



# LICHCRAFT

AN RPG ABOUT TRANS NECROMANCERS

# lichcraft

*The year is 2069. The setting is Great Britain. The Tories have been in power since 2010. Elections have long been abandoned since everybody kept voting for them anyway.*

*Due to National Health Service cuts, trans healthcare has become increasingly hard to access. The waiting list for a first appointment at a gender identity clinic is now 300 years.*

*They don't want to outright refuse you; that would imply that the health service is over capacity or underfunded. Instead they will simply add you to the end of the list and wait for you to die.*

*But they are fools.*

*For you have learned the secrets of immortality. And you will get to the end of that waiting list, even if it means waiting another millennium.*

**An rpg about being on an NHS waiting list so long that you become an immortal necromancer.**

This game is for one player and one GM // or a game for a group of people if you wish to play a gang of wannabe liches.

The rules are written for **two players**. But the rules can always be changed.

In this game, you play a trans person who has been trapped at the bottom of a waiting list for vital gender affirming healthcare.

You may already have been there for years, or you may have just recently joined the list. Either way, the list is far longer than the average mortal lifespan.

As a result you have decided to pursue lichdom. Over the game you will pursue all the components for the ritual necessary to transform yourself into an undead creature of great arcane power.

Will you perish on the way? Or will you achieve your goal? What will you sacrifice to get there?

### **A note on content...**

The author of this game is a trans person who has spent many years on an NHS waiting list waiting for healthcare.

No trans experience is the same. For some, the relatively light-hearted tone of this game may not be correct for you, and that's fine! If this experience comes too close to home, feel free to take a break or put it down. There's no shame in quitting.

The experience of having to struggle for vital healthcare is also not just a trans experience. It is also the experience of many disabled people, those trying to access mental health care, and unfortunately, many working class people in countries where healthcare costs money.

All healthcare should be fully funded, free at the point of access, and accessible easily and quickly. The fact that it isn't is one of many injustices in the world.

If you do play this game as a group, make sure you discuss consent and safety tools in advance.

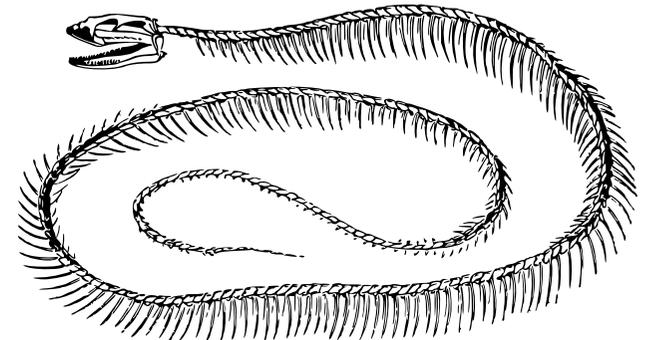
### **...And on setting**

Although in this game you play a trans character, you do not have to be trans to identify with this experience, and you do not have to be trans to play this game.

In fact, this game could be played in any setting- it doesn't have to be semi-dystopian-39-years-in the future-Britain. And it doesn't even have to be about waiting for healthcare- you could use this game to play characters who are waiting for anything, anywhere, at any point in time.

However, there is something innately fun about trans people becoming liches and fighting power in a setting that's just close enough to today to be meaningful- while being far enough away that it can also be fun.

So try it out the way it was intended- you won't be disappointed!



# Britain, 2069

Britain after more than fifty years of Tory rule can be as dystopian- or as everyday -as you want it to be. Feel free to build the setting or add features to the map as you go along: or if you want a more dystopian flavour, roll on the tables below for some starting scenarios

## Setting details

1

Public libraries have all been replaced by huge skull statues for performing necromantic rituals.

2

The Secession Wars have resulted in several counties- and even some London Boroughs- claiming independence.

3

Unnamed Megacorporation has taken over all public services- fire and ambulance services are all now included in a prime subscription.

4

They say Scotland is a nuclear wasteland- but could it be that they just don't want you to know what's really there?

5

The schools funding crisis has been solved with tuition fees from age 11- you all begin the game in debt to the state.

6

Ireland, Wales and much of the East of England have been flooded- what strange creatures lurk in the depths?



