

A Murder of Supplication

An Epic Ussuran Adventure

Introduction

A Murder of Supplication begins in the late summer of 1669 some four months following Jyrgal Timurbek's declaration of independence for Kosara from Ussura. In *A Murder of Supplication* your heroes will learn about the tyrannical rule of the the Knias of Molhyna, Vladimir Goroduk Drakov v'Pietrov, and of the plight of his lands and people; and if all goes well perhaps your heroes can make a benevolent difference in this torn and tragic and bloody land.

A Story In Three Parts

A Murder of Supplication is at its heart a tale told in three parts that are meant to run in one smooth order. The first part (Hard-Points 1-6) sends the heroes in to the domain of Molhyna where the soon realise that their rather unusual roles as couriers is even more then they thought. The second part (Hard-Points 7-10) brings the heroes into a greater understanding of the conflicts of Molhyna and leads them into the heart of darkness. Then the final part (Hard Points 11-16) gives the heroes the opportunity to bring down a tyrannical ruler and bring about good and honest change to the lands of Molhyna.

The adventure is composed of sixteen Hard Points and fifty Soft Points. In general each Hard Point should be run in the order presented but if you can and need to skip any of them you should feel free to do so, just be sure to cover or move any important information or events that might be in that Hard Point to where you need it to be. The Soft Points on the other hand are completely optional encounters that you can use to lengthen and toughen the adventure or perhaps use to give depth and breadth to Molhyna and Ussura.

Off the Beaten Path

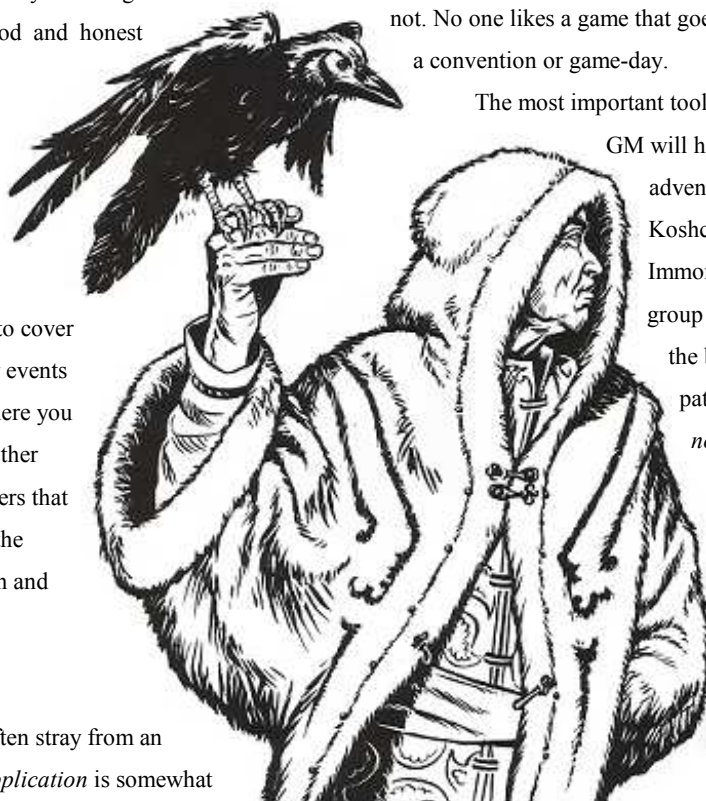
As they are wont to do, players can often stray from an adventure's set path. *A Murder of Supplication* is somewhat

more rigid then some GMs and players might prefer although we have tried to make it less so and will attempt to give hints to things within the adventure to help keep things in line. Most published adventures will "railroad" a group of heroes, but hopefully after reading the adventure in full and with the proper use of Soft Points, you will find enough material to make an adventure for your heroes in which they will not feel *completely* railroaded.

Ultimately, your heroes could simply decide to "get out of town" and ditch the quest and head off onto other adventures. If you are using this adventure to supplement and expand your personal campaign: To put it simply, let them. Should there be consequences, sure, but that doesn't mean that they will affect them. Who knows maybe some months later they will read in the Freiburg gazette about a group of heroes helping liberate Molhyna from a despot ruler.

On the other hand, if this is adventure is a "one shot" or a "convention run" for you, then obviously a little more demand on following plotlines and railroading is expected, and yes even appreciated at most conventions, believe it or not. No one likes a game that goes nowhere at a convention or game-day.

The most important tool you as the GM will have is this adventure is Koshchei the Immortal. Should a group go too far off the beaten path...or even not far enough along the path!... the Immortal can send a messenger, or if angry or agitated enough



arrive suddenly on scene himself to chastise the heroes for their wandering. As a master of fate-magic (in addition to fire-magic and animal-shapeshifting-magic) he could very well twist a strand of fate and redirect a small group of people back in line. In his mind people are dying in Molhyna, his people. Immortal he may be, he's not without a heart that feels grief. But at the same time, he knows he can only manipulate things so much...the heroes have to discover some of what they will face on their own. Alternatively, if you wish to bring about a more face-to-face encounter with the evil that they will hopefully help Molhyna free itself from a group of Oprechnina ("The Blackness of Hell") performing some act of terror can easily bring the heroes back to focus, especially if said act were to a group of innocents. The Oprechnina are the Stelets of the Knias of Molhyna, his personal guard and army. You can read more about them in the *Ussura* nation book or *Knights & Musketeers* sourcebook.

Also never underestimate the timely message or appearance of a member of an order or society that one of the heroes belongs to get them back on track. What the players bring to the table in the form of their characters can often be the most important element used to motivate someone.

Ultimately the absolute most important thing to remember is that fun should be had by all (Including yourself!) and that you should feel encouraged to use what you want in this adventure and throw out what you do not want so long as you and your players all have a great time.

BACKGROUND FOR THE GAMEMASTER

To run this adventure more smoothly it cannot be stressed enough that one should read and have a good understanding of *Ussura*. Especially the sections and personalities relating to Molhyna and in some small part Rurik and city of Pavtlow. The long and short of it is this.

An evil man by the name of Parigorii Nizhne Kalenikov once served the current Knias' (Vladimir Goroduk Drakov v'Petrov) father (Drako Goroduk Stanimirov v'Petrov) as an officer in the Oprechnina, the Knias Drako's personal army and tool of terror. Knias Drako was a man of unspeakable evil and cruelty, devising tortures that even Legion was impressed with. Tortures that Kalenikov and the Oprechnina were all too happy to go along with. However, with the death of Knias Drako in 1663 and the

ascent of his son Vladimir (who turned 30 on the same day his father died) to the throne of Molhyna things changed greatly...and for the better, for most anyway. The Oprechnina however was dispersed in spirit and name by the new Knias. Simply put, he had no need for the Oprechnina for they were useless to the way he was going to rule. However the Knias did keep the aged Kalenikov as Captain of the Guard.

Then in the early part of 1667 something terrible happened. A gunpowder explosion killed Vladimir's infant daughter. Kalenikov soon discovered evidence of assassins. Seemingly overnight Vladimir reinitiated the Oprechnina and made Kalenikov both his Chamberlain and the head of the army. Terror had returned to Molhyna with a vengeance, even to the point that Vladimir ordered the death of his own wife.

Of course there were no assassins, this had all been a ploy on Kalenikov's part to kill the Knias and his family, only the timing had been off and he managed only to kill the daughter. However, Kalenikov soon realised that maybe he could turn this to his advantage. Since then he has managed to take complete control of Molhyna behind the façade of Vladimir being the "Terror of Molhyna". He even managed to get the Knias to order the death of his own wife, but has secretly hidden her away of possible use in the future.

Now, as 1669 slowly begins to give way to 1670; Koshchei, once Knias of Molhyna himself some 1100 years before, seeks to send a band of heroes into the heart of hell in hopes that they might reclaim his errant "son" and beloved Molhyna from whatever evil that has hold of it as well as deflect another force from an even greater evil...

Here is a list of subjects and notes and some page references for your ease.

- **Wolf:** You can read more about this enigmatic power in *Ussura*. Ultimately he will have little to do with this adventure besides being a motivation for Koshchei to act to even though Koshchei himself does not know that it is Wolf that is behind this inquisitiveness. Wolf is seeking things that would advance his goals and he has turned his gaze upon Lake Vigil (p38) which lies in the heart of Molhyna.
- **Molhyna:** The realm of Vladimir Goroduk Drakov v'Petrov is described on pages 37-40 of *Ussura*.
- **Knias:** Be sure to read pages 77-78 and 119 of *Ussura* for information on the Knias.



- **Power Behind the Scene:** Knias Vladimir is not in control of his own mind, much less his nation. The true power in Molhyna is Parigorii Nizhne Kalenikov. The former officer of Vladimir's father has turned the current Knias into a terrified shell of a man while he rules with absolute tyranny with the aid of the Oprechnina, which is loyal only unto him. Read pages 78-79 and 119 of *Ussura* for information on Kalenikov.
- **Koshchei:** Someone, some power is starting to focus upon Lake Vigil. This attention has not gone unnoticed by Koshchei, and seeing that he knows what exactly is in there and knows what power and destruction lies under the calm waters of the lake, he in no way wishes it to be bothered. Who exactly is the force behind this curiosity he is not sure of but what he does know is that the current state of things in Molhyna is such that such inquisitiveness might very well go unseen and unknown until it was too late. For Koshchei this is a chance to kill two birds with one stone: head off this unknown force and free Molhyna from the plight in which it is currently enwrapped. Read pages 75-77 and 117-118 of *Ussura* as well as pages 88-89 of the *Gamemaster's Guide* for information on the Immortal.
- **The Lake:** Ozero Bodrustvovany (Lake Vigil) is fully described on page 38 of *Ussura*.

Where is Matushka during this?

That Matushka is a great and impressive and even terrible power in Théah there is no doubt. However, she does have her limitations and she is not without her own weaknesses. Not to put to fine a point on it she has been over burdened by the war with Montaigne now and sits in reverie while at the same time trying to watch over the events to the south, namely the rising of Cabora. For the time being, Ussura has been left to watch over itself while she recuperates and sees how events to the south are going to continue to play out. To his mind this is yet another reason for Koshchei to try and act at this time.

Getting *YOUR* Heroes Involved

Because these adventures happen in the most remote part of Théah it may be something of a challenge to get your collection of heroes involved in a plot so far from hearth and home...especially if there are no Ussuran heroes in your

collection of daring-doers. Dependent upon how you're game is constructed, your heroes may or may not need an entrance into Ussura, much less the Court of the Gaius. If your group is not in Ussura, feel free to use the Soft Points listed directly below to aid you in getting the heroes to Pavtlow. If you do not need help in getting the heroes to Pavtlow, please feel free to ignore or use the listed Soft Points in whatever manner you see fit and simply go onto to Hard Point One. As always it is recommended that you read the entirety of the adventure so that you are familiar with the material.

The Crunchy Bits

This document uses a simple convention to try and make it easier to use no matter which system you are using. Asides and comments are presented in Grey text boxes. Rules and NPCs for the original 7th Sea™ Roll and Keep system are in a pale Blue text box. While rules and NPCs for the Swashbuckling Adventures™ line and the d20™ rules system are in a pale Green text box. Of course this only works if you are reading this document in colour!

New Advantage - Bogaytr (8pts Ussuran only)

This advantage only costs 4 points if you have already purchased sorcery. This is similar to Gentry found in 'Montaigne'.

The bogaytr are the landless wandering nobility of Ussura, seeking their fortune among the cities and open land of the nation. Many bogaytr are sell-swords using the training they received to advance in military rank or to become a captain of the guard for one town or another. Others become merchants, using their contacts within the court to trade among the provinces. A few travel outside Matushka's domain, seeking fortune and fame (Ussura p27 for more details)

You receive 5,000G as starting money, but you have no monthly income unless you create it through investments. Bogaytr receive one Free Raise when using the Mooch Knack. Get one martial skill or the Merchant or the Courtier Skill for free.

Soft Point 1: Invitations & Orders

In some cases and for some heroic groups a simple messenger will be enough. A summons to the Court of the Gaius can go a long ways, after all. Ussura might be considered backwards by most of the rest of Théah, but one

hardly ignores such an exotic summons. For others more social prodding might be in order. Nearly every Guild, Society (secret or otherwise) or Club is curious of Ussura or wants access to her lands, ruins, courts and markets and thus can be a great influence upon heroes who belong to their orders. Lord and Ladies, such as the Princes of Vodacce, a few of the Eisenfürst (Heilgrund for one) would be interested in the mysteries and potential of Ussura in general. The Church might be interested in seeing how fertile the ground might be for missionary work, after all, the current faith of Ussura is lacking greatly in the eyes of the Vaticine and even the Objectionist.

Soft Point 2: Immortal String Pulling

Lastly, there are plots and threads most magical to entice a set of heroes upon a course of action. As a Gamemaster you have a great tool upon which to call, and one that is most eager to be called upon in this case. Koshchei the Immortal. Most often Koshchei is more than willing to allow matters to plod along at their own pace and concerns, but things have changed and forces have come to light that Koshchei no longer believes he can sit idly by. Thus, as a master of fate and destinies not unlike those practised by the veiled witches of Vodacce—he is a master of no less than three sorceries (*Ussura* p117-8)—he might very well decide to pull a few threads in the hopes of bringing to Molhyna the very heroes that are needed to aid his young kinsman, the Knias...and most importantly perhaps the very world itself. Any plying of the threads of fate by Koshchei could and should occur along with mortal and mundane summons, such as letters of invitation to the Gaius' Court from no less than the Gaius' wife herself, if such impression might be needed. A hint of a promise of favours and fortunes might bring others in line. A damaged ship's hull needing repairs might bring a seaworthy group to an Ussuran port, and thus into the manipulations of the Immortal. One important thing to note however is that Koshchei himself would never signal that it was he that encouraged the heroes' arrival to Ussura. In this case, Koshchei knows that his role being kept secret in this matter is of the utmost importance. At least not until he thinks it is necessary to make an appearance so as to impress upon the importance of the task at hand.

Beastmen of the Wolf 7th Sea - Henchman

Brawn 5, Finesse 3, Resolve 2, Wits 1, Panache 2

Attack Roll: Claw/Bite 6k3

Damage: 6k2

Advantages: Cold Climate Conditioning, Howl, Keen Smell, Keen Hearing, Large, Night Trained, Silence, Toughness, Unnerving Countenance (Hideous)

Knacks: Ambush 2, Attack (Natural) 3, Climbing 1, Footwork 3, Grapple 1, Land on Target 2, Long Distance Running 2, Sprinting 3, Stealth 1, Survival 2, Throat Strike 2, Tracking 2

Beastmen of the Wolf

Ussuran Infected Werewolf Hybrid Form / Warrior 2: CR 3; HD 4d8 +4; hp 22; Init +3; Spd 30 ft; AC 16 (+3 Dex, +4 natural); Base Atk +3; Grapple +5; Atk claw +5 melee (d4+2); Full Atk 2 claws +5 melee (d4+2) and bite +0 melee (d6+1) melee; SQ alternate form, wolf empathy, damage reduction 5/silver, low-light vision, scent; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 9; Skills: climb +4, hide +5, move silently +6, survival +5; Feats: cold climate conditioning, iron will, run, track

Soft Point 3: Yellow Eyes...

Creatures set upon the heroes, while they are travelling in Rurik; a mix of man and wolf. Anyone familiar with the ways of Pyeryem might believe that they were 'simply' Ussuran's gifted by Matushka with the arts of the skin-changer...but there's something different about these men-beasts...or beast-men. They are far more animal than man in attitude and spirit and their eyes are a poisonous yellow coloration, the colour of pus...disease, infection. What are these beasts...and why do they hunt after the heroes all of a sudden.

Hard Point 1: The Green-Door Inn

This adventure properly starts with the heroes meeting someone named Margreave at a place known as the Inn of the Green Door. Whether they are delivering a package or simply stopping there for a meal, or whether they are long time customers is dependant upon your campaign and what works best for you as the Gamemaster.

Margreave is an elderly woman who moves slowly about on her walking stick. She is a friend of Koshchei the immortal, and has been so nearly all her life, though only a few people know this. He once helped her escaped a bad arranged

Margreave 7th Sea - Henchman

Brawn 0, Finesse 0, Resolve 2, Wisdom 3, Panache 1

Advantages: Age & Wisdom (Old), Animal Affinity, Home Neighborhood, Patron (Koshchei), Sensitive Bones, Small, Ussuran

Servant: Etiquette 2, Fashion 1, Menial Tasks 3, Unobtrusive 3, Accounting 1, Gossip 3, Hagging 3

Spy: Shadowing 1, Stealth 1, Lip Reading 2, Sincerity 3

Margreave, Elderly Innkeeper

Ussuran Spy 1/ Commoner 2 - Small feat

marriage and has, over the last several decades done small favour for him.

She asks them their names, even if they are regulars, and tells them that there was a small package dropped off for them earlier in the day. She gives them the package and then moves on her own merry, is slow way. The package contains a small purse of rubles and a letter addressed to each hero. Each letter is the same, inviting the hero and a significant other or guest to attend the evening's festivities at the Court of the Gaius at his palace. There is a small note in the money purse explaining that there should be enough there purchase proper (if a bit frugal) attire the heroes for the evening's revelry.

If asked who delivered the package, Margreave will only remember that it was a young man whom she did not recognised. She believes that he wore a blue jacket with red trim, which might make him one of the Pavtlow Couriers. The Couriers are a number of young men and woman who run packages and notes and letters for anyone willing to pay a few coins for the service. Started by a young displaced nobleman some years before, the Couriers have gained a reputation for prompt, reliable and careful service. Checking with the service the heroes will discover that a well-dressed older man dropped off the package to be delivered. The man was Ussuran and had the look and mannerisms of a servant of the Boyar. The man did not leave a name or a return location if the package were somehow undeliverable.

The Courier service runs without the Merchant's Guild sanction, as the owner resents having to bend knee and open purse to a bunch of strangers who have nothing to do with his business. This situation is beginning to heat up as the Guild seeks to bring the independent service into its fold. As the heroes are there a group of merchant backed thugs come in to put on a little heat.

Symmons 7th Sea - Henchman

Brawn 1, Finesse 4, Resolve 2, Wisdom 4, Panache 3

Reputation: 18

Advantages: Able Drinker, Avalon (R/W), Debater, Friend at Court, Montaigne (R/W), Small, Théan (R/W), Teodoran (R/W), Ussuran (R/W), Vesten (R/W),

Knacks: Attack (DF) 2, Attack (Knife) 1, Balance 3, Balancing 2, Break Fall 2, Conceal 2, Contortion 2, Dancing 2, Etiquette 3, Fashion 1, Footwork 3, Gaming 3, Gossip 4, Juggling 4, Leaping 3, Lip Reading 1, Mooch 4, Oratory 4, Parry (Knife) 1, Rolling 3, Scheming 2, Sincerity 2, Socializing 4, Stealth 2, Street Navigation 2, Stunt 2, Throw (Improvised Weapons) 4, Throw (Knife) 4. Shadowing 3

Symmons, Jester of the Gaius' Court

Ussuran Théan Bard 6 - Small feat / Reputation 4

'Protection Money' Collector 7th Sea - Henchman

Brawn 1, Finesse 2, Reflexes 2, Wisdom 4, Panache 3

Reputation: -10

Advantages: Patron, Théan (R/W), Ussuran (R/W)

Knacks: Ambush 1, Architecture 1, Attack (Dirty Fighting) 3, Attack (Firearms) 3, Bribery 1, Cheating 3, Conceal 2, Forgery 1, Gambling 2, Lockpicking 3, Mathematics 1, Pickpocket 2, Prestidigitation 1, Quack 2, Scrounging 2, Shadowing 3, Shadowing 3, Socializing 3, Stealth 3, Street Navigation 3, Underworld Lore 2

'Protection Money' Collector, Local Thug

Ussuran Rogue 5

If you so choose you can jump to the heroes' arrival at the Court later that evening or use any or all of the Soft Points listed below.

Soft Point 4: Shopping for Attire

Armed with invitation and coin the heroes should feel obliged to find themselves suitable clothing for a night's attendance at the Court of the Gaius. Such a hook can be taken to various extremes with as little or as much roleplaying as you can your group can come up with. The heroes can meet a nobleman of your own design or perhaps meet one listed next, who they will run into again later that evening. This meeting can be deadly serious; meeting Aleksy would be along these lines, though one would wonder—really wonder—what Aleksy, Knais of Rurik would be doing there! Alternatively you could have a downright fun encounter; meeting the Gaius' jester,

Gang Leader *7th Sea - Henchman**Brawn 2, Finesse 2, Resolve 2, Wisdom 2, Panache 2**Reputation: -20**Advantages: Théan, Toughness, Ussuran (R/W).**Knacks: Ambush 3, Attack (Firearms) 2, Attack (Heavy Weapons) 3, Etiquette 1, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 2, Ride 2, Scrounging 1, Socializing 2, Stand Watch 2, Stealth 2, Street Navigation 3, Survival 3, Tracking 2, Underworld Lore 3, Unobtrusive 1***Gang Leader, Deserting Montaigne Soldier**

Montaigne Fighter 2 / Rogue 2

Symmons, not knowing who he was and seeing him in his getup at the Court would be intriguing. This could also be interesting if the heroes say anything untoward about the Gaius or certain other court members.

