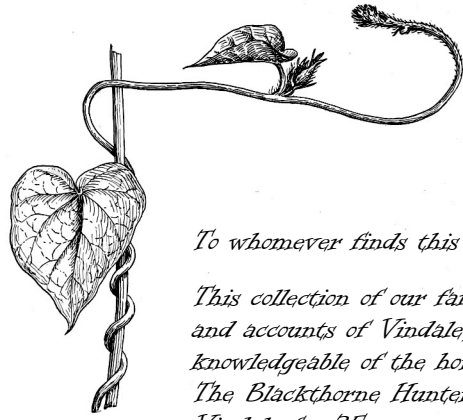


Blackthorne Family Guide to Surviving Vindale

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Foreword

To whomever finds this book take heed. It may save your life.

This collection of our family's history, local stories, creatures of and accounts of Vindale, is intended to keep you vigilant and knowledgeable of the horrors you may face in the city of Vindale. The Blackthorne Hunter Family have been among the woods of Vindale for 35 years now. Until recently our names were forgotten to the echoes of time itself, but this has been corrected with recent events.

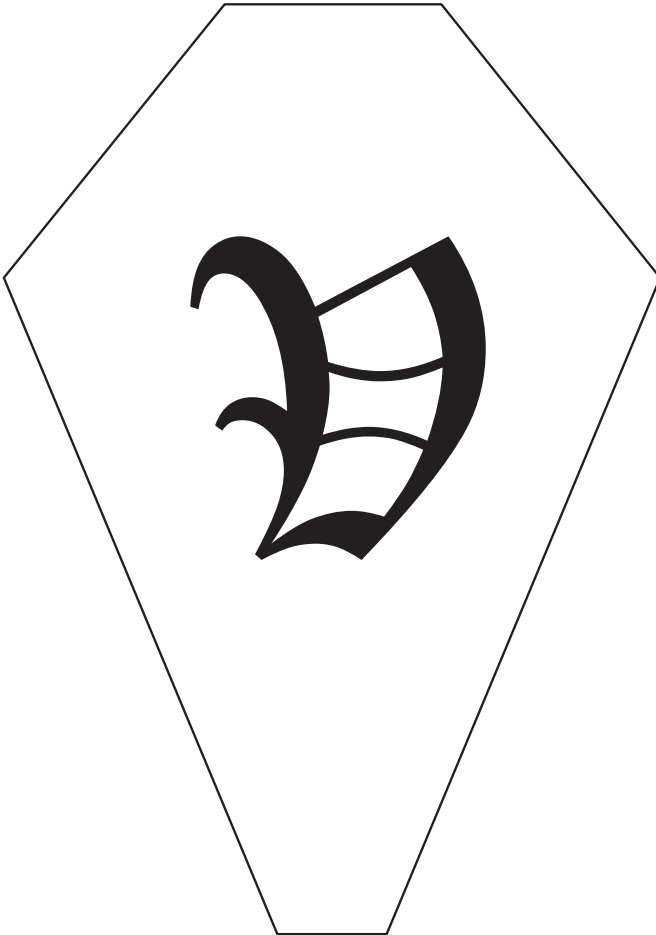
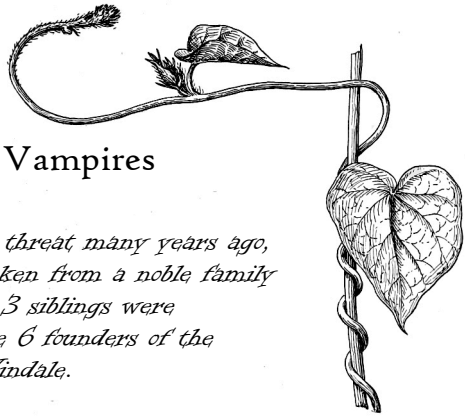
Traditionally, there has always been a Vampire Prince of Vindale, as was "custom" in these lands. Each Prince brings its own myriad of problems, it is our family's job to do our best to protect the citizens of Vindale from anything they send. This most recent breed of Vampire that has emerged is smarter than the last. It could be a change of elders or council, but it seems like an insurrection happened within their ranks over the last 4 years, and the ruling courts now have dispatched the old guard. They appear to be friends and the defenders of Vindale, but they are monsters through and through. Some have shown potential in being able to contain their bloodlust and be reasonable people, but normally this is a masquerade they wear to gain favor with the population. I won't say I like it, but this current brood of Vampires in Vindale are the most reasonable we have dealt with yet. There haven't been killings in the streets and mass murder under their reign. They are sociable and among the people, it is not uncommon to see them walking the streets at night. Be careful if you engage with them and watch your surroundings.

