

The Common Laws of the Kingdom of Haylem

High Crimes

Treason

The betrayal of the Kingdom by waging war against it, breaking its treaties, or by consciously and purposely acting to aid its enemies, treason is the most serious of all the High Crimes. The penalty for committing treason against the Kingdom of Haylem is death, although in dire cases both Exile from the Kingdom and Ritual Obliteration have been passed as sentences.

Sedition

Conduct or language inciting rebellion against the Kingdom and its authority is seditious. An individual convicted of sedition will likely face death if they sought to incite armed rebellion, while lesser incitement may result in fines, seizing of printed materials, and public recanting of their statements.

Necromancy

The casting of Chaos magic, the summoning of undead, and consorting with the Undead, are absolutely prohibited by the Kingdom and the Earthen Towers. While leniency may be extended in circumstances where individuals can prove they were not of sound mind (i.e. berserked or enslaved) or grossly ignorant of their actions, the usual penalty for Necromancy is death. Those charged with Necromancy are investigated and tried by the Earthen Towers.

Hedge Wizardry

Hedge Wizardry is a term used to describe unsanctioned or dangerous use and knowledge of Celestial magic, extra-planar creatures and phenomena, and the use of the element of Power. Those charged with Hedge Wizardry are investigated and tried by the Celestial Towers, and punishments can vary from the seizure of all magical property to execution by the Towers.

Desertion

Abandoning a sworn responsibility to the Crown or Towers, be it as a soldier, an official to the nobility, or a squire to a Knight, is a High Crime. Deserters are dealt with harshly, although extenuating circumstances may be put forward as an explanation. Death is a not uncommon punishment for a deserter once they are apprehended. Seizure of property is often part of the penalty for someone who has deserted an official post in the Kingdom.

Oathbreaking

Oathbreaking is a High Crime, but one that is rarely prosecuted. When a noble or Knight or their vassal breaks a sworn oath, be it in the form of a treaty, a trade agreement, or other binding contract, it is considered a High Crime, and those found guilty have, in the past, been stripped of their rank and privileges. Accusing a person of rank of oathbreaking is considered a great political risk to both the accuser and the accused.

Felony Crimes

Disobeying a Noble Order

Disobeying the public proclamation of a member of the nobility (Lord/Lady or higher) while present on their lands, or the orders of a Knight on a battlefield of which they have explicit charge, is a felony crime. The punishment is generally a fine in gold and a possible period of service with the local Watch or militia. If the action results in military defeat, or the loss of innocent life, the punishment may increase.

Mockery of a Noble Title

To slander, tarnish the reputation, or make mock of someone with the rank of Lord/Lady or higher or to mock the office in general is prohibited under Kingdom law. The penalty increases with the rank of title offended and the circumstances involved. To make mock of the King, for example, the penalty could be death, or include the greater charge of sedition or treason. In most circumstances, however, the perpetrator is fined and required to publicly recant.

Murder

The unlawful killing of one citizen of the Kingdom by another. A death that occurs through a mutually agreed Trial by Combat is not unlawful. The usual penalty for murder is death. If the victim finally dies, restitution to their family may be part of the punishment.

Attempted Murder

Attempted murder is a degree of magnitude greater than assault (a petty crime). Attempted murder is characterized by the intent to cause the victim to resurrect – either through killing blows, or the use of Alchemy or Magic to cause death. Penalties for attempted murder range from a gold fine and restitution to the victim to death.

Kidnapping

To seize and detain a person of the Kingdom unlawfully, and usually for ransom, is a felony crime. Kidnappers face heavy fines, restitution to the kidnapped and those being extorted for ransom, and possibly worse depending on the rank and reputation of the person abducted.

Slavery

There is no slavery in the Kingdom, and no member of the Kingdom may keep slaves or be made a slave. This includes the use of alchemical enslavement or charms. This law only protects those individuals that belong to a race recognized for citizenry to the Kingdom. The usual penalty is a gold fine to the crown, restitution to the enslaved, and seizure of property if such property was maintained by slavery. Someone found to be operating in the slave trade often faces a death and a period of probation.

Banditry

An individual or group who has made a living from theft, kidnapping, and other crimes may be charged with the crime of Banditry. Bandits are held accountable for both their individual petty crimes and punished under the wider Banditry charge. Bandits often face a punishment of death, or for lesser crimes a term of service with the Kingdom and a period of probation and sanction.

Obstructing Agents of the Law

This crime includes resisting arrest, lying to or purposely misleading the authorities, or giving aid or shelter to a criminal or outlaw. If violence breaks out during the course of resisting arrest or if an individual or group is defending a criminal or outlaw, the authorities and their agents may use appropriate force to bring the situation under control. If the accused dies trying to escape arrest, it is considered justice. Lying to or misleading the authorities is usually met with a gold fine.