The heroes could get sized for an outfit, then get handed the wrong jacket finding something of value in it at a later date—say in the middle of the party—that could very well put them in a situation.

The heroes could be getting sized when the “Ussuran Underworld” makes an appearance with the token “collecting for the protection racket”. The clothier could come up a little short in his payment and depending on the circumstances the Collector could get a little rough. Keep in mind that such physical encounters should be handled smartly; no one is going to fight to the death. The first sign that the Collector gets that he’s outnumbered and outclassed is his cue to leave...but only after giving a warning to the heroes to watch their back, of course. Such an encounter could lead to other adventures dealing with the local underworld, and in particular this heavy could become a reoccurring pain in the heroes’ collective butts.

Soft Point 5: That (Street) Smarts

As the heroes are walking along the streets they might spot a group of men tailing them. Then they soon realise that the group is not so small, and that some men are also now in front of them. They are surrounded. One of the men steps forward and asks them for a ‘donation’.

The men are not looking to hurt the heroes too much, but they are willing to give them a few bruises to teach them a lesson in street politics. Most of the men are soldiers from the war with the Montaigne who haven’t quietly gone back into society. They will settle for a few guilders from each

hero. Any Montaigne characters will have to pay triple and will quickly find themselves the target of the men’s ire should they answer back to them.

Keep in mind, that undue attention and noise will bring the Guard. The first signs of the Guard will send the thugs on their way, and they know the city very well. Dependant on how the heroes act, they might very well find the Guard a bit more sympathetic to the thugs than their victims.

Hard Point 2: Court of the Gaius

The heroes arrive at the court, present their invitations and are in turn presented to the court. Ask each player as to how the announcer should present them to the Gaius and his Court. This is going to be the very first impression the Court, as a whole, has of the character. If the Player jokes overly around at this point, he could very well be running some opportunities with the Court. Let the player have as much rope as they like, keeping in mind the announcer of the court was born without a sense of humour. Reputation Scores should generally be taken into account.

One quick reminder, be kind enough to allow the heroes some warning of the temperament and mind of the Gaius. They should be well aware, through rumours and talk in the inns and bath halls for instance, that the Gaius is as about as dangerous a man as they are likely ever to meet. He could very well be more dangerous than the O’ Bannon or Giovanni Villanova in the respect that the Gaius is quite capable of any level of violence at *anytime*. Jack and Giovanni can actually be quite predictable in comparison. Once announced to the Court of the Gaius the heroes are free to mingle, get a few drinks and visit the buffet table, the likes of which are fairly impressive. The Court is staged in a series of four halls this evening, each hall hosting its own theme. This evening the themes are the four seasons. The rooms and a side hook are listed below with a list of three encounters that must happen to progress the heroes further into *A Murder of Supplication’s* plot.

Additionally in soft point Seven, there are several more of the function’s attendees and a short motivation or possible encounter that they might present if you wanted to enhance or extend the group’s court experience. Villainous encounters in such a place often tend to be filled with dramatics, especially if the heroes want to kill the Villain and he knows that they dare not draw steel against him in the

Kostya Pavtlow Ilyaovich *7th Sea - Henchman*

Brawn 2, Finesse 1, Resolve 2, Wits 3, Panache 1

Reputation: 0

Advantages: Able Drinker, Age & Wisdom (Middle Age), Théan (R/W), Ussuran (R/W)

Knife: Attack (Knife) 2, Parry (Knife) 2

Servant: Etiquette 3, Fashion 2, Menial Tasks 4, Unobtrusive 3, Gossip 3, Hagglng 2, Seneschal 5, Valet 2

Spy: Shadowing 2, Stealth 2, Conceal 2, Sincerity 3

Kostya Pavtlow Ilyaovich, Seneschal

Ussuran Spy 1 / Commoner 3: CR 2; HD d6 +3d4 -4; hp 7; Init -1; Spd 30 ft; AC 9 (-1 Dex); Base Atk +1; Grapple +2; Atk dagger +2 melee (d4+1; 19-20/x2); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ Alias (DC 26); AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 9, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 10; Skills: bluff +6, diplomacy +2, gather information +5, hide +4, knowledge (nobility and royalty) +5, listen +4, move silently +4, profession (servant) +8, profession (seneschal) +10, speak language (théan, ussuran), spot +3; Feats: able drinker, skill focus (profession (seneschal), profession (servant))

Court of the Gaius. Not only is it disrespectful to attempt to kill the guest of a host, much less possibly the Gaius himself, the Gaius might take the time to personally oversee the matter in *whatever* fashion he sees fit. He could very well decide his dogs need the exercise and tell the heroes to start running after they have been stripped of their clothes and possessions.

Encounter 1: The Gaius Wife. The heroes are approached by a woman of striking beauty and impeccable style and dress who introduces herself as Ketheryna Fischler Dimitritova (Ussura p112), the wife of the Gaius. She simply wishes to express her gratitude for their attendance. If the heroes are foreigners to Ussura she will press them for news from abroad; if they are Ussuran she will inquire as to the state of things outside Pavtlow.

Encounter Two: The Wolf of Rurik. Soon after the conversation with the Gaius' wife ends they will find themselves face to face with the Knias of Rurik, Aleksi Pavtlow Markov v'Novgorov (Ussura p113 HV&M p7). Aleksi is interested in the heroes but he's not sure why, he just knows his nose is telling him the heroes are *something*. In truth, Aleksi is part of the reason the heroes are at the party. Koshchei has got the feeling that Aleksi is up to something to do with Molhyna. Distracted and weakened of late, Matushka appears unaware of the growing ire of Aleksi,

so Koshchei has brought the heroes in to help him see to things. He has manipulated the strands themselves to get them here. While Aleksi is a huge motivation for Koshchei to involve the heroes however, he has little more to do with the overall plot of the three-part adventure.

Encounter Three: A Seneschal of the House. An older man, dressed faultlessly in his servant's garb is a high seneschal of the palace. He approaches the heroes and when he believes he has a moment to talk to them without being over heard, thanks them for coming. He tells them that his name is Kostya and that he is in need of their help. He asks for them to meet him in two day's time (at stroke of the 2nd bell of the day) inside the Gravlana Cemetery. He will meet them at the grave of Stavek Pavtlow Kostyov (the man's son). He tells them that it is very, very important and to tell no one of their meeting. No one. With a nod, he is gone to see to other guests.

Soft Point 6: The Four Seasons

Each of the four halls of the night's Court has a seasonal theme. Here they are, with a small adventure hook for each room. In each room, young men and women are dressed provocatively but not scandalously appropriate to the theme. **Winter** (North Hall) The decorations are white, highlighted with tints of blue. Servants hide above the revellers room slowly spreading handfuls of "snow" while men and women walk about pretending to be chilled by the winter night's air. There is even a polar bear in the room.

Side Hook: The heroes are surprised when the large bear carefully motions for them to come closer. The bear is actually a Pyeryem shapeshifter and boyar who is rather embarrassed as to his role at the party, but when one loses a wager to the Gaius one can hardly say no. Luckily no one

Nobleman 'Bear' Shapeshifter *7th Sea - Henchman*

Brawn 2 (5), Finesse 3 (1), Resolve 2, Wisdom 2, Panache 1

Reputation: 8

Advantages: Noble, Sorcerer (Half Blood), Théan (R/W), Ussuran (R/W), (Keen Smell, Swimming, Warmth, No Fine Manipulation)

Knacks: Attack (Heavy Weapons) 1, Attack (Knife) 1, Dancing 3, Etiquette 3, Fashion 2, Fishing 1, Gaming 2, Oratory 1, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 1, Parry (Knife) 1, Politics 1, Ride 3, Sincerity 1, Stealth 1, Survival 1; Pyeryem: Man 3, Speak 3, Bear 3

Nobleman 'Bear' Shapeshifter, Worried Husband

Ussuran Noble 1 / Pyeryem Shapeshifter 1

Vendel Gigolo

7th Sea - Henchman

Brawn 1, Finesse 2, Resolve 2, Wisdom 3, Panache 3

Reputation: -15

Adv: Able Drinker, Appearance (above average), Dangerous

Beauty, Montaigne (R/W), Théan (R/W), Ussuran (R/W), Vendel (R/W)

Knacks: Attack (Firearms) 2, Attack (Knife) 2, Cheating 1, Dancing 4, Etiquette 2, Fashion 3, Gambling 2, Gossip 1, Lockpicking 2, Mooch 3, Oratory 2, Parry (Knife) 2, Pickpocket 2, Reload 1, Ride 2, Seduction 4, Shadowing 1, Shopping 1, Socializing 3, Stealth 3, Street Navigation 2, Underworld Lore 1

Vendel Gigolo, Unwanted Suitor

Vendel Courtier 1 / Noble 3 - Able Drinker & Dangerous Beauty

knows that he is the bear. Not even his wife, who is showing an inordinate amount of attention to a Vendel Merchant! He asks the heroes to keep an eye on his wife while he's stuck as a bear.

Spring (East Hall) This green hall is decorated in a romanticised version of spring. Small "storms" roam about the room as servants carefully pour rain down on the room below so as not to get any of the attendees.

Side Hook: As the heroes are walking about the well marked path (where it never rains it seems) they see a young Boyar giving a serving wench, dressed in the most flimsy of spring outfits, a rather impolite time. Assuming that they are unwilling to allow such caddish behaviour and approach the man they might notice a small cloud (literally) overshadow the path and it will suddenly rain down on the man...and anyone within five feet of him. The man will most definitely be upset, storming off on his own to go complain. If the heroes confront the man, he will demand to know their names, telling them that he is Ylion Vlakmorov (Ill-E-yawn vlak-MOR-ov). He will act as if the hero should know who

Ylion Vlakmorov 7th Sea - Henchman

Brawn 3, Finesse 2, Resolve 2, Wisdom 2, Panache 2

Reputation: -10

Advantages: Able Drinker, Friend at Court, Noble, Théan (R/W), Ussuran (R/W)

Knacks: Attack (Heavy Weapons) 4, Dancing 1, Etiquette 2, Fashion 1, Mooch 2, Oratory 1, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 3, Ride 3, Socializing 2, Stealth 2, Street Navigation 1, Survival 1, Tracking 3

Ylion Vlakmorov, Loutish Boyar

Ussuran Noble 4 - Able Drinker & Track feats

he is, but none will. The young girl is the fiancée of the storm cloud, who let love get in the way of his better judgement. The heroes could easily gain a friend amongst the serving staff of the Palace, perhaps even saving his life if you decide to portray Ylion aggressively.

Summer (South Hall) Greenery and flowers abound. Real tracts of grass and trees have been transplanted into the room for the event and lords and ladies are expected to remove their footwear so as to enjoy the feeling of the grass between their toes.

Side Hook: A small nest of squirrels have managed to go unnoticed and are quite out of their minds in wonderment as to nature that nature has changed into. One moment their tree was on the grounds, now it is inside a building with musicians and fancy humans all dressed to their best walking around barefoot! The best thing about it is the fact that some of the people walking about are carrying trays of great smelling food! It would only take a moment to jump to that person and then to that tray to grab up something... This works even better if one of the squirrels is the animal from which a hero gets one of their skins. After all, they must look after the beast as per their bargain.

Byelka "Squirrel" 7th Sea - Henchman

Brawn 1, Finesse 3, Resolve 1, Wisdom 1, Panache 2

Attack Roll: Bite 4k3; Damage: 1k1

Adv: Cold Climate Conditioning, Keen Smell & Vision, Silence

Knacks: Balance 4, Break Fall 2, Climbing 5, Footwork 3, Leaping 2, Land on Target 2, Stealth 1, Survival 2

Byelka, Ussuran Squirrel

Tiny Animal; CR 1/8; HD 1/4d8; hp 1; Init +3; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 15 (+2 size, +3 Dex); Base Atk +0; Grapple -12; Atk bite +5 melee(d3-4); SQ low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +0; Str 2, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 6; Skills: balance +11, climb +12, jump +4, hide +11, listen +1, move silently +7, spot +1, survival +1; Feats: weapon finesse
Squirrels have a +4 racial bonus on Move Silently checks, and a +8 racial bonus on Balance, Climb and Jump checks. A squirrel can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. A squirrel uses its Dexterity modifier instead of its Strength modifier for Climb checks.

Fall (West Hall) Dead trees with colourful leaves pasted on it, mounds of gathered crops, pumpkins and other signs of autumn including leaves falling from above.

Side Hook: One or more of the heroes might notice as an

obviously scared young lady enters the Autumn Hall. She quickly looks about and then moves off of the path and moves behind a tree in an attempt to trying to look as small and unnoticeable as possible. Moments later another woman, appearing as an older version of the young lady, enters the room with her a rather plump middle-aged looking man with bad skin.

The young lady is trying to avoid meeting her possible (and likely) future husband. The hero who spots this event will

likely realise that the older woman will spot her daughter and that they could easily distract the woman, perhaps telling her the young girl went into the next hall.

Alternatively, a young man who truly loves the girl could approach the hero asking for their help in getting his lover and him away from her mother. The two could even then try and escape fate altogether and go off and elope. This could bring the ire of both the mother and the husband-to-be on the heads of the heroes. After all, there's always a snooping servant to give the heroes identities away.

Lord Alan Morgan of Harrisborrow 7th Sea - Henchman

Brawn 2, Finesse 2, Resolve 3, Wits 4, Panache 2

Reputation: 37

Adv: Academy, Age & Wisdom (Old), Avalon (R/W), Connections, Friend at Court (Avalon), Noble, Théan (R/W), Ussuran (R/W)

Background: Secret (Affair) 2

Athlete: Climbing 2, Footwork 2, Sprinting 2, Throwing 2,

Commander: Strategy 2, Tactics 3, Ambush 3, Artillery 1, Cartography 2, Diplomacy 5, Incitation 2, Leadership 2, Logistics 2

Fencing: Attack 3, Parry 3, Cavalry Attack 3

Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 3, Reload 2

Hunter: Stealth 2, Survival 3, Tracking 3, Ambush 3

Politician: Etiquette 4, Oratory 4, Socializing 2, Diplomacy 5, Incitation 2, Politics 5, Scheming 2, Sincerity 5

Rider: Ride 4

Scholar: History 4, Mathematics 1, Philosophy 1, Research 1, Law 4, Theology 1

Spy: Shadowing 2, Stealth 2, Bribery 4, Conceal 1, Cryptography 2

Lord Alan Morgan of Harrisborrow, Military Advisor

Avalon Courtier 3 / Noble 3 - Leadership feat

Lady Constance MacGregor o' MacGregor 7th Sea - Henchman

Brawn 2, Finesse 2, Resolve 3, Wits 3, Panache 2

Reputation: 11

Adv: Able Drinker, Avalon (R/W), Dangerous Beauty, Foul

Weather Jack, MacEachern Weapon, Noble, Théan (R/W), Ussuran

Background: Hunted 4

Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 2, Sprinting 2, Throwing 1

Bard: Etiquette 2, History 2, Oratory 1, Singing 3, Riddles 2, Sidhe Lore 4

Courtier: Dancing 1, Etiquette 2, Fashion 1, Oratory 1, Diplomacy 2, Seduction 1, Sincerity 1

Knife: Attack (Knife) 4, Parry (Knife) 4, Throw (Knife) 1

Rider: Ride 3

Streetwise: Socializing 3, Street Navigation 2

Lady Constance MacGregor o' MacGregor

Highland Fighter 2 / Noble 4 - Able Drinker & Dangerous Beauty

Soft Point 7: The Guest List

Here is a list of several personalities and guests that might be of use. Each name is given a personality quirk or "encounter possibility" for your use and abuse.

Lord Alan Morgan of Harrisborrow. Avalon male of fifty years of age. Alan is a salt-of-the-earth type of man with a military background from a family of military men and women. He is serving as a military advisor from Queen Elaine and has been so for the last year or so. Morgan has secretly fallen in love with a local Boyar's wife and she with him. If word were to get out about this affair it would very

Sir Dirk Helstor of Freiburg 7th Sea - Hero

Brawn 3, Finesse 3, Resolve 3, Wits 3, Panache 3

Reputation: 25

Adv: Appearance (Above Average), Dracheneisen (sword, panzerhand, breast plate), Eisen (R/W), High Eisen (R/W), Linguist, Montaigne (R/W), Swordsman's Guild Member, Théan (R/W), Ussuran (R/W), Vendel (R/W)

Arcana: Overzealous

Background: Vow of Honour 3

Eisenfaüst: (Journeyman) Beat 4, Bind 4, Disarm 4, Exploit Weakness (Eisenfaüst) 5, Exploit Weakness (Bogatyr) 3

Athlete: Climb 2, Footwork 2, Sprinting 1, Throwing 2, Side-step 3

Courtier: Dancing 1, Etiquette 3, Fashion 2, Oratory 3, Diplomacy 3, Gaming 1, Politics 2, Seduction 1, Sincerity 2

Heavy Weapon: Attack 4, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 4

Hunter: Fishing 1, Skinning 2, Stealth 2, Survival 3, Tracking 3, Trail Signs 1, Ambush 1

Panzerhand: Attack 4, Parry (Panzerhand) 4, Uppercut 4

Streetwise: Socializing 3, Street Navigation 2

Urchin: Stealth 2, Street Navigation 2, Survival 3, Scrounging 1, Sincerity 2

Sir Dirk Helstor of Freiburg, Sieger Ambassador

Eisen Noble 2 / Ranger 3 / Eisenfaust 3 - Appearance (AA) feat



Baron Hauser Rane of Posen *7th Sea - Henchman*

Brawn 3, Finesse 2, Resolve 4, Wits 2, Panache 2

Reputation: 31

Adv: Academy, Age & Wisdom (middle age), Dracheneisen (breastplate), Eisen (R/W), Eisen Bodyguard, Firm Grip, Friend at Court (Posen), Left Handed, Montaigne, Noble, Théan (R/W), Ussuran (R/W), Vendel (R/W)

Background: Vow of Service 3

Athlete: Climb 2, Footwork 2, Sprinting 2, Throwing 2, Swimming 2

Commander: Strategy 2, Tactics 2, Ambush 2, Diplomacy 4

Courtier: Dancing 1, Etiquette 2, Fashion 2, Oratory 2, Diplomacy 4

Heavy Weapon: Attack 4, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 4

Hunter: Skinning 1, Stealth 1, Survival 2, Track 1, Animal Train 1

Knife: Attack (Knife) 2, Parry (Knife) 2

Panzerhand: Attack (Panzerhand) 2, Parry (Panzerhand) 2

Rider: Ride 4, Animal Training 1

Streetwise: Socializing 2, Street Navigation 1, Underworld Lore 1

Baron Hauser Rane of Posen, War Veteran

Eisen Noble 4 - Dracheneisen breastplate

Captain Joshua Rikes of Heilgrund *7th Sea - Henchman*

Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Resolve 3, Wits 3, Panache 2

Reputation: 8

Adv: Appearance (Above Average), Commission (Captain), Eisen (R/W), Membership (Heilgrund Iron Guard), Night Trained, Théan (R/W), Ussuran (R/W)

Athlete: Climbing 2, Footwork 2, Sprinting 1, Throwing 1,

Courtier: Dancing 1, Etiquette 2, Fashion 1, Oratory 2, Diplomacy 3, Scheming 2

Crossbow: Attack 3, Fletcher 2, Reload (Crossbow) 5

Heavy Weapon: Attack 4, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 2

Hunter: Stealth 4, Survival 4, Tracking 2, Trail Signs 1, Traps 1

Sentry: Etiquette 2, Stand Watch 3, Unobtrusive 4, Menace 2

Spy: Shadowing 4, Stealth 4, Bribery 2, Interrogation 1

Wrestling: Grapple 3, Bear Hug 1, Break 3, Escape 1, Head Butt 2

Captain Joshua Rikes of Heilgrund, Iron Guard

Eisen Fighter 3 / Spy 4 - Improved Grapple feat

likely hurt the Lord's honour and the Lady's virtue to no small degree. Truth be told, the honourable Lord would likely kill himself then suffer the embarrassment.

