

HEART

BEETS

#8 | OCTOBER 2025

**THE SONIC ALTRUISTS OF
FUNERAL FOR A VAMPIRE**

PAGE 5

THE FUTURE OF THE IBP!

DO NOT, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, SHARE THIS ZINE!

Calling all Audionauts! Since the intergalactic ban on music, perpetrated by everyone's favorite bureaucrat, Lord Prosect, the infinite void has been eerily silent. In the before times, known as Before Music (or BM), music was distributed freely and fairly and pressed onto wax for everyone to spin. These tasty beats were thought lost forever after the attacks on July 6th, 5000 by Lord Prosect and his minions. Every radio station from the Andromeda to the Zymolytic Galaxy was assaulted, and cassettes, records, and CDs were disintegrated. If not for the brave Audionauts out there who smuggled what they could, the thumping rhythms and trilling arpeggios of the universe's greatest musicians might have been lost forever.

Before that attack, The Intergalactic Beats Project (then known as The Intergalactic Beats Project before the ban on the word "beat") was a major distributor of the music lost that day. After our headquarters was decimated, only two agents remained in operation.

We are those agents.

It has been millennia since the sounds of our artists have been heard, but every day we discover and decode the lost music that fueled generations to shake their hips and bang their heads. This Zine will track our progress as we travel through space and time to restore our entire catalog.

We need your help.

Our methods are unconventional, which means we lack the resources of the former IBP. We rely solely on your tips and scouting reports to track down everything lost in the fires and everything that has been secretly

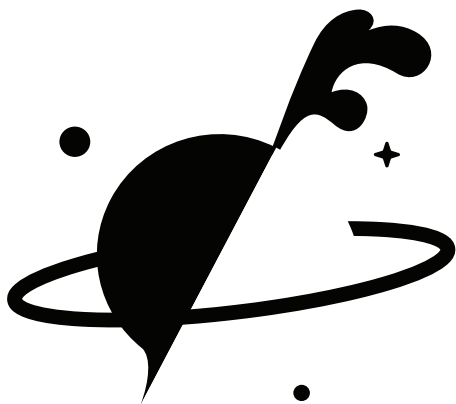
made since. If you are out there and your tasty beats need a home, send us a secure signal so that we may help distribute your music freely and fairly. We run the risk every single day that we will be discovered and imprisoned, or worse...

Visit our telecommunications hub at INTERGALACTICBEETSPROJECT.COM and sign up to receive our Zine, listen to our entire decoded discography, and join the fight against Lord Prosect. Together, we can bring an end to his tyrannical rule and restore music to the ears of all creatures in the universe.

In the words of our Neptunian supporters:



F3rix & Cyllene



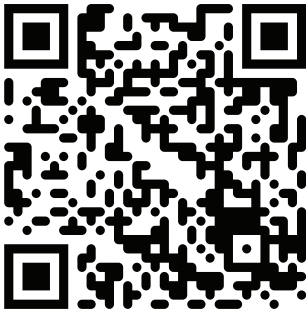
WHAT IS THE IBP?

The INTERGALACTIC BEETS PROJECT seeks out and decodes the tastiest beats in the universe, presses them to vinyl, and distributes them for all creatures to listen to. From 2021 until the year 5000, the IBP made a name for itself by making music free, easy to collect, and worth waiting for. After Lord Prosect banned all music on July 6th, 5000, it became our mission to save every last beat in the universe, rebuild our catalog, and make sure that the past is never forgotten.

The IBP does this as a free service, however, we encourage all Audionauts to support our mission in other ways: by purchasing merch from our Shop, signing up for our email newsletter, or by reading this very Zine! We have begun to repress our collection to vinyl and we hope that you'll stop by our telecommunications hub and pick up a copy.

Due to the constant threat of Lord Prosect, we take great caution in encrypting every communication, every item in our Shop, and every beat of every song. We have thwarted his silver hand and we will continue to do so for millennia to come.

Welcome aboard!



INTERGALACTICBEETSPROJECT.COM

HEART BEETS

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Theodoros Sabbatianoι

STATE OF THE PROJECT

“**T**he IBP has always had a multi-phase strategic plan to collect and distribute music freely. **Phase I** focused on accumulating entries in our discography, creating our zine *Heart Beets*, and premiering our first exhibition in 2021.