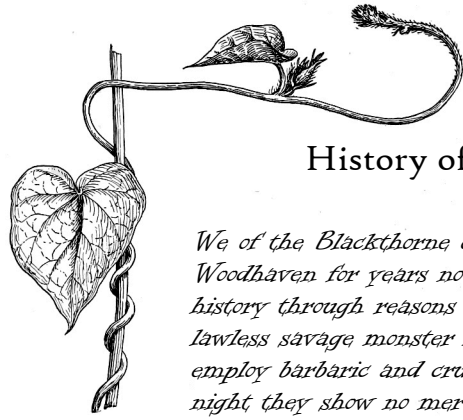
In the end, they all must die, but the night is powerful and endless, so we do what we must for Vindale.

~V

History of the Vindale Vampires

Vindale once lived in peace from Vampire threat many years ago, but under a blood moon 3 Siblings were taken from a noble family in exchange for a debt to be paid off. The 3 siblings were captured by a small band of Vampires- the 6 founders of the Houses and Clans of the future Court of Vindale.





History of the Blackthorne Family

We of the Blackthorne clan have walked in the darkness among Woodhaven for years now. However, our name has been lost to history through reasons that are hard to explain. We are not the lawless savage monster hunters people portray us as. While we employ barbaric and cruel tactics, when you hunt creatures of the night they show no mercy, so we shall not when we hunt them.

We are banned from residing within city walls due to the violent nature of our profession. We live happily in wagon caravans and underground keeps for safety and mobility. You can approach our camps freely if you are free of evil taint or intention; our families magics repel creatures of the night at the edge of them. If you see blue flames burning a creature in the woods, know that they are evil and not welcome. The locals take solace knowing we lurk in the dark, as well as the creatures. You won't see us walking openly in the city streets besides getting supplies, unless we are tracking a creature or someone we expect to hurt innocents.

If an agent of the night finds this letter, know our numbers are as endless and relentless as yours. We will not rest until you are removed from Undeath. You will know our symbol and learn to fear us or love us, depending on what lies in your heart. If you aid the agents of the night, expect no mercy from us, only a swift death. If you are being controlled by them, we will attempt to save you if we can, but sometimes the creatures curse people to death and we cannot save everyone.

~E



Current Blackthorne Family Council

At any time there are 7 Elders of the Blackthorne Council, we all have our roles and our purposes for the family.

Vincent Blackthorne: Eldest Hunter and leader of the Blackthorne Family for over 30 years, "He who walks in shadows"

Estoria Blackthorne: Healer and Medicine specialist of Family Blackthorne, wife of Vincent Blackthorne, "She who is touched by light"

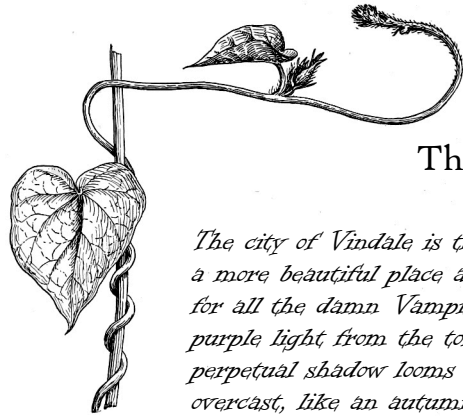
Streyor Blackthorne: Master of Arms and Strategy, younger brother of Vincent Blackthorne, "He who dances with steel"