Lady Constance MacGregor o' the MacGregor. Highland woman in her early to mid thirties. Constance has only been in Ussura for the last two months and while she likes the feel of the Pavtlow and her people she terribly misses her highland home. Constance is a fair and honest woman who is in a bit of a rough spot. Her family has long been involved

Pierre Elena du Duchaine *7th Sea - Henchman*

Brawn 2, Finesse 2, Resolve 3, Wits 4, Panache 2

Reputation: 39

Adv: Able Drinker, Age & Wisdom, Connections, Debater, Eisen (R/W), Friend at Court (Montaigne)(Ussura)(Eisen), Membership (Vintners & Distiller's Guild), Montaigne (R/W), Noble, Rose & Cross Patron, Theah (R/W), Ussuran (R/W)

Athlete: Climb 1, Footwork 2, Swinging 1, Throwing 1, Swimming 4

Courtier: Dancing 3, Etiquette 3, Fashion 1, Oratory 3, Diplomacy 5, Gaming 3, Gossip 3, Memorizing 3, Mooch 3, Politics 3, Scheming 3, Sincerity 3

Fencing: Attack 2, Parry 1

Firearms: Attack 1

Merchant: Accounting 3, Hagglng 3, Vintner 3, Distiller 3

Politician: Etiquette 3, Oratory 3, Socializing 3, Diplomacy 5, Incitation 1, Politics 3, Rabble-Rousing 1, Scheming 3, Sincerity 3

Scholar: History 3, Mathematics 1, Philosophy 3, Research 1

Rider: Ride 2

Pierre Elena du Duchaine, Former Comte d'Orlaen

Montaigne Courtier 5 - Able Drinker feat

in the struggles of the Seelie and Unseelie conflicts that most people are not even aware exists. Several months ago she managed to really irritate an Unseelie Lord, never a good thing.

Sir Dirk Helstor of Freiburg. An Eisen man in his early twenties. Dirk is a handsome man who has taken the virtues of honour to heart. He serves Eisenfürst Sieger as a courier and ambassador of sorts to the Ussuran courts. Dirk is a bit overzealous in nature and he has got into more than one duel due to this.

Baron Hauser Rane of Posen. An Eisen man in his late thirties. Rane is a rather friendly and warm man considering the fact that it is Eisenfürst Pösen whom he serves. He lost his right arm during the War of the Cross but has overcome the handicap by training himself in its use with his left hand. He is proud of his Eisenfürst and his culture and people in general and does not hesitate to declare such to any who might dare give him, his Lady or his people insult.

Captain Joshua Rikes of Heilgrund. Joshua is a handsome Eisen man in mid twenties. He is an accomplished swordsman and, unknown to all but a few, a member of Eisenfürst Heilgrund's personal Iron Guard. His mission is simple, keep an eye out for and report any unusual or mystical incident. He does not know why his lord has sent



Marcus Brouchfort du Charouse *7th Sea - Villain*
Brawn 2, Finesse 2, Resolve 2, Wits 4, Panache 2
Reputation: 18
Advantages: Connections (Council of Eight), Indomitable Will, Membership (Rilasciare), Merchant Patron 5, Montaigne (R/W), Théan (R/W), Unnerving Contenance (Ugly), Ussuran (R/W)
Arcana: Fanatical
Background: Vendetta (nobles & sorcers) 3
Arson: Mathematics 2, Street Navigation 2, Architecture 1, Natural Philosophy 3
Artist: Drawing 3, Writing 3
Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 1, Parry (Fencing) 1
Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 2, Reload 1
Forger: Calligrapher 2, Forgery 3, Research 3, Conceal 2, Cryptography 1
Merchant: Calligrapher 2, Scribe 4, Steward 2, Accounting 2, Haggling 3
Politician: Etiquette 4, Oratory 4, Socializing 3, Diplomacy 4, Incitation 3, Politics 4, Rabble-Rousing 4, Scheming 2, Sincerity 3
Streetwise: Socializing 3, Street Navigation 2, Underworld Lore 1
Urchin: Stealth 2, Street Navigation 2, Survival 1, Conceal 2, Pick-pocket 2

Marcus Brouchfort du Charouse, Model Citizen
 Montaigne Courtier 4 / Spy 1 / Saboteur 1 - Rilasciare member

Vladimir Staver Gregorovich *7th Sea - Henchman*
Brawn 4, Finesse 2, Resolve 2, Wits 4, Panache 1
Reputation: 18
Advantages: Able Drinker, Academy, Age & Wisdom, Fhidel (R/W), Noble, Théan (R/W), Théodoran (R/W), Ussuran (R/W)
Archer: Attack (Bow) 3, Fletcher 1, Horse Archery 1
Commander: Strategy 1, Tactics 2, Ambush 1, Cartography 2, Diplomacy 3
Falconer: Bird Handling 5, Animal Training 4
Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 2, Reload 2
Heavy Weapon: Attack 3, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 3
Hunter: Stealth 2, Survival 2, Tracking 2, Trail Signs 2
Merchant: Furrier 2, Accounting 2, Appraising 2, Haggling 2
Politician: Etiquette 2, Oratory 2, Socializing 4, Politics 1
Rider: Ride 2
Shield: Parry (Shield) 2, Attack (Shield) 1
Wrestling: Grapple 4, Bear Hug 3, Break 2, Escape 5, Head Butt 2

Vladimir Staver Gregorovich, Concerned Father
 Courtier 2 / Noble 2 / Ranger 3 - Able Drinker & Imp Grapple

and his wife Arielle are Montaigne nobles in their early to mid sixties. Up until about fifteen years ago Pierre was the Montaigne ambassador to Ussura. During the final few years of Leon's rule of Montaigne he became fairly vocal against l'Empereur and especially the invasion of Ussura. Despite vocal outcry on his part he and his household fled Montaigne and have since become displaced. Recently Pierre became the ambassador and diplomat to Ussura from the Government-in-Exile that sits in Siegsburg.

Citizen Marcus Brouchfort du Charouse. Marcus is a rather unpleasant looking Montaigne man who fell victim to the pox in his youth. He is a shrewd and clever man, who is mostly self-educated. He has a passionate dislike for nobility

Nikita Odysse Fyodorov of Somojez *7th Sea - Scoundrel*
Brawn 2, Finesse 1, Resolve 3, Wits 3, Panache 1
Reputation: -18
Adv: Keen Senses, Noble, Scoundrel, Théan (R/W), Ussuran (R/W)
Background: Vow (kill Montaigne) 3
Artist: Composer 4, Musician (Gusli) 3
Courtier: Dancing 2, Etiquette 3, Fashion 1, Oratory 2, Gossip 3, Mooch 2, Scheming 4, Sincerity 2
Criminal: Gambling 2, Shadowing 2, Stealth 2, Cheating 2
Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 2
Herbalist: Cooking 1, Diagnosis 2, First Aid 2, Flora 1, Compounds 1, Poison 3
Knife: Attack (Knife) 4, Parry (Knife) 2
Streetwise: Socializing 3, Street Navigation 2, Scrounging 1, Underworld Lore 2

Nikita Odysse Fyodorov of Somojez, Vengeful Patriot
 Ussuran Courtier 2 / Rogue 1

Coika Reenya Borisova Stavertova *7th Sea - Henchman*
Brawn 1, Finesse 2, Resolve 4, Wits 2, Panache 4
Reputation: 18
Advantages: Appearance (Above Average), Eisen, Friend at Court (Gaius' Wife), Montaigne, Noble, Pyeryem Sorceress (Half Blood), Small, Théan, Ussuran
Pyeryem: (Adept) Man 3, Speak 3, Cardinal 3, Poodle 3
Artist: Drawing 5, Sculpting 3, Singing 2
Courtier: Dancing 3, Etiquette 3, Fashion 3, Oratory 3, Gaming 2, Sincerity 2
Doctor: Diagnosis 1, First Aid 1, Veterinarian 2
Falconer: Bird Handling 4, Animal Training 4
Rider: Ride 4, Animal Training 4

Coika Reenya Borisova Stavertova, Jovial Lady
 Ussuran Noble 3 / Pyeryem 4 - Appearance (AA) feat

him to Ussura for this, but he will do his duty to the utmost.
Pierre Elena du Duchaine, former Comte d'Orlaen. Pierre

Master Argus Rasmuller of Kirk *7th Sea - Scoundrel*
Brawn 2, Finesse 2, Resolve 3, Wits 3, Panache 1
Reputation: -28
Advantages: Age & Wisdom, Debater, Avalon (R/W), Astrologer, Eisen (R/W), Friend at Court, Linguist, Merchant Patron, Merchant's Guild Membership, Montaigne (R/W), Théan (R/W), Ussuran (R/W), Vendel (R/W), Vodacce (R/W),
Courtier: Dancing 1, Etiquette 4, Fashion 3, Oratory 4, Diplomacy 5, Gossip 3, Politics 2, Scheming 4, Seduction 1, Sincerity 3
Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 4, Reload 2
Merchant: Brewer 4, Confectioner 3, Florist 3, Furrier 4, Gunsmith 2, Jenny 4, Jeweler 2, Accounting 5, Appraising 5
Scholar: History 2, Mathematics 3, Philosophy 2, Research 2, Astronomy 4, Law 3, Natural Philosophy 2
Spy: Shadowing 1, Stealth 1, Bribery 4, Conceal 1, Forgery 4

Master Argus Rasmuller, Vendel League Representative
 Vendel Courtier 3 / Wanderer 3

Ven Waldson of Kivik *7th Sea - Henchman*
Brawn 3, Finesse 2, Resolve 3, Wits 2, Panache 2
Reputation: 5
Advantages: Large, Swordsman's Guild Member, Théan, Ussuran, Vendel (R/W)
Kjemper: (Journeyman) Attack (Shield) 4, Corps-à-Corps 4, Wall of Steel (Shield) 4, Exploit Weakness (Kjemper) 5
Captain: Strategy 2, Tactics 2, Ambush 2, Diplomacy 4, Gunnery 2, Incitation 3, Leadership 3, Logistics 2
Heavy Weapon: Attack 5, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 2
Pugilism: Attack 3, Footwork 3, Ear Clap 2, Uppercut 3
Sailor: Balance 2, Climbing 2, Knotwork 4, Rigging 3, Leaping 2, Navigation 4, Pilot 3, Sea Lore 2, Swimming 2, Weather 2
Shield: Parry (Shield) 5
Whaler: Balance 2, Knotwork 4, Throw (Harpoon) 4, Leaping 2, Sea Lore 2, Swimming 2, Weather 2

Ven Waldson of Kivik, Vesten Diplomat
 Vesten Pirate 3 / Captain 1 / Kjemper 2

and sorcery that is only trumped by his passion for the “new Montaigne”. Despite his cruelty and calculations he is a man of his word.

Vladimir Staver Gregorovich. Vlad is an Ussuran man well into his forties. He is a boyar of some note from the Knias of Veche. His son, Ivan has been out of the country, most recently in Freiburg and San Cristobal so anyone from those parts of the world will get a fair and pleasant grilling.

Sofia. This beautiful and alluring Ussuran woman looks to be in her mid twenties, but a few whisper (carefully) that she

The Lady Mira Gallandro of Vestini *7th Sea - Henchman*
Brawn 1, Finesse 2, Resolve 2, Wits 3, Panache 4
Reputation: 15
Advantages: Appearance (Stunning), Lord's Hand, Scarovese, Servants (Vodacce Brutes TR2), Théan (R/W), Ussuran (R/W), Vendel, Vodacce (R/W)
Cloak: Parry (Cloak) 4, Entangle 3
Courtesan: Acting 4, Dancing 4, Etiquette 3, Fashion 4, Jenny 5, Masseur 5, Unobtrusive 5, Cold Read 4, Conceal 2, Gossip 2, Politics 2, Seduction 2, Sincerity 4
Dirty Fighting: Attack (DF) 1, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 3, Eye-gouge 4, Parry (Improvised Weapon) 3, Throat Strike 4
Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 2
Knife: Attack (Knife) 2, Parry (Knife) 2, Throw (Knife) 2
Merchant: Cooking 2, Jenny 5, Perfumer 3
Spy: Shadowing 2, Stealth 4, Bribery 2, Hand Signs 2, Lip Reading 3

Lady Mira Gallandro, Agent of the Merchant Prince
 Vodacce Assassin 1 / Courtier 1 / Spy 1 - Exotic Shield Prof

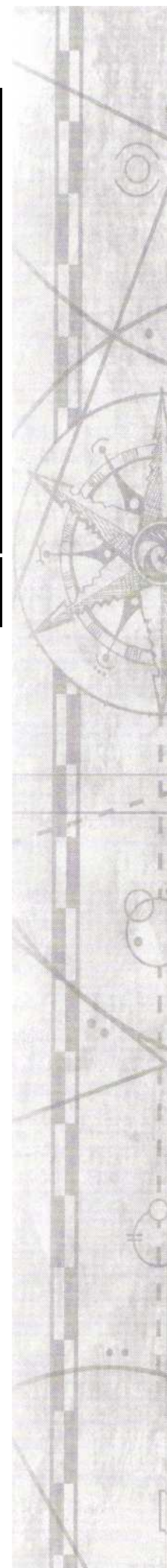
may be twice as old as that.

Nikita Odyesse Fyodorov of Somojez. Nikita is a young Ussuran man with sharp eyes and a deep hatred for anything even remotely Montaigne. He has vowed to himself, Theus and the First Prophet to kill any Montaigne he can. Obviously he knows the risk of angering the Court...so he'll look for other ways to do so. His hatred comes from the fact that his city was invaded and family killed during said invasion while he was away. He has money enough to get a good brute squad or two if he needs them.

Coika Reenya Borisova Stavertova. A Ussuran woman of small stature and brilliant green eyes. If there were a contest for the most bright and cheerful person in all of Ussura...perhaps even Théah itself...Coika could be the grand champion. She just might balance the rest of Ussura's doom and gloom. She has a Montaigne poodle named “Champaign” that is always with her.

Master Argus Rasmuller of Kirk. A Vendel man in his mid forties. Argus is a bit on the round side for his height. Many in he courts whisper that he is a deadly man to have as a enemy. There have been several wagers made to see who dies first, him or his Vodacce counterpart—Lady Mira Gallandro. There have been some unsubstantiated reports that he has convinced the Gaius to accept the Guilder as the national currency of Ussura.

Ven Waldson of Kivik. Ven is a tall man well into his



thirties. Ven has come to Ussura to seek out allies in the war against the Vendel. He is hoping to secure materials for boats as well as general aid and support to help solidify the Vestenmannavnjar side of the conflict.

The Lady Mira Gallandro of Vestini. Lady Mira is a Vodacce woman who appears to be in her early thirties. She is a champion of a rich, but strangely subtle style and air. She always speaks softly, yet all seem to be able to hear her. She always looks just to the left of a person to whom she is speaking and she nearly always either has a fan in her hands or a set of playing cards. Many wonder if she should actually be wearing a veil...

Soft Point 8: After Party Drink

As the party is winding down and the attendees are beginning to slip away into the early, early morning hours a servant, well dressed but somewhat tired looking approaches the heroes and invites them, on behalf of his lord, to have a drink. Who is this invitation from? Perhaps it is a visiting dignitary, or it could even be the Gaius himself curious about the heroes after having seen them at the party.

Soft Point 9: Dirty Hands

A man approaches the heroes when all things are quiet; perhaps he is in their room when they return from being out (he quickly explains that he told the innkeeper he was a Heroes' brother or some such thing). The man is a Montaigne by his accent and he tells the heroes that he used

Montaigne Porté Mage 7th Sea - Henchman

Brawn 2, Finesse 2, Reflexes 2, Wisdom 3, Panache 2

Reputation: 2

Advantages: Academy, Commission (lieutenant), Gentry, Montaigne (R/W), Porté Sorcerer (Full Blood), Théan (R/W), Ussuran

Background: Hunted (Ussura) 2, Hunted (Montaigne) 3

Knacks: Ambush 2, Attack (Fencing) 2, Attack (Firearms) 2, Cavalry Attack (Fencing) 3, Climbing 1, Dancing 1, Diplomacy 1, Etiquette 2, Fashion 3, Footwork 3, History 1, Mathematics 1, Mooch 3, Occult 4, Oratory 1, Parry (Fencing) 3, Philosophy 2, Reload 3, Research 1, Scrounging 3, Socializing 2, Sprinting 2, Stand Watch 2, Street Navigation 4, Throwing 2, Underworld LoReflexes 1, Unobtrusive 2

Porté: (Adept) Attunement 4, Bring 4, Bleeding 4, Pocket 4, Walk 4, Catch 4

Montaigne Porté Mage, Stranger in Strange Land

Montaigne Porté Mage 8

to be in the Montaigne Army but when the Army retreated he was forced to remain behind.

The man has enemies both in Ussura and Montaigne and now they have found him it seems. Normally a man such as himself, a Porté Mage, could just walk away, but he cannot do that as he has no blooded objects that he could walk to. He seeks the heroes' help in getting out of the city...

Soft Point 10: Finding Graviana

The heroes may notice, as they are going about town that they are being followed. The agent could be in the employ of any number of nobles or other well-off people whom they met at the party. It could be an agent of the Gaius, or his wife or even that of the Knias of Rurik.

It could be someone feels very slighted by the heroes and that someone has decided to make some trouble for the heroes. This could be in the manner of a duel or it could be that he or she decides to send some thugs their way to take care of them. Or it could be someone looking for help of some kind.

Hard Point 3: Graviana Cemetery

Kostya Pavtlow Ilyaovich has asked the heroes to meet him at the grave of his son, Staver Pavtlow Kostyov, two nights following the Gaius grand ball at two in the morning. Kostya is a well-trained and educated servant of the Gaius' palace. He is formal, precise and polite. But Kostya is a front of sorts, a willing pawn under the employ of Koshchei. He was asked to contact the heroes and arrange for their meeting at the cemetery.

When the heroes arrive Kostya will be kneeling before a small gravestone and as he sees or hears the heroes' approach he will stand and wipe a few tears from his face. Kostya will attempt to do small talk with the heroes at this point, as he is waiting for Koshchei to show up. This type of scene, in an obviously creepy setting, with a man who does not want to be there but is trying to "stall for time" can be both a tension builder and a tension breaker at the same time if done right.

A few minutes after the arrival of the heroes, a raven or two will fly and let down on this branch or that tombstone. Slowly more and more begin to arrive landing on tree branches, on top of statues or grave markers. The first few the heroes might not notice but when there's suddenly a murder of ravens about them this will undoubtedly make the

heroes nervous (its surely making Kostya nervous). Suddenly, as the heroes are focusing on all the ravens and crows they hardly notice the figure of a man come out of the darkness. As Koshchei the Undying finally arrives, Kostya will let out a huge sigh of relief.

Koshchei asks Kostya to make an introduction between the heroes and Koshchei, undoubtedly a few heroes might recognise the name. Once introductions are complete, Koshchei tells Kostya that he may go and thanks him for his favour. Turning to the heroes he tells them not to worry about the ravens, they are simply making sure that no one is spying upon them.

Koshchei is here to get the heroes to go to Molhyna and free his descendent from whatever malaise that it is that has fallen over him. He is quite aware of the twists and turns in his Knias, but it is not his place, in his mind, to give too much information on the matter. He has manipulated things far too much already in bringing the heroes here and sending them on. While he would like to see his Molhyna out from under a traitor's machinations, he is far more worried about a greater enemy.

Koshchei is pretty sure he knows who this enemy might be and what he might be planning, but he may not be strong enough to confront it on his own...and Matushka seems...unavailable since the ending of the war with Montaigne and some other event that has occurred in the south. What Koshchei does know is that if he can get his "son" out from under the spell he is currently afflicted by and put down the traitor, a strong Knias could stop the plans, and for now, this is enough.

Koshchei will not tell the heroes this, as it is far too much information for their needs. Instead he will take out a small flask of vodka, offering a sip to each. He then tells them the following. (Gamemasters, please change this "speech" to suit your needs, tone and style.)

Thank you for coming.

Kostya is a good man as was his son. You no doubt have a great concern at having such a meeting with one as myself at this time of night in such a place. This is understandable and quite logical; I do have something of a reputation as I understand it...so I will come straight away to the point if

this pleases you?

I need your help in delivering a set of correspondence to various lords and ladies in Molhyna for me: four letters and four people to be precise. This must be done with great care and respect for my privacy, if you take my meaning. He smiles. I do so value discretion, don't you?

If you could find in yourself a way to do this for me I can compensate you quite handsomely when you have completed this errand. To prove my point and generosity here is a demonstration of my favour that you may keep.

At this one of Koshchei's ravens flies forward and drops a small pouch in one of the heroes' hands. It has three small rubies in it, easily 500 guilders in value worth of stones.



