Setting & Lore (BAD)

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Overview

> The Templar got a text and checked his phone. No one thought anything of it. We were meeting the Archbishop, and he was standing against the back wall like a beautiful statue. No one paid him much mind. He was a goddamned glorified bodyguard, right?
>
> So anyway, guy gets a text. The next thing we know, the Archbishop’s head is rolling across the marble floor, and his body turned to ash.
>
> "What did we do? Bitch, we ran! That pretty motherfucker was a Templar for a reason!"
>
> – Brian O’Malley; Brujah Antitribu and Former Priest of the West Baltimore Pack

It was 2012 when everything changed.

Situated between the Washington DC, Philadelphia, and New York, Baltimore was a veritable playground for Sabbat packs cutting their teeth on the Final Nights, and learning what it could be to be True Sabbat.

Crime rates increase and government corruption was at an all-time high. It was incredibly easy for them to keep their foothold, and other than the neighborhoods of Little Italy (A stronghold for the Giovanni since the early 1900s) and The Block (A Place Only a Setite Could Love), the city itself was chaos. Even the nice little touristy places–Federal Hill, Fells Point, Hampden–were places people just did not walk alone late at night.

After two-or-three in the morning, even the cops didn’t pay the goings on much mind. It was far too dangerous to do so.

Then it started happening.

One day, an abandoned warehouse went up in flames in Pigtown. Mortal firefighters attempted to keep the fire contained to save the rest of the Historic District from going up in flames. They succeeded, but the damage to the 19th Century Warehouse was almost complete. When the building was demolished for safety purposes a few weeks later, they learned that someone had been living there.

The residents of the neighborhood told the investigators that there were squatters there occasionally, and they caused a good deal of trouble late into the night. That the building was gone was a godsend. Most residents were performatively grief-stricken that there may have been people who perished.

A few weeks after the fire, the roof of the old Westport BG&E Building collapsed. A massive building that had been abandoned for years and not kept up properly, the roof caving in was only in shock in that it took so long to happen.

Still, people nearby swore that when it happened, they heard screams and then suddenly nothing.

When investigated, no human remains were found.

Things like that happened for weeks in Baltimore City. Nothing out of the ordinary in a city so corrupt that even the infrastructure was crumbling. While it looked like just another sign of urban decay, the Sabbat knew better.

They were being slowly exterminated.

Amongst the Kindred of Baltimore, June 6, 2012 is known as ‘The Night Of Blood’. In reality, the kine barely noticed a difference. It was the night that the Camarilla showed up in force and swept up enough of the Sabbat remnants that they were able to take the City.

The Independent Clans in Little Italy and on The Block? They did little to stop the Camarilla from coming into the city. On paper, they stayed neutral, though both groups agree that the Camarilla are better for the tourist business as well as the vice-trades.

In reality, both groups helped with the incursion as a means of protecting family and cult, as the Sabbat had begun encroaching on their agreed upon territories. When one of the Giovanni Cousins was dumped on the doorstep of the Giovanni Donna by a Sabbat Ductus, close enough to death that his only saving grace was the Embrace, it became a matter of survival.

When one of the cult’s sacred brothels was desecrated by a frenzying Gangrel, the Setites threw their lot where they’d lose the least.

The two groups couldn’t take the Sabbat on their own, but the Camarilla could.

For ten years, the Independent Clans and the Camarilla have been waging a sort of ‘Cold War’ in their tenuous peace. The one thing that keeps them together is the Treaty of Baltimore and the fact that they are smack in between two Sabbat Territories, with small splinter groups still hiding in and around the city.

Between the threats from without and the threats from within, Baltimore is a powder-keg.

Whether it will explode is not a matter of ‘if’...

But of ‘When’.

Map

The Baltimore After Dark map can be found on Google Maps, here.

(Anarch) Regency Titles in Baltimore

Unsurprisingly, there are few formal positions within an Anarch domain, and in fact even those that appear to have the air of formality are anything but. Within Baltimore, during this new politically unstable period known as "The Julien Regency", the following positions have emerged:

Regent

a.k.a. Baron, Acting Prince, Interim Prince

With the absence of Prince William Good, Julien Lavalle has found himself thrust into the position of Regent with the support of some of the most powerful kindred in Baltimore. The motivations for his ascension are unclear, as is often the case with the politics of the night society. But what is certain is that Monsieur Lavalle is not William Good.

