

September 2022



The World Takes

By

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Harpy of Trenton

A Select Gathering

TIn contrast to most months when **Sovereign** Prince **Walter Merrick** holds public court, September found only a discreet group of residents of Trenton invited to a sneak preview and review of what will be the city's newest Elysium, the historic Old

Barracks. Meeting with the approval and support of the Prince and the assembled Court Officers, next month **Enforcer** **Darcy Whitmore**, Trenton's Keeper of Elysium, will officially open the doors to one and all. Until then, however, it was only the select invitees that were present to hear Prince Merrick's words of recognition for some of the city's

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residents. The Prince recognized the **Honorable** service provided by his **Noble** Seneschal, **Chauncey Deleon** in overseeing the response to hunters, and the **Loyal** service to the Court offered by **Arthur Crowley**.

When Shadows Bite

Investigations into last month's reports of vermin assaulting homeless along the Trenton waterfront was revealed to be a problem far bigger than merely aggressive rodents. Rotary Island, the larger of two islands in the Delaware river, was found to be the site of an open gateway into the shadowy realm known as the Abyss. It was from this inky blackness that the foul creatures were escaping... a problem addressed by the coordinated efforts of the **Noble** Nosferatu Primogen, **Colonel Greene**, Mr. Crowley and **Malachy Rourke**. Between Primogen Greene's martial abilities in confronting the creatures and the combined skills and assets Mr. Crowley and Mr. Rourke brought to bear, the gateway was neutralized long enough for a more permanent solution to be enacted. Further, where mortals had begun to share images to social media regarding the

shadowy creatures under the hashtag #SpookySeason, Primogen Greene and Mr. Crowley enacted a plan to cast doubt on the videos by supplanting the images of abyssal creatures with those of black cats doing typical cat things in shadowy environments. Kudos to Primogen Greene for his skill with felines, to Mr. Crowley for their magical alterations of digital images, and Mr. Rourke for providing skilled tools and resources to ensure this matter was resolved. Research into this matter is ongoing, not only in Trenton, but in other cities like New York where similar tears in reality have appeared. Of course, now there are reports of shadowy spiders all over the city...

In Service

The **Sovereign** right of Princes is clearly and unquestioningly stated in the Traditions we adhere to. Yet the Ivory Tower must, for the benefit of Kindred society, maintain a measure of awareness and control, especially in these hunter-filled nights. To this end Their Graces empower **Noble** Archons to serve as the eyes and ears, and occasionally strong arms, of the Justicariate. Yet even these Noble agents are limited in their ability to be everywhere they are needed.

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Delegating a measure of their standing to selected servants, these Servires provide the additional information and awareness that the Archons need to fulfill their duties. Many an Archon has spent time as a Servire before ascending to the larger position.

Congratulations to Trenton's **Mary Petersen** of the True Brujah, Servire to **Noble** Archon **Gabriel Fontaine**, in service to His Grace, **Ascendent** Justicar **Ian Carfax** of Clan Tremere.

Congratulations to St. Petersburg's **Casimir Swain** of the Ananke, Servire to **Noble** Archon **Lot 666**, in service to Her Grace, **Ascendant** Justicar **Diana Iadanza** of Clan Toreador.

To Infinity and Beyond

This month's Court will be hosted by the Clan of Kings, at **Noble** Elder Primogen **Charles Hakstege**'s nightclub, Infinity. While there are certainly local issues to consider, ranging from the threat posed by random shadowy gateways to evicting the trespasser under the Grounds for Sculpture, it is expected that discussion of the Grand Conclave's motions will be the subject of more than a few

conversations. Speaker of the Conclave, **Sovereign** Prince **Don Ariel** of Harmony Island, presided over a quartet of offerings, ranging from the use of technology to the admission of a bloodline, from the recognition of standing for one clan to the revocation of standing for another. I expect many heated debates over some of these topics...

