

The Hidden Parlor

NST Elections - September 2017

Sample Expectations/Content Document: Joe Carron

Special thanks to the staff of Austin, for the creation of most of this document. The idea is for us as a club to take a look at the content that the wish to present, and provide a “What to Expect” type of document to their players.

What to Expect

The Hidden Parlor is a high-immersion vampire LARP with an emphasis on mood, costuming, and immersion – but most importantly community.

Mood

Occult mysteries hidden in shadow. Monsters held back by a veneer of civility. The mood is what defines a vampire or werewolf game and makes it unique among LARP. The Hidden Parlor is an 18+ game (21+ at some sites) that gives players an opportunity to explore the mature themes of the World of Darkness, like experiencing personal horror and navigating labyrinthine politics.

Costuming

An important part of setting the mood of any LARP event is communicating aspects of your character through costuming. It helps keep immersion and is a good way to differentiate between a player and their character; it is also a great way to get into your own character’s head.

We encourage our local chapters to organize Costume Exchange Bins at their events. These bins serve as a resource for players to pick up unique and quality costume pieces to help define your character. This is also a way to earn Volunteer Points for donating usable costume pieces to the community to promote the mood and immersion of the game.

Immersive Role-play

With mood and costuming, immersion comes easily. Staying in character throughout the event makes it easier to explore the depths of the game; the characters, the plot-lines, the mysteries. After game begins, there are a number of hand signs (described in the book) that help silently communicate out-of-character (OOC) needs without interrupting the role-play scene around you.

Extended OOC conversation will be limited to a pre-established OOC “zones” at the gamesite. Otherwise, we will try to keep OOC conversation to a minimum while in the playspace.

Community

We are people before we are vampires/werewolves. This may not seem like a novel idea, but after an evening of playing cutthroat Vampire politics (or fighting the Wyrms), it can be hard to decompress and separate the player from their LARP persona. Many chapters within The Hidden Parlor try to bridge that gap by hosting a number of socials between games and meeting up for food after each event (called “afters”) for people to socialize and talk to each other as Real Humans™.

Make some time to visit your local chapter’s event calendar, and find time during the month to come out and visit us when we aren’t monsters in the World of Darkness. Stay afterwards and goob and eat pizza and become involved in the best part of Hidden Parlor – the community.

Content Listing

At The Hidden Parlor, we want to make sure that all prospective players come to the game able to make an informed decision about their participation, knowing the content that may be present at any given Hidden Parlor LARP. Here we have outlined many of the key components of the game experienced in a simplified list.

The setting that we use (World of Darkness) is one where players are asked to explore mindsets and moralities that are different from their own. The game setting is one where the dichotomy between the rich and poor, influential and weak, powerful and powerless, is much more pronounced than in the current world. Given the present-day political climate, especially in the United States, we recognize that these themes run parallel to real-life issues about human rights and the dichotomy between the privileged and the marginalized.

Some of the items on this list are pretty heavy; as a game, we make an attempt to handle these subjects with extreme respect and accommodation, but we also recognize that some matters are overwhelming to some players and may trigger emotions or “bleed” during play in ways that they are not interested in exploring.

[Edit this list for items that would be considered allowed/disallowed]

Acts of Violence, Torture, and Character Death.

Alcohol.

Amoral Characterizations (for both PCs and NPCs).

Conspiracy Theory Themes.

Dark Humor.

Themes and Canon Materials based on the World of Darkness role-playing Universe.

NPCs to Represent both Friends and Enemies.

Political Intrigue.

Self-Managed Engagement.

Simulated Drug Use and Addiction (no actual drug use is allowed at events).

Swearing.

Public Shaming used Punitively.

Powers which may Coerce or Influence a PC or NPC's Perspective and Emotions.

Struggle involving Traditions and Conservative Values.

Power Imbalances explored via an age-based Caste System (Neonate, Ancilla, Elder).

Power Imbalances explored via a Political System (Primogen, Harpy, Prince, etc).

Nepotism.

Use of religious iconography (Judeo-Christian, Islamic).

Use of ritualistic magic.

Prejudice based on your Clan/Bloodline (A parallel to racism that does not use real world racist terms, but can be used as a parallel to discrimination).

Representation of Mental Illnesses.

The following are not allowed in games that are part of The Hidden Parlor, Member safety and inclusion is more important than maintaining setting purity

Any content related to rape or sexual assault (including use of powers to coerce non-consensual physicality).

Actual racism (including the use of racist terms/slurs/adages).

Real violence, non-consensual physical contact.