> Anarch philosophy critiques authoritarian rule, yet acknowledges the need for leadership in a domain, often embodied by the figure of the Baron. Despite efforts to avoid autocracy, Barons can succumb to power's corrupting influence. They walk a delicate line between wise leadership and autocratic tendencies, often hindered by the impracticality of revolutionary ideals when practical matters demand attention.
>
> Barons, akin to Princes, hold similar duties and privileges, but the inhabitants of their domains prefer a less dominating ruler. Consequently, a Baron's authority is more constrained, reflecting the Anarchs' willingness to trade some control for freedom. While they interpret the Traditions, their authority relies on reason, populism, and personal influence rather than absolute power. While they may arbitrate matters concerning the Masquerade and Domain, other Traditions are left to the free Kindred to resolve, with a Baron's input being advisory rather than binding policy.

Reeve

a.k.a. Sheriff

The Anarch Reeve, despite being a symbol of order in domains that reject such authority, is a necessary safeguard against chaos. Barons, wary of potential breaches of the Masquerade, often appoint Reeves to maintain discipline, though blind trust in fellow Anarchs is rare. While akin to a

Sheriff, Reeves have even less oversight, often attracting bullies to the role. However, they must tread carefully, as the Baron and popular opinion within the domain can swiftly strip them of power. Though similar to Sheriffs in function, the Reeve's lower Status reflects the skepticism many Anarchs harbor toward authority figures.

Emissaries

a.k.a. Parlays, Primogen, Talkies

A free state can have five gangs, or it can have an uncounted number of ever-changing factions. These can be centered around clans, philosophies or individuals. No matter the number or their composition, at some points these groups clash and this is where the Emissaries come in. They are the diplomats, the negotiators and the advisors for their respective factions. They might still stab you in the back though.

Sweeper

a.k.a. Scourge

Occasionally, there's a rampant outbreak of vampires Embracing recklessly, or a betrayal from within the ranks. In such dire circumstances, immediate action is required without room for debate. This responsibility often falls on the Sweeper, an unofficial role typically assigned to a physically capable individual, not heavily involved in politics and possibly affiliated with a local gang or cell. During crises, this individual is tasked with eliminating threats until the situation is resolved. It's a thankless and socially isolating duty.

SS Achilles

The SS Achilles sits moored out in the harbour, a once proud freighter, has been left to rust and slowly be eaten by the ocean. At least that is how most mortals see her. For the kindred of Baltimore however, the Achilles has become a place to settle grievances, or make a name for yourself. For it is within her rusting hull that vampires come to fight.

Money, blood, boons can all be won here. As can arguments. The Achilles is officially off-the-record as far as the Camarilla is concerned, it is a Giovanni enterprise on the surface. But the place stinks of Tremere magic and Gangrel stand guard...

The SS Achilles can be accessed from a small bar in Little Italy. Those with the password are given access to the backroom, where a doorway leads from the mainland to the ship presumably by way of blood magic.

Elijah Giovanni has recently been named Manager of the SS Achilles.

> Fights within the SS Achilles arena do not induce Frenzy. While Final Death IS possible accidentally, it is not sanctioned without the Prince's explicit approval. Fight to Torpor is possible, and those torpored will be restored back to conciousness... eventually.

(Defunct) Camarilla Titles in Baltimore

See (Anarch) Regency Titles in Baltimore

- Prince of Baltimore
- Seneschal of the Nightcourt
- Herald
- Sheriff
- Hound
- Scourge
- Underscourge
- Harpy
- Keeper of Elysium
- (Deputy) Keeper of [specific Elysium]

Scandal & The Hidden Temple

Scandal: The Nightclub of Shadows



> Scandal is more than just a nightclub; it is a temple of temptation and desire, a place where the boundaries of pleasure and peril are constantly pushed. Whether one is drawn to the frenetic energy of the Pit, the seductive intimacy of Up-Top, or the exclusive allure of Down-Below, Scandal offers an experience like no other. It is a place where secrets are both kept and revealed, and where the Setites' influence seeps into the very fabric of the night.

Scandal, nestled along the 400 block of downtown Baltimore, is a pulsating epicenter of hedonism and intrigue, known far and wide as the hub of Setite activity within the city. By day, its exterior blends into the urban landscape, but by night, it transforms into a beacon for those seeking thrills and secrets.

The Pit

At the heart of Scandal lies the Pit, the main dance floor, a throbbing, writhing mass of humanity that rises and falls to the relentless beat of the music. Strobe lights flash in chaotic harmony with the music, creating an almost hypnotic effect on the dancers. Elevated platforms scattered throughout the Pit are home to go-go dancers who move with a seductive grace, their bodies illuminated in the shifting lights, adding to the electric atmosphere.

Up-Top

Encircling the Pit is the Up-Top, a spacious balcony that offers a different kind of allure. Here, the volume drops just enough to allow for whispered conversations and more intimate encounters. Scattered around are secluded nooks and plush seating areas where patrons can sit down, talk, and indulge in more personal forms of entertainment. The shadows here seem deeper, more inviting, providing the perfect cover for passionate embraces or clandestine meetings.