Going Through the Motions, Pt. 1: Technology

The first motion offered for the Conclave's consideration was a very well-known one, sponsored by a very well-known Kindred. **Sovereign** Luminary Elder Prince **Nissim Melamed** of New York has been a strong advocate for rescinding the Ivory Tower's general prohibition against technology for more than a year now. In consultation with esteemed noteworthy Kindred like Prince Merrick and His Grace, **Ascendent** Justicar **Zane Bevan** of the Banu Haqim, as well as several others, these wise elders have crafted a proposal that balances the needs of maintaining a digital identity in the 21st century with maintaining the secrecy of the truth of our existence.

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Framing the entire issue as one of protecting the Masquerade, the proposal includes rules for securing the devices that a Kindred uses, rules for restricting digital communications to those that understand their proper use, and prohibiting any content or communication that directly addresses vampirism, the Masquerade or locations peculiar to our society, such as havens or Elysiums. By recognizing what matters may be revealed online, and more importantly which ones may not, this proposal appears to strengthen the safety previously offered by the technology ban. Arguments offered against it were mere trifles that were readily addressed, and this measure is widely expected to be adopted in some form or another.

Going Through the Motions, Pt 2: True Brujah

The second topic brought forward by Speaker Ariel was the motion by **Privileged** Luminary Elder, **Alaric of Gaul**, for the Ivory Tower to

recognize the True Brujah as a Pillar Clan of the Camarilla. Recognizing the vacancy left by the departure of the Brujah that founded the Ivory Tower, Elder Alaric offered the True Brujah bloodline as actual warrior scholars that have proven themselves to be competent rulers, Servires, and combatants. Further, he emphasized the benefit to the Tower of having a perspective unimpeded by emotion. While some measure of issue and objection were raised by Justicar Bevan and by Boston's **Sovereign** Prince **Christian Whitechapel**, the voices raised in support of Elder Alaric's motion appeared to outweigh the concerns. Noteworthy among those voicing their support was the unique **Sovereign** Luminary Elder Prince of St. Petersburg, **Persephone of Argos**... the sole remaining member of the founding Brujah. In demonstration of that support, she publicly granted Elder Alaric a Major boon as a sign of solidarity and bridging old divides. This matter will surely be one of interesting debate... but isn't that a true hallmark of their clan?

Going Through the Motions, Pt. 3: Kiasyd

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The third motion, offered for the Conclave's ~~amusement~~ consideration was a petition for the Kiasyd to be accepted as members of the Ivory Tower, submitted by **Privileged** Luminary Elder **Athanasius Xenos** of Clan Malkavian. Apparently lacking support among the assembled Kindred, many rose to speak in opposition to the proposal. Some of those voices even stated that the Kiasyd as a whole had no interest in the proposal and that this measure was offered primarily for the benefit of a sole acquaintance of Elder Xenos. Others dismissed this as merely a prank and a waste of time. Until a number of Kiasyd can agree upon and make a cogent argument for their inclusion, I for one have better uses of my ink than to offer any more commentary on this...

Going Through the Motions, Pt. 4: Tremere

Architects of the Tower, by dint of their involvement in the creation of our sect, have long enjoyed the right to anonymously submit measures to the Grand Conclave's docket. This unquestionable privilege, however, was most recently used to call into

question part of the structure of the Ivory Tower itself. Citing historical grievances against Kindred of Gangrel, Tzimisce, Salubri, Nosferatu and Gargoyle blood, this motion asked the assembly to strip noble Clan Tremere of their Pillar status. The uproar against this proposal was immediate and overwhelming. While not a single voice was raised in support of this naked political assault on Clan Tremere, the outpouring of voices in opposition clearly demonstrated the broad reach and impact the clan of wizards has made. One speaker even remarked something to the effect of "*Didn't they help lead a ritual to literally save the world?*" With such strong condemnation of this anonymous motion, and no voices raised in support, Speaker Ariel called the Conclave to a close.

Who Booked This Excursion?