Malicai Blackthorne: Master of the Hunt, always accompanied by his loyal hounds, Rip and Tear, "He who is bound in rage"

Victoria Blackthorne: Master of Finance and Logistics of the Blackthorne Family, "She who walks verdant horizons"

Boulder Blackthorne: Master Blacksmith of the Blackthorne Family, "He who shakes the earth"

Estella Blackthorne: Head of Diplomacy and Outsider Relations, sister to Estoria, "She who speaks with the morning star"



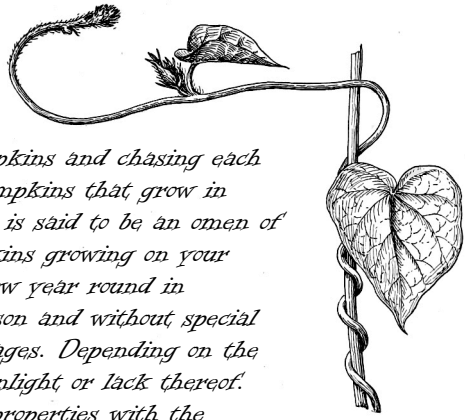
The City of Vindale

The city of Vindale is the pinnacle of Gothic beauty. There is not a more beautiful place at nighttime in all of Elysia, if it weren't for all the damn Vampires. The city glows in a dark vibrant purple light from the torches and flowers growing there. A perpetual shadow looms over Vindale; even at high noon it is still overcast, like an autumn rain about to pour down. While the morning rays of sunlight lift the cool chill of night from the skin in Vindale, it is never without its dark charm and macabre.

There is a large clocktower in the center of Vindale not far from the Burning Goblet Tavern. Though the clock keeper has not been seen in ages, the Clocktower of Vindale runs seamlessly without missing a second.

The Half Pony Inn on the east side of town, in the warehouse district. Velray Fisttøe has been the owner for several decades, after the inn acquired the moniker "half pony". The sign at the inn is the front half and back half of a horse, having been damaged in a storm. The original name of the inn has been forgotten. Velray allows our people to stay if needed at a steep discount, and we keep an eye on things here and there. If a good card game and cheap ale is what you seek, the Half Pony can provide no better.

Near the center of the town is a spring. This spring, allegedly, was used to water the very first vines that were planted in Vindale. The spring has been out of commission for a long time. I didn't actually think they would ever get around to repairing it. But they did. And did one better. They made it so the spring gives the drinker a Cure Light Wounds potion once per day. We investigated the spring as soon as it opened, and found no evidence of tampering. Seems safe enough.



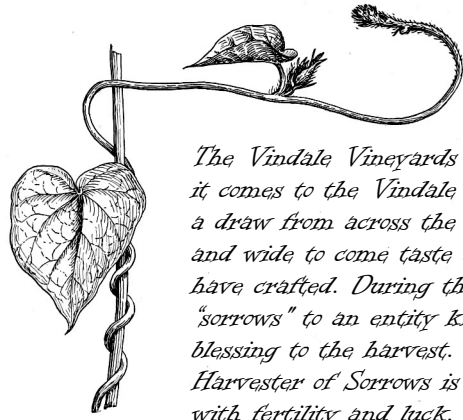
It is common to see children wearing pumpkins and chasing each other about the streets of Vindale. The pumpkins that grow in Vindale are the best in the entire land. It is said to be an omen of good luck if you have large healthy pumpkins growing on your land. Black Lillies, Orchids, and Roses grow year round in Vindale. They grow with no rhyme or reason and without special care out of season, confusing botanists for ages. Depending on the moon phase, these flowers glow in the moonlight or lack thereof. Scholars say they have different magical properties with the turning of the seasons.

Avian wildlife around Vindale is mainly condensed to vultures, crows, and ravens. This is the result of many generations of predator creatures and selection of the ruling families of Vindale. Killing these avian creatures is not only a bad omen, it is illegal, and a curse might befall you and your family if you do.