Phase II expanded our collection to a stunning 200 beats (including multiple full-length albums), introduced additional elements such as t-shirts, music on cassettes and vinyl, and introduced our music to Spotify, Soundcloud, YouTube, and dozens of other music streaming platforms. We also introduced the ability to download all of our songs (previously, we had only a small portion of songs available to download due to time constraints). We also culminated our Phase II with the release of four, yes **FOUR**, full-length albums at the end of the year and an exhibition at the Avon Free Public Library in Kent, CT.

Phase III, which we are currently in the midst of, saw the release of our Database for easy sorting and downloading of all our beats, as well as the projection of hitting 300 beats by December 31st. We also opened our second iteration of Intergalactic Beets Records in New Milford, CT, and welcomed almost 500 audionauts through our doors! We are also introducing options to our Shop to provide on-demand vinyl printing, as well as cassette tapes of all of our EPs and LPs (which number 11 in total, for now!). And, in October and December, we are planning to release two more full-length albums.

Phase IV, which will be our most significant phase leap, will see the release of an additional 100 songs (bringing our total to 400), including four new full-length albums, and the launch of *Intergalactic Beets Live!*, a musical-theater style performance of IBP music featuring the heroes and villains of the IBP Universe. Additionally, several exhibitions (including more iterations of our Intergalactic Beets Record store) are planned for 2025 and 2026 and will bring our music to more Audionauts than ever before. Expect new additions to our YouTube channel, including music videos and video elements that expand the story of the artists in the IBP, as well as more behind-the-scenes looks through our Patreon (and our weekly Earth-based music recommendations).

We are proud to announce that the Intergalactic Beets Project is now fiscally sponsored by The Field, allowing Audionauts to make tax-deductible donations to fuel our musical odyssey. We hope to raise funds to bring you more music, more opportunities to interact, and more public events to spread the tastiest beats in the Universe. As always, we encourage you to visit the official Intergalactic Beets Project website to donate, join our Patreon, purchase merch, or just listen to the music in our vast Collection. Thank you for your support and we hope to see you out there in the Void!

Felix & Cyllene

Sonic Altruists

Funeral for a Vampire celebrates the release of their second album, II, and we dive deep behind their battles against the Lord of Shadows.

The village of Nyx had fallen into disrepair in the looming shadow of the closest moon. It was not the fault of the celestial body itself, but those who lurked in the mist upon its rise and fall. The son of a carpenter, Lefkó Vrykola would have died a carpenter without the intervention of the Feast of the Ancient Ones. A yearly ritual staged in the autumnal season, the Feast saw the shambling, lost sons and daughters burst forth from their graves, bent on siphoning the blood and nutrients flowing through the veins of the denizens of Nyx. Lefkó, forewarned of the Feast and trained to offer alternatives (beast and fowl blood), witnessed the demise of his father and brother at the hands of the creatures we commonly refers to as *vampires*. With blood coating their teeth, the pale monsters leapt and clawed for the young carpenter, his sprint hoisting him over bales of hay and into the bowels of Nyx, darkness and waste comforting him as the screams of the innocent bayed above. The strike of a match in the void sealed his fate, surrounded by white-eyed malice. Pain stretched the sensitivity of his muscles as he floated, suddenly empty, into the arms of Count Striges, the heir-apparent. Not content to simply feed and fly, Striges, himself an undead creature of considerable age, hurried Lefkó to his manor, for time was of the essence. Accuracy has long been the enemy of history, but most agree that at the base of Castle Ifaisteio, Lefkó was bestowed the honor of becoming the Lord of Shadows, watching over the brethren of vampires across the countryside and beyond Nyx, in an attempt to keep the lineage strong and everlasting. Count Striges disappeared that night, his evil stain possibly absorbed by Lefkó, giving rise to Count Vrykola and the thousands of creatures at his command. Funeral for a Vampire, who had charmed the Universe with their debut, simply titled I, had fled the village of Nyx after