Here are the four letters. He hands them a bundle tied with a waxed cord. *Each is addressed and they are to be delivered in the order in which you find them top to bottom. I understand that you, not being heartless rogues and scoundrels, would never dare open and read such personal messages.* The heroes get the hint that bad

things will happen to them if they open and read the messages. *I have taken the liberty of arranging for horses and foodstuffs for you, as well as procuring the aid of a guide if that is okay? I would suggest leaving as quickly as possible and I will await your return to Pavtlow. The guide and mounts await you at your residence so that you may collect whatever belongings you might need. Good night.*

With that Koshchei will start to walk away and the murder of ravens will begin to fly about in a confusing pattern, sometimes blocking the heroes view of the retreating man. At one point Koshchei will simply disappear, having turned into a raven and joined the birds flying about. He will follow them back to the hotel and watch their departure from the city. The letters given to the heroes by enigmatic Koshchei are addressed to the following people.

Sofia Linauisova. Sofia is a noblewoman with a large amount of land under her protection and authority. Her manor lies some 500 miles north east of Pavtlow. The heroes have, in all likelihood, never heard of the Lady Sofia, as she

rarely ever leaves her lands.

Viacheslav Tchernivich. (*Ussura* p38) Is the governor of Eniseisk. He is a former soldier and a good man. Only those heroes familiar with Eniseisk, the recent history of Molhyna or of the battles with the Kosar might have heard of Viacheslav.

Father Rullo Genovich. This Orthodox Priest is a man of honour and strong belief in the spirit of man. Only the most ardent followers of the church and its priests as well as those informed about Molhyna could have possibly heard of this man.

Knias Vladimir Goroduk Drakov v’Pietrov. Vladimir rules his Knias with a rather terrifying fist, but this was not always so... It was said that before the death of his wife, that Vladimir worked very hard to undue the evil mastered and manufactured by his father. But since the death of his love, it is said he is fast on the road to become even more terrifying than his sire.

Soft Point 11: Not So Adventurous

If the heroes decide to not help Koshchei here are several ways you might get them to come around. Use them as you might need, or think that they might work best with your particularly stubborn set of players.

1. They will find a rather large contingent of Stelets waiting for them. This force is meant to over take the heroes and throw them into prison. After a week in an Ussuran cell they might be more inclined to help Koshchei. However now they are not getting paid for it.

2. They could suddenly find themselves each under a terrible curse enacted upon them by Koshchei. Such curses should hit each hero where they are most vulnerable and should be unpleasant to an extreme. The curse will not bother them as long as they are doing what Koshchei wants and he will remove it when they return.

3. The heroes could make it to their room then awaken, unable to move with Koshchei standing in the room, over them. He can simply tell them to do what he wants, perhaps displaying some pyrotechnics and how it is quite unwise to make him angry.

4. Each hero suddenly discovers a loss of something very important to him or her. Guess who has it and guess who will give it back when their done doing what he wants.

5. A kindly old woman and her granddaughter approach the

heroes and sit and have tea with them and she tells them a terrible story of retribution and pain and death. (Make it graphic and fit the phobias and fears of the heroes and players.) She then tells them that this is their fate if they do not follow the course set to them the night before.

If the heroes attempt to open the letter they will find that there is something about the letters that makes them unable to open them. It is a deep sense of foreboding mixed with the way it used to feel as a child when they knew they were not supposed to do something and they were contemplating doing it anyway. If the players persist, tell them straight up that they know something very bad will happen to them if they open a letter and remind them that there are much greater things to be feared than death. If the “heroes” persist, give them your worst. Koshchei, at over a 1000 years old, is very capable of the most horrid of thoughts and actions a man could possibly have.

Soft Point 12: Wolves on the Prowl

As the heroes make their way out of the cemetery and back to their accommodations they will get the feeling that they are most definitely not alone. As they continue they will get the sense of movement first to their left, then to the right. Then they will notice several pair of yellow eyes looking at them from the darkness ahead...and then to the left...right and finally, behind them. They are surrounded.

These wolves are simply hungry and see the heroes as an easy meal, but their appearance will undoubtedly inspire suspicion and worry within the group, which is a good thing. If it suits your game and style to have these beasts here for more reason than a quick meal, feel free to make them spies of The Wolf or even Knias Aleksy, or some other power you desire them to be mastered by. The wolves will try and keep several heroes distracted while the rest of the pack attempts to get some food and run. Overly loud noises, or a good hit will likely send any of these hungry beasts off to find easier prey.

Hard Point 4: A Guide to Molhyna

When the heroes arrive to their residence they will find a horses for each member of the group plus one more. On this horse’s saddle sits a crow with a small string and card attached to its leg. In small careful script it says, “This is your guide. When you are ready show it the first letter.”



Wulv 7th Sea - Villain

Brawn 4, Finesse 3, Reflexes 5, Wisdom 3, Panache 3

Reputation: -22

Adv: Bogatyr, Cold Climate Conditioning, Fhidel, Fhidel Connection (3), Montaigne, Pyeryem Sorcerer (Full Blooded), Swordsman's Guild Member, Théan, Teodoran (R/W), Ussuran (R/W)

Arcana: Ruthless

Knacks: Ambush 5, Astronomy 1, Attack (Bow) 2, Attack (DF) 3, Attack (Hand Axe) 2, Attack (HWeapon) 4, Bear Hug 2, Break 4, Break Fall 2, Long Distance Running 4, Cheating 2, Climbing 4, Direction Sense 4, Escape 2, Fishing 3, Footwork 2, Gambling 3, Grapple 3, Head Butt 1, Heavy Weapon 2, History 2, Mathematics 1, Occult 3, Parry (Hand Axe) 2, Parry (HWeapon) 3, Philosophy 2, Research 1, Ride 3, Scrounging 2, Shadowing 4, Skinning 3, Snapshot 3, Socializing 2, Sprinting 2, Stealth 3, Street Navigation 2, Survival 5, Swimming 1, Throw (Hand Axe) 2, Throwing 2, Tracking 5, Trail Signs 2, Trick Shooting 2, Underworld Lore 2

Bogatyr Swordsman: (Journeyman) Lunge 5, Pommel Strike 4, Throw (Axe) 4, Exploit Weakness (Bogatyr) 4

Pyeryem: (Adept) Man 4, Speak 4, Wolf 5, Boar 4, Fish 4

Wulv, Dangerous Agent of Rurik

Ussuran Fighter 2 / Pyeryem 8 / Wanderer 1 / Bogatyr 3: CR 14; HD 13d10+d8+14; hp 89; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; AC 17 (+7 udp); Base Atk +13; Grapple +16; Atk mw battleaxe +18 melee (d8+8; x3) or battleaxe +14 ranged (d8+8; x3) or longbow +13 ranged (d8; x3); Full Atk mw battleaxe +18/+13/+8 melee (d8+8; x3) and claw +11 melee (d6+3) or battleaxe +14 ranged (d8+6; x3) or longbow +13/+8/+3 ranged (d8; x3); SA accuracy with axes, all in attack, pyeryem adept (tiger's claw); SQ evasion, forms(boar, fish, fox, goshawk, wolf), shape of the beast, transformation 3/day; SV Fort +13, Ref +9, Will +9; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 10; Skills: bluff +5, climb +13, escape artist +4, gather information +6, hide +11, knowledge (arcana) +9, knowledge (astronomy) +4, knowledge (history) +7, knowledge (local) +5, knowledge (mathematics) +4, knowledge (philosophy) +7, move silently +11, profession (skinning) +7, ride +7, sleight of hand +4, speak language (fhideli, montaigne, teodoran, théan, ussuran), survival +15, swim +4, tumble +4; Feats: cold climate conditioning, cruel (flaw), full blooded (pyeryem), half blooded (pyeryem), iron will, lunge, power attack, run, ruthless (wile), track, unarmored defense proficiency (beginner), weapon focus (battleaxe), weapon specialization (battleaxe); Spells (4/5/4/3/2) animal friendship, hold animal, detects snares and pits; animal messenger, barkskin; bull's strength, cat's grace; charm monster, phantom steed; summon nature's ally IV, locate creature

Once the heroes collect their gear they will find out from the innkeeper that their bill has been taken care and the

innkeeper wishes them a safe and profitable journey and hopes they will come again soon.

The heroes are welcome to rest the night and leave in the morning or to leave right way. In any event when they show the bird the first letter, it will squawk and fly off expecting the heroes to follow it out of Pavtlow and to the east, towards long distant Molhyna.

The journey from Pavtlow to the manor of Sofia Linauisova is nearly 500 miles, no small journey indeed. If the heroes push their steeds and travel as much as safely possible they can make the trip in about nine days. If they take a more relaxed stance on the trip it will take about twelve days. Really pushing it might make it as little a seven, but this will surely result the in the loss of several horses. About half the time they will likely be able to find a farm, or small village in which to hold up for a night.

Each day the raven will be with the group and will unerringly lead them in the direction in which they must go. If they treat the bird right, it might help them later on, such as warning them of approaching men or wolves, or it may lead them into some trouble if they treat it badly, as you see fit. As to how complicated this trip is ultimately up to you. Here are several possible ideas and hooks for the long trip east and north of Pavtlow. Keep in mind that you could run one of the soft points from the beginning of the adventure that you did not use.

Soft Point 13: The Wulv

A group of men lead by a man simply known as Wulv (a rather ruthless skin-changer) hound the heroes' trail. The Knias of Rurik has sent the men to investigate Lake Vigil as well as look into the heroes. Wulv and his men are careful, practised hunters. As shown in the sidebar, Wulv is a *tough* villainous adversary...if you want or need to tone him down please feel free to. If you are looking for an Ussuran nature/hunter oriented Villain to boost your game's danger level, Wulv's your man.

Soft Point 14: Men on the Prowl

Some hunters or bandits have come upon the heroes trail and decided to "get into some trouble". Times are tough, the War with Montaigne has left many dissatisfied and more still on hard times. Such times breed hard men. These men could be Montaigne or Ussuran deserters or simple local folk who have been to hard pressed by their noble protectors.

Oprechnina Mid-ranking Officer*7th Sea - Henchman**Brawn 3, Finesse 3, Resolve 3, Wisdom 2, Panache 2**Reputation: -30.**Adv: Commission, Théan (R/W), Toughness, Stelets Membership (Oprechnina), Swordsman's Guild Membership, Ussuran (R/W)**Bogatyr (Apprentice): Lunge 2, Pommel Strike 2, Throw (Axe) 2, Exploit Weakness (Bogatyr)**Archer: Attack (Bow) 2, Fletcher 2**Athlete: Climbing 2, Footwork 2, Sprinting 1, Throwing 2**Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 2**Heavy Weapon: Attack 3, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 3**Hunter: Stealth 2, Survival 3, Tracking 2**Rider: Ride 2**Sentry: Etiquette 1, Stand Watch 2, Unobtrusive 1, Menace 1, Ambush 2**Shield: Parry (Shield) 3***Oprechnina Officer, Mid-ranked Handler**

Ussuran Fighter 4 / Bogatyr 1: CR 5; HD 5d10+5; hp 32; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 14 (+2 Dex +2 armor) or 16 (shield); Base Atk +5; Grapple +7; Atk +9 mw battleaxe melee (d8+4; x3) or +8 battleaxe ranged (d8+4; x3; 10ft incr.) or composite (+2 Str) longbow +7 ranged (d8+2; x3) or pistol +7 (d10; x30); SA accuracy with axes; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 10; Skills: climb +5, craft (fletching) +3, hide +6, intimidate +4, knowledge (nobility and royalty) +2, listen +1, move silently +5, ride +4, speak language (théan, ussuran), spot +1, survival +4; Feats: exotic weapon proficiency (firearms), expertise, iron will, pommel strike, power attack, skill focus (move silently), track, weapon focus (battleaxe), weapon specialization (battleaxe)

Oprechnina 7th Sea - Brutes*Threat Rating: 2**Usual Weapons: Axes/Swords (Large Weapons: 9), Archery (6)**TN to be Hit: 15**Knacks: Ambush 2, Etiquette -1, Menace 1, Riding 2, Tracking 1, Underworld Lore 1***Oprechnina, Member of the Blackness of Hell**

Ussuran Warrior 2: CR 1; HD 2d8; hp 9; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; AC 12 (+1 Dex +1 armor); Base Atk +2; Grapple +3; Atk battleaxe +3 melee (d8+1; x3) or longbow +3 ranged (d8; x3); AL LE or NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 13, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 9; Skills: gather information +2, hide +3, intimidate +1, move silently +3, ride +4, survival +0; Feats: skill focus (gather information), track

Soft Point 15: Free Like the Wind

Perhaps the heroes could come upon an Fhideli caravan. Such a band of men and women could easily bring the heroes several adventures. They could ride with the caravan for part of the way, in which case certain social foibles could easily be made. Such foibles could bring great tension and hostility, a perfect chance for the players to roleplay and simmer down such hot-blooded people. Finding a missing child or saving a young colt could make them a good friend of the Fhideli.

Soft Point 16: Blackness of Hell

It is very likely that at some point in time the heroes will encounter the Oprechnina ("The Blackness of Hell"), which is the personal army of the Knias of Molhyna. It is hardly likely that such an encounter will be peaceful. The Oprechnina is used to getting what it wants and when. The leader of the band will want to know where the heroes are from, where they are going, what is their business and if they hear of the letters, will want them given to them now and they are not afraid to kill the heroes for disobeying them. These men are black-hearted thugs who believe that they literally have nothing to fear no matter how evil their actions might be. Should they get a hold of the letters, the leader will try and open one and as he does so something very terrible will happen to him. He could fall to the ground clutching his face and throat before dying after several moments of the most horrid and agonising screams the heroes will have likely ever heard, or possibly he will simply burst into flame. No matter what, anything happening to the commander will spur one of the group's numbers to attempt to escape and the rest to attack the heroes without mercy.

Hard Point 5: Manor of Lady Sofia

After nearly two weeks of travel across the broad northern plains and farms of Molhyna the group of heroes and their raven guide come upon the large manor of Lady Sofia Linauisova. As they approach the bird will circle away from the group and take a spot in a nearby tree, seemingly content there.

The boyar's homer is a two-story building, spread out, with a large structure that must be a stable as well as two other smaller houses. Several men and woman work the grounds,



Sofia Linauisova 7th Sea - Henchman

Brawn 1, Finesse 2, Reflexes 4, Wisdom 3, Panache 2

Reputation: 20

Advantages: Age & Wisdom (Middle Age), Cold Climate Conditioning, Noble, Théan (R/W), Ussuran (R/W), Servants

Arcana: Stubborn

Knacks: Animal Training 1, Attack (Knife) 2, Diplomacy 2, Etiquette 2, Fashion 1, Gossip 2, Memorizing 2, Oratory 2, Parry (Knife) 2, Ride 2, Scheming 1, Seduction 1, Sincerity 2, Throw (Knife) 1, Dancing 3

Sofia Linauisova, Loyal Boyar

Ussuran Aristocrat 3: CR 2; HD 3d8; hp 13; Init -1; Spd 30 ft; AC 9 (-1 Dex); Base Atk +2; Grapple +0; Atk mw dagger +2 melee (d4-2; 19-20/x2); AL NG; SV Fort -1, Ref +0, Will +5; Str 7, Dex 9, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 10; Skills: bluff +6, diplomacy +5, gather information +4, handle animal +4, intimidate +1, knowledge (nobility and royalty) +6, perform (dancing) +6, perform (oratory) +4, ride +4, speak language (théan, ussuran); Feats: cold climate conditioning, expertise, iron will, parry, stubborn (hubris)

Vyslav (aka Gregoir the Spy) 7th Sea - Villain

Brawn 2, Finesse 2, Resolve 3, Wits 4, Panache 3

Reputation: 0

Adv: Night Trained, Théan (r/w), Teodoran (R/W), Ussuran (R/W)

Arcana: Deceitful

Courtier: Dancing 1, Etiquette 2, Fashion 2, Oratory 3, Diplomacy 1, Gaming 3, Gossip 3, Lip Reading 3, Memorizing 3, Mooch 2, Scheming 2, Sincerity 2

Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 3, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 3, Eye-gouge 3, Kick 2, Parry (Improvised Weapon) 5, Throat Strike 4, Throw (Improvised Weapon) 2

Rider: Ride 2

Servant: Etiquette 2, Fashion 2, Menial Tasks 3, Unobtrusive 4, Accounting 2, Drive Carriage 2, Drive Sleigh 2, Gossip 3, Hagglng 2, Seneschal 2, Valet 3

Spy: Shadowing 3, Stealth 3, Bribery 2, Conceal 4, Cryptography 2, Disguise 5, Forgery 3, Interrogation 2, Lip Reading 3, Memorizing 3, Poison 2, Sincerity 2

Vyslav, Gregoir the Spy

Ussuran Assassin 2 / Courtier 1 / Spy 4: CR 7; HD 7d6; hp 24; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; AC 10; Base Atk +4; Grapple +4; Atk dagger +4 melee (d4; 19-20/x2) or dagger +4 ranged (d4; 19-20/x2); SA death attack (DC 14), sneak attack +3d6; SQ alias (DC 36), brilliant get-away, contacts, poison use, style and grace, talent, wealth; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +7, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 14; Skills: bluff+9, diplomacy +7, disguise +10, forgery +9, gather information +10, hide +6, intimidate +8, knowledge (cryptography) +5, knowledge (economics) +8, knowledge (nobles) +7, move silently +6, perform (dance) +6, perform (oratory) +10, profession (servant) +8, ride +5, speak language (théan, ussuran), spot +5; Feats: blindfight, deceitful, expertise, parry

all of who watch curiously as the heroes ride up. Before the heroes get to the house one of the servants, a small woman, runs into the house and as the heroes ride up, a fairly formal looking man, a servant by his dress, walks out of the front door and bows in respect to the heroes.

This is Vyslav, Sofia Linauisova's butler and seneschal. He smiles and greets the heroes fairly, snapping his fingers for two of the servants to gather the horses from the heroes. He takes their names, and escorts them into the house to a drawing room. He tells them that beverages will be brought in immediately and asks for their patience while he speaks to the Lady Sofia Linauisova.

True to Vyslav's word, the heroes are in the warm and comfortable room for only a few minutes before a servant girl in modest but clean clothing comes in with a tray of drinks. Ten minutes later Vyslav returns and welcomes the heroes in the name of his Lady and bids them to take the opportunity to clean up after several days on the road and to perhaps take a rest before dinner this evening where the Lady will be available to meet with the heroes and speak with them.

If the heroes try and just drop off the letter and run, Vyslav will not stop them, but he will explain that his Lady will be most disappointed if the heroes do not at least dine with her this evening so that she may speak with the heroes at length

of the world abroad. However, if the heroes need to go, they need to go. If the heroes do leave continue onto soft point seventeen.

If the heroes do stay they are each given a small if not very comfortable room. A pair of servants will be put at their disposal who will help them with drawing baths, pressing clothes or any other general tasks the heroes might need. The servants are tight-lipped but canny heroes might get any number of the following tidbits. Each tidbit should be taken and used to best suit the tone and flavor in which you are running this adventure.

1. That there are few guests this far into Molhyna.
2. The people under Sofia Linauisova are happy.
3. The Oprechnina are feared greatly and work with

impunity.

4. Sofia Linauisova is a good woman who is not happy at current events of late.
5. Koshchei has been to the house before, several years ago.
6. Viacheslav Tchernivich has never been to the house, though a few of the servants might have been soldiers under his command.
7. No one has heard of Father Rullo Genovich at the Manor.
8. The servants will not dare to communicate any displeasure of the Knias, though a few of the older ones might sadly shake their head in sorrow.

After the heroes clean up and rest a bit they are welcome to walk the grounds of the estate, which are well cared for but somewhat wild compared to the carefully sculpted gardens of the Avalon, Montaigne and Castillian nobles. A hour or so after sunset Vyslav will come to the heroes and ask that they follow him to dinner. The Lady Sofia puts out a rather nice spread for the heroes, but nothing extravagant or over the top. The food is simple, but flavourful and is well proportioned; it is a meal set to impress the frugality of the host yet the importance of the guest to the host.

Lady Sofia will come into the dining hall just after the heroes get a drink. She introduces herself and takes in the heroes' names then thanks the heroes for being her guest. Sofia has a lot of questions in regards to the world outside her domain. She will want to hear about their trip, their time in Pavtlow and especially of the world beyond Ussura. Eventually, if the characters do not, she will come to the point of asking why the heroes are here and will take possession of the letter from them, which she in turn gives directly to Vyslav and asks him to place it upon her desk. She'll look back to the heroes and tell them that she will look upon the letter after dinner, and if need be have a response for them to return in the morning. For now though, she is simply desirous to have a good time and will have one of her servants sing a song or play the guslyar (a stringed instrument).

Sofi tries to avoid politics, though she is passionate about her people. If the heroes can get her going, especially after several vodkas, she will voice her disdain and hatred for the Oprechnina and sorrow and fear of the Knias. It will appear to the heroes that her servant, Vyslav, will do anything he thinks he needs to do to save his lady from speaking up too much, but in reality this is not the case.