Bats are a symbol of protection and a watchful eye in Vindale. Though the Bats of Sanguine Reaping are servants of the House of Feral Howls, they are not typically hostile unless provoked or commanded to attack by the Courts. The more aggressive of the servants are the Wolves of the Feral Hunt. They typically are on missions from the Courts and do not like to be interfered with, also keep in mind you are dealing with a wolf. Finally, the most terrifying of the three, are the Gargoyles of Nights Stone. They are the true protectors of Vindale. The Vindale Watch does a good job at patrolling but the Nights Stone watchers can get to places and move unnaturally where humans cannot. Their resilience in battle is impressive. We have no proof of it, but they seem to be a creation of the House of Sanguinus Nocturna... seems like a move they would make.

As for the rest of the town of Vindale, the Universities of Vindale are impressive. The town prides itself on a highly educated society. The people understand the situation they are in and they aren't naive to who really runs the area, but seem content with it.

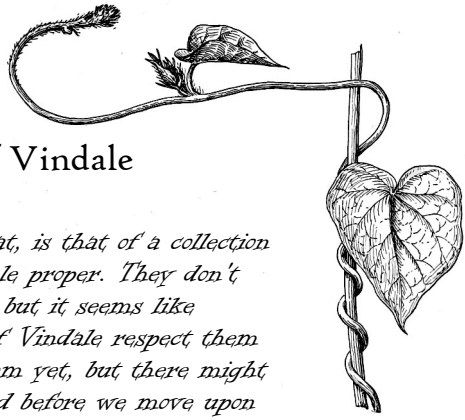
You can find just about anything you want in Vindale. Merchants love to live in the bazaar known as the Crimson Pouch. Every guild you could want in Elysia is found in the bazaar, but be careful how open you are with your desires, because you might leave with less coin than you intended.



The Vindale Vineyards are a highlight of the city, especially when it comes to the Vindale Harvest Festival each year. The festival is a draw from across the Dutchy of Elysia. People travel from far and wide to come taste any new flavors the brew masters might have crafted. During the festival, the locals give up their "sorrows" to an entity known as the "Harvester of Sorrows", as a blessing to the harvest. We have no reason to suspect this Harvester of Sorrows is anything but a spirit that blesses the land with fertility and luck. The spectacle of the festival is something that even we in the Blackthorne Family can respect. However, the true rulers of Vindale walk the streets openly during this time of year. It is imperative to be cautious of anyone wearing a mask or hiding their face during the festival. You may never know who you might run into during this festival; they might be from another land, another plane, or another timeline. Last year "The Prince", as he called himself, was seen at the center of the festival followed by every man's wife as they fawned over the very ground he walked on.

Another interesting note for outsiders is the Hoylean Library. About 15 years ago it vanished from Vindale one night and it hasn't been seen since. The locals left the plot untouched in hopes one day it would return, so all may share in its knowledge and majesty. In the center of the empty housing plot is a single stone slab. Lying on this slab lies a White Pearl in the shape of the symbol infinity. The slab and stone are both indestructible and immovable, they hum with a faint essence of Time Magic. Hundreds of scholars have attempted to open it with no success, even those with Time Alignments. I hope for our sake this Hoylean Library stays out of place in Vindale until the bigger problems are dealt with, but time and fate have a funny way of playing jokes on us. With our luck it will appear when we don't need it to again.

~ E



The Local Nobility of Vindale

The local nobility, if you want to call it that, is that of a collection of people who run the day to day in Vindale proper. They don't seem to be bad folk and do their jobs well, but it seems like something is off with them. The citizens of Vindale respect them so we have not felt the need to remove them yet, but there might be something deeper we need to understand before we move upon the local "Court".

These positions mimic the Vampire Courts of old in Vindale, but they were elected titles. Strange if you ask me, but the people of Vindale are superstitious as it is. Something to do with paying heed to the past while moving into a new age. While they call themselves Princes and such, their titles are as stable as a drunkard's legs when it comes to holding up to the proper nobility. They might as well be pretty titles for children playing a game of nobility.