# CREATING A *Character*

There are only two non-negotiable aspects of your character:

- 1) They are trans
- 2) They are on a waiting list

Everything else is up to you- or you can generate randomly using a D6

Make sure you choose your **politics**, a **day job**, a **hobby**, and a **magical source**. You use these to gain bonuses on rolls.



**Aspects: Roll a d6 to generate or decide on your own.**

I am: (1. Non-binary, 2. A Woman, 3. A Man, 4. Agender, 5. I haven't decided yet, 6. Your choice)

I am a(n):  
(1. Communist, 2. Anarchist, 3. Eco-socialist  
4. Socialist, 5. Anti-imperialist, 6. Your choice)

My hobby is (1. Crafting, 2. Cooking, 3. Reading, 4. Gardening, 5. Sports, 6. Your choice)

My day job is (1. Barista, 2. Journalist, 3. Accountant, 4. Cashier, 5. I don't have one, 6. Write your own)

The source of my magic is (1. Nature, 2. Runecasting and ritual, 3. My magical bloodline, 4. Book smarts, 5. Sheer force of will, 6. Your choice)

**Decide on this too:**

My name is \_\_\_\_\_

I am \_\_\_\_\_ years old

I have known I was trans since \_\_\_\_\_

**Optional rule: reducing your health.**

Your starting health should be a joint decision between the GM and players based on how hard you want the game to be. However, it might make sense to reduce the starting health if there are more than 2 players. For balance?

Now write out your story in your own words:  
for example:

My name is **Alice**. I am a **25** year old **woman**. I have known I was trans since **I started casting spells when I was 13**. I have been on a waiting list for 7 months.

I am an **anarchist** who loves **gardening**, but my day job is as a **barista**. The source of my magic is my **magical bloodline**, as I am the seventh daughter of a seventh daughter. My little sister was initially disappointed that she wouldn't get to be the witch in the family- but she's warmed up to it over time!

**Dice stuff: You have three stats. Assign the numbers 1, 2, and 3.**

**Strength** : Use this for a physical challenge.

**Sense**: Use this for a social challenge requiring charisma, or a challenge requiring intellectual prowess.

**Spells**: Use this when you face a challenge that requires your magical prowess.

**You start with 5 health.** If you want the game to be harder, start with less health. If you want it to be easier, start with more.

name

.....

magical source

.....

politics

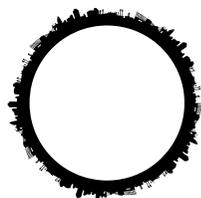
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hobby

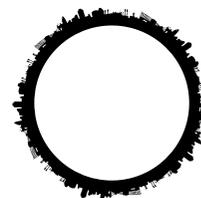
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day job

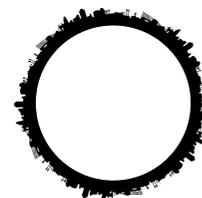
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strength



sense



spell



describe yourself

harsh lessons

Four horizontal lines for writing.

Four horizontal lines for writing.



health



# Rules of Play

## Playing with two players:

Generate one character. One player will play the character and the other will narrate the challenges you face and the environment (acting as the game master).

Alternatively, you can swap roles as the game progresses it, with players taking it in turns to act as either the game master or the character.

## Playing with more than two players:

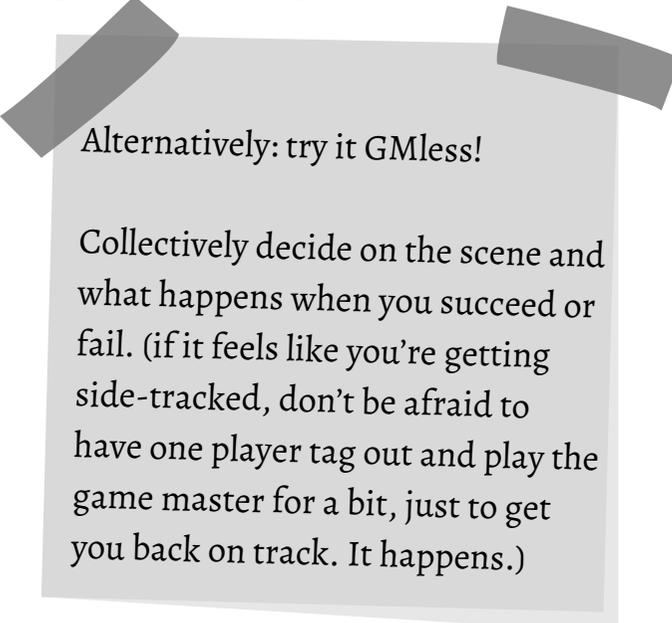
Generate one less the number of characters as you have players, and have somebody act as the GM, or generate the same number of characters as you have players, and take it in turns to play as the GM, with those characters sitting out the scene.

