

Report Unto the Archducal Council:

- His most Imperial Majesty (by acclamation of the Ancients and the Fey), the Archduke Alastair of Canberry
- The Lady Brionna of the Southlands, Captain of the Archducal Guard, Chief Military Adviser to the Archduke
- The Lady Catherine of the Quon, Privy Assistant and Adviser to the Archduke
- Such others as the Archduke may designate

At the request of the Archduke - an examination of the old families and their lineages.

Prepared by Alphonse, the Privy Secretary to the Mouth, in the enclosure of the Quon.

All hail and salutations!

I have hurried the disposition of this report as much as was possible, pursuing each lead personally and driving the researchers so unmercifully that I shall extend their next full rest by a day with the blessings of the Archduke.

Simply put, the records are conflicted. NEVER have I seen such a thing.

The records in the Great repository of the Quon and in the Archduke's private archives show that families throughout Drucien, north of the Barrier, are intertwined, as are those south of the Barrier. That is to say that there are various familial connections, stretching back almost an eon in the north - particularly between the families ruling the Guard Cities, the wealthiest enclaves of the City of Enclaves, the Cities of Lost Splendour, the Crystal Cities (now falling one by one to Hanal), the cities of Golems, and some of the most powerful Kovs in Hanal.

The Privy Records in the First Repository however shows something entirely more. Passing through the Veil to find out if the even more ancient records showed anything further to add, I found that they did not agree - or rather not in full - the records of the First Repository could be argued to be more complete. Those records show that for hundreds of years now three families within the City of Life have also been breeding with families north of the barrier, not only those noted for inbreeding in general but also the royal family of our most powerful coreligionists there. The record also shows that a single family has bred elsewhere - with the Archducal family - as the Council I suspect knows. The records in the Great Repository and in the archives show that no family from the City of Life has bred outside the lands controlled by Life - and all of the records on breeding within Life match. It is only in the First Repository that I found records of breeding outside however. Youngest daughters - assumed to become nuns, assumed to have died, assumed to have been stillborn. Always daughters, always too unimportant to have their lives and deaths examined closely. Never breeding directly with a ruler.

I asked the Record Keepers in the First Repository about this, and they responded by saying that they were not responsible for fiction, that the First Repository recorded only facts as they were. because in only an eon or two, they would run out of storage space. The Recorders always flummox me I confess, and I did not know what to say to this. I could hardly argue.

The glaring reality however is that this breeding according to the Privy Records began nearly 300 years ago, but only reached its present pitch in the last 100. The family that bred with the Archducal family was never part of that breeding program, and their involvement was only here.

Beyond this bizarre irregularity however, I can say that inbreeding is prevalent throughout the history that I examined, and that according to alchemists and healers I consulted could cause all sorts of oddities of health and form. All agreed however that the combination that is seen among some of the royal families is uncommon, and that diseases of the blood and mind would be more expected.

Your Grace I am at your service, and of course the service not only of my Lady, but also of the honored Lady Brionna. I will explain this report as you wish. I await your pleasure.