witnessing a ruse in the making. A funeral for an elder in the town square was actually an ambush, unleashing vampires from the depths in an attempt to bypass the Feast of the Ancient Ones and harvest more human blood year-round. Noodles, Dex, Kyv, and Giallo took to the Bleeding Fields outside the village, wading through mud and mist, hiding their scent from briar wolves as they fought for survival. Not content with just evading the pale creatures, they made a pact to end, once and for all, the rule of Count Vrykola, who was said to have ruled for over 500 years on a throne of blood. The trail of dead leading to Castle Ifaisteio was mostly unhelpful, save for the withered hand of a journeyman, his last gasp clutching an ancient text. It was hard to read as decay and erosion

had played their part, but the context was clear: an elixir of divinity. Gathering the ingredients together, the band coated their instruments in the glowing mush, supercharging them with piety and penance. Up the castle steps, their rhythm and melody soaring, they beat back the charging vampire hordes, enveloping them in sonic waves that removed their flesh from their bones and vaporized what was left in a holy light. From the crumbling anterooms, to the cistern, to the Armory of Bones, they battled, honing their music into a raging sword, swinging it with abandon until the Lord of Shadows had had enough, making his presence known. Audionauts, so too did he come prepared, a raging piano swirling the band's pathetic attempt and shackling them into invisible submission. Count Vrykola bared his fangs, ready to put an end to the uprising, but his guiding hand began to tingle, breaking the spell. *Sunlight*. The night had crept into dawn, the pained outbursts of his coven echoing along the Bleeding Fields as they begged for protection, unable to make it to the castle grounds in time. His attempts to disrupt the Feast of the Ancient Ones had cost him his loyalists and his kingdom. Before the sun could finalize his reign, he absconded to a coffin of obsidian and gold, locking himself within. Noodles and his sonic altruists readied their final performance, their strength returning in a blaze of adrenaline, and swallowed the coffin with their raging beats until the very elements began to splinter. Count Vrykola begged for forgiveness as his prison exploded, his skin devoured by the sun, his bones left as only ash. They had held their own funeral for a vampire, but it was short-lived. The remaining creatures, now without a master, sought a new voice. But who would dispose of those left? Or perhaps, rebuild their army? This is where part two of Funeral for a Vampire's saga concludes. with the chest-thumping melodies of *II*, an ode to their sonic battles with the undead, no longer afraid to run, but still fearful of looking over their shoulder. Part three, aptly titled *III*, has yet to be released, but, in its stead, the IBP is proud to announce the decoding of *The Vrykola Codex*, a tome of appreciation and lament for the members of Funeral of a Vampire, chronicling the rise and fall of Count Vrykola and

the members of the band. Its cryptic epilogue is especially chilling: warning of a new threat that is rising to the West, marking, perhaps, the beginning of the end for the melodies of Funeral for a Vampire.



Side A

1. Request
2. March of the Briar Wolves
3. Beyond the Safety of the Moon
4. Rotting Coven

Side B

1. The Endless Bleeding Fields
2. Chamber of Sin
3. Lord of Shadows
4. Hallowed Ground



Scan me to listen!

SNEAK PEEK BEAT

One of the truly great musical chameleons, Prickley Pete, never rested on his last album. A pirate, a martial arts reptile, a knight in shining armor, and, now, a bandito of unsure moral fiber. His Crinkeley Clint phase was met with applause and anticipation, leading to a frenzy of tourists flocking to his desert studio to watch his new material in action. After the success of *The Fright Album* and his fear of vending machines finally fading, it was the courage he had summoned during its production that created his latest character: a gunslinger modeled after those in the old American West of Earth. Crinkeley Clint was neither hero nor villain, drifting in and out of morality with a bag full of coins and a horse full of beans. The beats on *A Fistful of Marshmallows* did not lose their signature Prickley Pete-ness, but here, much like on the fifty-song, sea-shanty-focused *Graveley Guybrush*, his subject rang true with the twang of old guitars, the hum of empty moonshine bottles, and the rattle of snakes setting the mood. To prepare for the album, Prickley Pete



joined a herding outpost contracted to bring hefty bovines to greener pastures before winter set in. The road was arduous, the brutal sun cooking his marshmallowy exterior into a golden brown butter. Many nights were spent playing harmonica, poorly, while on lookout for those who might steal one away from the herd. He heard tales of ancient creatures who lurked among the monuments of rock, ready to steal away livestock and injure those who did not respect nature. Roping jackrabbits, cracking open a can of beans without a tool, and knowing how to back up properly on a horse; it was a crash course in the tender, ancient art of “cowboying.”