Oprechnina 7th Sea - Brutes

Threat Rating: 3

Usual Weapons: Axes/Swords (Large Weapons: 9), Archery (6)

TN to be Hit: 20

Knacks: Ambush 3, Etiquette 0, Menace 2, Riding 2, Tracking 2, Underworld Lore 2

Oprechnina, Seasoned Fighter

Ussuran Fighter 1 / Rogue 1: CR 2; HD d10+d6+2; hp 11; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 14 (+2 Dex, +2 mw leather armor); Base Atk +1; Grapple +3; Atk battleaxe +3 melee (d8+2; x3) or longbow +3 ranged (d8; x3) or pistol +4 ranged (d10; x3); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ trapfinding; AL LE or NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10; Skills: gather information +5, hide +5, intimidate +5, move silently +5, ride +5, speak language (théan, ussuran), survival +3; Feats: exotic weapon proficiency (firearms), iron will, track, weapon focus (pistol)

Vyslav is a spy for the leader of the Oprechnina, Parigorii Kalenikov (Ussura p119) and he is trying his best to maintain his cover yet at the same time get concrete evidence to use against this uppity boyar and these strangers. He already tried to open the letter when Sofia asked him to put it up on the desk but he got a strange sense of foreboding and he wisely stopped. He decided it might be best to try and read it after the Lady opened it, perhaps.

Soft Point 17: Drop and Run

If the heroes simply drop off the correspondence and continue on they will miss the attack on Lady Sofia described below and will not know that there's now a squad of Oprechnina now after them. The squad should fall upon them some few days later seeing to capture them; hopefully the heroes are up to the challenge.

Hard Pt 6: Oprechnina in the Night

After a heavy diner, several songs and more vodka the heroes and the Lady Sofia are all quite ready for bed. After looking over the letter Sofia will be anxious and will start drawing several small notes together, during this time Vyslav is able to get a few sneak peeks of the correspondence and decides to send a small messenger bird off himself.

Several hours later, near to three am, the Lady Sofia asleep at her desk, pen in hand a large band of Oprechnina approach the house. Their mission is to take the Boyar and

her guests as prisoner and burn the house.

The heroes are given fair warning however by the raven. Either it's pecking at a hero's head (if the window was left open) or the gentle wrapping at the window. As the hero looks to the bird he will see the two-dozen horsemen coming in the distance. Vyslav will attempt to maintain his cover; he is not willing to give the heroes a target for their aggression. It will not take the men of the Oprechnina long to get to the house and Lady Sofia will spare no time in getting the heroes out of the house via a small secret tunnel. She tells them that they must go on, that she will distract the Oprechnina as best she can while they get away under the cover of darkness. She gives them a small letter to give to Viacheslav Tchernivich and thanks them for their efforts. Sofia tells them that what they are doing is very important and that they cannot let anything stop them from their duty. She tells them a servant with horses will be waiting for them a mile east from where they exit.

A short time later the heroes come out from the tunnel into a small copse of trees. They are about a fifth of a mile east of the house and can easily see the front of it. There's shouting and it is obvious that the Oprechnina are not happy at all and want to know where the Lady's guests are. They can see Sofia talking but there's no way to read her lips or to hear her. Whatever she says it makes the Oprechnina furious and he pulls out a pistol and shoots the woman. The servants cry out and the Oprechnina commence to finish the job and burn the house.

The heroes might try and stay and fight alongside the Lady Sofia but she will plead for them to escape and complete their duty. They might try and convince her to go along, but she knows that if she can stall the Oprechnina the heroes will have an easier time of it. She truly doesn't believe (or perhaps doesn't care if) anything bad will happen to her despite the reputation of the stelets. The fact that the man kills her is a surprise even to himself, to be honest...that was not his orders, she just happened to push the exact wrong button.

If the heroes kidnap the Lady, they will have a rougher time of getting away as the stelets will automatically be searching the woods. The stelets should be difficult, and more than likely more than a match for the heroes. After all, they have been warned of the number of heroes and perhaps even their competency by the master spy.

Does Lady Sofia need to die? No, but her death sets up to the heroes what level of "game" they are now playing. If a soldier is willing to kill one of the nobles in such a brutal fashion, there is little doubt as to what will happen to them. This tragic death will also set for the heroes that there is a struggle between good and evil happening in Molhyna and that the Oprechnina are most definitely not serving the side of good.

Good to her words, there is a servant waiting for them with their horses. They will see the raven sitting with them, waiting for the heroes to mount up before flying to guide them away. The servant will let them have the horses and telling them he knows of a village he can (and will) run to, runs off into the night after wishing the heroes luck.

Soft Point 18: Oprechnina Scouts

As the heroes collect the horses from the tearful servant (he can hear what is going on in the distance) a trio of men, Oprechnina scouts see the heroes and attack. One has a horn that he could call on but a canny hero should be able to stop him from doing so. In fact, unless you want the characters to battle the Oprechnina, the man should be stopped, but the player will not know this and you can play it up with dramatic zeal, allowing the heroes this minor victory on this very dark night.

Hard Point 7: Eniseisk

The road to *Viacheslav Tchernivich* (Ussura p38) and the city of Eniseisk is a long one, longer than the one from Pavtlow to Lady Sofia's manor by nearly 150 miles. No doubt the heroes will be pushing their mounts to get the next letter to its recipient. The chance for encounters across this distance and time are most definitely possible. Villages and communities could each have their own little problems that they could drag the heroes into.

The heroes could easily run into Oprechnina patrols. These patrols would likely not know of the heroes' plot and mission and would simply be patrols looking for signs of trouble. Weather could become a problem in the form of heavy thunderstorms. Again, bandits and Fhideli could be a thorn in the heroes' side.

And lastly, there are the animals of the wild, such as wolves that may or may not be more than they seem as well as other more supernatural forces (nature spirits, ghosts, etc.) that might take an interest in the heroes as they race along.



Viacheslav Tchernivich *7th Sea - Hero**Brawn 4, Finesse 3, Resolve 4, Wits 4, Panache 2**Reputation: 21**Advantages:* Academy, Age & Wisdom, Eisen (R/W), Natural Aptitude (Strategy), Noble, Théan (R/W), Ussuran (R/W)*Archer:* Attack (Bow) 3, Fletcher 4, Horse Archery 3, Trick Shooting 4*Bodyguard:* Interpose 3, Shadowing 1, Unobtrusive 2, Cold Read 3, Menace 3*Commander:* Strategy 3, Tactics 3, Artillery 1, Cartography 2, Diplomacy 2, Gunnery 1, Incitation 3, Leadership 4, Logistics 4*Firearms:* Attack (Firearms) 3, Reload 3*Heavy Weapon:* Attack (Hv Weapons) 4, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 4*Hunter:* Stealth 2, Survival 4, Tracking 4, Trail Signs 2, Traps 3, Ambush 3*Knife:* Attack (Knife) 3, Parry (Knife) 3, Throw (Knife) 2*Politician:* Etiquette 1, Oratory 2, Socializing 3, Diplomacy 2, Incitation 2, Politics 2, Rabble-Rousing 2, Scheming 2*Rider:* Ride 4**Viacheslav Tchernivich, Ussuran Hero****Ussuran Courtier 2 / Fighter 2 / Noble 5 / Ranger 2 / Captain 2:**

CR 13; HD 4d6 + 7d8 + 2d10 + 13; hp 70; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; AC 10; Base Atk +8; Grapple +9; Atk mw greataxe +10 melee (d12+1; x3) or mw composite (+1 Str) longbow +9 ranged (d8+1; x3); Full Atk mw greataxe +10/+5 melee (d12+1; x3) or mw composite (+1 Str bonus) longbow +7/+7/+4 ranged (d8+1; x3); SA favored enemy (animal), taunt; SQ commanding presence+2, cunning plans, motivational speech, seduction, style and grace, wealth, wild empathy +3; AL NG; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +15; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 10; Skills: craft (arrowmaking) +9, craft (maps) +9, craft (strategy) +9, craft (traps) +6, diplomacy +6, hide +6, intimidate +8, knowledge (economics) +11, knowledge (nobility) +8, listen +4, move silently +6, perform (oratory) +10, profession (siege engineer) +4, profession (tactician) +9, ride +10, sense motive +11, speak language (eisen, théan, ussuran), spot +4, survival +10; Feats: academy(diplomacy, ride, sense motive), exotic weapon proficiency (firearms), expertise, leadership, iron will, mounted archery, mounted combat, parry, rapid shot, skill focus (knowledge (economics), profession (tactician)), track

And lastly, if you so choose, perhaps the Oprechnina at the Lady Sofia's house have found the heroes tracks and now give pursuit to them. A cat and mouse chase might work very well for you and your group, with the raven perhaps helping the group by warning them of their arrival. This might allow the heroes' time to set-up an ambush and get revenge upon the men who murdered the Lady and her

servants.

In any event, the heroes should arrive at Eniseisk some week and a half to two weeks following the attack on Lady Sofia.

It is unlikely that news of the event has reached the small community given the fact that it was a night attack, that the heroes are moving so fast and that the Oprechnina doesn't want the other nobles alarmed unnecessarily.

Eniseisk (Ussura p38) is the home of 35,000 or so folk and sits on the eastern edge of Lake Vigil (*Ozero*

Bodrustvovany). The heroes will easily be able to find a small hotel or inn in the city, though their appearance will undoubtedly call attention...it is not that often that they get travellers from so far away, after all. It would be right to guess that Viacheslav Tchernivich will hear of the heroes' arrival before they find him.

Viacheslav Tchernivich is an honourable man who has great concerns weighing on his mind and soul. He fears for his people and his lands to the point that he is actually considering declaring his independence from the Knias and from the Gaius, he only waits to see what happens to the Kosar and their bold declaration of independence.

Viacheslav is also a smart and cautious man, he will wish to make sure the heroes are not some spy sent from Sladivgorod. The note from Sofia (which only says, "Trust them Viacheslav dear." if the heroes check.) and the letter from Koshchei will bring the heroes into the confidence of the ruler of Eniseisk.

He will tell them of the bright hope that all thought Vladimir Drakov v'Petrov was going to be and the dark day that the Knias' ladylove was killed. He will not tell them what is on the letter from Koshchei, but he understands that they must go to Sladivgorod. He will help them as best he can, getting a small launch to take them across the Lake after they have had a good night's rest and a small feast at Viacheslav's table.

What the heroes do not know is that Koshchei has called upon Viacheslav to begin crafting a small army of trusted men and women who Viacheslav knows will not sit idly by while evil and tyranny run rampant if they are given a leader. Viacheslav is not that leader, but he can bring the small but dedicated to that leader, if he or she can be brought before them by the heroes, which is why they must go onto Sladivgorod. Though he will not tell *them* this.

When Viacheslav commented on the group sailing across

Nikita, Fyodor and Ilya *7th Sea - Henchman**Brawn 5, Finesse 2, Reflexes 2, Wisdom 2, Panache 2**Reputation: 8**Advantages: Appearance (Above Average), Cold Climate Conditioning, Large, Ussuran**Knacks: Attack (Bow) 3, Attack (Dirty Fighting) 3, Attack (Heavy Weapons) 2, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 1, Attack (Knife) 3, Balance 3, Bear Hug 2, Break 1, Climbing 2, Drive Sleigh 1, Escape 3, Etiquette 1, Fashion 1, Fletcher 4, Gossip 1, Grapple 3, Head Butt 3, Kick 4, Knotwork 4, Lake LoReflexes 4, Leaping 2, Menial Tasks 2, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 2, Parry (Improvised Weapon) 1, Parry (Knife) 1, Pilot 4, Ride 1, Rigging 3, Socializing 4, Stealth 2, Street Navigation 2, Survival 2, Swimming 3, Throw (Knife) 1, Tracking 1, Trick Shooting 3, Weather 1***Nikita, Fyodor and Ily, Three Brothers****Fighter 2 / Pirate 2 / Rogue 1 / Wanderer 1:** CR 6; HD 4d10

+d8+d6; hp 30; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; AC 10; Base Atk +4; Grapple +11; Atk knife +7 melee (d4+3; 17-20/x3) or composite (+2 Str) longbow +4 ranged (d8+2; x3); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ evasion, damage reduction 2/-, trapfinding; AL N or NG; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 10; Skills: balance +7, climb +10, craft (arrowmaking) +6, escape artist +4, gather information +3, hide +3, intimidate +1, knowledge (local) +5, knowledge (nobles) +3, jump +8, move silently +3, profession (navigator) +5, profession (sailor) +5, ride +2, speak language (ussuran), survival +6, swim +4; Feats: appearance (above average), brawny, cold climate cond, expertise, improved grapple, improved unarmed strike, pirate trick (sea legs), two weapon fighting

Lake Vigil what he meant was that they would be riding around the coast of the of the lake, as far as anyone knows...no one has ever sailed the large inland sea.

In the morning Viacheslav will introduce the heroes to a trio of brothers: Nikita, Fyodor and Ilya. These men will take the heroes aboard a rather large fishing boat and that will take them along the coast to the far western point of the Lake. Viacheslav will give the heroes clothing more appropriate for this region, which he hopes will make them a little less conspicuous and tells the brothers to give the heroes some lessons in the way of thing while on the lake to help them blend in a bit more.

The Lake, which is actually a sea the size of the island of Avalon is one of the most unusual places the heroes will come across in Ussura. The waters are clear and look inviting but are terribly bitter and are said to have been cursed by Matushka. They do not freeze in the winter and

when the sun is not out, the fishermen stay off the lake. The brothers will warn the heroes of creatures and things in the lake best left undisturbed.

One note of interest, the raven guide will not fly to the boat or over the lake at all. As in *never*. No mater what the heroes do, it simply will not fly above the lake, but will follow along above the shore and will not approach within twenty-five yards of the shore.

The trip along the Lake's side will save the heroes a several days, as the brothers are very experienced in these waters. At night they pull the boat ashore and take their rest with s small fire and a comfortable attitude. All in all it might take as little as four or five days and will also save the heroes from likely run-ins with the Oprechnina or some other villain or rival that might be after them.

Soft Point 19: Another Spy?

The heroes will likely be very suspicious of anyone and anything at this point, and with good reason. You could drop into their midst another spy, the Oprechnina will have them nearly everywhere after all, or you could drop in a red herring, perhaps letting them see something that looks suspicious but turns out to be something less then what it appears. Ie. The heroes see a local merchant passing a small vial of blue liquid to a man they later meet who is the cook of Viacheslav. What is this blue liquid? Why were they so clandestine in their trade of goods for money? To the heroes it will likely look like poison that they are maybe going to get fed later that night, but in reality it might simply be a perfume that the cook purchased for his *girlfriend* and does

Oprechnina Spy *7th Sea - Henchman**Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Reflexes 2, Wisdom 3, Panache 3**Advantages: Appearance (Above Average), Night Trained, Small, Théan (R/W), Teodoran (R/W), Ussuran (R/W)**Background: Debt 2, Obligation 2**Knacks: Apothecary 3, Attack (Knife) 5, Balance 2, Balancing 2, Break Fall 2, Bribery 4, Compounds 1, Conceal 4, Cooking 2, Cooking 2, Cryptography 2, Dancing 3, Diagnosis 2, Diplomacy 1, Disguise 2, Etiquette 2, Fashion 2, Fashion 2, First Aid 2, Flora 2, Footwork 4, Hand Signs 2, Lip Reading 2, Memorizing 3, Menial Tasks 2, Mooch 2, Oratory 1, Parry (Knife) 3, Poison 3, Quack 3, Ride 2, Scheming 2, Seduction 3, Shadowing 4, Sincerity 1, Stealth 4, Stunt 2, Throw (Knife) 2, Unobtrusive 3, Valet 4***Oprechnina Spy, Coerced Local**

Ussuran Alchemist 1 / Spy 3 / Swashbuckler 4 - Small feat

not want his wife to know about it.

Soft Point 20: A Dark Shape

As the heroes are riding along, watching the brothers move the craft expertly along the shore one of the heroes suddenly sees a large, dark form pass underneath them without so much as causing any disturbance. The brothers will look nervous (they are not fools after all) but they will keep the craft moving.

Thing Under the Water 7th Sea - Villain

Brawn 8, Finesse 2, Reflexes 2, Wisdom 1, Panache 1

TN to Be Hit: 35

Attack: 4k2 Bite; Damage: (10k2 Bite)

Fear Rating: 4

Skills: Ambush 4, Swimming 6

Special: The “Thing” oozes a rather nasty inky-chemical, which makes getting a good look at the beast almost impossible. If the heroes could see it, it would look something like a demonic manta ray with two-dozen eyes (Perception 6k2). If the hero has contact with the chemical cloud about the beast they suffer -1 penalty to Brawn per Round, until they reach Brawn 0, then they sink and drown. The effect wears off with a hot soapy bath and a day’s rest.

Thing Under the Water, Dangerous Creature

Use Kraken - Monster Manual p162

Soft Point 21: A Storm

As they travel along, the sun starts to fade away as storm clouds move in. The brothers argue for several minutes amongst themselves then tell the heroes they must help them get the boat to the shore. As they just reach the shore and the rain starts something will bump the boat from underneath, but by this time the heroes and the brothers are safely on shore. The trio will not speak of what that was; only thanking Matushka that they got to the shore in time. They will not get the boat out onto the water until sunrise the next morning.

Soft Point 22: Overboard

As the boat moves along the heroes pass a small boy and his grandfather fishing. The boy waves to the heroes, the grandfather ignores them. Suddenly the boy’s fishing line shifts and as he goes to catch it, falls overboard. The grandfather calls out in horror. What do the heroes do? What is in the water with the boy?

Grandfather 7th Sea - Henchman

Brawn 3, Finesse 3, Reflexes 2, Wisdom 2, Panache 1

Advantages: Age & Wisdom (Old), Ussuran

Knacks: Attack (Heavy Weapons) 2, Attack (Knife) 4, Balance 3, Climbing 1, Diagnosis 2, First Aid 3, Fishing 5, Knotwork 4, Lake LoReflexes 3, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 2, Parry (Knife) 2, Pilot 2, Rigging 3, Shipwright 4, Surgery 1, Survival 3, Swimming 2, Throw (Knife) 1, Tinker 2, Trail Signs 1, Traps 2, Veterinarian 2, Weather 4

Grandfather, Elderly Fisherman

Ussuran Expert 4 / Warrior 1- Old

Soft Point 23: The Bereginia

The Bereginia is a waterside spirit, a female. This spirit could essentially be anything you need as a Gamemaster. Some horrid monstrosity to terrorise your players with, or some simple and friendly spirit simply in need of conversation, or perhaps some oracle of sorts of something to come. Such spirits can hardly ever be killed by the mundane weapons and abilities of the heroes but something such as fire or perhaps even pure, clean, drinkable water might chase it off where swords and axes seem to have little effect on a spirit of water. If the heroes have an overly tough time of it, the three brothers could easily make a helpful suggestion.

Bereginia of Ozero Bodrustvovany 7th Sea - Henchman

Brawn 2, Finesse 5, Reflexes 1, Wisdom 1, Panache 3

TN to Be Hit: 30

Attack: 8k5 Touch

Damage: 5k2 shocking touch

Fear Rating: 3

Skills: Ambush 4, Swimming 6

Special: The mere touch of this horrid and watery spirit is said to be enough to kill a man. Archaic geometric knots created by the old wives of the nearby villages stops a beast from getting to close. Pure water also drives them back. Any mortal weapon deals two less kept dice of damage.

