



Visitations of Glory, Volume 4

*A magazine dedicated to the world of
The Petal Throne by M.A.R. Barker*

máisir linnmolóm mssúran tlatiilingyal
He embraced them, the moons (for her benefit).

A rare ceremony, performed only during the passing of the



emerald green moon
Gayél completely
behind the blood red
moon Káshi.

During the Battle
of the Dórmoron
Plain, Dlamélish
demande several
conditions from the
other gods before she
would support their
effort against her
lover Ksárul. She

exacted from Vimúhla that they should couple to remind all of
what she was giving up during the Doomed Prince's
imprisonment.

To the spectators on the ground it appears
that the Flame Lord enters the Green-
Eyed Goddess and remains until she casts
him out and continues on her journey
alone once more.



This time is particularly auspicious for
the followers of Hriháyal and Chiténg. Their lustful
intertemple conjoinings send many worshippers to the Planes
Beyond as a result from their zealous ferocity.



Contributors

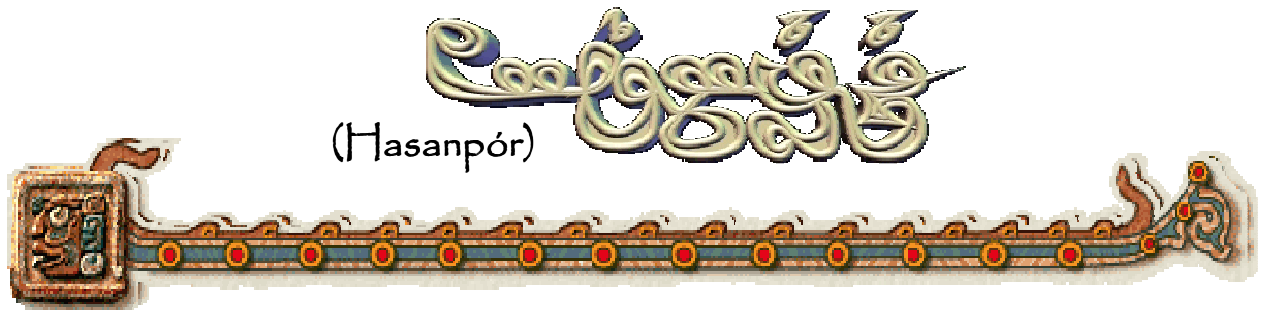
Brad Johnson Embellisher

Mari Orié Calendar

Peter Gifford The New Arrival

Krista Donnelly A Hot Time in Fasiltum





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 (Daunél) (Tlakál) (Rü'üsa) (Zaqé) (Mugún) (Surúnra)

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The New Arrival

By Peter Gifford

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Jegrísh felt the world under him pitch from side to side as he left the gangplank and stood on the dock. Behind him, among the crowds of peasants, shuffling slaves and sweating workers, the heavy-set man called Hanúmal he had befriended on the ship came forward to roughly grab his arm.

"La, young Jegrísh, you gawp like a new arrival from the backward isles of Tsoléi. But wait - by Avánthe's rosy nipples, I forgot, that's just what you are!"

The young man smiled crookedly at Hanúmal's hearty guffaws and made a mental note to try not to stare at the wonders before him. It was difficult, however. Here at last, after more than a month on the stinking ship *The Brow of Blúmish*, was the great city of Jakállá, famed throughout the five Empires. Here was the traditional first port of call for those new to the great Empire of Tsolyánu. Here country bumpkins (like myself, he thought ruefully) could rub shoulders in the street with noblemen and priests, soldiers and clan-lords. Through the morning haze, beyond the buildings that crowded the shore, he could see the tops of mighty pyramids, vast temples dedicated to one of the Lords of Change or Stability. And the throngs of people! A boy from a small fishing village could scarcely imagine that there could be so many people gathered in one place. The wharfs were thronged with stallholders selling goods, beggars crawling through the dust, slaves running errands ... there, a palanquin holding a fat nobleman bobbed above the heads of the crowd. There, members of a Tsolyáni legion, dressed in blue and gold lacquered armour, tramped efficiently along the shore, the crowd parting before them. Their scalloped Chlén-hide swords clacked against their thighs as they walked. Jegrísh felt his eyes smart with so many wonders. His nostrils, too, filled with exotic odours he could not identify, mixed with the sharp scent of sweat and the dry dust the crowds kicked up.

"Come Jegrísh," said Hanúmal above his left ear, "shall we plunge into the river of life together?"

Jegrísh shook his head eagerly in assent, looked up at his new friend, and began the walk down the dock to the shore. He had not gone ten paces before he found his way blocked by a crowd milling in confusion before a row of Tíu-wood tables, behind which sat several officious-looking functionaries. Here was the place, Jegrísh realised, where newcomers to Jakállá were quizzed about their future plans, and non-residents were directed to suitable accommodations within the Foreigner's Quarter. Ship talk had warned him of the procedure. Out of his belt pouch he drew a much-folded document, his recommendation from the Old One at the Clan of the Wicker Brush back in Miyél on Llürúra Isle, and for the hundredth time stared at the strange

characters and pictures. They meant nothing to him, but he had been told to present them on his arrival, and he would find a related clanhouse in Jakállá who could give him a sleeping mat and perhaps even a few copper Hlášh with which to start his new life.