Every character in the scene should roll at least a few times- assist each other or come up with multiple challenges to overcome.

The goal of the game is to gather all the components required for the ritual.

The requirements to create the ritual randomly generated below in the section on determining the ritual. The GM uses these random tables to come up with a series of obstacles between you and the component. To overcome these obstacles, players use their abilities to **roll dice** and see how they do.

The game is played in **3** scenes, with each scene culminating in gathering a component.



Alternatively: try it GMless!

Collectively decide on the scene and what happens when you succeed or fail. (if it feels like you're getting side-tracked, don't be afraid to have one player tag out and play the game master for a bit, just to get you back on track. It happens.)

DETERMINING THE

*Ritual*



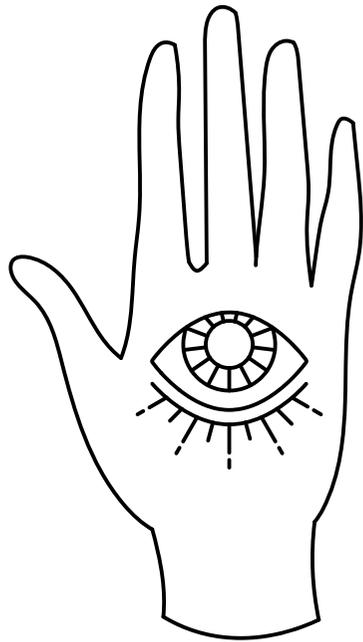
The ritual to become a lich requires:

A magic spell

Rare and valuable components

A magically powerful place

Roll some d6s to find out more!



**The spell is in...**

**Hidden in...**

**Guarded by...**

1

An ancient grimoire

A university library

A crochety old wizard

2

Scrawled on the back of an envelope

A museum

A circle of druids

3

Encoded in an 18th century love letter

An ancient temple

Vampires

4

The notes of an absent minded academic

A cluttered cafe

Magically talented librarians

5

A long lost Sappho poem

The house of a witch in the woods

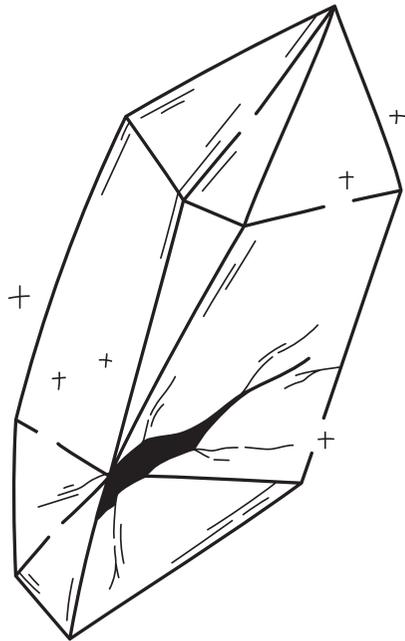
Hungry carnivorous books

6

A secret passed down in oral tradition

A magical school

A riddle telling sphinx



1

**The components are...**

A lot of money

**Hidden in...**

A magical bank

**Guarded by...**

Vengeful ghosts

2

The venom of an extinct species of snake

A train you'll need to rob

Zombie Theresa May (or politician of your choice)