Bearing False Witness

If an individual knowingly accuses someone of a crime of which they are not guilty, or gives false witness during an investigation into the accused's guilt, they may themselves be subject to the accused's punishment. For example, if you accuse someone of necromancy knowing they are innocent, you may face a punishment of death for your actions.

Petty Crimes

Assault

Assault is a violent attack by physical, magical or alchemical means. Charges are usually brought by the victim against the aggressor, although if the Watch or other authority intervenes in a conflict charges may be brought against both parties. The penalty for assault is typically a fine in gold.

Theft

Theft includes taking any possession that belongs to another without the consent of the owner. The standard punishment is the return of the stolen property, and a fine equal to the value of the property paid to the victim. In addition, there is usually a fine paid to the Crown, rarely more than 10 gold.

Dealing in Illegal Elixirs

The trade and possession of certain elixirs is prohibited by the Kingdom. Enslavements, love elixirs, and Euphoria may not be crafted in uncontrolled circumstances, cannot be sold or purchased, and if found must be turned over to the authorities immediately. Failure to do so will result in seizure of property and a fine in gold.

Forgery

The forgery of the signature or credentials of another individual for personal gain is prohibited by law. Forgery of Kingdom or Tower documents or currency is handled separately and may be considered treason. Someone found guilty of forgery will be fined in gold, required to make appropriate restitution, and possibly face a period of probation or sanction.

Vandalism

The destruction or defacement of property, be it in the hands of the Crown, the Towers, or an individual, is a petty crime. The guilty party must replace or repair what has been damaged, and pay a fine in gold to the appropriate authorities. Vandalism with a political intent may be seditious, and far more serious.

Littering

Littering and leaving garbage in public places is punishable by a gold fine.

Laws Specific to Borders of County Kyrinen

Domain of Innis

Any wilful damage to the walls of the City of Innis is a crime of most serious import. A penalty of death and expulsion from the City are both within the rights of the Lady of Innis in these circumstances.

Domain of Watchwood

The Wild Elves of the Akanazi Tribe have the right to escort any trespassers on their tribal lands to the borders of their territory. If met with resistance, they may subdue the intruders and remove them to the border. Akanazi must announce their presence and give any trespasser full opportunity to leave on their own.

Domain of Xinshen

All visitors to the settlement of Xinshen must present themselves at the gates and give their full name, rank, and reason for visiting. Those without business in the settlement may be refused entry; those with legitimate business must wait for a visitor's visa to be processed.

Domain of Eldamar

No trees may be cut down without a license from the office of the Seneschal of Eldamar.

Domain of Wolfhaven

Any intentional or negligent disruption to agricultural processes within the Domain of Wolfhaven is taken extremely seriously. Punishment could range from a fine to death depending on the severity of the disruption and the intent of the action.

Common Punishments

Fines

Fines are the most common punishment for Petty Crimes, and many Felony Crimes as well. Generally ranging from five to ten gold, they are paid to the Crown via the local nobility. Those unable to pay a fine may be allowed to pay it in stages, or to substitute it with a period of service at the discretion of the local magistrate or noble. For certain crimes the fines may be payable to the Celestial or Earthen Towers instead.

Restitution

In cases of theft, vandalism, and other circumstances where the material or emotional well-being of a member of the Kingdom has been harmed by a criminal's actions, the guilty party must make restitution to those they have wronged. This can include a payment in gold, the replacement of damaged or stolen property, or a period of aid and assistance.

Probation and Sanction

Probation and sanction are often part of the punishment for repeat offenders of serious crimes, political criminals, or those who perpetrate frauds. Those on probation must report to the local magistrate or nobility when they arrive in a new area, indicating why they are on probation and how long they intend to stay in the area. People under sanction may be prohibited from travelling to certain places, undertaking certain work, or practicing particular magic. Violating probation or sanction is the act of an outlaw, and the cost may be very high.

Seizure of Property

The goods, property and possessions of a criminal is sometimes seized. This punishment is usually meted out when an individual has materially gained from their crimes, has dealt in illegal or smuggled goods, or has no other means of making restitution for the crimes committed.

Period of Service

Periods of service are both a common punishment and a common alternative when a fine cannot be paid. Criminals are required to serve a measure of time (anywhere from a few days to several years) in service to the Crown via such institutions as a County Watch, a militia, or the Black Watch. A period of service may also be to a particular individual if restitution cannot be met another way.

Public Recantation

In cases like slander, mockery of a noble title, or sedition, public recantation is often required. This is a public avowal of the wrongness of the criminal's previous words or actions, via such means as a speech in Court, in a public square, or printed for distribution. Serious recantations are often published in the Haylem Herald.