Alister Crom, Prince of Vindale

Dante Hammerstein, Sheriff of Vindale

Aleron Shadows, Keeper of Elysium for Vindale

Lucien Castiel, Seneschal of Vindale

Krimson Bloodstone, Scourge of Vindale

Seraphine Belledona, Harpy of Vindale

Khalid Orchid, Curator of the Vineyards

Elise Blackrose, Mistress of Fortunes

Malik Forge, Warden of Trade of Vindale

Nekrous, The Black Hand of Vindale, a Dark Goblin who deals specifically in secrets, rumors and rare lore. Everything comes at a cost with him but his payment is unconventional.



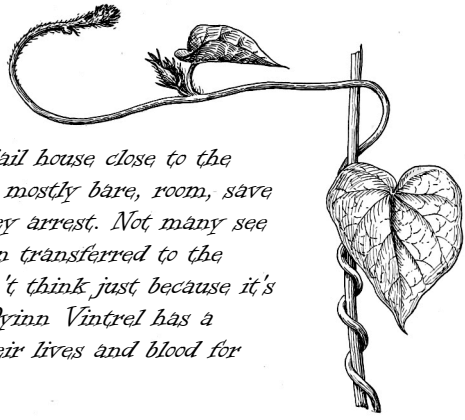
Other Residents of Vindale

As for the other "Commoners" who are unique in the town of Vindale, which is a quite a statement, there are several that stand out in my eyes as both useful and, ones you should be careful with in your dealings.

Old Jarod, the Crazy Hermit. Rumored to be once a powerful Celestial magician, his heart was shattered by a dead lover. He tells tales and talks until your ears fall off, but his stories are absolutely maddening. His speech patterns are odd and otherworldly for a supposedly educated person. Possibly the most disturbing part about Old Jarod is the ritual he makes you perform when you ask for his help. But that is for you to experience on your own.

Grim, the Undertaker of Vindale. Grim is the quiet type, his facial expressions and cold white eyes tell you more than his words normally. If he speaks to you, it is like he is there but someone else is speaking. Something about him terrifies me, but I don't know what it truly is about Grim that does it. He is a good person and has never harmed anyone unless they disturb his grave keeping routine. I once asked him a personal question. I woke up in a pumpkin patch, without clothes, covered in blood, wearing a pumpkin on my head without memories of the last few days. Never again will I ask him such a question. Either I experienced something I couldn't comprehend or that was his cruel and morbid sense of humor. Either way, don't offend him.

Feihlen Brighthelm. Feihlen is new to the area. Feihlen has uncanny and possibly unnatural control over some of the local wildlife. He is a loud advocate for wildlife and animals, both benign and not, and resorts to extreme methodology to further his ideals. We keep a close eye on him and his animal cohorts.

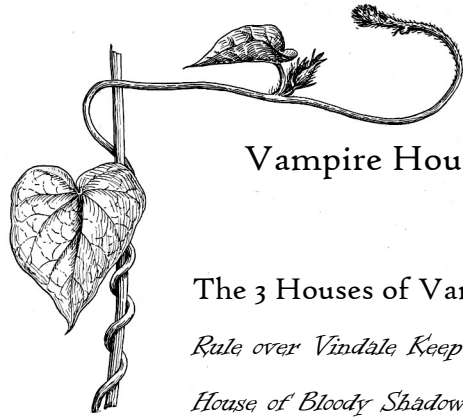


Captain Dyinn Vintrel: Operates a small jail house close to the Burning Goblet Tavern. Inside is a single, mostly bare, room, save a circle of power where they house any they arrest. Not many see the outside of this room again, except when transferred to the larger prison, or used as food, or both. Don't think just because it's daylight they are not watching. Captain Dyinn Vintrel has a whole host of traitors happy to trade in their lives and blood for the "privilege" of working for the clans.