3

Dinosaur bones

An alchemy lab hidden under a metro station

A crack security team

4

Mummy wrappings

A haunted tacky home decorations store

Your choice of trademarked vigilantes

5

An ancient glass dagger

A dangerous swamp

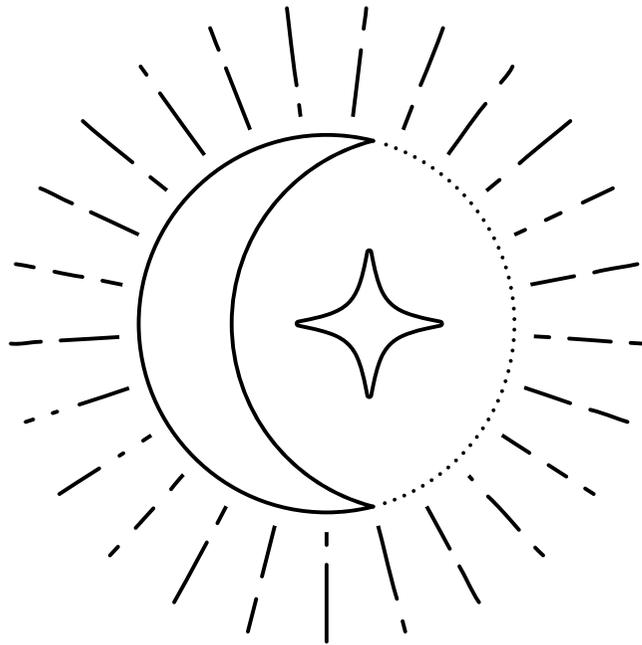
An ancient, sassy dragon.

6

Moss gathered from ancient standing stones

The houses of Parliament

Goblins



	<b>The location for the ritual is..</b>	<b>The problem is...</b>	<b>The local denizens are dangerous because...</b>
<b>1</b>	A non-descript parking lot	Somebody has tipped off the cops about your plan. They're coming to stop the ritual	They can all do ice magic
<b>2</b>	The top of an Aztec-style pyramid	There is a Secret Research Facility here, the area is heavily guarded	They are zombies
<b>3</b>	Stonehenge, probably	A very crowded music festival is being held at the location	They have guns and swords
<b>4</b>	The convergence of two powerful leylines	The location has been flooded or is in the middle of the ocean	These people will call the cops at literally any provocation
<b>5</b>	The sports ground of an exclusive private school	The location is in an area which has seceded from the UK and travel here is banned	They are giants
<b>6</b>	The top of a corporate skyscraper (you pick the corporation)	Strange magical weather phenomena in this area, the location is unstable and/or dangerous	Any combination of the above, plus they are innately hostile to outsiders.

## Playing a Scene

Once you have generated the locations of your ritual components, decide how best to approach the challenge. The GM will come up with obstacles in your way as you move through the scene.

You can determine in advance whether it is a sense, strength, or spell approach- or work it out in the scene. Play the scene out, until it feels appropriate to roll dice.

Roll the number of dice you have for the stat that feels most appropriate and take the highest result. If the stat is 0, roll 2 dice and take the lowest.

You can get an extra die if your approach is relevant to your hobby, politics, day job, or magical background. [these stack, so if you are using your highest stat, you could be rolling up to 7 dice]

Ideally you should be rolling two or three times per scene, but go with what feels narratively right.

On a **6**, you succeed. Describe how you achieve what you were intending to.

On a **3, 4, or 5**, you succeed, but not without consequences. The GM may give you an unintended consequence or a worse outcome. Choose 1: lose one health, or remove a point from whichever stat you rolled.

On a **1 or 2** you fail completely and the situation goes sideways. Remove a point from the stat you rolled, *and* lose one health in your escape.

If you fail completely, write down a harsh lesson you have learned. Invoke that lesson later to gain an additional die.

### Optional Rule: Difficulty

Depending on how difficult the task is, the GM may ask you to remove up to three dice from your pool. Sneaking through the halls of a magical school may be easy- but battling the ancient vampire headmaster who guards the library may necessitate a more difficult roll. Usually, you should only take **one d6** away for difficulty- unless the situation is truly dire.

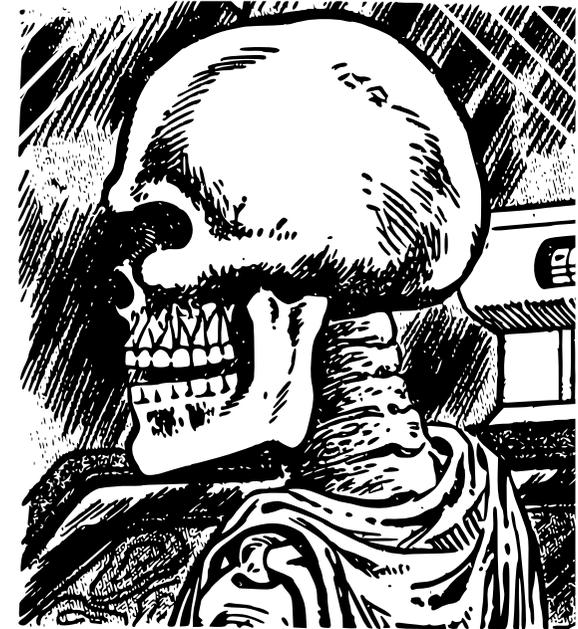
## Sacrifices

If you run out of health, you lose- you die or give up. Losing skills also reflects your confidence in your skills and your determination. The more you lose, the harder it is to succeed. But you don't ever have to give up on your quest. In this game, losing is a choice.