Bereginia of Ozero Bodrustvovany, Water Spirit

Use Sea Hag or Nixie - Monster Manual (p144 / 235)

Hard Point 8: Road to Sladivgorod

Making landfall the brothers will help them unload their horses and say their goodbyes before setting back out for home as quickly as possible. At this point the heroes are merely three days away from Sladivgorod with a good road ahead of them. Though heavily patrolled by the Oprechnina, if the heroes do not go out of their way to attract attention and wear the clothing given to them by Viacheslav, they will likely get to Sladivgorod without too many problems. Smart heroes might even try and get themselves attached to a merchant's caravan that might be heading towards the city. The day before they arrive at the city, they will be able to see it in the distance they will come upon a small sect of priests and monks making their way from the city. The heroes could take this opportunity to get an idea of what the mood of the city is, what news there might be and even if the priests have

Father Rullo Genovich *7th Sea - Henchman*

Brawn 3, Finesse 2, Reflexes 5, Wisdom 3, Panache 2

Reputation: 18

Adv: Age & Wisdom, Faith, Home Neighborhood, Man of the Cloth, Ordained, Théan (R/W), Teodoran (R/W), Ussuran (R/W)

Background: Moment of Awe 2, Nemesis 2

Knacks: Astronomy 2, Calligraphy 2, Compounds 2, Diagnosis 4, Diplomacy 3, Etiquette 2, First Aid 4, History 3, Incitation 2, Law 2, Mathematics 1, Menial Tasks 4, Mooch 3, Natural Philosophy 1, Occult 1, Oratory 4, Philosophy 4, Politics 2, Religious Lore (Orthodox) 4, Research 3, Scheming 2, Seneschal 2, Sincerity 3, Socializing 3, Street Navigation 2, Surgery 3, Theology 5, Underworld Lore 2, Writing 3

Father Rullo Genovich

Ussuran Courtier 2 / Wanderer 3 / Field Surgeon 1: CR 6; HD 3d8 + 3d6; hp 27; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; AC 10; Base Atk +3; Grapple +4; Atk dagger +4 melee (d4+1 19-20/x2); SQ evasion, healing expertise, improved healing (first aid), uncanny dodge, style and grace, talent; AL LG; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +10; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 10; Skills: bluff +6, craft (alchemy) +6, craft (calligraphy) +6, craft (writing) +10, diplomacy +7, gather info +6, heal +14, intimidate +5, knowledge (anatomy) +6, knowledge (arcana) +2, knowledge (astronomy) +6, knowledge (history) +8, knowledge (law) +5, knowledge (local) +5, knowledge (math) +3, knowledge (nature) +3, knowledge (nobles) +7, knowledge (philosophy) +10, knowledge (religion) +10, perform (oratory) +10, profession (herbalist) +8, profession (servant) +9, search +6, speak language (théan, ussuran) Feats: faith, iron will, ordained, skill focus (heal), toughness

heard of Father Rullo Genovich and as to where he might be. To their surprise, they will find him standing before them. He is on his way to visit some family and friends in a village a day or so down the road. He is most surprised that the heroes are asking for him and at first he will be a bit taken aback, perhaps even worried that this might be some trick of some kind but something in his heart just tells him this is not the case.

He will take the letter, confused at its presentation and step away to read it. After reading it, he will walk away a few more feet looking back at the city then will reread the letter. After this second reading, he nods, motions a sign of the cross of Theus and walks back to the heroes and throws the letter on a small cooking fire set to make lunch.

He looks to his fellow priests and tells them that he must return to the city but that they are to go on ahead and give his love to family and friends as well as his apology for not being free to make it and that he will visit them soon, perhaps in a month or so. Confused they will do as asked and will leave the priest in the care of the heroes.

Once out of earshot of his brethren he will turn back to the heroes. He tells them that he is aware that they must deliver their next letter to the Knias but warns them that this is impossible: No one gets in to see the Knias that does not pass the inspection of the Oprechnina, some 2,000 of which sit in his castle.

The only chance they might have is if they can get around or past the guard and get before the Knias himself. Perhaps then the heroes could get the message into his hands. Father Genovich might just know of someone who might be able to help them out in this regard though they will have to get into the city first.

Soft Point 24: The City Gates

Getting into Sladivgorod should be fairly easy for the most part; the heroes will have enough to deal with soon enough. However, if you wish to have a small scene involving the bribing of the gate-guard or perhaps even having the group figure some alternate way into the city (such as climbing the wall at night) feel free, just keep in mind that getting in will not be nearly as dangerous and hard as getting out will be.

Hard Point 9: Sladivgorod

Once in the city the heroes, hopefully with the help of Father Genovich need to find a way into see the Knias without

Ana Volshuva *7th Sea - Henchman*

Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Wits 2, Resolve 4, Panache 3

Advantages: Appearance (Above Average), Dangerous Beauty, Night Trained, Pyeryem Sorceress (Full Blood), Scoundrel, Small, Théan (R/W), Ussuran (R/W)

Pyeryem: (Appr) Man 3, Speak 3, Cat 5, Owl 5, Squirrel 3

Acrobat: Balance 3, Footwork 5, Break Fall 3, Contortion 4, Juggling 1, Leaping 3, Rolling 3, Swinging 3

Athlete: Climb 5, Footwork 5, Swinging 3, Throwing 3, Break Fall 3, Leaping 3, Rolling 3, Swimming 3, Swinging 3, Side-Step 2

Courtier: Dancing 2, Fashion 2, Oratory 1, Diplomacy 1, Gaming 3, Gossip 3, Memorizing 5, Mooch 3, Scheming 1, Sincerity 3

Criminal: Gambling 2, Shadowing 3, Stealth 4, Ambush 2, Cheating 2, Lockpick 4, Pickpocket 3, Prestidigitation 4, Scrounging 2

Knife: Attack (Knife) 4, Parry (Knife) 2

Servant: Etiquette 4, Menial Tasks 1, Unobtrusive 3, Hagglng 2

Streetwise: Socializing 4, Street Navigation 3, Scrounging 2, Shopping 3, Underworld Lore 3

Ana Volshuva

Ussuran Courtier 2 / Pyeryem Shapeshifter 4 / Rogue 3: CR 9;

HD 5d6 + 4d10; hp 39; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft; AC 19 (+1 Dex, +8 udp); Base Atk +7; Grapple +7; Atk mw dagger +9 melee (d4; 19-10/x2); Full Atk mw dagger +9/+4 melee (d4; 19-10/x2); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ apprentice pyeryem (spell), evasion, forms: 3 (cat, owl, squirrel), speak with animals, style and grace, talent, transmutation 1/day trapfinding, trap sense +1; AL CN; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +9; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 14; Skills: balance +5, bluff +14, climb +8, diplomacy +10, escape artist +7, gather information +11, hide +10, intimidate +4, jump +7, knowledge (local) +6, knowledge (nobility and royalty) +6, move silently +10, open lock +11, perform (oratory) +6, perform (dance) +8, profession (servant) +6, search +2, sleight of hand +10, speak language (théan, ussuran), swim +4, tumble +12; Feats: appearance (above average), half blooded (pyeryem), iron will, unarmored defense proficiency (beginner, advanced), weapon finesse; Spells: calm animal, detect animal, detects snares and pits; animal messenger, barkskin; cat's grace, summon nature's ally II

getting intercepted by the Oprechnina. The castle is well fortified and is home to over 2000 men and women at arms bent on protecting their Knias at all costs.

The city is a tense hotbed of fear and listening to the rumours for a night or two will tell the heroes that there is much darkness going on in the castle of the Knias. The city and the especially the castle is always on the alert for assassins that are bent on killing the Knias so the heroes had best try and stay as quiet and out of sight as possible.

A few nights after entering the city, staying in a secret basement in one of Father Genovich's churches the heroes are introduced to a small but pretty woman named Ana Volshuva. Ana tells them that she knows of a way into and out of the castle, a secret and (she believes) forgotten way. Her grandmother told her about it one time when she was just a child.

She is willing to show them the way in, but only if they will help her with something. The Father grows angry at this and tells her that these men and women are not here for her abuse, but the woman holds fast, saying that if they want her help, she will have theirs. Her needs are simple enough. Her lover is to be executed in two day's time for speaking out against the Oprechnina and the Knias and she would have the heroes help her rescue her lover, Stevan. She can show them where the execution will take place and knows of several men willing to help her and the heroes out as best they can. The execution is to be held at noon two days from the heroes' first meeting with Ana. There will be four others set to be executed along with Ana's lover and will likely be some twenty Oprechnina as well as some city guard there to deal with the crowd.

Ana can easily show a few of the heroes (taking them all out at the same time might be dangerous) to the scene and can try and help them plan the escape. She can get almost anything that they might need, within reason and can also help act as a diplomat with the locals in anyway that the heroes might think that they might be able to help out. Ana

This is one of those encounters where you can let the players plan things out and just have fun with it. It is a moment of true swashbuckling where the heroes get to save some (mostly) innocent men from the executioners axe. Run the foes of the heroes as a bit laid back as they believe themselves in total control of the streets. Sure they expect a little trouble, pushing and shoving and possibly some rotten vegetables being thrown, but for the most part they are simply not ready for the heroes and their plan.

At the same time, do not let it be a cakewalk though. Go for the high drama. Let the heroes be the heroes, let them save lives at the last minute, hold off several Oprechnina while the weakened condemned make their escape in a wagon, perhaps save some poor dropped child who is going to get trampled by the crowd as they try and flee the chaos of the attack. If you get a chance re-watch the ending fight scenes of Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves for a good "attack an execution" scene with heroics.

Sewer Beast *7th Sea - Henchman*

Brawn 6, Finesse 2, Reflexes 2, Wisdom 1, Panache 5

TN to Be Hit: 30

Attack: 8k2 Tentacle Grapple (One Attack each Tentacle)

Damage: 6k1

Fear Rating: 2

Skills: Ambush 4, Bear Hug 4, Break 2, Grapple 6, Shadowing 2,

Stealth 2, Swimming 5

Special: This beast detects vibration, and as such it is not affected by darkness. Heroes suffer -2 kept dice in dim lighting and 4 kept dice in total darkness unless they have the Night Trained Advantage, which halves the penalty. The beast's normal diet is waste and garbage, but it will eat just about anything it can. Its favored tactic is to grab a person, hold them under the water till they stop moving, stuff them in a crack and then come eat them a few days later.

Sewer Beast, Natural Waste Recycling System

Use Aboleth - Monster Manual (p8)

Soft Point 25: The City Sewers

This place is unpleasant, to say the least. Garbage and waste float slowly out of the city in this knee-to-waist-high river. It only becomes more disturbing when *something* moves past them *under* the water, perhaps brushing against one of the heroes' legs. After several minutes of tense waiting something drags one of the heroes under the water! We recommend it being the person carrying the light source. After all there's nothing like fighting some horrid monstrosity in sewer *without* the light source.

If this encounter is a bit too "Star Wars: A New Hope" for you, please feel free to replace the beast with a horde of rats or perhaps a Cathayan Crocodile, or whatever works best for you and your group. Also keep in mind that the noise the heroes make might very well cause alarm above!

will warn the group to keep the plan simple and to keep it out of as many ears as possible, else the Oprechnina might hear about it.

Given two days time, fairly decent resources for a bunch of foreigners and Ana, who knows the city very well, as well as the possible help of Father Genovich the heroes should have a pretty good shot of pulling this off.

Her lover free from the Oprechnina and alive Ana will be most appreciative of the heroes' efforts and will happily lead them into the castle as promised though she will warn them that they would be better off not going in there. She will give them two nights to heal and rest in which time she will make a few bribes and arrangements. As promised she returns two days later, telling them to don heavy cloaks made of a very dark material.

A few hours later the heroes find themselves coming into several dark and dank corridors that Ana tells them will lead into the castle. Depending on your style you may or may not want to add to the difficulty to get into the castle. If you do want more challenge, here are three soft points you could drop in. Other options could be a Oprechnina squad sees the heroes and gives chase into the sewers or another might be that a band of people live in the sewers, not unlike those that live underneath Charouse.

Soft Point 26: The Castle Doorway

After a hour (or several if you wish them to get lost for a while) of trudging through the sewers Ana brings the heroes to a rather sturdy looking grate. Perhaps the gate is trapped.

Soft Point 27: The Bone Room

Having got into the castle, the heroes seek their way up from the lower catacombs when they come upon a room with a slightly shifting floor. As they get a closer look at it, they discover the room, which is not a small room, is piled high with bones...human bones. There are easily the remains of a thousand people in this horrid chamber.

It is at this time the room's temperature seems to drop and several of the heroes begin to see movement at the corner of their eyes...ghostly pale movement! You can handle this encounter several ways.

1. A straight up fight. Remember Ana's warning to be as quiet as possible.
2. The heroes have to flee the scene and perhaps get lost or fall into a trap since the ghosts cannot leave the chamber.
3. Perhaps the ghosts attack and seem immune to the attacks by the heroes but they are willing to negotiate. Perhaps the heroes can promise to have a priest come and free their souls.

Ghosts of the Bone Room *7th Sea - Henchman*

Brawn - , Finesse 2, Reflexes 4, Wisdom 1, Panache 1

TN to Be Hit: 30

Attack: 8k2

Damage: 4k4

Fear Rating: 4

Special: The Ghosts of the Bone Room cannot be stopped physically from touching their victims save by complete avoidance, they cannot be Parried. Footwork or Balance (because of the treacherous footing) is the only Defense that works against them. They will not attack someone with the Faith Advantage and someone who is a ordained Orthodox Minister can usually guide them beyond the to a better place, if they are not full of spite and hatred, which is most often the case. Their touch affects the spirit of someone rather than them physically, as such the wounds dealt are not resisted with Brawn, but instead with Panache. The number of wounds taken before Crippling and Knocked-Out are still measured by Resolve. They cannot be healed by the medical Knacks, instead time affects them, healing two per scene or as the Gamemaster needs.

Ghosts of the Bone Room, Mournful Spirits

Ussuran Ghost Fighter 2: CR 4; HD 2d12; hp 13; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 16 (+2 Dex +1 def +3 udp); Base Atk +2; Grapple +4; Atk corrupting touch +4 melee (d6); SA corrupting touch; SQ darkvision 60 ft, incorporeal traits, rejuvenation, +4 turn resistance, manifestation; AL N or NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 14, Con -, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 12; Skills: gather information +3, hide +10, intimidate +6, listen +9, move silently +10, ride +5, search +9, speak language (théan, ussuran), spot +9, survival +3; Feats: exotic weapon proficiency (firearms), iron will, unarmored defense proficiency (beginner), track, weapon focus (pistol)

Hard Point 10: Day is Night

The heroes have gained access to the Castle of the Mad Knias. Now all they have to do is find the Knias' chambers or find out where he is if he's not in them and get to him without being discovered.

Again, this is as difficult as you want it to be. Obviously a palace is going to have servants, but keep in mind that there might not be as many as you might think, especially as the heroes get closer to the Knias. By all accounts he's insane, this tends to keep the servants away as much as they can get away with. A servant could be persuaded to help for one reason or another, or could act an ally only to betray the group the moment they got the chance. There will be Oprechnina patrols, but again not that many...after all, who would be so foolish as to enter the castle of a madman with

2,000 soldiers at his call? Most Oprechnina will be fairly loyal and iron willed to the cause, so it might be harder to get one of them to co-operate.

You could easily have the spirit of a lost soul find the group as they wander the halls. Whether it is hostile or friendly is up to you depending upon if you want to aid or hinder the heroes' path. (See soft point 28)

Parts of the castle are empty enough that they should be able to find a place to stay in should they need to get some rest, but unless the brought food or can steal it somehow they will be out of luck.

Eventually the heroes should get into a secret corridor and room that looks down into a large chamber, in which sits a dark haired man on a throne. He looks terrible. He is thin, his flesh pale and his eyes rimmed in shadow, sleeplessness and a raw redness. His fingernails are long and he is fairly unkempt. He looks to be a man broken and tortured by conscious and fear. As they look upon the man they see the doors open to the large hall and several Oprechnina enter the room, led by a much older man. This is *Parigorii Kalenikov* (Ussura p119). Kalenikov approaches the Knias, greeting him as the Knias Vladimir and speaks into the man's ear for several minutes before Vladimir nods and says to the assembled Oprechnina, "Find them and kill them."

Soon, the men leave and as they closed the door behind them the man cradles his head in his hands and sigh's deeply fighting back some emotion. When he looks back up his eyes are redder then when they were before, no small feat. A simple Cold Read or Sense Motive check will tell anyone that Vladimir is wracked with fear, self-revulsion and guilt. The players can easily see a way into the room, and can enter and approach Vladimir as they see best. Before they can attempt any serious communication however Kalenikov will return, calling out an alarm immediately.

Kalenikov is an old man, but he's a battle trained and tested warrior, he should likely be able to hold off the heroes till a few more men can come into the fray. As a story point Kalenikov is not beatable/killable at this time. He should escape out a secret door if need be to avoid this fate. As it is, being discovered, the players will have little chance of escape, in fact they have none. The castle has 2,000 Oprechnina inside it and whatever servants it might also have.

Dramatically Vladimir will call for the heroes to surrender

their arms and for Kalenikov to stop his assault on them. Make it seem as if he's coming awake, coming around...then have the darkness cloud over once again and have him order the heroes detention in the dungeon. As for that which was to be delivered to the Knias, it is simply a blank scroll...

Being taken prisoner, the heroes will be stripped of their possessions and it is unlikely that they will miss anything the heroes might have on them, but a good attempt to conceal with some common sense could play out in the hero's favor. Kalenikov will have the heroes' possessions brought to him so that they can look over the material for information. As such, the heroes will likely not get back any of their possessions until the end of the adventure. The heroes will know where the items are going and who will have them. During their escape it is unlikely that they would be able to get to their items and Rollowich will beg them to forget about them for the time being, that they could be regained later on. Obviously a fine item might catch the attention of someone and the heroes might see it on a guard or captain or someone. If anything, the loss of their "stuff" might be an added motivation for them to help Iviana's cause.

Soft Point 28: A Cry in the Night...

If the heroes stop and rest in one of the abandoned parts of the palace they will not have a very restful night. As night falls they will start to hear the mewling of a baby that slowly starts to develop into a cry. The sound is definitely that of a child and it seems to be coming from the next room, which looks to be boarded up. The crying keeps about for an hour or two then stops suddenly.

If the heroes get into the room they will see that it was once the room of a baby, there are toys and decorations...it is obvious that there was a lot of love put into the room. There's a gaping hole in the floor and part of the wall, though the wall has been repaired enough that from the outside it is likely disguised. Much of the floors and walls look blackened and in the corner lays a cradle.

There is no child.

Investigating the cradle reveals to a perceptive hero (TN20) the sweet and natural smell of a baby and then slowly that smell turns to burnt flesh. The characters that witness this are filled with sickening dread and terrible sorrow...some terrible injustice happened here.

A hero with some insight on who's who in Ussura might

well remember what happened to the Knias family. This was the nursery of Vladimir and Iviana's daughter who was killed in a gunpowder explosion. The state of its death and the after effects that it had on the father and the current plight of its parents has bound the spirit to the room, perhaps righting the wrongs in Molhyna will bring it to rest.

Soft Point 29: The Help...

The heroes are moving along when suddenly they hear the sound of growling behind them and find three large dogs coming up on them. A Pyeryem shapeshifter (who is a servant of Kalenikov) and his two pet dogs fell upon the trail while doing a patrol and started to follow it out of curiosity. These are some serious looking animals and now they have caught up to the group.

Pyeryem Dog Handler 7th Sea - Scoundrel

Brawn 3, Finesse 3, Reflexes 3, Wisdom 3, Panache 3

Reputation: -5

Advantages: Animal Affinity, Combat Reflexes, Pyeryem Sorcerer (Half-Blood), Théan, Toughness, Ussuran

Background: Obligation 2

Knacks: Ambush 3, Animal Training 5, Attack (Dirty Fighting) 3, Attack (Hand Axe) 3, Climbing 2, Etiquette 2, Footwork 4, Leaping 2, Long Distance Running 2, Menace 2, Parry (Hand Axe) 3, Scrounging 2, Socializing 2, Sprinting 4, Stand Watch 4, Stealth 2, Street Navigation 2, Survival 3, Throat Strike 2, Throw (Hand Axe) 1, Throwing 1, Tracking 5, Underworld Lore 1, Unobtrusive 2
Pyeryem: Man 3, Speak 3, Dog 3

Pyeryem Sorcerer, Dog Handler

Ussuran Fighter 2 / Ranger 2 / Rogue 3 / Pyeryem 2: CR 9; HD 4d10+2d8+3d6+9; hp 50; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 20 (+2 Dex,+8 udp); Base Atk +8; Grapple +10; Atk mw handaxe +11 melee (d6+2 x3); Full Atk mw handaxe +11/+6 melee (d6+2 x3); SA favored enemy (human) +2, sneak attack +1d6; SQ evasion, forms(dog, wolf), shape of the beast, transformation 1/day, trapfinding, wild empathy +4; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +4; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10; Skills: climb +7, diplomacy +5, gather information +5, handle animal +11, hide +7, intimidate +6, jump +7, knowledge (local) +5, knowledge (nobility and royalty) +5, listen +9, move silently +7, speak language (théan, ussuran), spot +9, survival +12; Feats: expertise, half blooded (pyeryem), iron will, run, skill focus (survival), track, unarmed defense proficiency (beginner, intermediate), two weapon fighting; Spells: animal friendship, calm animals; barkskin, summon Nature's Ally I

Oprechnina "Hell Hound" 7th Sea - Henchman*Brawn 3, Finesse 1, Reflexes 1, Wisdom 1, Panache 1**TN to Be Hit: 15**Attack Roll: 6k1 Bite**Damage: 3k2 Bite**Advantage: Pain Tolerance**Skills: Attack (Bite) 3, Corps-à-Corps 4, Footwork 2, Tracking 2**Special: These hounds have been trained to take down a foe quickly. Their tactics are to bring a target down and then savage them while they are on the ground.***Oprechnina "Hell Hound", Viciously Trained War-Dog**

Use Wolves - Monster Manual (p283)

Soft Point 30: Pursuant Gaze

As the heroes are moving about in secret to find the Knias they begin to hear several men conversing. If they stop and listen the heroes will soon notice that there is a small step and a slid-latch, as if it is meant to be used to spy in the room. Moving the latch reveals a pair of eye-shaped holes...they are looking out of the eyes of a painting! They can see a half dozen men sitting at a table laid out with a food and drink while another man stands at its head. This man is older than the rest, his uniform more decorated than theirs and his attitude is that of a man who fears no power in heaven or hell. This is Parigorii Nizhne Kalenikov. The men are Kalenikov's aides and captains and they are currently talking about minor uprisings that they have put down as well as about a few boyars that they have had taken care of, including Sofia Linausova, whom the heroes saw murdered. The point of this encounter is to give the heroes the idea that Vladimir might not be in charge. Kalenikov's voice and authority are dominant, the others do not argue. If one of the men brings up the Knias in conversation Kalenikov's facial expression is that of a man who could care less about the bug in his hand.