Back in the studio, he found it hard to shed his new persona, often muttering to himself about Arch Stanton, a fellow cowboy who had met his demise in a red clay canyon, just miles from the gift shop. *A Fistful of Marshmallows* is a somber album, though fresh with thumping melodies. Still, the rage of the range and the crashing thunderstorms that turn the desert into a tundra permeate the journey of a gunslinger looking to make a little extra coin,



maybe to save the one he loves, maybe to save himself. There are no bad or ugly beats here, just the good nature of cowboys and the cheeky melodies of a ghost with nothing to lose. That is, until his next album...

A FISTFUL OF MARSHMALLOWS

SIDE A

1. Toodoolee-Doo
2. Horse, Sweet Horse
3. Dance, Varmint!
4. Reach for the Stars

SIDE B

1. Home on the Shooting Range
2. Two Kinds of Ghosts
3. Blondie
4. Riders on the Dust Storm



Scan me to listen!

STORY TIME

LORD OF SHADOWS

*After vanquishing Count Vrykola in 6486, the members of Funeral for a Vampire were profiled, among other topics, in **The Vrykola Codex**, a hagiography of sorts that chronicled their battles with the Count but also the journey of the Lord of Shadows from his time as a poor carpenter in the village of Nyx to his first demise during the Feast of the Ancient Ones. We present to you now, in conjunction with the release of the band's album **II**, an excerpt from **The Vrykola Codex**. For those interested, the entire text has been republished, with permission, and is available to purchase on the IBP website.*

In the year of our Lords, sixty-three hundred and twenty-five, it was so marked as an uncharacteristically warm summer. The uneven sun dared not be tamed by mortal means; the prayers went unanswered for shade and solitude. It was here, in the village of Nyx, south of Koiláda by several nights, that nothing of consequence occurred; at least, according to historians of much more significant wealth and stock.

Borne between the shivering heights of the Diávolos Mountains to the north; the rock-laden, gentle Kátharsi River to the east; and the stalks of the Forest Psíthyros, fashioned as the Whispering Woods by locals for its ability to echo even the smallest of confessions, in the northwest and middle-east; the village existed solely to exist. The denizens had been cast out of nearby settlements and establishments, packed up their belongings, and huffed their way to more profitable pastures. A house of worship, a cobbler, an inn, a tailor, an alchemist. Nyx was of no consequence; a haven for those passing through to the capital, on a journey no less than a few cycles.

While the village center built a reputation, it was in the outerlands, in the fields and dales, where fortune and legacy were made.

His knees were embedded in the

dirt; his chewed and crusted fingernails cleared a thimble-sized divot. From his palm tumbled a blood-red seed, quickly smothered by black, and drowned with a gulp from the rosette of a dented watering can. His eyes contracted in the unforgiving rays of the sun, the third time he had calculated its height in the last few moments. He estimated he had enough time to sow only a dozen more. His stained tunic cleared perspiration from across his brow and chin, the redness of his cheeks emitting their own heat.

Next, the livestock: the bovines of engorged milk; the fattened, slated hogs; the cheerful, bearded and hooved; the clucking birds of little flight. Their pens had been reinforced with a levered drawboard, a second bar of iron secured with a key to lock it into place. He dragged grain and grass into their feeding troughs and ensured that river water from the well had been boiled and transferred. The various creatures neighed and bleated, begging for a scratch upon their chins, a tap to their hides.

What of his own stock? A storage shed adjacent to the chattering animals rattled with jars of fruit preserves and pickled eggs. Mold had not yet set in, judging by the color in the yellow light. Slivers of beef lay nestled in salt,

preserving their longevity for at least a handful of seasons. He lowered the drawboard and fastened it into place, offering a quick rattle to ensure its stability.

"Lefkó!"

He dismissed the call. "Lefkó?"