Death

A sentence of death requires the dissipation of the criminal's body. A killing blow followed by the use of healing does not suffice. Executions may be public or private, and are usually carried out by someone ranked as Magistrate or higher. In some cases if a criminal resurrects during an altercation with the authorities or their proxies, the sentence is considered carried out, but this is at the discretion of the magistrate, and is by no means common.

Ritual Obliteration

Ritual obliteration is reserved for the most serious of crimes and the most evil of criminals: mass murderers, the worst necromancers, and others for whom a simple resurrection does not suffice to redress the evil of their acts. This is a Formal Ritual that, at its successful completion, weakens the spirit of the criminal three times over.

Exile

Exile, like ritual obliteration, is a rare punishment. The leaders of treasonous rebellions, seditious agitators, and those who have betrayed the Kingdom are the most likely to meet this fate. An exile is escorted to the borders of the Kingdom and instructed never to return, on pain of death. Descriptions of all living exiles are posted at Watch headquarters throughout the Kingdom.

Execution of the Law

Petty Crimes

Petty crimes come before a local magistrate on appointed days each month, although exceptions can be made for urgent cases. It is rare for anyone above the rank of magistrate to deal with these crimes. Those accused of petty crimes are brought before magistrates by the local Watch. If you wish to report a petty crime, a member of the Watch is the appropriate person to approach.

Felony Crimes

Felony crimes, being more serious, are dealt with as they occur. Felony crimes should be reported to the Watch, the Magistrate, or the noble of the Domain immediately. A magistrate may still oversee the investigation and judgement of a felony crime, but it is a common occurrence for a noble to be called in to decide on the matter if circumstances are unclear or have a political element. The local noble must confirm all sentences of death.

High Crimes

High Crimes, being crimes against the Kingdom and Towers themselves, come before the highest local authority with jurisdiction, never of less rank than a Guildmaster or a Lord/Lady of a Domain. Due to the threat they pose to Kingdom security, Treason and Sedition are often referred to County or even Duchy authorities.

Important Notes

Sentencing

It is the right of a noble acting as judge to apply a sentence that is different than what is outlined in the guidelines for each crime but they must be able to justify that sentence to those above them as fair and just. This right is exercised only in rare circumstances with the exception of cases where there is a substantial difference in station between the victim and the person committing the crime. For example, the fine for assault is typically a gold fine but a Commoner who assaults a noble should expect a harsher sentence.

Nobles Accused of Crimes

It is the right and obligation of Nobles to punish other Nobles. A Commoner who wishes to bring a claim of criminality against a Noble must appeal to a Noble of equal or higher rank than the accused to bring charges forward. This holds true for a member of the Chivalry as well, and for Guild members attempting to bring charges against a noble or knight.

Knights and the Law

In accordance with their vows of Chivalry, it is a Knight's responsibility to intervene when crimes are being committed, safeguarding the innocent and bringing the perpetrators to the magistrate or nobility for justice. If a Knight wishes to accuse another member of the Chivalry of a crime, protocol is followed as per with the ranks of the nobility, but Knights often use the alternative of a duel to find justice.

Adventurers and the Nobility

Adventurers sometimes have an unusual relationship with their local nobility and chivalry, existing on much more familiar and casual terms than most commoners would do. This often creates an atmosphere of tolerance and leniency. However, it is important to note that in matters of formal justice, court settings, public life and the battlefield, adventurers can be held to the law when it comes to Seditious, Disobeying a Noble Order, and Mockery of a Noble Title.

Hedgewizardry and Necromancy

The Punishment of Hedgewizardry and Necromancy is carried out, in regular circumstances, by the Earthen and Celestial Towers. Any Noble who carries out a sentence on these crimes without referring the accused to the Towers takes upon themselves full accountability to the Towers for their judgement and sentence.

OOG Notes:

- Whether you are playing a lawful and upright character or a shady fellow looking for the next big score at the Diamond Bear Inn, Nero should be fun for everybody. You can absolutely play a character on the wrong side of the law – but if you get caught, there's a strong chance you will be punished IG according to the laws you have just read. Make sure that's not something that will ruin your fun at game before taking the risk.
- While no PC-administered punishment will render your PC unplayable (i.e. banished forever or sentenced to final death), bear in mind that the darker your character's crimes, the harder it may be to continue playing them and having them participate enjoyably with the town should their crimes come to light.
- If your PC is convicted of a crime that would logically result in your character becoming unplayable (treason or mass murder to the point of exile/final death, for example), Plot will be involved in any judgement or punishment meted out and will be available to speak to you on an OOG level as well.