If it looks like you might be running out of luck- you're low on health, or skills- but you don't want to lose the game, you can choose to regain stats by sacrificing something that is important to your character.

Decide what you sacrifice. It doesn't have to be an object, it could be a relationship, a hobby, or something else. Explain why it hurts to lose it and how sacrificing it helps you carry on with your quest. When you sacrifice something you regain 2 skill points **or** 2 health.

Generally, you can sacrifice things **in between** scenes- if you run out of health or stats during a scene, you'll need to try to weather the storm however you can. However, if it feels narratively appropriate to sacrifice something during a scene, you can always bend this rule.



### Things to sacrifice

Your best friend

Your career

A strongly held moral belief

Your relationship

Your sense of independence

A valued possession

# Example Scene

*Marlene, Lucy and Jack are playing – Jack and Lucy are playing wannabe liches. Marlene is GMing*

**Marlene:** do either of you guys want to GM? I'm happy to keep going, but I can play a character for this scene if anyone else wants a go

**Lucy:** nah, I want to finish out with this character! Fleur the anarchist baker druid needs her resolution.

**Jack:** Same here with Ethan, I like their story so far.

**Marlene:** OK, in that case, let's just hop straight into the action- unless anyone wants to sacrifice anything?

**Jack:** I only have two health, and I'm kind of short on skills- but I think it actually makes sense to just make a final push. I'm good.

**Marlene:** Right. Ethan and Fleur have robbed the magical school of its ancient grimoire and pulled off a brilliant heist on lich J\*ff B\*zos's Prime Train. All you need to do is get to the location where the ritual will take place. There's only one problem. Let me just roll some dice...

*(Marlene rolls 3d6 to determine the final scene. She rolls a convergence of leylines, in a recently seceded area, guarded by zombies- but keeps that last bit to herself for now.)*

**Marlene:**...Ok, so the place where the magical leylines converge is in an area that's seceded from the UK. I guess that would probably be the Cornish autonomous zone, right? Crossing the border is gonna be difficult.

Ok, so you roll up the motorway, but as you head towards the Cornish border, you see there's a border crossing on your side. There's lasers across the road, and a cop leans out of a little guard station, asking to see your papers.

**Lucy:** As tempting as beating up a cop is, border police are a bit close to home right now. I'm just gonna **X card** interacting with cops at all- can we skip this bit?

**Marlene:** Sure. How about instead, you avoid the border checks on your side altogether by sneaking through the woods. Eventually, you reach what seems to be a makeshift concrete and barbed wire barricade. Graffitied on it is the slogan 'No Gods, No Masters'. You look up and there's a tall woman with two laser pistols at her side. She calls out 'Welcome to the Free Republic of Cornwall. Are you friend or foe?'

**Lucy:** That sounds good to me. I think Fleur is also an anarchist, so she might be the best person to talk to her. Fleur shouts up 'Friend, comrade- we're refugees from London'.

**Marlene:** This sounds like a roll to me. You're lying to her about why you're here, but anyway I think this is a sense roll- it's a social challenge.

**Lucy:** Sure. I only have one point in that, but I am an anarchist- I think I should have 2 dice at least. I'm not sure being a baker or a barista helps here- can I use my nature powers to make me look more attractive? Like with flowers or something?

**Jack:** I think that's a bit of a stretch- unless you wanted to flirt a little. That could work then I guess?

**Marlene:** If you want to flirt with her, fine- take three dice. But only because it's adorable.

**Lucy:** Nice! I rolled a **6!**

**Marlene:** OK. Her eyes meet yours and you feel a comradely connection. She presses a button and a gateway appears in the barricade, allowing you through. Your new companion leads you through the woods on the other side, heading towards the nearest town. But Ethan, you hear a sound from the trees.