Before long he found himself the subject of a piercing black-eyed stare through heavy brows. The official, dressed in a stained white tunic with an elaborate pectoral and leather skullcap, looked bored and hot. Behind him a looming hulk of a man in Chlén-hide armour stood ready to back up his edicts.

"Name and clan?" said the official, bending his head over a parchment crowded with writing.

"Jegrísh Meshmúyel, Clan of the Wicker Brush, Miyél, Tsoléi." answered Jegrísh.

The official scowled in a dismissive fashion. "Do you have papers?" Jegrísh hurriedly handed over his parchment and the man unfolded and read the characters. Jegrísh, distracted by the site of a hulking reptilian Shén conversing with a market-seller, did not see the official's expression change slowly from boredom to shock, and thence to wonder.

"Boy ... errr ... you are sure these are your papers? Speak truly now, and swear by Lord Hnálla's changeless light that you do so!"

"Of course master," answered Jegrísh, feeling fresh sweat break out on his brow, "I've carried them close all the way from my clanhouse. Is there something wrong? I have only the need for a place to lay my head, perhaps ..."

The official was on his feet now, whispering something to the guard, who saluted and walked rapidly off into the crowd. "No, no, my young master, nothing is wrong, we just wish to talk with you a bit further, that's all. Standard procedure for all new arrivals from the Isles, you know. Just wait here by my desk while we arrange a fitting reception ..."

Jegrísh felt panic grow in him now. Behind him, Hanúmal was getting restless; asking him what was going on. Was this to be the end of his great adventure, snuffed out before it had even begun? Had he committed some great breach of etiquette already? Perhaps he had been mistaken for some known felon, and even now the guards were on their way to escort him to take the 'high ride' on an impaling stake, or to languish for years in some forgotten dungeon. Should he run, taking his chances among the crowds or wait to see his Skein of Destiny unravel? By the Gods, what had he done?!

Hanúmal had submitted his papers and all had been found in order, though it was quickly apparent he intended to stay with his friend to share his fate. Jegrísh tried to dissuade him, but secretly he was pleased at the noble action of his friend. Fisherman of a lowly clan he may be, but he would not trade the big man's friendship for the a piece of the Egg of the World itself! It was a friendship that would soon be tested, thought Jegrísh, seeing the guard shouldering his way back through the crowd with a tall, black robed man at his side.


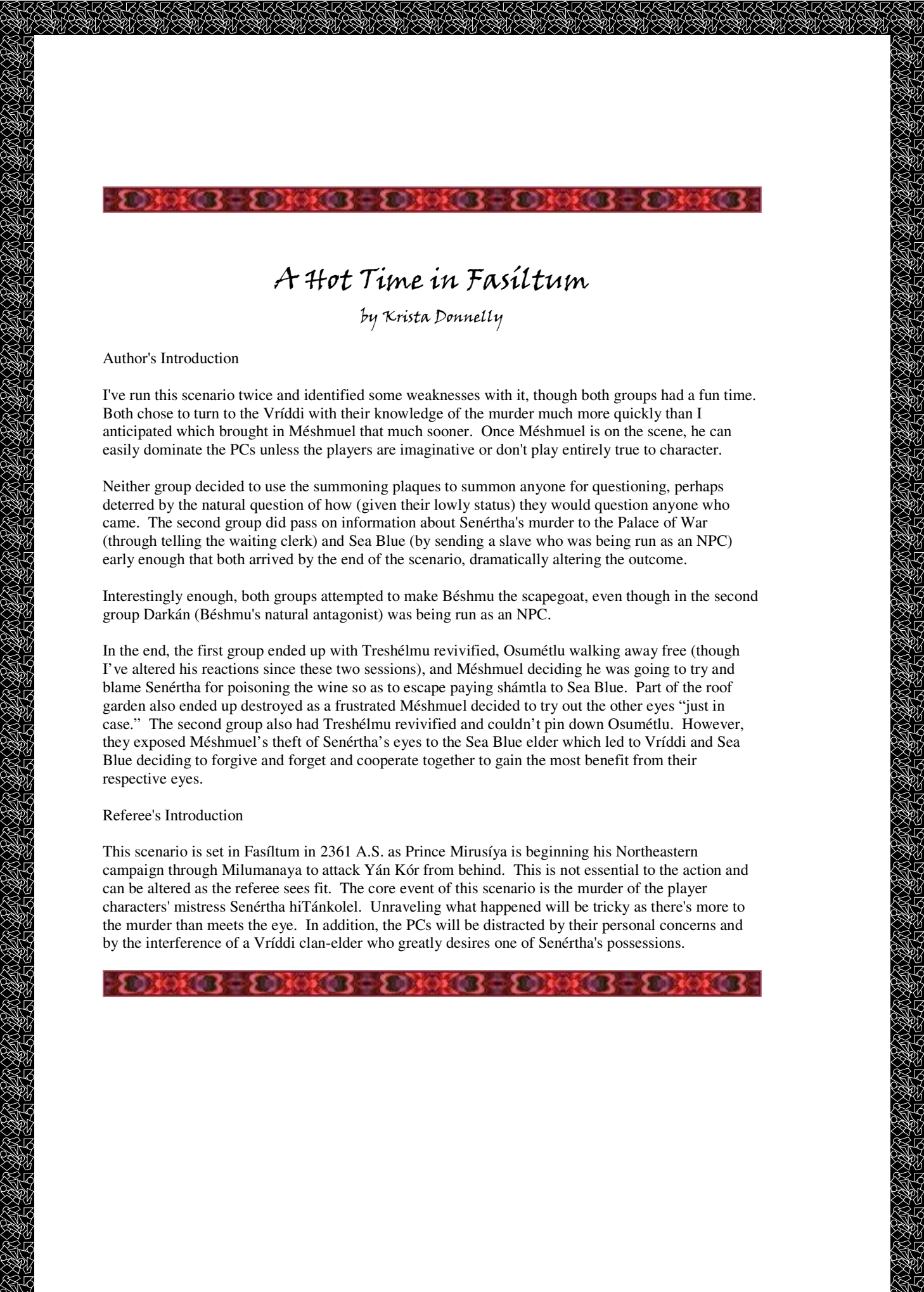
Jegrish studied the man as he drew close. He seemed unnaturally tall, an impression emphasized by the long black flowing robes he wore. On his head rested a squarish mortarboard-shaped headdress of black velvet, and below this a smiling silver mask hid his features. There was an eagerness about his movements Jegrish found disturbing. A priest, perhaps, or some functionary of the temples, probably those of one of the Gods of Change or one of their Cohorts.