Down-Below

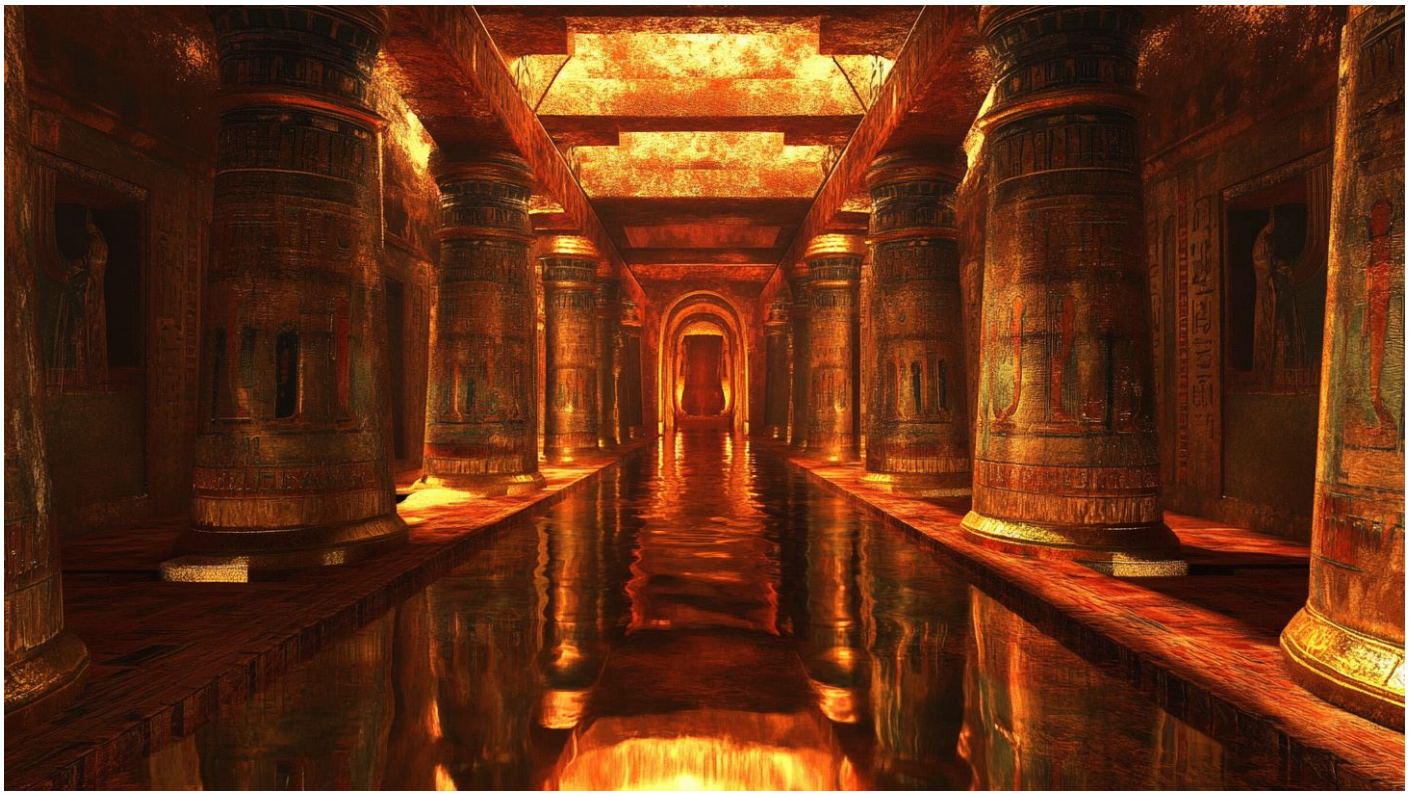
Beneath the club, accessible only by a guarded staircase, lies Down-Below, the exclusive VIP area. This is no mere playground for the elite; it is a haven for Kindred, where vampire-friendly drinks are served and the staff is well-versed in catering to their unique needs. The atmosphere is darker, more refined, with an air of predatory elegance. Go-go dancers here are even more provocative, their performances designed to tantalize and entice. Private rooms offer a discreet setting for more primal forms of entertainment, where the line between pleasure and pain often blurs.

Theme Nights

Scandal is renowned for its extravagant theme nights, when the entire venue undergoes a dramatic transformation. On these nights, the club might become a swashbuckling pirate ship, with staff dressed as buccaneers and patrons encouraged to don their best pirate attire. On another night, it might morph into a haunted house, complete with eerie decorations and ghostly staff, creating an immersive experience that blurs the line between reality and fantasy. These events are not just for show; they are a testament to the Setites' love for drama and decadence, providing the perfect backdrop for their nocturnal activities.