Frank Grisk: For some reason, he calls himself "the les Sangesues Abyssale". We haven't been able to find the reason for the odd name, and frankly don't care. Frank is someone who would sell his own mother for a gold and an intoxication potion, and I advise you watch your back, and your purse, when he is around.

Alderik and Eslendra Crinamorte: Young for such beasts, a mere 75 years, they own and operate a vineyard that is known as one of the best. They claim they are sympathetic to the living, and in truth, we haven't found anything yet to contradict that. The other creatures of the night grow tired of their sympathies, and they know this.

~ M



Vampire Houses and Clans of the Vindale Courts

The 3 Houses of Vampire Nobility

Rule over Vindale Keep and the Surrounding Villages.

House of Bloody Shadows: Beautiful, powerful, shadow wielding warriors and dominant leaders, they are persuasive, diplomatic, but terrifying in battle with weaponry.

House of Sanguinus Nocturna: Blood Sorcerers and Experimenters of Vampiric Alchemy and makers of Flesh abominations.

House of Feral Howls: Traditional Vampire stereotypes of animalistic claws and deformed visages, they have control over the creatures of the night and woods.

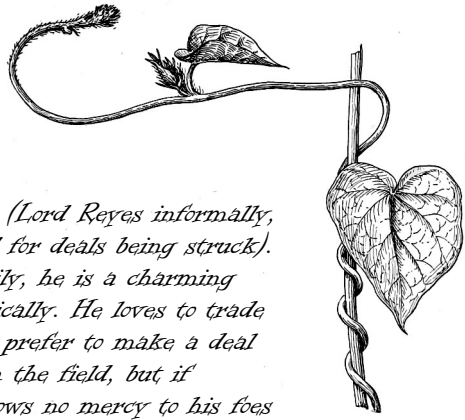
The 3 Clans of Vampire Commoners

Serve the Noble Houses of Vindale.

Clan of Creeping Death: Vampire assassins, they capture and eliminate threats for the nobility for gold and favors. Tend to be sloppy eaters and leave victims to die.

Clan of Deranged Nightmares: Vampire saboteurs, they will enter a village and ravage resources and drive the villagers mad from fear before the nobility arrives, but they are highly unstable and tend to be violent when challenged.

Clan of Shattered Bone: Vampire shock troops, absolute brutes and hard to control, they tend to lash out when you tell them what to do without a way to calm them down.



House of Bloody Shadows

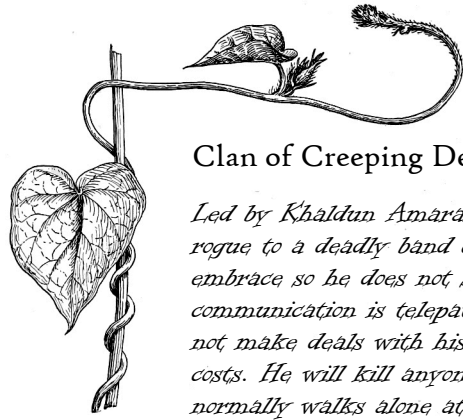
Led by Lord Alvaro Balduino de-los-Reyes (Lord Reyes informally, his full name is on written documents and for deals being struck). A former warrior king of a lost noble family, he is a charming tyrant that can be reasoned with diplomatically. He loves to trade boons and favors in a court setting. Would prefer to make a deal and win the battle without stepping foot on the field, but if enraged, Reyes takes up his sword and shows no mercy to his foes or those who have slighted him. If you do not agree with him or submit to his will he will dominate you to bow or enslave you to do his work unwillingly. He is the current Prince of the Vindale Vampire Court.

House of Sanguinus Nocturna

Led by Lord Magnus Erebus, a powerful magic scholar who devoted his studies in life to advanced formal celestial magic. In death, he has become more favored with Necromancy research and rituals to create new breeds of undead abomination. His prowess as a Celestial wizard has never been questioned as he openly challenges people to magical duels if they question him.