The man immediately spoke whispered words to the official, then turned to face Jegrish. "Ahhh, so this is the young new arrival, I see" - he had a disturbing way of elongating his words - "weeeell, come with me young Jegrish, and let us see what can be done about a place for you to staaaay ..."

Hanúmal moved Jegrish aside to stand before the black robed priest. "Lord, Jegrish here is a sworn clanbrother of mine. I have taken an oath on our clan hearth that I will accompany and protect him."

If the silver face could have scowled, it would have done so. "Very weeeell, but be quick about iiiit. Commmme." He turned and began moving off into the crowd, the guard with him. Jegrish and Hanúmal looked at each other in puzzlement but could find no excuse not to obey. Whichever way his Skein was woven, thought Jegrish, he could do nothing yet but follow this strange priest.





A Hot Time in Fasíltum

by Krista Donnelly

Author's Introduction

I've run this scenario twice and identified some weaknesses with it, though both groups had a fun time. Both chose to turn to the Vríddi with their knowledge of the murder much more quickly than I anticipated which brought in Méshmuel that much sooner. Once Méshmuel is on the scene, he can easily dominate the PCs unless the players are imaginative or don't play entirely true to character.


Neither group decided to use the summoning plaques to summon anyone for questioning, perhaps deterred by the natural question of how (given their lowly status) they would question anyone who came. The second group did pass on information about Senértha's murder to the Palace of War (through telling the waiting clerk) and Sea Blue (by sending a slave who was being run as an NPC) early enough that both arrived by the end of the scenario, dramatically altering the outcome.

Interestingly enough, both groups attempted to make Béshmu the scapegoat, even though in the second group Darkán (Béshmu's natural antagonist) was being run as an NPC.

In the end, the first group ended up with Treshélmú revived, Osumétlu walking away free (though I've altered his reactions since these two sessions), and Méshmuel deciding he was going to try and blame Senértha for poisoning the wine so as to escape paying shámtila to Sea Blue. Part of the roof garden also ended up destroyed as a frustrated Méshmuel decided to try out the other eyes "just in case." The second group also had Treshélmú revived and couldn't pin down Osumétlu. However, they exposed Méshmuel's theft of Senértha's eyes to the Sea Blue elder which led to Vríddi and Sea Blue deciding to forgive and forget and cooperate together to gain the most benefit from their respective eyes.

Referee's Introduction

This scenario is set in Fasíltum in 2361 A.S. as Prince Mirusíya is beginning his Northeastern campaign through Milumanaya to attack Yán Kór from behind. This is not essential to the action and can be altered as the referee sees fit. The core event of this scenario is the murder of the player characters' mistress Senértha hiTánkolel. Unraveling what happened will be tricky as there's more to the murder than meets the eye. In addition, the PCs will be distracted by their personal concerns and by the interference of a Vríddi clan-elder who greatly desires one of Senértha's possessions.



Introduction

Who would have thought the life of the bureaucrat to be so exhausting? Senértha hiTánkolel, a member of the prestigious Sea Blue clan, exemplifies the hectic schedule of a 15th Circle Aridani bureaucrat in the Palace of War. As a Regional Superintendent of the Disposition of the Palace of War's Monies and Supplies she is constantly on the move verifying the needs and field conditions of the Seal Emperor's legions. Unfortunately for you, she oversees the northern region. And in the year 2361 A.S., in the midst of a raging war against Yán Kór, the northern region is not a safe place. Fasíltum is even less safe as Hirkáne hiTlakotáni prepares to open a new Northeastern front under the guidance of his newly revealed son Mirusíya, of the Vríddi clan. Naturally, Senértha has chosen to travel next to Fasíltum, taking you even further from the comfort and safety of a Sea Blue clanhouse in a reasonable city, like, say, Béy Sü. But you must accompany her wherever she chooses to go as you are her personal slave retinue.

