Introduction to Vampirism

Vampires are vermin that feed on the blood of men and mer. The Tribunal Temple claims that they have exterminated vampires in Vvardenfell, however, that is not entirely true. They could exterminate most of them, but just like in the case of any kind of vermin, some of them always survive. Indeed, vampires still live in Vvardenfell, hidden from mortal eyes: underground, in ancient tombs, caverns, and strongholds. I am a vampire hunter. Hundreds of these vermin had fallen in front of me. I have worked with the Ordinators of the Tribunal Temple, faithful crusaders of Meridia and Stendarr, as well as self-willed heroes who wanted to make a name (and gold) by hunting them down. I have even worked together with some Twin Lamps agents, who would join our crusade against vampires because they wanted to liberate the slaves that the vampires keep for their blood. They call these slaves their “cattle,” and they frequently bleed them to collect their blood in bottles, which they call a “blood serum.” I am old now, and it is time for me to retire. In this book, I aim to summarize my knowledge about the vampires of Vvardenfell and their unique powers, which would prove useful for vampire hunters of the future.

All vampires are supernatural beings. Someone bit by a vampire would catch a disease that doesn’t have any symptoms: in fact, the victim would feel being well-rested and having a lot of energy. However, unless the disease is cured by regular means, they would die in three days, during their sleep. They get buried, and their bodies start transforming while they are dead: their muscles grow, and they become stronger, faster, and more focused than mortals. They would develop all kinds of immunities to diseases and some forms of magic, such as paralyzation. Then they wake up from death, as these supernatural, powerful creatures. They would feel hunger. As they are not living creatures anymore, it’s not natural hunger, but an unnatural hunger for blood.

There are several differences between the various breeds of vampires. On Vvardenfell, there are three vampiric clans: the Berne, the Aundae, and the Quarra.

The Berne clan is a clan that prefers moving in the shadows and being silent. They are almost invisible as they hunt down their prey. Most Berne vampires were thieves, burglars, assassins, or similar during their mortal lives. They catch their prey in crowded cities, in dark alleys. One power they possess is the so-called “Mistform.” The Mistform power allows a Berne vampire to make their very essence similar to mist: to move truly unnoticed, even through closed doors, walls, and people.

The shadows are the ally of a Berne vampire. The “Shadowstep” power allows them to avoid the light altogether. Those familiar with intervention spells might know a thing or two about teleportation magic. Shadowstep is a form of teleportation. A Berne vampire using this power can teleport anywhere where there is a shadow, avoiding the light, and thus being undetected.

Not all Berne vampires are sneaky thieves hiding in the shadows. Just like among mortals, there are two types of thieves: those who would steal your purse in a crowd, or break into your home, and those who play in the big leagues and rob you blind without you noticing it: the bureaucrats, tax collectors, and the leaders of the various trading companies. These people use their charm, and communication skills so that you would willingly give them your money. Among the Berne Clan, this type is also present, and mostly they serve the Berne Clan as their elite, their leaders. One of the powers of these vampires is “Glamour.” Glamour allows these vampires to hide their vampiric nature, and pass as mortals. With that, they don’t need to hide in the shadows anymore: their prey would trust them, as they would think that they are just fellow, harmless mortals. The most powerful Berne vampires also possess the “Enthrall” ability: with the usage of suggestion and charms, they make their mortal victims their slaves, who would willingly give their blood to them, and even protect them from other mortals, if necessary.

The next clan is the Aundae clan. They are masters of vampiric magic, and most of them were mages in their mortal lives. Many of them became vampires willingly. As mortal mages, they have experimented with necromancy, Daedric rituals, and similar, and they have found out about vampirism at one point. These Aundae vampires possess the “Vampiric touch” power, which would magically make it impossible for their victims to move. They would be paralyzed, and their essence would become similar to a stone, giving plenty of time to the Aundae mage to feed on them. Where charms, communication skills, and suggestions fail, magic can prove to be useful too. Just like their Berne counterparts, these Aundae mages can also make their mortal victims their slaves with their “Enslave” power which would magically break the will of their victim and make them loyal servants of the creature.

However, not all vampires become vampires willingly. Some Aundae vampires were just honest mages, working for reputable organizations, who became vampires by accident, and against their will. These vampires only view their prolonged life as vampires as a tool to further their magical research. They are not interested in domination and gaining power as much as their fellow Aundae do. Their unique vampire powers also reflect this lack of violence and curiosity about the world: they have increased intuition, and their insight is generally higher than that of a mortal, or other vampires. They can sense if someone is a vampire, even if it’s not obvious, such as in the case of some of the Berne vampires who learned how to hide it. They can also sense the quality of the blood of their victims, which would make feeding (which is rather a chore than a pleasure for these mages) more efficient.

The last clan to discuss is the Quarra clan. They are a clan of warriors, and just like in the case of the other two clans, their mortal lives reflect the nature of their vampiric powers: they were all warriors in their mortal lives too. The Quarra are so powerful physically that some of them might be able to defeat the toughest Redoran knight with good quality equipment, without wielding any weapons or wearing any armor themselves. These vampires are closest to a predator, hunting their prey. Their hands are rather similar to the claws of a predator. They can use them to tear a mortal apart. They are ruthless, animalistic, enjoy massacres, and have a higher bloodlust than other vampires. The purpose of their abilities is to strike fear into the hearts of their prey: their “Bloodstorm” power can conjure up a storm, in which blood would rain. Naturally, not only does it make mortals panic, but it also helps them to be more effective in combat, as blood would surround them, which they could utilize whenever they want during the combat.

Just like in the case of the Aundae clan, not all Quarra vampires are satisfied with their condition, and many of them were turned into vampires against their will. These warriors were crusaders, vampire hunters, and similar who caught the disease when fighting vampires. These Quarra vampires aim to stick to the moral code of their mortal lives: they never harm innocents, and only feed on bandits, Daedric cultists, and similar harmful people. This way, they believe that they can turn their shame into something honorable: they view themselves as protectors of mortals who use their supernatural powers for good. However, for a real vampire hunter, every vampire is a vermin, and they do not make a distinction between honorable and dishonorable ones. This is the reason why these Quarra vampires developed the “Mesmerize” power to make their mortal enemies calm down and yield in combat to them so that they wouldn’t be forced to kill them in self-defense.

The weaknesses of vampires:

Based on this book, the reader might assume that being a vampire is all about power. That is not the case. Vampires have their weaknesses too, which every vampire hunter should learn about to make defeating vampires a more manageable job. Every vampire, regardless of clan, gets destroyed by sunlight, which is the reason why they are nocturnal creatures who hunt at night. However, while a young and weak vampire would get destroyed by sunlight in mere seconds, an older and more powerful vampire may develop immunity to it to a certain degree: they might be able to spend a significant time outside during the day, or they might walk around in sunlight all day, as they have gained complete immunity to it.

Fire damage weapons and spells are useful against vampires too. However, what I would recommend to every vampire is to carry around a stake. The weakest spot of the vampire is the heart. A stake may pierce through it, and destroy the creature under a second. A bolt shot from a crossbow might be powerful enough to pierce through armor and the heart too, if aimed well.