If the heroes get to comfortable here, simply have one of the men look up at the painting, cock his head and look and tap the shoulder of the man sitting next to him as if to say, "Hey I think that painting is looking at me." This should give the hero a chance to close the viewing slot and move on before they are discovered.

Soft Point 31: Vermin Problem

If you wanted to play up a moment of dramatic comedy have one of the heroes suddenly feel something fall on his shoulder, when he looks he sees the beady eyes of a rat looking at him. Or perhaps a large spider crawls over and the heroes realised that they all have several large arachnids on them. Imagine being trapped in a small, cramped secret tunnel in the walls of a palace full of guards and servants and having spiders the diameter of a fist crawling all over you...you can't scream...you can't thrash about too much...

Hard Point 11: Torture Most Foul

The characters are in dire straits. There simply is not a chance that they can escape at this point. They can try, but there's just too many armed men willing to put them down and drag their unconscious bodies into the cells below. The dungeons are as bad as you can make them. There's no mercy in this place, no decency, only the manifestation of the evils that Drako and Kalenikov can imagine up, which is no small thing. The heroes are allowed to stew in the cells for the rest of the day and night, take this time to describe well the horrors that they can witness from their cells to build the sense of dread and doom.

The next day, Kalenikov will come down and select one of the heroes. The hero will be put onto the rack, or some similar device and asked about a revolution and what they are doing here and how they got into the castle, and who helped them, and so on. When that character passes out, he goes onto the next. Make sure the characters see the other devices that Kalenikov has for later use if need be. Allow the characters to resist the first session.

Dramatically, the harshness of this hard point is to cement the heroes' resolve in seeing this drama to its full and righteous end. If they suffer great injustice here then they have that much more motivation and will to see its end. This is about tyranny and the abject abuse of power by an evil, evil man: Kalenikov.

After this first round, have a somewhat aged man who has obviously been down here for sometime named Rollouich approach and help them. He'll try and ease their suffering, help them with their wounds as best that anyone could and generally try and uplift their spirits. When asked what he was down there for and who he is, he tells them that he was the Knias' Chaplain and that he is down here because

Kalenikov fears in the bottom of his black heart the power of Theus too much to kill the priest outright.

Rollouich will then question them carefully. He is trying to gage the heroes, decide if they are the answer to his prayers. Obviously the heroes should be leery of such questioning as for all they know this man could truly be a spy for Kalenikov.

Rollouich *7th Sea - Henchman*

Brawn 1[3], *Finesse* 1[2], *Resolve* 3, *Wisdom* 4, *Panache* 1[3]

Reputation: 38

Advantages: Age & Wisdom, Man of the Cloth, Ordained (Ussuran Orthodox), Pain Tolerance, Small, Théan (R/W), Théodoran (R/W), Ussuran (R/W)

Background: Crisis of Faith 3, Defeated 3, Nemesis 3

Knacks: Diplomacy 3, Etiquette 4, History 4, Incitation 4, Mathematics 1, Mooch 3, Occult 1, Oratory 4, Philosophy 4, Politics 2, Religious Lore (Orthodox) 4, Research 3, Scheming 4, Sincerity 3, Socializing 3

Note: Stats in brackets reflect his real stats before his suffering

Rollouich, Political Prisoner

Ussuran Courtier 2 / Wanderer 1: CR 5; HD d8+d6+3; hp 8[14]; Init -1 [+0]; Spd 30 ft; AC 9 (-1 Dex)[10]; Base Atk +1; Grapple +0[+2]; Atk unarmed strike +0[+2] melee (d3[+2]); SQ evasion, style and grace, talent, wealth; AL LN; SV Fort +4, Ref +3[+4], Will +6; Str 8[13], Dex 8[10], Con 12, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 12; Skills: bluff +11, diplomacy +10, gather information +6, knowledge (arcana) +4, knowledge (history) +10, knowledge (mathematics) +4, knowledge (nobles) +8, knowledge (philosophy) +9, knowledge (religion) +10, perform (oratory) +11, search +6, speak language (teodoran, théan, ussuran), tumble +2[+3] against larger opponents; Feats: cold climate cond, iron will, ordained, small

Note: Stats in brackets reflect his real stats. Ability damage Rollouich has suffered is healed at standard rates

If the heroes are willing to put their trust in the man all the better. If they are not, which is likely, having several guards come and get him and torture him for a hour or so without asking him a single question should bring them around.

These guys are actually torturing the guy there is no play-acting here. Logically this should prove his plight and bring the heroes around to trusting him.

Once they are trusting of him and he is sure that they are his hope, he will tell them of a secret way out of the palace that he is aware of from his days of being the Master Chaplain of the Castle. He knows well the way of the castle and feels that he can confidently get them away from the dungeons and the

castle, if only the heroes can get themselves and he out of the dungeons.

Rollouich will wish to try and get anyone and everyone out of the cells, but he is fully aware that there must be a limit. He tells them that he understands that it is impossible for everyone to escape but he does ask that they take one other with them, a 12-year-old boy (Pyotr) whose parents were killed by the torturers. The boy is nearly catatonic and will surely die in these cells if the heroes and Rollouich do not take him with.

Armed with the knowledge that they can get away from the dungeons, the heroes can begin to seek an opportunity to overpower a few guards and get on the move. This will not be too hard; the guards are over confident and will not see

Leaders of the “Lost” *7th Sea - Henchman*

Brawn 3, *Finesse* 2, *Resolve* 2, *Wits* 1, *Panache* 3

Advantages: Area Knowledge (the Under-Terra), Burrow, Keen Hearing, Keen Smell, Poor Sight, Teodoran, Unnerving Contenance (Hideous), Ussuran (ACQ)

Background: Cursed 3, Nemesis 3

Knacks: Ambush 3, Attack (Blowpipe) 4, Attack (Dirty Fighting) 4, Attack (Knife) 3, Break Fall 3, Camouflage 2, Climbing 4, Etiquette 1, Fletcher (Darts) 2, Footwork 2, Land on Target 2, Leaping 5, Lie In Wait 3, Menace 1, Parry (Knife) 1, Poison 2, Rolling 3, Set Traps 2, Shadowing 3, Skinning 2, Sprinting 2, Stand Watch 2, Stealth 4, Survival 3, Swimming 3, Throwing 1, Tracking 2, Trick Shooting (Blowpipe) 3, Unobtrusive 1

Note: Use “Dirty Fighting” for their claw and bite attacks, which do 2k2 and 4k2. They often use toxins on their blowguns.

Leaders of the “Lost”, Cursed Rodent-Men

Ussuran Natural Wererat Hybrid Form / Rogue 3: CR 5; HD d8+3 plus 3d6+6; hp 24; Init +4; Spd 30 ft; AC 17 (+4 Dex, +3 natural); Base Atk +2; Grapple +4; Atk dagger +6 melee (d4+2; 19-20/x2) or blowpipe +6 ranged; Full Atk dagger +6 melee (d4+2; 19-20/x2) and bite +1 melee (d6 plus disease) or blowpipe +6 ranged; SA curse of lycanthropy (DC 15), disease (filth fever, DC 12), sneak attack +2d6; SQ alternate form, damage reduction 10/silver, evasion, low-light vision, rat empathy, scent, trapfinding, trap sense +1; AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +4; Str 15, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 13; Skills: climb +7, craft (arrowmaking) +2, craft (poison) +1, craft (traps) +2, gather information +3, hide +8, intimidate +3, knowledge (local) +4, knowledge (nobility and royalty) +1, jumb +9, listen +7, move silently +7, speak language (teodoran, ussuran), survival +6, swim +7, tumble +9; Feats: exotic weapon proficiency (blowpipe), iron will, point blank shot, track, weapon finesse

the heroes as much of a threat as they really are. With Rollouich's guidance on the when the heroes can spring forward and over power a trio of guards as they bring back a random victim.

With one of the heroes taking up the boy and another helping Rollouich move along (keep in mind he's an old man who has been down here for sometime) the heroes can move fairly quickly. After taking down a few more guards for "dramatic revenge" and allowing the Players to get a good sense of control of their characters have Rollouich point out a secret tunnel entrance and have them escape behind the door just in time to be missed by more guards, and perhaps even Kalenikov himself!

Soft Point 32: The Lost...

As the heroes sit in their agony and misery they will see several smallish, stopped forms enter into their area of the dungeon walking alongside the guards though it is obvious that the guards hardly care for the men themselves. The small figures are cloaked and draped in layers of cloth and have an stink about them that's enough to turn one's stomach if they get to close. At some point in time the heroes will see one in the light, it looks like the cross between a rat and a man.

A cellmate will tell the heroes that they are "the lost" and that they were said to have been men who angered a Gaius or perhaps Matushka herself many generations ago and now as the heroes see them. Whether these are the ones who were directly punished or their offspring is unknown. The cellmate tells the heroes that they come up every once in a while to get their pay.

At this, the heroes see several prisoners are pointed to by one of the rat men and the guards hand the prisoners over to the humanoids, who takes the chains and lead them out of the area, the screams and please of the taken prisoners echoing and calling out as they do so. The cellmate tells them that those taken are never to be seen again.

Soft Point 33: That's Not Funny

When things have quieted down some a guard, who just finished helping carry a prisoner back to another cell, will look about carefully and will subtly beckon one of the heroes closer. Once within range to whisper the guard looks at him and says that he is working on a way to get the hero and his friends out of the dungeon. He believes he can do it.

For now he asks them to be patient. Several hours later he will return saying that he has a plan. A few hours later he says that he can get them out but only with a bribe, so he asks the heroes if they have anything that they think might help him get them out. Of course the guard is just trying to pull a fast on them, having his cruel fun and hoping at the end of the joke that he can get a little extra for the effort.

Hard Point 12: Another Prisoner

Rollouich now leads the heroes through several tunnels and staircases and through this or that room. How much "escape and evasion" you want to add is up to you, after a few hours time however Rollouich will ask the group to stop and will tell them that they must go across a hall to another set of secret passages in order to escape. The problem is that the rooms or halls are likely to have someone in them.

Iviana Chevekka Ketrovnia Vladimirtova 7th Sea - Hero

Brawn 2, Finesse 2, Reflexes 2, Wisdom 3, Panache 3

Reputation: 0

Advantages: Appearance (Stunning), Guardian Angel, Montaigne (R/W), Noble, Théan (R/W), Teodoran (R/W), Ussuran (R/W)

Background: Defeated 3, Lost Love 3, Vendetta 3

Knacks: Astronomy 2, Attack (Fencing) 2, Attack (Firearms) 2, Bird Handling 3, Composer 2, Dancing 2, Diplomacy 1, Etiquette 2, Fashion 2, Gaming 1, History 3, Law 2, Mathematics 3, Musician (flute) 2, Natural Philosophy 3, Occult 1, Oratory 2, Parry (Fencing) 2, Philosophy 3, Research 2, Sincerity 2, Theology 4, Writing 4

Iviana Chevekka Ketrovnia Vladimirtova

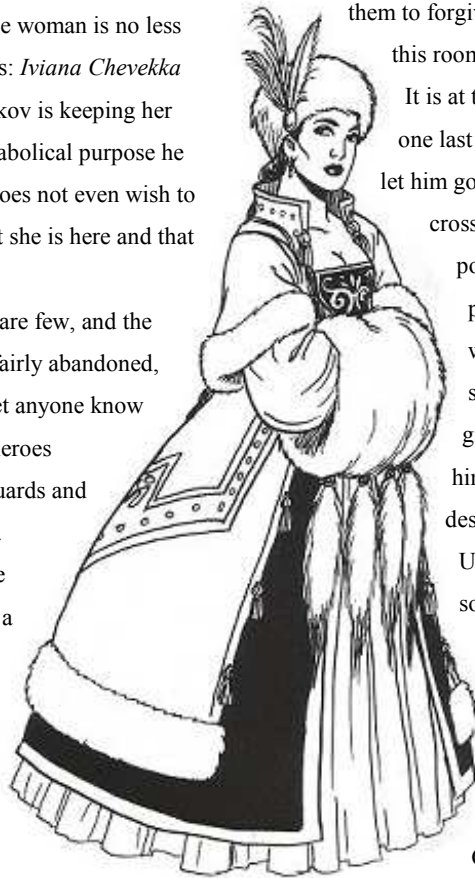
Ussuran Courtier 2 / Fighter 1 / Noble 2: CR 5; HD d10+

2d8+2d6; hp 21; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Base Atk +3; Grapple +2; Atk rapier +4 melee (d6; 18-20/x2) or pistol +4 ranged (d10; x3); SQ commanding presence +1, evasion, friends in high places, style and grace, talent, wealth x2; AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +9; Str 9, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 15; Skills: bluff +8, craft (music) +7, craft (writing) +9, diplomacy +10, gather information +6, handle animal +4, knowledge (arcana) +4, knowledge (astronomy) +6, knowledge (history) +9, knowledge (law) +7, knowledge (mathematics) +9, knowledge (nature) +9, knowledge (nobility and royalty) +7, knowledge (philosophy) +8, knowledge (religion) +9, perform (dance) +8, perform (wing instruments) +7, perform (oratory) +8, search +4, speak language (montaigne, théan, ussuran); Feats: appearance (above average), exotic weapon proficiency (firearms), expertise, skill focus (knowledge (religion)), weapon finesse

Rollouich does not wish anyone killed, but they must go that way, so he'll urge the heroes to take care in how they act and asks them to be better men and women and show mercy. Rollouich is not being completely honest here with the group. He could have got them out of the castle already, but he needs the heroes help and doesn't feel quite right with telling them the whole truth. Despite his faith, he is still a man with fears and doubts, especially after all that he's been through.

He has led the heroes here so that Rollouich and they can get into the chambers across the way in order to help the woman who is trapped there. The woman is no less than the 'dead' wife of the Knias: *Iviana Chevekka Ketrovnia Vladimirtova*. Kalenikov is keeping her against her will; for whatever diabolical purpose he might need her for Rollouich does not even wish to think about. All he knows is that she is here and that she must be helped.

The guards that are keeping her are few, and the part of the palace they are in is fairly abandoned, as Kalenikov does not wish to let anyone know of the woman's existence. The heroes should face several men, both guards and servants "trusted" by Kalenikov. However, once past this obstacle they will come face to face with a striking woman, Iviana and her handmaiden, Ana. Iviana will recognise Rollouich, and will immediately her eyes will become filled with tears. They obviously know each other. If the heroes are still working under Rollouich's "lie" he will explain to them who the woman is and what Kalenikov has done to her and apologises sincerely for not being honest with them in full and promises that he can now lead them all out of the castle without further subterfuge. Iviana and Rollouich could go to the Knias now, but it would be to little effect, Kalenikov is far too powerful and the guard too much under his power. They must escape and decide on the next course of action from a place that offers more security.



Soft Point 34: The Chapel

Going from hall to hall, tunnel to tunnel the heroes come upon one of the palace's chapel. From the spying port it looks like the place has just been rampaged. Statuary is turned over and broken, wood is smashed and even honoured icons are sundered. Curtains and drapery have been pulled down and there are pages, once from a beautifully scripted book litter the floor.

Rollouich will look upon the desecration with great sorrow and will say a prayer to Theus and the First Prophet asking them to forgive the acts and violence that were set upon this room.

It is at this, when the priest looks upon the scene one last time that he gasps, and begs the heroes to let him go into the room. He points out to them a

cross, hanging from a chain on the podium. He points it out to them that it had to have been put there after the destruction and that it was once his mother's given to him before she died. The last he had seen of it, he had given it to the Knias just before the Lord had him taken to the dungeon. Rollouich desperately wishes to get the cross back.

Use this scene to build up tension. Have the sound of men walking by the doors leaving it to the imagination of the heroes that they are going to stop and fling open the doors suddenly. If you think the heroes need a little action, have someone hear them and enter the chamber.

Cross in hand, Rollouich looks upon the relic with great joy and kisses the heroes responsible for getting it back on both cheeks, blessing them repeatedly. His joy at this moment should be infectious.

Soft Point 35: The Sun

At some point the heroes are going to need to take a moment of rest and for Rollouich to get his bearings. As the heroes discuss the matters at hand, check their bandages and get a few moments of rest they don't notice the small form of the little boy get up and move off.

Rollouich and the heroes will soon notice the boy's absence as they prepare to move on and it will obviously fill them with some horror as the child could very easily give

them away to their enemy. Following the child will not be too difficult, though the heroes might have to sneak past a guard or two to do so.

They will find him on the balcony of the palace, looking up at the sun, feeling it on his face, tears rolling down from his eyes. He will smile at the hero that grabs him and says, “I like the sun.” and smiles at the hero as if nothing is wrong in the world. After this, the boy is quite and meek, but not catatonic any longer. Rollouich will thank the Theus for this blessing.

Hard Point 13: Escaping the City

With Iviana and Rollouich, the heroes can escape the castle through some sewers and exit up into the city through a graveyard. Rollouich will counsel the heroes to seek aid from Father Genovich, Iviana will agree. It is important for her to remind the heroes that what they do now is life and death, by freeing her they have put Kalenikov into a corner. To the world, she is dead, killed several years ago in a “tragic accident”. Anyone and everyone Iviana comes into contact with is likely a potential victim of Kalenikov. She knows this and it weighs on her conscious greatly. Being careful the heroes should be able to get to Father Genovich, who is happy to see the heroes and literally shocked into unconsciousness by the sight of Iviana and Rollouich, both of whom he thought was long dead. Once awakened and he has time to speak with them and learn from them all what has happened he will send for Ana Volshuva and seek her help in getting the heroes out of the city. Not long after the heroes arrive at Father Genovich’s church however, the city’s bells will ring out and the city will be closed...the Oprechnina will begins searching for “assassins”.

But Ana knows well the city and can get them all out, though she will insist that Father Genovich come with as he will not likely be safe in the city at this point. He will agree. Getting out of the city can be as tough as your game requires, but in all likelihood it will be stealth that gets them free of the walls and the Oprechnina. Feel free to take in the ideas and plans of the group, giving input as Ana, Father Genovich, Iviana and Rollouich and then cut to them escaping out of a drain through the wall and stealing off into the night. Some possible difficulties are listed in the following soft-points.

Soft Point 36: The Lost Redux

As the heroes lead Iviana, Rollouich and Pyotr (the boy) through the sewers they are suddenly set upon by several of the rat-men from soft point 32. They are scouring the sewer, looking for the heroes at the order of Kalenikov.

Soft Point 37: Gravediggers

As the heroes come up out of the tomb they will see three men not far away, one with a subdued lantern looking straight at them in abject horror. By the looks of them, they work here in the cemetery as gravediggers and likely are also paid to keep a vigil against those that might wish to defile a person’s rest for one reason or another. The heroes will have to act quickly before they go screaming off into the night at the top of their lungs...

Soft Point 38: The Crossing

The heroes and their charges have to cross a river in order to get to Father Genovich’s church. There are a few bridges, but they tend to have activity around them. The heroes could try and swim across the river or even take a small boat, though this commotion on the river at night might draw some attention. The heroes could try and bluff their way across, perhaps taking a wagon to the other side. This should be a matter of stealth and clever roleplaying over arms and combat, as Rollouich and Pyotr especially are hardly capable of dealing with being chased throughout the city by the Guard.

Grave Diggers *7th Sea - Henchman*

Brawn 3, Finesse 2, Reflexes 2, Wisdom 2, Panache 1

Reputation: -10

Adv: Area Knowledge, Scoundrel, Théan, Ussuran (R/W)

Knacks: Ambush 1, Appraising 3, Attack (Dirty Fighting) 2, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 3, Cheating 1, Climbing 2, Footwork 2, Gambling 2, Hagglng 2, Kick 2, Lockpicking 1, Parry (Improvised Weapon) 2, Pickpocket 1, Scrounging 3, Shadowing 2, Socializing 3, Sprinting 4, Stealth 3, Street Navigation 3, Throwing 2, Underworld Lore 3

Grave Diggers, Terrified Locals

Ussuran Rogue 2 - Run feat

Hard Point 14: Revolutionaries

A few days out of the city, after getting some horses Iviana will ask the heroes to help them get to some friends that she knows will help them. She will understand, however, if they wish to flee out of the region and away from Kalenikov.