"A moment, pray thee!" He was buried in preparation. A bit of oil from a clay bottle splashed onto a linnen rag, the substance applied to the iron current that ran down the length of a crossbow. He checked the tension of the bow and applied an arrow. He polished the sight on the front of the weapon, making sure the delicate cross was straight and true. A quiver produced only five more projectiles, two of them rotten and in danger of splitting.

Not enough.

"Lefkó!" He set a pitcher of river water and a wool swatch onto a side table and knelt. His father's pained expression meant much more than discomfort. He was dying, falling further from the light just as the sun began its same descent.

"You are prepared, no less?" the elder whispered.

Lefkó sighed and dunked the wool into the cool water, squeezing the excess. It found a home on the wrinkled forehead. "I was not able to fill the fields as I would have liked."

"Bah! You are the son of a carpenter. Even thine mother would have disregarded her bounty."

"That is because she knew she would survive the Feast."

"And you won't?"

There was little confidence behind the exhaustion. "Of course, *babás*."

"There is strength *here*." His father tapped his own heart with a stern index. "Tonight does not belong to them. She survived long enough to deliver her own ritual. She may have

gifted herself beyond, but she did not bow to those..." He searched endlessly for the word, but fell silent in the throes of fever.

Lefkó moistened the wool and replaced it, praying the calm interlude would quell the flames.

The entrance to their cottage heaved, the heavy iron plating smacking the wall, testing the durability of the hinges. The angered stomp of his brother's boots wafted over the threshold into their father's quarters.

"I know...I am late."

Lefkó quietly exited, the doorway yawning enough to allow a sentimental view of the ailing patriarch, before confining him. "What hast thou brought?"

The burly shoulders, previously straight, slouched. A swollen hand through his curled, dry locks. He rummaged in his rucksack and produced a wax-wrapped gift.

"Cheese?" Lefkó spat. "Where is the garleke? The sage?" Shuffling feet; a lack of eye contact. "Arkos?"

His voice, normally hoarse with manual masculinity, squeaked: "Not... not much remains. Pray thee, I nearly looted the monger!"

"Has the hour escaped thee?"

"And to whom do I answer? *Babás*?"

"To thine own self. The Feast is upon us, and thine head has been left behind in the sky!" Arkos pushed past him, palm to his shoulder. "Should the pastor expect you at mass?"

His brother sifted through a chest of carpentry tools, busying himself while he searched for a proper retort. "I am weak. *Tired*. Preparation has been costly on my bones."

"Should I send for the bishop?" he bleated sarcastically. "Should a blessing be offered?"

"I have other duties to attend to."

Arkos slammed the lid and clapped his hands free of sawdust.

"Do not forget thy bounty." Lefkó tossed the hunk of cheese, caught with some sheepishness. "Remain close, the briar wolves have been loud this afternoon. I pray that they do not loot before the first waves. I have bled the beasts and fowl appropriately; should time be kind, please apply them to the doorways." Arkos barely offered a nod as he shuffled into the rear chamber of the cottage and out into the growing fields, his hands on his hips, studying his brother's sowing.

Lefkó retreated to his father's workshop, rough planks of cottonwood tucked underneath his arm. A serrated blade split the width, roughly the length of his arm. A dozen would do. A mallet evened out the triangular tips, a honing rod sharpened the edges for maximum air speed and stopping power. He assembled the crude arrows and loaded them into the chamber of his crossbow. A little oil across the shaft would allow for a fastidious exit.

The remaining scraps could not amount to much, but a burlap string threaded over a few crossed switches was enough to appear divine. He chiseled the bark clear in intricate patterns and formed a dainty rose. Useless, he knew, but the process draped his shoulders in a serenity that was difficult to conjure otherwise. Before he could continue in earnest, the syncopated clomp of hooves drew him to the threshold.

Upon the doorstep to his home slinked a weathered steed, her ribs outlined against a caramel hide. Her misery was temporary, her rider offering sugar as a reward. His burlap robe marked him as a penitent man, his necklace of mountain ice betraying him as a monk of the Order of the Sacrificial Crystal. Mostly harmless, his

people had retreated to the Diávolos Mountains to worship the naturally forming crystals forged from millennia of pressure and climate. His blade-shaved skull beaded with anxiety as he unfastened a sloshing bucket and ladle from his horse's saddle.