You arrived in Fasíltum late at night the day before last. Rather than staying at the Palace of War or the Sea Blue clanhouse, Senértha came to the main Vríddi clanhouse. You don't know if it's merely a political gesture or signifies something else. She does have a Vríddi lover, but she has a lover in nearly every noble clan in the empire. Whatever the reason, you were obviously expected as a spacious set of rooms had been set aside for your use.

Yesterday, Senértha got down to business. Operating out of her rooms in the clanhouse, she began receiving visitors early in the morning. A steady stream of forgettable clerks came and went from the Palace of War until lunch. After breaking for a leisurely private lunch spent poring over some volume from her baggage, Senértha began receiving visitors again. Her afternoon callers were more distinguished. The clan-master of High Tower arrived, gift in hand, and was closeted with her briefly. High Tower is only a low-status clan but he was the clan-master! Then a man wearing the clan emblems of Sword of Fire paid a visit. They spoke behind closed doors for several kirens before he strode briskly out. Lastly, a Dritlán from the Legion of the Storm of Fire came and spent a short time with her. By late afternoon, business seemed to be concluded.

The evening was spent attending a Vríddi feast. Three of you entertained there to some success: Timúna, singing an epic while accompanied on the ténturen by Chémýal and Rachán. Afterwards, Senértha retired alone to the roof garden with a Vríddi man, Treshélmú, whom you've seen before several times over the last few years.

Now it's the dawn of another day.

Player Characters

[Their descriptions each start on their own page to facilitate printing and handing them out to the players.]

Béshmu

Concubine, Male, Ksáruł, 23 years old

Attractive (Very), Decisive (+2 initiative in combat, fast on feet in social situations)

Strength 3	Language (Tsolyani, speak) 2	Melee Attack 4
Dexterity 4	Knowledge (Mrelu) 1	Missile Attack 4
Intelligence 6	Etiquette (Slave) 2	Melee Defense 2
Psyche 4	Etiquette (Very High) 2	Missile Defense 2
Willpower 4	Subculture (Slave) 2	Initiative Base 4
Charisma 4	Observation (Cultural) 2	Health Points 35
	Sexuality (Heterosexuality) 1	Shock Value 7
	Sexuality (Homosexuality) 1	Magic Resistance 5

You were born and raised as the slave of a Cloak of Azure Gems clan member. Three months ago, this man got involved in a particularly high stakes game of tsahlén. To make his bet, he put you up and then promptly lost. You were won by a beautiful lady, Senértha hiTánkolel of Sea Blue clan. Privately, you've had doubts about that game since it was her slave, Kómek, who was doing the judging. But you don't really care since Senértha immediately took a liking to you and added you to her retinue as a second concubine. Her other concubine, Darkán, is getting older, and you can tell that he's extremely jealous. He should be: Senértha clearly prefers you.

You've spent your free time carefully observing Senértha's patterns and the other slaves. She's obviously a woman of influence, and you suspect there's more going on than appears on the surface. For instance, why does she travel without personnel from the Palace of War? Why use a personal slave scribe instead of a clerk from the Palace? Why hire litter-bearers in every city instead of using the Palace's? Why neglect to keep any guards around, save when travelling between cities? You don't have any answers to your questions, but you'd love to be able to satisfy your curiosity.

Additional Information

1. The night you arrived in Fasíltum (the day before yesterday), you shared Senértha's sleeping mat.
2. You have a key to Senértha's chest of money and permission to spend it if you feel you need something.

Goals

1. Search Senértha's belongings to see if anything there explains her actions.
2. Make Darkán, the other concubine, look like the fool that he is.

Chargésh

Scribe, Male, Avánthe, 45 years old
Older, Good Reputation (Minor)

Strength 1	Language (Tsolyani, speak) 2	Melee Attack 4
Dexterity 6	Language (Tsolyani, read) 2	Missile Attack 4
Intelligence 4	Knowledge (Béy Sü) 1	Melee Defense 2
Psyche 2	Etiquette (Slave) 2	Missile Defense 2
Willpower 4	Etiquette (Very High) 2	Initiative Base 5
Charisma 2	Subculture (Slave) 2	Health Points 25
	Calligraphy (Mu'ugalavyáni) 5	Shock Value 5
	Calligraphy (Livyáni) 5	Magic Resistance 3

Calligraphy (Tsolyani) 5
Calligraphy (Engsvanyáli) 5
Calligraphy (Salarvyáni) 5
Languages (En,Mu,Liv,Sal,read) 2

You have served the Sea Blue clan for your entire life, as have your parents and siblings. Sea Blue fed you, clothed you, educated you and watched over you. Once when you were young, you accidentally ran into a man in the marketplace. Enraged, he came at you with dagger drawn while you cowered at his feet. But before he could strike, a Sea Blue clansman rushed over and stopped him with a few well-chosen words. This incident has always exemplified the nobility of Sea Blue in your mind.

You were trained by the clan as a scribe, and you have created meticulous documents for many within Sea Blue over the years. You were honored when Senértha added you to her retinue years ago rather than procuring a clerk from the Palace of War. She has always been demanding but fair. You don't associate much with the other slaves as they are beneath you. You're especially uneasy about Kómek, the tsháltén judge. You've heard that his clan sold him into slavery as punishment for murdering a fellow clan member. What kind of depraved person would deliberately lose their clan membership? For Senértha's sake, you do try your best to keep the others in line. But it isn't easy.

