but he is dismissed as some kind of rogue anomaly by members of the Camberian Council. He seems to be no higher than gentry, so he's got some resources for travel, but he's not so important that he is missed when he does vanish.
- ✓ I believe Laran lacks the Healing ability, for I'm sure he would have attempted it at least once in his life. By this point in the time line, he's in his sixties, and he has been a physician for several decades. It seems likely that at some time in that career he would have felt so strongly about the prospect of losing a patient or a loved one that he would try to Heal as Morgan did in *Deryni Rising*. Given that, the fact that he doesn't know how to Heal suggests he lacks the gift altogether. Recall that even in Camber's day, Healers were so rare that they were actively discouraged from taking Holy Orders so they would marry and breed more Healers. Also, of Rhys and Evaine Thuryn's four children, only two of them could Heal, so there's no guarantee all of a Healers offspring will have the gift.
- ✓ We know Kelson has a copy of Dom Queron's book, for Jehana was reading it in the library annex when she first met Barrett (per *KKB*). It's not clear that his copy is a complete text, though hopefully it is. Queron's fate is also something of a mystery; he's thought to have died some time after the year 928 (about a decade after the persecutions began), but specifics are unknown.

Comments:

Domestic Gwynedd subplots(cont'd):

- A Surprise Student: Briony Morgan
 - Morgan and Richenda discuss having Briony's Naming ritual (usual age is about eight), though they need not rush matters as Morgan's mother and aunt did.
 - Some event prompts Briony to either consciously attempt to Heal, or inadvertently do so.
 - Morgan and Richenda get into a row about training Briony to Heal:
 - Morgan is protective, and asserts that his daughter is a lady who should not be involved in blood and muck.
 - Richenda has several counters (she'll bleed every month, it's a lady's place to help nurse her family, she's going to grow up and it's their place as parents to help her learn, don't waste her gifts just because she's a girl).
 - Morgan is still resistant, so Richenda plays the trump card: Remember what happened to your mother, and let Briony be taught so she can maybe help other women avoid Alyce's fate.
 - Morgan has to concede the argument, for his mother's death is still a sore spot all these years later.
 - Dhugal's Courtship
 - Dhugal is under increasing pressure to marry and father an heir.
 - Problems finding Healers and his own Healer heritage mean pressure from a new angle: he's urged to breed in hopes of producing more Healers himself.
 - He spends some time as a student at the *schola*, trying to make up for lost time in his own training.
 - He takes an interest in a female student at the *schola* and begins to court her.
- Evaine Thurnyn had a daughter who Healed), but they were even rarer than male Healers, so this scenario is possible yet something of a surprise. The fans will know about Jerusha Thurnyn, so this is a kind of treat for them.
- ✓ Richenda is a descendant of Camber's family, and Morgan is either that or shares a common ancestor with Camber (Alaric has the name MacRhorin in his family tree, and Camber's grandfather spelled the family name that way). In addition to providing some hope for the future and a chance for Alaric and Richenda to argue, this subplot acts as foreshadowing of Morgan's heritage revelation.
 - ✓ Richenda's final argument is the clincher: Alyce de Corwyn Morgan died of puerperal sepsis complicated by psychic exhaustion from helping to start Brion Haldane's empowering (at the end of *Childe Morgan*). Alaric was just four, and Bronwyn was only days or weeks old. Alaric mourns her loss and visits her tomb in Culdi in *Deryni Checkmate*.
 - ✓ Briony's age would be about right. She's five years old in *KKB*, so by 1132 she'll be nine, not only the right age for a Naming ritual, but also close to the age when Healing talents were thought to manifest in the tenth century. The catalyst could be an injured animal or pet, a playmate's injury, her own injury, or even the blood drawn in her Naming ritual (see *Childe Morgan* for a prototype).
 - ✓ Dhugal will only seek to marry another Deryni (per *TqfSC*).
 - ✓ The *schola* is a possible pool for young Deryni.
 - ✓ It's only unclear if he'll make a match with a foreign noblewoman or even princess, or someone from the borders.

Comments:

- ✓ Female Healers did exist (Rhys and