As members of the Tower began to assemble for the Grand Conclave in Houston, a most interesting travel offer was made by one **Sergei Vykos**, an unaligned member of a lineage that needs no introduction.

Advertised as '*Premier private transportation to a secluded Mexican*

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locale, with the opportunity to explore historic sites and take in the local culture,' this brief vacation was all the worst parts of a 3rd rate travel agency. Inky darkness, aggravatingly bumpy flight, vermin... all to be greeted with little more than leftovers? While those of a more learned bent examined some of the abandoned relics and discerned that the Sabbat were truly gone, most of the guests on this unfortunate excursion were left to puzzle over the miscellaneous supplies of weapons and armor that were scattered about the shadowy vault. One thing is certain... despite the lovely tourism guides left behind advertising a vacation resort known as the Lover's Cave, I for one will not be booking any further travel with Mr. Vykos. Oh, and absolutely no blasphemous tomes or heretical writings of any sort were recovered.

We're Snubbing You, You and You, Pt 1.

The noble Primogen council serves as a deliberative body to ensure proper representation for each clan, offering insight peculiar to their distinct nature. Having adequate

information to come to an informed decision is key, and as a hallmark of their clan, the Nosferatu are the key to information. So why would the Primogen Council of Pittsburgh repeatedly choose to hold meeting after meeting without **Noble** Nosferatu Primogen **Ence**? Certainly this would not be happening if **Privileged** Luminary Elder **The Mastiff** was still the Primogen, would it? Of course, if it were an emergency, one could overlook the absence of any particular Primogen from a formal meeting once or twice... but when it becomes a pattern, is it really yet another emergency or is it more a dereliction of their social duty to the Domain as a whole? A Primogen Council's business is its own, but when their choices disenfranchise a Pillar Clan to the detriment of the entire city, it may be time for one responsible for ensuring the social conscious of our society to interject. Enter **Noble** Dawn, Harpy of Pittsburgh, who found this snubbing of Clan Nosferatu to be scandalous and remarked upon it in her first published Harpy report, Steel Whispers. As a **Guardian** of social norms, Harpy Dawn **Warned** the **Noble** Primogens **Thomas Ewing, Amelia Reeves, Ari Vaughn, Elijah Thorne** and **Hu-Li**, of clans Ventrue, Malkavian, Tremere, Toreador and

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Banu Haqim, respectively. A bold move, especially considering the reputation for **Loyal** efforts in the past that secured the standing of all but Primogen Vaughn. Then again, isn't a Harpy selected in part to ensure that proper social norms are maintained?

We're Snubbing You, You and You, Pt 2.

With lightning speed, in response to Harpy Dawn's report, several members of the Pittsburgh Primogen Council once again convened an 'emergency meeting' the very next night and issued the following statement...

Kindred of Pittsburgh,

Due to the gross inaccuracy of her reporting of events in our Domain and her inability to discern the difference between scandal and business-as-usual in the Camarilla, Dawn of the Roses no longer has the support of the majority of the Primogen Council and is dismissed from the position of Harpy of Pittsburgh.

An announcement of our new Harpy will be forthcoming.

Sincerely,

Amelia H. Reeves, Malkavian
Primogen

Elijah Thorne, Toreador
Primogen

Ari Vaughn, Tremere Primogen

Thomas Ewing, Venture
Primogen

and approved by Huli, Banu
Haqim Primogen

With this declaration, the **Warning** that now-ex-Harpy Dawn had issued was ended with her time in office.

We're Snubbing You, You and You, Pt 3.

Yes, it appears that Clan Nosferatu was yet again not included to address this matter... even after The Mastiff resumed the position of Nosferatu Primogen. Of course, one can judge the accuracy of Harpy-emeritus

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Dawn's report by the attendance at this 'emergency Primogen meeting'.