Additional Information

1. You carry Senértha's supply of summoning plaques that she sends when she wants to arrange a meeting with someone. There are two types, the "work" plaque that contains the glyph of the Palace of War on one side and the Sea Blue glyph with an "S" on the other side. The "personal" plaque substitutes the Sea Blue glyph for the Palace of War one.
2. You acted as a chamberlain yesterday, announcing and admitting all the guests. The clerks from the Palace of War who came in the morning are all a blur. But in the afternoon, you remember that Túlkesh, the High Tower clan-master, arrived and left very happy. Osumétlu, from Sword of Fire, arrived cordially but left looking upset. The Dritlán was tense when he arrived and very angry as he stormed out.

Goals

1. Serve Senértha to the best of your ability.
2. Keep the others from getting into trouble.

Chémyal

Ténturen musician, Male, Avánthe, 21 years old

Attention Deficit (Easily bored, hard to concentrate on dull tasks), Indecisive (-2 to combat initiative)

Strength 6	Language (Tsolyani, speak) 2	Melee Attack 5
Dexterity 5	Knowledge (Béy Sü) 1	Missile Attack 5
Intelligence 4	Etiquette (Slave) 2	Melee Defense 3
Psyche 9	Etiquette (Very High) 1	Missile Defense 3
Willpower 4	Subculture (Slave) 2	Initiative Base 5
Charisma 4	Arts (Ténturen) 3	Health Points 50
		Shock Value 10
		Magic Resistance 8

You and your twin brother Rachán were born slaves to the Sea Blue clan. Your mother was a slave but your father was a Sea Blue clan member. That's given the two of you a few breaks. When you both showed some musical talent, you were trained as ténturen musicians instead of becoming cooks or body-servants or litter-bearers or concubines. The ténturen is a 12 stringed instrument with two resonance chambers. It requires one person to finger the strings and another to pluck them with metal finger-picks. Yours is a fine instrument made of dark, polished wood. You finger the strings while Rachán plucks them.

Despite being your profession, music has never really interested you. That was never a problem before you were assigned to Senértha's retinue and had to team up with Timúna, the epic singer who accompanies your playing. Besides being pretentious (Who cares that her father was Sea Blue? The clan certainly doesn't.), she assumes far too much 'authority.' She wants to practice continually, learning new songs, in a futile quest for perfection. Why after your last performance together, she even had the gall to complain that your ténturen was out of tune. It was, slightly, but only because the strings need replacing. You need to ask Senértha for some money to get new ones. You've put it off, hoping that you'll return in time to a clanhouse where you can just speak to a steward about it. Frankly, Senértha intimidates you. But no matter what, you need new strings before your next performance.

Additional Information

1. After your concert last night, Senértha said she wanted to talk with you this morning.

Goals

1. Don't be embarrassed in a performance.
2. Don't let Timúna, the epic singer, push you around

Darkán

Concubine, Male, Vimúhla, 35 years old
Attractive (Extremely), Hard Luck, Older, Uneducated

Strength 4	Language (Tsolyani, speak) 2	Melee Attack 5
Dexterity 6	Knowledge (Béy Sü) 1	Missile Attack 5
Intelligence 4	Etiquette (Slave) 2	Melee Defense 3
Psyche 3	Etiquette (Very High) 3	Missile Defense 3
Willpower 4	Subculture (Slave) 2	Initiative Base 6
Charisma 2	Subculture (Very High) 2	Health Points 40
	Gambling (Kévuk) 2	Shock Value 8
	Intoxicants (Alcohol) 2	Magic Resistance 4
	Sleight of Hand (Cheating) 3	
	Familiarity (Etiquette: Low)	
	Familiarity (Subcult.: Low)	

Up until the age of four, you happily played and worked with the other children of Red Moon. But then the harvest failed for the third year in a row. Starvation loomed large in the clanhouse, and you were chosen as one of the children to be sold into slavery so that the others might live. You never knew if you did anything wrong or if it was just the capriciousness of Lord Hrü'ü. Fortunately, the slaver from the Collar of Bronze was able to re-sell you quickly and you ended up with Sea Blue.

At Sea Blue, you never lacked for food. And as you grew, you developed a fine physique and classically handsome features. By your late teens, you were singled out to become a concubine. You belonged to Lady Litheni for ten years before she tired of you and traded you to Senértha. You've been with Senértha for seven years now. Frankly, your duties have always been light. Senértha has many lovers, almost one in every city, and you seem to be partly ornamentation and partly a travelling mat-warmer. This suits you just fine as it leaves you free to do virtually whatever you want.

Your only worry is that she'll tire of you as well. Then what? You're old enough that maybe another lady won't want you. You dread the thought of becoming a menial again. Your main competition is Béshmu, the new concubine. Senértha won him in a tsahlten match that Kómek judged several months ago. He's younger, cockier and sleeps with her more often. If you can get rid of him (how fair a judge was Kómek?) or get him to fall from grace, your position will be much more secure.