Keep in mind, as Gamemaster that Iviana is an attractive, smart, natural leader. She will have spent the last few days seeing what makes the heroes tick. She believes that she needs them and has no problem asking for their help. She is fighting for her life and the lives of her people in her mind, but she is not the type to try underhanded tactics and subterfuge to do so. She will tell the heroes they might very well die by standing beside her, but she truly believes at least then they will die with honour and for a good cause.

Once solidified in their commitment Iviana will take them to her friends. She will take them to a manor of a friend, who in turn, after the shock of seeing her passes, excitedly takes the group to a nearby forest. It is an old and eerie place full of weight... a place that seems to be holding its breath.

There they will meet once again with Viacheslav Tchernivich, only this time he has a small army with him. He is happy to see the heroes and greets them warmly with hugs and kisses on the cheeks. He too is then stunned when Iviana Chevekka Ketrovnia Vladimirtova reveals herself to him and the others. Her appearance is seen as nothing less than a miracle sent straight from Theus to the men and women who have gathered here. She immediately becomes the inspiration and righteousness of their cause.

Iviana will immediately take command of the situation, though she makes Viacheslav her general and trusts to him to make the military commands and suggestions, she has not the skill or experience that he has.

To Viacheslav and Iviana what it comes down to is taking out Kalenikov and the Oprechnina. If they can do that, getting to the Knias will not be that difficult all things considered. So to do so Viacheslav will suggest that several attacks on the Oprechnina by Iviana's army will draw Kalenikov out, especially if they are followed with rumours of the "the ghost of the Lady Knias". Kalenikov will have to bring a force out to put down the rebellion and squash the rumours and Viacheslav knows the man personally and feels that he will do so by mustering a large force of men to do it. Once Kalenikov makes his move, the rebels can set a trap for

him and hopefully kill him, without him, the Oprechnina will likely founder and break apart. It is a gamble in any event, but one that might well pay off. As to what role the heroes will play in all this is up to the Gamemaster and the players. Listed below are several options and directions that could be explored.

There is another person whom they will recognise, and that is Vyslav, Sofia Linauisova's butler and seneschal from Hard Point Four. After the Oprechnina burned down the manor most of the servants were left alone and able to get away. He managed to find his way here. In actuality he is a spy and traitor working for Kalenikov. He will betray the heroes and the cause when he gets a chance.

If they don't agree to stick around Father Genovich, Iviana and Rollouich are all upset but will not speak against them, though they will try and convince them. If they are still unsuccessful they wish them a long life and move on with their cause. After they leave simply plan a few encounters and allow them to escape the region and go onto other adventures. You could try and force the issues with a few encounters that would force them to go back and help her...Koshchei could even twist some strands...but in the end, it would only railroad the heroes along. The heroics of something like this should be a matter of choice. However, this will likely not be the choice the heroes make, so it shouldn't be an issue.

Soft Point 39: Oprechnina Patrol

Clearing the city and moving off into the night the heroes suddenly hear several shouts as a group of mounted Oprechnina spot them and move to ride them down. This is a fine opportunity to give the heroes some much-needed weapons and horses

Soft Point 40: The Vodyanoi

After frantically fleeing the city and the Oprechnina the heroes finally get a chance to slow down and rest, if only for a moment or two. They have managed to find a small copse of trees and a small stream in which to clean up at. Iviana will take this moment to get cleaned up herself, asking for privacy and a few moments to "pamper herself". For her, these few moments are pure pleasure; it has been nearly two years or better since she has been really outside of the palace...

Unknown to her, she is not alone.

A Vodyanoi has taken this particular bend of the river as his own. Vodyanoi are an evil and dangerous water spirit who drowned people that appears as a long green-bearded naked old half-man, half-fish; covered with mire, slime, and scales that can transform into a fish.

Vodyanoi 7th Sea - Henchman / Villain

Brawn 4, Finesse 2, Reflexes 2, Wisdom 2, Panache 4

Advantages: Area Knowledge, Firm Grip, Théodoran, Toughness, Unnerving Countenance (Hideous), Ussuran, Vodianoi

Arcana: Cruel, Envious, Lecherous, Proud or Talkative

Knacks: Ambush 4, Attack (Pugilism) 2, Bear Hug 4, Break 4, Ear Clap 3, Escape 2, Grapple 5, Head Butt 1, Lie In Wait 5, Sincerity 3, Stealth 3, Swimming 5

Vodyanoi

Use Vodyanoi (*Frostburn* p160 by Wizards of the Coast™) or Sahuagin Ranger 2

Soft Point 41: The Good Folk

The heroes are starving, they have not eaten right in days at this point. Rollouovich asks that they try and get some real food, if only for the boy, Pyotr. Iviana is reluctant, she does not wish to endanger anyone but after looking at the child, she will relent and ask the heroes for their opinions. Could they risk approaching a farm, perhaps passing themselves off as travellers for the night? Could they steal food?

You should try and work out the matter so that a farmer and his family graciously invite the heroes and their companions

into their home for a fine, if not simple meal and a safe night's rest. Remember that the Ussuran people do not turn people away for fear of "unnatural retribution" from wandering spirits. Hospitality and generosity are very important to the people of Matushka.

Have the family sit at the table, pray to the Icon of the House (A Orthodox Icon that is given a place of honour in the house), and then set into the food. They laugh and tell stories and after they play some games and drink some food. Pyotr has a chance to play with a few other children which brings waves of joy to Rollouovich, who will likely cry at the sight. The following morning, the man will hand a few tools to the heroes, perhaps a old axe, some rope, a few bundles of food (bread and such) as well as some skins of water and a few draughts of vodka. Afterwards his wife smiles and asks Iviana if she might hold her daughter's hand for just a moment. Afterwards she will smile and hug her child telling her that that she can tell the entire world when she grows up that she once held the hand of the Kniasinya. The farmer will smile at them, knowingly, and tell them that their secret is safe with them.

Hard Point 15: Battle of Lake Vigil

The battle's flow and outcome should have the following points and moments, other than that, feel free (and encouraged) to embellish scenes and establish the action of the heroes within the battle itself.

- Vyslav (Gregoir the spy) will have revealed the plans of the trap to Kalenikov, putting the rebel army at the



disadvantage tactically.

- Vyslav will strike at General Viacheslav and/or Kniasinya Iviana hurting them dramatically, but not fatally; at least not Iviana, though the dramatic fall of General Viacheslav at the hands of a spy would be very cinematic.
- The heroes should chase after the spy onto the Lake.
- At the end of the battle Kalenikov should escape, he should have enough men to be able to slow or stop any immediate pursuit. If dramatically you believe its more important for the heroes to bring him down, he should not be killed, dropping his weapons and surrendering at the last minute if need be.

General Viacheslav's plan is to present a weak force of rebels, with Iviana, are hiding out. He does this in the hopes that Kalenikov will bring a force of men adequate to the task of wiping out the rebels once and for all. However, Viacheslav will really have many more men and women than he's letting out and will be setting the battlefield to his utmost advantage. Unfortunately, Kalenikov is well aware of this plan because of the spy, Vyslav. Kalenikov is playing the part of the fool, while secretly sending a second force of men around behind the rebels. In the end, he will easily have four or even five times the number of men that the Kniasinya's general will have.

Dramatically it would be interesting to see Kalenikov and Viacheslav come into hand-to-hand fighting but it is doubtful that Kalenikov would allow himself to get into a test of arms at his age if he could at all avoid it.

The cowardly attack of Vyslav on the leaders of the Kniasinya's army should happen just at the right moment so that the heroes can witness the event and give chase after him. As the heroes chase him they will see him get into a boat on the Lake Side. As they follow after him they (there are many little crafts there for them to use) and they get out onto the water, a fog and storm that has been threatening for hours finally comes in. The heroes will likely remember the terrible things that inhabit the lake from their previous trip along its edge. As the spy gets away into the fog he mockingly calls out to them, laughing... just then as he disappears the laughing turns into terrible screams. The heroes have only a few short minutes to get back to shore before the fog catches up to them.

The aftermath of the battle, like any, is terrible. Men and women in pain and suffering, the dead laid and twisted upon

each other. It is a terrible sight, but from a military mindset a victory, though it is obvious by the pain in Iviana's face that there was not victory to be had as long as life was lost. She will soon come out of her sorrow and rally the army to move with all speed to Sladivgorod and hopefully her husband.

Soft Point 42: The Bannik

This dangerous spirit is known both to protect and grievously harm presents by suffocating them or peeling their skin. In this soft point a Bannik has found its way to the secret army. Is it happy with what it sees or displeased? Suddenly finding sentries without their skin could very well destroy the army before its first skirmish. General Viacheslav and Kniasinya Iviana ask for the heroes help in finding out what is happening and stopping it.

The Bannik *7th Sea - Villain / Hero*

Brawn 2, Finesse 6, Reflexes 2, Wisdom 2, Panache 2

Advantages: Able Drinker, Small, Théodoran, Unnerving Countenance (Ugly), Ussuran

Knacks: Ambush 4, Attack (Dirty Fighting) 2, Attack (Knife) 5, Climbing 2, Dancing 2, Etiquette 1, Footwork 3, Grapple 4, Juggling 2, Menial Tasks 3, Mooch 3, Parry (Knife) 1, Prestidigitation 3, Shadowing 4, Singing 2, Skinning 6, Stealth 4, Survival 2, Throat Strike 4, Tracking 3, Unobtrusive 2,

The Bannik, Murderous Spirit

Use Cloaker - Monster Manual (p36) with Knife proficiencies

The Bannik's Knife

The Bannik's knife is a special thing not quite of Théah...or at least not part of Théah since the rise of humanity. There are tales of such blades, when kept to long, influencing one's thoughts and that the blade can even turn one into a Bannik when they die.

The blade is fit for a Bannik's hand, but for a human would be uncomfortable to handle and use, imposing a -2 Kept Die penalty on attacks. The knife does Brawn+1k2 but due to its extreme sharpness actually stages at 5 instead of the normal 20!

The Bannik's Knife

+2 keen shocking burst intelligent dagger; AL CE; Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10; Empathy, 30ft vision and hearing; Ego score 8. Lesser Powers: unique power, the holder makes a Fortitude save DC 8 or raises as a Cloaker when he/she dies. The save is ego-based. Moderate transmutation; CL 10th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *baleful polymorph*, *keen edge* and one of the following: *call lightning* or *lightning bolt*; 81,302 gp

Soft Point 43: Oprechnina Patrol

The heroes are helping the army out by doing a patrol of the surrounding lands when they suddenly see a group of mounted Oprechnina spot them. The men turn their horses about and begin to ride off. The heroes must give chase!

Soft Point 44: The Raid

The army needs some weapons or other supplies, the heroes are asked to infiltrate a small fortification and open the gates so that a force of men could be let in to capture the structure and its supplies.

Soft Point 45: Oprechnina Prisoner

Several Oprechnina prisoners are taken. How are such men as these treated? Many in the revolutionary army wish vengeance for wrongs done to them and their family, for many these men are as good as any to deliver their hate upon. What will the heroes do?

Soft Point 46: I Spy...

The heroes spot a strange animal in camp. While it's not strange to have various animals in a military camp as they are often the pets and companions of soldiers now and again, this dog seems to be a rather curious fellow. And he does have green eyes...

Soft Point 47: Series of Skirmishes

You could run each of the above soft points, plus whatever encounters of your own devising intermixed with several small battles using Mass Combat rules. This will give the heroes (and players) a sense of scale to the events of which they are a part of now. Each battle gives them more and more clout and recognition amongst the army.

Soft Point 48: Love and War

Any number of heroes could find a romantic interest amongst the ranks of the men and women in the army. If not love, a definite camaraderie and companionship should develop. In times of crisis and battle such friends and lovers are needed to retain their humanity, but later on, if something should happen to them... what then?

Soft Point 49: Their Moment

Each hero should be given his or her chance (and theirs alone) to shine on the battlefield. Perhaps they must grab up

Oprechnina Spy 7th Sea - Scoundrel

Brawn 3, Finesse 3, Reflexes 3, Wisdom 3, Panache 3

Reputation: -5

Advantages: Animal Affinity, Combat Reflexes, Pyeryem Sorcerer (Half-Blood), Théan, Toughness, Ussuran

Background: Obligation 2

Knacks: Ambush 3, Attack (Dirty Fighting) 3, Bribery 2, Conceal 2, Climbing 2, Disguise 2, Etiquette 2, Footwork 4, Leaping 2, Lip Reading 4, Long Distance Running 3, Memorizing 4, Menace 2, Poison 2, Scrounging 2, Shadowing 3, Sincerity 3, Socializing 2, Sprinting 4, Stand Watch 2, Stealth 4, Street Navigation 2, Survival 3, Throat Strike 2, Throwing 1, Tracking 3, Underworld LoReflexes 1, Unobtrusive 2

Pyeryem: Man 3, Speak 3, Dog 3

Oprechnina Spy, Dog-in-Disguise

Ussuran Ranger 3 / Pyeryem 2 / Spy 3: CR 8; HD

2d10+3d8+3d6+16; hp 51; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; AC 17 (+7 udp);

Base Atk +7; Grapple +9; Atk unarmed strike +9 melee (d3+2) or

as dog; Full Atk unarmed strike +9/+4 melee (d3+2) or as dog; SA

favored enemy (human) +2, sneak attack +2d6; SQ alias DC 30,

brilliant getaway, contacts, forms(dog, duck), shape of the beast,

transformation 1/day, wild empathy +3; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref

+9, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 12; Skills:

bluff +7, climb +7,craft (poison) +6, diplomacy +5, disguise +6,

gather information +5, handle animal +4, hide +8, intimidate +6,

jump +6, knowledge (local) +6, knowledge (nobility and royalty)

+6, listen +5, move silently +8, speak language (théan, ussuran),

survival +9; Feats: endurance, half blooded (pyeryem), rapid shot,

run, track, unarmored defense proficiency (intermediate); Spells:

animal friendship, calm animals; barkskin, magic fang

the banner of the revolution, perhaps they must stand over a wounded friend (or a wounded General Viacheslav's) and fight off those rakes that would kill a downed man.

Whatever it maybe, give each hero a chance to take some glory and do something truly heroic and grand. Look at each character and his motivations and background to find that moment that you could craft knowing it is just for him.

Hard Point 16: Waking the Orakov

Kalenikov should have escaped yet again and has raced ahead of the heroes and the army of Iviana Chevekka Ketrovnia Vladimirtova to lock down both the city and the castle. If he has not escaped, and is dead or captured, the heroes and Iviana must then get through several would-be-Kalenikov-replacements. You can allow the heroes to

negotiate their way into the city, or perhaps perform some action of subterfuge and battle to open the gates for Iviana and her rebel army.

Getting into the castle will be harder the place is manned by several hundred men (remember most would have been taken out to crush the rebels) loyal to the Oprechnina. Even if Kalenikov is paraded before them, he will not willingly play hostage...unless he can get some promise from Iviana that guarantees his safety.

Getting to Drakov is simply as difficult as you wish to make it. The heroes and Iviana could walk right into the city, up to the castle and into Knias' throne room, if you so choose. Alternatively, you could run a protracted siege of the city and the castle and then have Drakov, nearly insane at this point coming out of the castle to do battle in his family armour and the heroes must fight him to the point that they can "awaken him from the trap his mind is in".

The most important thing to keep in mind while running this is to play up the drama and terror of Drakov. This man has been so manipulated and tortured mentally he no longer knows what is up and down, day and night. He is terrified and would be on the verge of insanity and suicide were it not that Kalenikov has him so manipulated. The one thing, when all is said and done, that will shock Drakov out of his mental state is the appearance of his wife: Iviana Chevekka Ketrovnia Vladimirtova. This will cause him to come slamming into reality. He will at first think she is a ghost and will have to touch her to know that she is real. For the heroes this will be an amazing show of the love that these two had and what her supposed death had done to him and what her living can now do for him. Still, Drakov's mind is quite fragile and splintered, and Kalenikov's manipulations will come forth and Drakov will suddenly turn against the group, him taking his wife hostage at the point of a knife.

Give this opportunity to the heroes to talk Drakov down, to show him that things are *right* now. That Kalenikov is stopped, his wife's death a lie and that he is his own man once again. After all is said and the heroes talk Drakov down a large black raven flies onto the scene and changes in to that of Koshchei the Immortal. Koshchei is pleased with the heroes, pleased that his descendent is taken from the grasp of Kalenikov's twisted manipulations.

Soft Point 50: Guards

The heroes are asked by the Knias and his warrior-wife to guard Kalenikov until they can discuss what it is they wish to do with him. The heroes are likely going to have to protect him as much as keep him under guard from escapes.

A Happy Ending?

What if I do not wish to have an overly happy ending? What if I wish to have the Knias and/or his wife dead and Kalenikov, or a player's hero in power at the end of my adventure? Our answer is, "Go for it!" However, in regards to the official timeline and story chronology for Théah the Knias and his wife will have survived their times of trouble and will have taken back their kingdom and Kalenikov righteously punished.

Oùenouement

Over the next few months the Knias has a lot of healing and rebuilding to do and seeks the heroes aid even in this. They are given rewards of title and land for their bravery and courage and will forever be counted as friends of Vladimir and Iviana.

As for Kalenikov, if he still lives, what will happen to him is a matter of some debate. Koshchei asks to take him, but Iviana and Vladimir deny his request. They do not execute him as many call for, stating that they will not reduce themselves to his level and instead imprison him. A few months later he dies, poisoned by one of the families of the victims of his tyrannical reign.

A year following the The Battle of Ozero Bodrustvovany Ivianna and Vladimir have a child, a boy and the realm is well on its way to healing the terror of the Oprechnina.

Continued Adventures in Mothyna

Regarding Kalenikov

The heroes are asked by the Knias to escort Kalenikov to the north, where he will be imprisoned until the end of his days. Think "Siberian work house". The heroes will have a tough ride a head of them, the former Chamberlain is smart and he has a certain charisma. He also has friends that are seeking to free him and enemies hoping to kill him following after the group.

The Lake Watchers

The Knias, after having a small discussion with the enigmatic Koshchei, asks the heroes to go to Ozero Bodrustvovany and “look around”. They should be on the look out for anyone or *anything* unusual and deal with it as best they can. The locals will be able to help them, and surely after their exploits, the characters are famed heroes to the people of Molhyna.

The Subtle Assassin

The birthday of Iviana Chevekka Ketrovnia Vladimirtova is fast approaching and the Knias has called for a large (but modest) celebration of the event. The heroes are invited to celebrate her birthday with them of course! That leaves them with the mission to buy the lady a birthday gift! Will one of the heroes be the unwitting pawn of a clever assassin attempt when it turns out his gift might very well kill Iviana?

The Subtle Assassin *7th Sea - Villain*

Brawn 2, **Finesse** 4, **Reflexes** 3, **Wisdom** 4, **Panache** 4

Advantages: Combat Reflexes, Connections (Various), Keen Senses, Membership: Merchant’s Guild, Night Trained, Théan (R/W), Théodoran (R/W), Ussuran (R/W), Vendel (R/W)

Knacks: Accounting 2, Acting 3, Ambush 2, Apothecary 4, Attack (DF) 4, Attack (Knife) 5, Attack (Pugilism) 3, Blacksmith 1, Cold Read 3, Cooper 2, Dancing 2, Diplomacy 2, Disguise 2, Etiquette 2, Footwork 4, Forgery 3, Fuses 3, Hagglng 4, Hatter 2, Jab 2, Jeweler 3, Lockpicking 3, Mathematics 2, Natural Philosophy 2, Oratory 2, Parry (Knife) 5, Poison 2, Prestidigitation 3, Ride 3, Seamstress 3, Shadowing 3, Sincerity 3, Singing 1, Socializing 4, Stealth 4, Throat Strike 3, Throw (Knife) 5, Wigmaker 3

The Subtle Assassin, Guild Agent

Vendel Assassin 5 / Wanderer 4

The Last Stand

A group of errant Oprechnina still control a small portion of land and farms and the heroes are tasked with clearing them out.

Credits

Writing

Floyd Wesel

Editing

Mark Stanton Woodward

System Mechanics

Floyd Wesel

Nikolas Kyriazopoulos Panagiotopoulos

Cover Artwork

Carl Frank

Line Development

Mark Stanton Woodward

7th Sea System Creation

John Wick, Jennifer Wick and Kevin Wilson

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