Party Crashers

The Toreador Grand Ball is traditionally one of the most prominent events of the year for Kindred. When the host is none other than the Toreador Justicar herself, and when word gets about that she is hosting a private invite-only salon... well, now *THAT* is a coveted invitation. In this year's case, however, perhaps it was a too coveted invitation, as information from reliable sources have indicated that some invitations were forged. Indeed, at least one Luminary elder has taken a personal interest in investigating this matter. Considering the disrupting presence of 'Morty' on the first night, is there any real doubt that some unwelcome guests had found a way in other than by authentic invitation?

Eyes in the Sky

There's been a new addition to the Trenton night sky. Not a celestial body, but rather a series of commercial ones. Recently, a large online retailer has begun exploring the possibility of using camera-guided drones for aerial

delivery of packages. These eyes in the sky are also able to connect to that company's popular network of doorbell cameras, providing both aerial and ground level coordination... allegedly for a more secure delivery process. Apparently those with a more larcenous bent have suggested that these delivery drones are 'dumb' and that thieves have been able to capitalize on the deliveries... but there are also significant rumors about these drones simply flittering about in grid-like patterns, as if surveilling the area. If only the Domain had someone dedicated to reviewing this sort of issue. Paging Mr. Crowley...

My House, My Rules

A recent monthly gathering in Boston was held to celebrate **Noble** Toreador Primogen **Xavier Smith**'s new facility, a race track that ostensibly was to make the streets safer in Boston by providing street racers a place to enjoy their passion. While many not-so-subtly recognize this as nothing more than a place for the good Primogen to enjoy his particular passion for motor vehicles, none can question that he generously opened the doors of his location and

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that he had ensured the area was secured for the Masquerade. That he chose to include mortal security agents was his decision to make, not one for any other than Prince Whitechapel to question if he so chose. Yet why, when the good Primogen has requested that all his guests be on their best behavior, did he have to respond to the unwanted 'efforts' by certain unnamed individuals to 'address' these security agents? Shame really... but a credit to Primogen Smith's discretion, he chose not to name those 'overactive guests' in the public rebuke he left in Boston's Elysium. Checkered flag there, Primogen Smith...

Odds & Ends

Those tuning into the police band may have caught wind of a messy 'knifing' during a robbery outside a local liquor store. Or so the story goes, with Scourge Greene 'addressing' the sloppy Caitiff trespasser that was responsible. Really? In these nights, with hunters so prevalent? There is no room for this sort of needless trouble.... But what can you expect from ones like that?

The explosive final motion at the Grand Conclave spawned quite a bit of speculation about the source of the

motion. Of the 'wronged' clans listed, only the Nosferatu are in the Tower. Was this a grudge held by an elder of that clan? Was it put forth by someone looking to frame the Nosferatu as the most likely culprit? Did this originate with the Anarchs or the IA as an effort to drive the remaining Tremere out of the Tower? Oh so many possibilities, each more devious and manipulative than the last...

Eyes in the sky aren't the only things patrolling part of Trenton. Rumor has it that the shifters are getting anxious for Prince Merrick to 'evict' the trespasser under the Grounds for Sculpture... so much so that they are now patrolling the edges of the area. They certainly don't think or act on the time scale of Kindred... how much longer will they be patient?

Some people noted how very upset certain members of Clan Ventrue were at the Grand Conclave after the motions were made. Considering how passionately Boston's Prince Whitechapel spoke on several of them, arguing for some and against others, one has to wonder if the unified face of Clan Ventrue was called to speak out on matters they would rather not have... or in ways they would not have chosen. Prestation is magic, after all...

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Some have questioned whether the forged invitations for last month's Toreador Grand Ball may have been nothing more than a Malkavian prank. Other privileged voices have whispered questions about how one of such prominence could find themselves entangled in such a fiasco. Still other **VERY** privileged voices whisper whether a Machiavellian Prodigy less than a century old has the experience to properly handle such responsibility.

Eyes and Ears

It is simply impossible to be everywhere at all times. So much juicy news that goes unreported... unless YOU bring the story. Appropriate recognition as the situation calls for, naturally. Who lives, who dies, who tells your story...