Additional Information

You know that Senértha travels without bodyguards because she feels protected by the four Eyes she carries. You can recognize on sight the one that protects her from attacks since she used it once on the Sákbe road. You think you can recognize the one that shoots out lightning. You're not as certain on that one because you were scrambling for cover by then. You don't know what the other two do. You never saw her use them.

Goals

1. Either get rid of Béshmu or blacken his reputation in some fashion
2. Enjoy yourself. You like musical performances; see if you can sit in on Timúna while she practices with the ténturen musicians.

Jímu

Dancer, Male, Hnálla, 25 years old
Attractive (Very), Hard Luck

Strength 6	Language (Tsolyani, speak) 2	Melee Attack 7
Dexterity 8	Knowledge (Jakálla) 1	Missile Attack 8
Intelligence 4	Etiquette (Slave) 2	Melee Defense 5
Psyche 3	Etiquette (Very High) 1	Missile Defense 6
Willpower 3	Subculture (Slave) 2	Initiative Base 8
Charisma 4	Arts (Dancing) 4	Health Points 45
		Shock Value 9
		Magic Resistance 4

You have never been so unhappy in your life. What did you do to deserve this fate? Your life had been going so well. You were the son and grandson and great-grandson of slaves owned by Sea Blue. In fact, they for have owned your family so long that there's no memory left of any previous existence. When you proved to be both handsome and especially agile, you were sent to Jakálla and trained in the most popular and refined styles of dance. Dancing was always a joy and delight to you. You were showered with compliments by the finest of people, and enjoyed many liaisons with your fellow dancers. (How helpful that so many of them worshipped Dlamélish rather enthusiastically.)

But then a year ago Senértha hiTánkolel attended one of your performances. It went magnificently. Then several days later, the clan steward came to you and told you that Senértha had requested you as part of her retinue. She was apparently a rising star for the clan and so her request was granted. It made no sense to you. You don't perform alone. Your style always requires at least one partner. And yet, while Senértha had a singer and two musicians traveling with her, there were no other dancers. You have yet to be asked to perform a dance. This made you afraid that she really wanted you for another concubine (you're homosexual), but she made no motions in that direction. Instead, you are ignored and seem to have been forgotten. This has depressed you greatly. You have to do something because you don't think you can stand this any longer.

Goals

1. Get someone who appreciates dancers to buy you from Senértha.
2. If you can't do that, at least get the other slaves to pay some attention to you.

Kómek

Tsahlén Judge, Male, Hriháyal, 32 years old
Bad Reputation, Hard Luck, Older

Strength 5	Language (Tsolyani, speak) 2	Melee Attack 5
Dexterity 5	Knowledge (Béy Sü) 1	Missile Attack 5
Intelligence 6	Etiquette (Low Clan) 1	Melee Defense 3
Psyche 3	Etiquette (Slave) 1	Missile Defense 3
Willpower 6	Subculture (Low Clan) 1	Initiative Base 5
Charisma 4	Subculture (Slave) 1	Health Points 55
	Observation (Cultural) 1	Shock Value 11
	Artisan (Weaver) 2	Magic Resistance 4
	Brawling 2	
	Gambling (Tsahlén) 6	
	Gambling (Dén-Dén) 1	
	Gambling (Kévuk) 1	
	Intimidation (Street) 2	

How oddly the Weaver has woven your skein! Once you had a clan. You were a proud member of Green Opal. You had a wife. (Have a wife? You never really knew if a divorce was filed at the Palace of the Realm. It must have been.) It wasn't your fault. It was Qólmu's. He's the one who claimed he was the better weaver. He's the one who was so clumsy that he hit his head when you gave him a well-deserved shove. And he's the one who had the ill grace to die instead of just being injured. But you're the one who got blamed for it all. The clan elders conspired against you, revoked your clan membership and sold you into slavery.

That was 14 years ago. Sea Blue purchased you very cheaply. You should have become a litter-bearer or someone else involved in heavy labor, but a son of an elder had a fancy of becoming the talk of the town through his exciting tsahlén matches. So he picked a couple dozen slaves to send over to the Clan of the Balanced Stone to see if any had a facility for learning how to judge tsahlén. To your amazement, you were one of the few selected to finish out the training. It was long and difficult, but you eventually became an accomplished judge. You only ended up working for the elder's son for less than a year before he grew bored and lost interest. Then you were hired out for special occasions until you were assigned to Senértha's retinue several years ago. She travels frequently for the Palace of War and attends parties at almost every stop. Drinking, gambling at tsahlén and keeping a string of lovers seem to be her favorite pastimes. You've done a lot of judging for her. Not three months ago, you judged the contest in which she won her latest concubine, Béshmu. This seems to have been some kind of blow to Béshmu's pride. You don't know why. He's a slave; what did he expect? But you keep a careful eye on him in case he tries to get some kind of revenge.

Additional Information

1. Tsahtén is a popular form of gambling. Of Mu'ugalavyáni origin, it involves tossing a handful of colored sticks into the air and "making the pattern" one has called. A professional judge is usually required to determine whether the figure has been "made", "not made", or "neither made nor not made" according to very complex rules. A thrower who makes his pattern wins any wagers he has ventured according to the odds for each figure. Those who have bet on his success also win. All bets must be covered by other players. Béshmu's former owner bet his slave that he could make a very difficult pattern. Senértha covered his bet with Darkán (Darkán does not know this). He didn't make the pattern, and Senértha walked away with Béshmu.