A nod and a wave from Lefkó initiated the contract: blessed water splashed along the perimeter of his home. A few pieces of bread and a handful of dried fruit wrapped in linnen was the penalty; not much, but the nearly toothless grin and clasped hands were worth the offer. The monk continued his ritual, splashing the water to and fro, forgetting accuracy.

The sun now dipped, suddenly weighted, the descent casting jagged shadows across the tiny mounds that would one day bear a lucrative harvest. The bucket fell, the soil barely swallowing the water before the monk's sandals were striking his conveyance, propelling the two towards the horizon. His reward was left behind, for life was far more precious than an earned meal.

Lefkó was upon the anteroom, the door barred, his crossbow slung over his shoulder alongside a quiver, a blade tucked into his belt. An inspection of his father revealed slumber.

He marched to the window: Arkos was within a stone's throw, hurrying to the back of the cottage. He latched the porthole shut and stood against the cool, stone wall. A sliver of light wormed its way through the window dressing, creeping slowly from east to west. He calmed his heart with long, deliberate breaths; the sound of his brother in the other room delivered him comfort.

Within moments, darkness was upon them.

A match steadied to ignite a wick over oil. It was an unfortunate trigger

as the flutter of wings brought the chitter of soaring rats. “*Nychterídes!*” his father crowed, calling out the wave of reconnaissance. The roof giggled as the bats tiptoed, searching for a place to roost and mark.

The Moon, often referred to as Selene by elders, undressed, casting a sickly white glow upon the farmstead and the village of Nyx. The shadows now moved with purpose, shambling atop two, three, or four legs, beating back grass, dirt, and brush.

The groaning of the second stage was more akin to living lips; hunger and direction, tinged with anger and an eternal loss of empathy. The *nychterídes* signaled to the shamblers the location of fresh flesh. “Does beast and fowl blood lie at the entrances?” His brother’s shadow was still underneath the doorway. “*Arkos?*”

Screams to the west meant that Nyx had already absorbed the invasion. *Death.*

The poor bleating of the hooved; the baritone purring of the bovine. They were unwilling sacrifices. Lefkó mourned for his familiars; furious that Arkos had not followed dereliction and duty. His focus pulled towards the scraping of nails through wood. The entrance swelled; his father cursed; his brother said nary a syllable.

The hoard sniffed, their shadows trading places, ensuring the envoy was in order. Then, *three knocks*. Raspy, knuckle-driven; almost polite.

In a flash, the party departs. The wind whistles its exclamation down from the mountains through the Whispering Woods. There is rhythm in his heart, irregular, for his breathing leaves little room within his chest.

The silence is broken by the heavy deposit above: the roof toils and squirts. Blood, bubbling and black,

pours between the trusses of hewn wood and straw. Arkos unlatches the window dressing and pushes it out towards the rear of the property. “*Three knocks,*” he mutters. Without removing his gaze, he extends his left hand and weakly performs the password.

Upon the third knock, the white glow of a watchful pair of eyes reveals itself. He retreats a step, his throat bulging, attempting to swallow dryly. The unblinking orbs calm him, allowing his hands to drop to his side. The drawboard lifts easily, the hinges protested.

Lefkó is magnetized to the rear chamber, pounding the wood, engaging the knob with no results. “*Arkos! Avert thine eyes!*” He searches his tunic for the keys, failing to grip the ringlet properly. He finally frees the lock and tumbles inward, slapping the dirt floor with much fanfare. The daze of confusion muddies his vision. Arkos’ attempt to calm his brother with his hypnotized stare failed. He signaled towards the transfixed eyes and shot out his index to pinpoint his fixation. It was his final gift before a battery of bloody claws reached inward and sucked him into the night air.

Bats took his place, filling the cottage with winged skin as they circled and nipped. Lefkó rolled to his back as the anteroom exploded with wood, the shambling horde rushing inward with lust. They invaded his father’s room first, with haste, their fangs embedded across his neck and extremities in a fountain of blood. There was little resistance from the patriarch, the speed unwilling to give his throat the chance to utter the prayer that might have kept them at bay.

Lefkó kicked closed the backroom entry and anchored it from his knees. The rear egress had not attracted

attention yet. He reached for the knob to slam it shut, but his forearm was handcuffed.