Scandal's security is greater than most nighclub's. Before attempting to circumvent the bouncers, engage in sketchy behaviour, or talk your way into Down-Below, please check with a Storyteller.

The Hidden Temple



The existence of the Setite temple is not common knowledge. Unless a character has specific lore knowledge of the Followers of Set and their practices, or has been exposed to the Temple itself, then they would not know if its possible existence. Access to the Temple is also heavily guarded - any scene involving unsanctioned access to the Labyrinth is an automatic consent to the possibility of character death. Any scene involving an attempt to beach the Pylon or any unsanctioned access beyond the Pylon is an automatic consent to inevitable character death. In either case, speak to a Storyteller before proceeding.

The Labyrinth Entrance

Deep beneath the vibrant and bustling nightclub Scandal lies a hidden world of ancient power and mystery. To reach Baniti's temple, one must first navigate a labyrinth designed to deter and confuse intruders. This labyrinth, an intricate network of winding passageways and dead ends, is dimly lit by flickering torches and adorned with carvings of serpents and cryptic hieroglyphs. The air is heavy with

the scent of incense and ancient dust, and the walls seem to echo with the whispers of forgotten rituals.

This labyrinth is more than a mere physical maze; it is also a psychological gauntlet designed to test and tempt those who seek the temple. Hidden chambers off the main paths offer various forms of temptation. Some rooms are filled with luxurious pillows and silken draperies, where acolytes engage in sensual acts meant to distract and seduce. The air here is thick with the sounds of pleasure and the intoxicating scent of exotic perfumes. These rooms are designed to lure the unwary into abandoning their quest, lost in hedonistic delight.

Other chambers appear as opulent guest rooms, complete with comfortable beds and lavish furnishings, inviting travelers to rest and succumb to the comforts of the flesh. Each of these rooms is a trap, ensnaring those who stray from their path with promises of respite and indulgence.

The Pylon

Emerging from the labyrinth, visitors are greeted by a grand pylon, a massive gateway flanked by towering obelisks. The pylon is decorated with detailed carvings depicting the deeds of Set and the history of Baniti's Blood Cult. The symbols and reliefs glow faintly with an otherworldly light, hinting at the supernatural power contained within. Beyond the pylon, the temple itself stretches out, its grandeur hidden from the world above.

The Courtyard

Entering through the pylon, one steps into a large open courtyard. This space, while underground, is designed to mimic the feel of an outdoor area, with high ceilings painted to resemble the night sky. Statues of Set and other deities line the courtyard, their eyes seemingly watching all who enter. The floor is paved with polished stone, etched with sacred symbols that guide initiates through their rituals. At the center of the courtyard lies a reflecting pool, its waters dark and still, reflecting the torchlight in eerie patterns.

The Hypostyle Hall

Beyond the courtyard lies the hypostyle hall, a vast chamber supported by rows of towering columns. Each column is intricately carved with scenes of Baniti's exploits and the cult's rituals. The ceiling is adorned with a celestial map, showing the alignment of stars significant to the Setites. This hall serves as a gathering place for larger ceremonies and meetings, where the cultists come together to hear the words of the High Priest or Priestess.

The Sanctuary

At the heart of the temple is the sanctuary, the most sacred and secretive part of the complex. This chamber is accessible only to the highest-ranking members of the cult. The walls are lined with

shelves holding ancient scrolls and relics, some of which date back to Baniti's time in Egypt. The focal point of the sanctuary is the grand altar of Set, carved from black marble and stained with the blood of countless sacrifices. This is where the most potent rituals are performed, where the blood of the willing and the unwilling alike is offered to Set in exchange for power and protection.

The Inner Sanctum

Beyond the sanctuary lies the inner sanctum, a small, heavily guarded chamber that houses Baniti's resting place. This crypt is adorned with treasures and artifacts that Baniti accumulated over his long existence. His sarcophagus, an ornate coffin covered in gold and precious stones, lies at the center, surrounded by protective wards and spells. The air here is colder, and a sense of ancient power permeates the space, as if the very stones themselves remember Baniti's presence.

> The temple beneath Scandal, with its labyrinthine entrance filled with temptations and seductions, grand pylon, sacred courtyard, imposing hypostyle hall, and hallowed sanctuary, is a place of both reverence and fear. It stands as a testament to Baniti's enduring legacy and the dark power of the Setites. Hidden from the world above, it waits patiently for the day when its master will awaken and once more walk among his followers, bringing with him the chaos and change of the ancient god Set.