2. You've taken a liking to the cook Sitláya. But she seems to be shy and doesn't spend much time with the other slaves.

Goals

1. Keep track of what Béshmu is up to.
2. Try to get Sitláya to spend some time with you.

Rachán

Ténturen musician, Male, Avánthe, 21 years old
Impulsive (+2 penalty to detect deception or charm. Make Willpower Stat check to resist blatantly revealing your feelings)

Strength 6	Language (Tsolyani, speak) 2	Melee Attack 8
Dexterity 9	Knowledge (Béy Sü) 1	Missile Attack 8
Intelligence 4	Etiquette (Slave) 2	Melee Defense 6
Psyche 4	Etiquette (Very High) 2	Missile Defense 6
Willpower 4	Subculture (Slave) 2	Initiative Base 9
Charisma 5	Arts (Ténturen) 3	Health Points 50
		Shock Value 10
		Magic Resistance 4

You and your twin brother Chémýal were born slaves to the Sea Blue clan. Your mother was a slave but your father was a Sea Blue clan member. That's given the two of you a few breaks. When you both showed some musical talent, you were trained as ténturen musicians instead of becoming cooks or body-servants or litter-bearers or concubines. The ténturen is a 12 stringed instrument with two resonance chambers. It requires one person to finger the strings and another to pluck them with metal finger-picks. Yours is a fine instrument made of dark, polished wood. You pluck the strings while Chémýal fingers them.

Lately, your profession has become much more interesting to you. Rather than just doing enough to get by, as your twin Chémýal does, you've developed a desire to expand your repertoire. When Timúna, the epic singer, suggested learning the Khéiris Recension of the 'Lament to the Wheel of Black', you were thrilled. Of course, maybe that's because you would then have to spend many close hours in practice with Timúna. It hasn't escaped your notice that she's beautiful. In fact, you can think of many activities that you'd to practice with her. If only Chémýal didn't seem to go out of his way to irritate her, you might get somewhere.

Additional Information

After your concert last night, Senértha said she wanted to talk with you in the morning.

Goals

1. Spend as much time with Timúna as possible.
2. Keep the peace between Chémýal and Timúna.

Sitláya

Cook, Female, Dlamélish, 26 years old
Hard Luck, Older, Uneducated

Strength 5	Language (Tsolyani, speak) 2	Melee Attack 5
Dexterity 5	Knowledge (Béy Sü) 1	Missile Attack 5
Intelligence 4	Etiquette (Low Clan) 1	Melee Defense 3
Psyche 5	Etiquette (Slave) 1	Missile Defense 3
Willpower 8	Subculture (Low Clan) 1	Initiative 5
Charisma 4	Subculture (Slave) 1	Health Points 65
	Cooking (Tsolyani) 3	Shock Value 13
	Negotiation (Business) 3	Magic Resistance 4
	Observation (Cultural) 1	

The Weaver of Skeins has not dealt kindly with you. You were born and raised in the Green Stone clan, a low status but honorable position in Tsolyani society. You grew up working steadily around the clanhouse, always there to lend a hand when needed. You enjoyed spending time with your clan cousins, waiting slightly impatiently for the day when your marriage would be arranged. After all, you were already 14. And then you met him. Hóru came into the clanhouse when his family came up from Penom. You fell madly in love with him, but he wouldn't even look at you, not even for a short dalliance. So you decided to attract his attention. You wanted to present him with a fine present. Since you lacked the money to buy one, you decided to just help yourself. Surely the merchant wouldn't miss just one?

The thread the Weaver wove turned out to be grey, not black, as you were merely sold into slavery for the theft and not impaled. For the last 12 years you have labored for Sea Blue as a kitchen worker and then a cook. You've slowly evolved a plan for how to get out of slavery. You will accumulate enough money to bribe a Sea Blue slave overseer into letting you buy your freedom. You'll tell him you got the money from your old clan. Then, when you return home, you'll tell Green Stone that Sea Blue released you as a reward for good service. Then your life will finally be set back to rights.

You've been getting the money through clever management of your resources. When you go out on your food shopping expeditions, you always choose the more reasonably priced ingredients and then bargain hard for them. You then pocket the difference between what you were allotted and what you actually spent.

Additional Information

You made two food shopping expeditions yesterday: once in the morning and again in the afternoon. Two Vriddi bearer slaves (Sivusé and Hémeth) accompanied you and carried your purchases. You saved 4 hlásh yesterday! A good day.

Goals

1. Continue to quietly accumulate money.
2. Don't get distracted, especially by a man. Men have been enough trouble already.