**Jack:** I'll turn to her- "what was that?"

**Marlene:** "I don't know, but we should keep moving". You notice she looks a little shifty as she says this, but you don't have time to follow it up, because suddenly, something leaps at you from the treeline and goes to bite you.

**Jack:** I'll try and jump out of the way. I have two points in strength, and my hobby is sports- three dice?

**Marlene:** Sure, but I think you should have one **difficulty** because you're surprised.

**Jack:** Alright then... oh dear. I rolled an **1** and a **2**.

**Marlene:** The creature bowls you over and you hit the ground hard, losing one health. I think you also twist your ankle so remove a point from strength. You look up into the face of what is definitely a zombie- and your full failure here is that you are prone on the ground beneath it as it goes to bite you.

**Lucy:** Can I summon some vines to pull it off Ethan? 1 in spell, plus nature magic, so 2 dice, and I rolled a **5**.

**Marlene:** Not quite a full success but it does the job for now, pulling the zombie off Ethan- though it won't keep it down for long. What do you lose?

**Lucy:** Damn, maybe I should have sacrificed something earlier... I'll lose a stat, but that was my last point in spell. Now I have 1, 1, 0. Oh well, let's press on!

# COMPLETING THE *Ritual*

Once you have gathered what you need for the ritual, you may optionally play through one final scene. Treat this as you would a bossfight or a denouement. If you want to skip straight to the ritual, go ahead and move to 'Completing the Ritual' on **Page 19**.

If you wish to play a final scene, choose one challenge: **Ritual Effects** or a **Bossfight**.

If you chose **Ritual Effects**, pick one more tags from the Ritual Effect Table and play out a scene where you experience the consequence of the ritual- whether you try to mitigate the destruction or simply watch and laugh.

If you choose **Bossfight**, pick an archetype from the Antagonist Table to do battle against. For whatever reason, they have arrived to prevent you from completing your transformation. (**NB: The Antagonist Tables have archetypes which may or may not be based on famous transphobes. It is the choice of the table how much you play this out. They could simply be personal enemies, or politically opposed to undeath. Discuss it first!**)

## Ritual Effect Table

(Pick one or more tags)

**Explosive:** The ritual is highly destructive to the surrounding environment.

**Necromantic:** The ritual reanimates any skeletons, corpses or dead animals in the surrounding area

**Weather-sympathetic:** The ritual summons deadly lightning storms

**Flashy:** The ritual is bright and noisy, drawing unwanted attention.

**Infuriating:** The ritual causes animals and humans in the vicinity to fly into violent rages.

**Hypnotising:** The ritual causes humans in the area to fall under the thrall of a mysterious spell. What is it?

## Antagonist Table

(Choose an antagonist to battle)

The Politician

*"I just worry that necromancy is being pushed on children before they're old enough to understand it. Is this an acceptable use of **public funds?**"*

The Author

*"You speak out once against undeath, and suddenly nobody wants to buy your awful novels anymore. I've been **cancelled!**"*

The Religious Leader

*"If G\*d wanted you to become a lich, you would have been born a skeleton. Crossing the boundaries between life and death is **unnatural**- like nuclear weapons or not giving me money."*

# Completing the Ritual

Now you have all the components you need for the ritual, and you're in the place you need to be in to complete it.

All you need to do is cast the spell.

Pick three questions from this list and answer them to describe what the ritual looks like

- What time is it when you begin the incantation?
- Are you casting this spell alone or with allies?
- How have you laid out the components?
- Are you confident or nervous?
- Is the ritual complex or deceptively simple?
- What can you hear, feel, smell or taste as you cast the spell?
- What does becoming undead feel like?

**The process of becoming a lich requires you to know yourself. In the process of casting the spell, you may ask yourself, or the GM may ask you, one of these questions.**

**Answer it to complete casting the spell:**

- Are you proud of the way you have acted while preparing this ritual?
- Have you fulfilled your political beliefs while preparing this ritual?
- Have you lived up to the expectations of those close to you while preparing this ritual?
- What has this process taught you about yourself, your gender, or your sexuality?
- Do you really want to become a lich?

# Congratulations!

You have successfully become an undead necromancer of great arcane power

You may now proceed to change your body however you wish using magical spells that were once beyond you

Or... You can use that immortality to do it the right way and finally get to the end of that waiting list.

**Have a wonderful gay eternity!**



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