House of Feral Howls

Led by one known as "Ravenlord". In life Samiel Walker was a humble farmer and hunter for his king with an affinity for wild animals. When he was embraced to the night, he was left for dead in the forest by his sire. The only creatures to hear his cries for help were an unkindness of ravens in the Vindale woods. They came and drank of his blood and became empowered by the essence of darkness itself. They carried him to safety where Samiel began his undeath in a cavern. Over time he mastered the power of the corrupted animals of Vindale's wilderness. He is always accompanied by a swarm of humanoid Ravens who viciously defend him and attack on his command.



Clan of Creeping Death

Led by Khaldun Amaranth. In life, Khaldun was a murderer and rogue to a deadly band of assassins. His throat was slit upon his embrace so he does not speak normally, his only means of communication is telepathy. He is cold and calculating. He does not make deals with his prey. He completes the contract at all costs. He will kill anyone who gets between him and his prey. He normally walks alone at night but on missions he is accompanied by a group of elite rogues who ensure no witnesses or survivors are left.

Clan of Deranged Nightmares

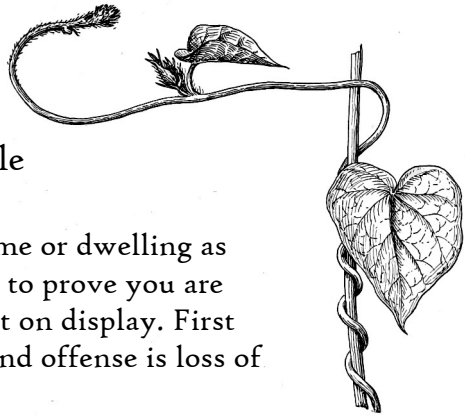
Led by Zelos Arentis, a man of sick and twisted faith in life. Deranged from a young age, he spoke with spirits who were never there to others. He trains his clan to inflict pain and misery on those who defy the masters of Vindale. He carries the preserved dead rabbit he had as a childhood pet as a means to communicate with the spirits whom aren't seen. He might seem almost normal for a moment with his humor but don't turn your back or his sinister nature will get your throat slit while he smiles. Zelos summons Nightmare elementals when he is attacking or feels fear because his repressed child mentality can only be comforted by the Nightmares of Vindale.

Clan of the Shattered Bone

Led by Mortimer Cerdic, a violent and brutal barbarian who ravaged the countryside in life for fun. The Tribe of Shattered Bone is known for its brutality and not even leaving a building standing in their wake. They would burn the building with victims barricaded inside and slaughter those who ran out like game. If you draw a sword in their presence they will attack.

Mortimier likes to collect the heads of his victims, specifically the leaders or nobility in places they have conquered. Accompanied by an entourage of bloodthirsty savages who only wants your blood and heart.

~ V



Laws of Vindale

- Nobility may enter into a home or dwelling as they wish. You may be asked to prove you are nobility by writ or house crest on display. First offense is a 50 Gold fine, second offense is loss of land rights in Vindale.
- No Wards are to be cast inside the city walls of Vindale. Any nobility must have access to enter and leave all buildings freely within Vindale.
 - *They will destroy your Wards while you sleep. First offense is a warning and destruction of your Ward, second might as well be death but could be worse. Don't test them twice.*
- Do not kill any birds within the city walls of Vindale. First offense is a 30 Gold fine, second offense is public execution.
 - *It is illegal and a very bad omen for your soul.*
- Destruction of plant life, pumpkin patches, or Vineyards is prohibited. First offense is a 50 GP fine, second offense is public execution.
- Consorting with the Bloody Fist Orcs is punishable by death.
 - *There is no excuse for this. The local nobility strictly enforce this. For proof walk the road into town and look for the impaled heads.*

This is part of the Zine Library for the NERO Live Action Roleplaying game. For more details about this game please check out Nero International at nerolarp.com and the local POLAR chapter at polarlarp.org.

If you know anyone that wants a copy of this send an email to the POLAR staff at johnthompson1@yahoo.com and we will ship one out for you!

The contents of this document are available to characters in the game world of Tyrra and can be known by your NERO character if it would make sense for them to have read this document.

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