He stared, transfixed, into the lost eyes of pestilence. It lacked hair of any kind; its skull forming a sickly dome of black veins perched over milky eyes. A mountain peak of a nose did little to protect the gangly mouth of uneven teeth, the flat molars transformed into a jagged field of glass. Not enough room existed to properly close the mouth, filled already with blood and emitting an animalistic hiss.

Lefkó's free hand found the trigger of his crossbow, the angle just enough to puncture upward through the bottom of the jaw, the shaft visible in the rear of the vampire's mouth. The rage of pain released the stranglehold; his boot heavy enough to discharge the creature and allow him to shut the door and window and secure them.

A new arrow was conscripted, the bow dragged and secured. From his belt came a modest sword, and his tunic provided a vial of crushed garleke which dripped liberally along the blade. An unlit torch fixated his attention. His hands searched for more as his home absorbed the collective blows of the horde. Finding nothing of value to light the animal fat, he held the rags to the wall and struck with purpose his sword. The spark ricocheted off the stone and clambered up the torch, bathing the small chamber in cleansing light.

The nychterídes swarmed the exterior, leaving little of the Moon's glow intact. Sensing his incarceration, Lefkó stabbed the ceiling with the torch, spreading the flames across the roof. The bats, unable to escape the blaze, wilted as their fur singed and their wings huddled their chests to mute the heat.

He overturned a barrel in the back of the room, revealing an iron cover. Looping his fingers through the filtration holes, he popped it free. The shaft was wide enough, but the depth he had forgotten, for his childish days were far behind him. He was left little time to ponder as the blaze pressured the roof. The rattling undead took the room for what it was worth and piled in, stumbling over one another while the trusses weakened and crushed them all into the dirt. Lefkó hurried into the cistern chute and dragged the iron grate behind him.

The freefall was unexpected, the landing unwelcome. His knees absorbed most of the impact, his torch now lost in the murky water. He fumbled, in pain, the wall offering a brief respite. He heaved a calming breath as the light from the flames above extinguished, the shaft cast in a thick and unsettled darkness.

The stench is nearly unbearable; every bucket of water drawn from it in need of boiling and sanitization. Rats hustled and bustled above the surface, announcing their location and intention, hoping to avoid Lefkó.

He kept his eyes clenched, worried that the hypnotizing orbs would reappear. His fingers gingerly read the tunnel, stone turning into bone: hands; fingers; skulls; death. These were the lucky ones, truly forgotten. He paused, waiting for the water to settle the waves of his journey.

Screams above. The village of Nyx had cast out the living, it seems, and invited them to wander his property and the surrounding woods.

Onward. Ages to the river, he knew, but perhaps he could outswim them. Lose them here, for he was but one of many with blood to spare.

A splash. Behind him.

The nervous shiver launched him forward, his knuckles striking metal. Armor. *Armor!*

Frantic searching. A wooden shaft. Linnen. *Linnen!*

He readied his sword and struck the wall of the cistern, igniting the long-lost torch in brilliance. Lefkó laughed to himself in relief and turned towards the decaying echo, brandishing his crude cross to deflect what evil awaited.

The tunnel screeched as dozens of pale faces welcomed him with devilish glee.

The torch sighed. The void enveloped him.



Scan me to purchase a copy of *The Vrykola Codex*!



THE FUTURE IS NOW

**An Intergalactic Beets record store is coming
to Putnam, Connecticut!**

Coming this October, **Intergalactic Beets Records** will be our third pop-up shop and gallery in the Milky Way Galaxy (by way of Connecticut). Our full collection will be on display, giving Audionauts an opportunity to learn about the history of the IBP, listen to every song in our discography, and bring home a little piece of the universe with them.

In July of 2025, we generously received fiscal sponsorship by the nonprofit organization **The Field**, allowing us to accept tax deductible donations!

If you would like to join our mission of uncovering the tastiest beats in the universe, please scan the QR code below. As a valued supporter, you will receive free items for registering for our upcoming event.

October 15th - October 26th
Art exhibition open to public.

October 17th - October 19th
Full record store experience + meet the artist!

Silver Circle Gallery
134 Main Street - 2nd Floor, Putnam, CT



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