Sríma

Body-Servant, Female, Drá, 16 years old
Ambidextrous, Uneducated, Younger

Strength 6	Language (Tsolyani, speak) 2	Melee Attack 6
Dexterity 6	Knowledge (Béy Sü) 1	Missile Attack 6
Intelligence 4	Etiquette (Slave) 2	Melee Defense 4
Psyche 4	Subculture (Slave) 2	Missile Defense 4
Willpower 5	Stealth (Urban) 1	Initiative Base 6
Charisma 5	Observation (Cultural) 1	Health Points 55
		Shock Value 11
		Magic Resistance 4

This trip to Fasíltum is your first time working for Senértha. She has a fearsome reputation of going through body-servants quickly. The other slaves whisper that the first wrong move quickly brings down curses and beatings on your head. Second offenses tend to bring banishment to latrine duties or worse. Consequently, you have kept your head low and been very attentive. This has left you exhausted from lack of sleep, but you've yet to earn her ire. You're not sure how long you can keep this up though.

If you weren't so intimidated by Senértha, you would try to gain her favor by pointing out a few of the small things you've noticed so far. Like, the cook is stealing from her. She bargains hard in the market and buys inferior foodstuffs and then pockets for herself the hlásh that she saves. Or, that the new concubine Béshmu is a spy for Cloak of Azure Gems. He's always sneaking around and trying to poke in Senértha's belongings when he thinks no one is watching. You bet his last owner deliberately lost that tsahlén match just so he could get someone inside Senértha's household. And who knows what Timúna, the epic singer is up to? She seems to be trying to subvert the musicians, always holding secret conferences with them. Maybe they're planning to try and embarrass Senértha at their next performance.

Additional Information

Your arms are still tired from fanning Senértha all day yesterday as she received visitors and worked. You paid no mind to the faceless little clerks who came in the morning. The afternoon, however, was more interesting. You disliked the Sword of Fire visitor, Osumétlu hiArusá. He was pathetic, wanting to re-start a romance that Senértha cast aside years ago. And he was rude. He didn't give Senértha her gift (a bottle of wine) until he was ready to leave. A gentleman gives gifts when he arrives. And then there was the Drihlán. He scared you. He seemed very upset about some contract. At one point, you thought he might hit her.

Goals

1. Make yourself look better by pointing out the failings of your fellow slaves.
2. Keep up your good work at your job so Senértha doesn't decide to do something awful.

Timúna

Epic Singer, Female, Qón, 27 years old
Attractive (Quite), Highly Skilled, Older

Strength 4	Language (Tsolyani, speak) 2	Melee Attack 4
Dexterity 3	Language (Tsolyani, read) 2	Missile Attack 3
Intelligence 6	Language (Engsvanyáli, speak) 2	Melee Defense 2
Psyche 2	Language (Engsvanyáli, read) 2	Missile Defense 1
Willpower 4	Arts (Singing) 5	Initiative Base 3
Charisma 5	Charm (Social) 2	Health Points 40
	Knowledge (Béy Sü) 1	Shock Value 8
	Etiquette (Slave) 2	Magic Resistance 4
	Etiquette (Very High Clan) 2	
	Subculture (Slave) 2	

You have led a privileged life as a slave. You were born into Sea Blue's ownership, your mother having been a life-long slave to the clan. By the time you realized that the other slave children were already hard at work while you were still at your lessons, you figured out that your father was a Sea Blue clan member. You suspect that you know who he is, but your mother's never said anything, and he's never acknowledged you. Intellectually, you know the clan will never offer you membership, but secretly you still dream about it. To go in one leap from being nakomé to being a member of the most prestigious clan short of the Tlakotani!

As it is, you are very valuable. You turned out to have a fine voice as well as an excellent memory. Consequently, you were trained as an epic singer and frequently perform at clan feasts and for private audiences. For the last three years, you have been attached to the retinue of Senértha hiTánkolel. While you appreciate the opportunity to see the empire, you would prefer to remain in Béy Sü where you could build your reputation by performing for larger audiences. As it is, you make the best of a mediocre situation by trying to expand your repertoire as much as possible. For instance, you need to learn the Khéiris Recension of the "Lament to the Wheel of Black." All the most popular singers know it. It's a disgrace that you haven't mastered it yet.

Unfortunately, you're also being held back by your accompanists. Chémial and Rachán, the twin brothers who play the ténturen while you sing are growing increasingly lax. They seem to have decided that they no longer need to practice. In fact, their ténturen was even out of tune during the last performance! You're going to have to set them straight before they start making you look bad.

Additional Information

After your concert last night, Senértha said she wanted to talk with you in the morning.

Goals

1. Have a rehearsal session with Chémial and Rachán, and make sure the ténturen is in tune.
2. Enhance your reputation by giving a successful performance.

Non-Player Characters

1. Senértha hiTánkolel, 15th Circle Aridáni Palace of War Bureaucrat, Sea Blue, Hnálla

Senértha is a Regional Superintendent of the Disposition of the Palace of War's Monies and Supplies. She oversees the logistics of the armies, handing out appropriate contracts, determining the allocation of supplies, evaluating future needs and so forth. Though there are plentiful opportunities for graft, she is nearly as honest as one can be at her level. That is, she signs corrupt contracts only when forced to by political necessity. Determination to keep her hands clean and a certain perverse pleasure in frustrating the ambitions of others has led her to rely mainly on Sea Blue-trained slaves rather than clerks and other personnel from the Palace of War. This also allows her to conduct her affairs with a measure of privacy that others in the higher Circles have lost. Her skill and clan status have led to her eccentricities being tolerated.

Senértha has no husbands, but does keep two concubines and a string of lovers. This habit has finally proved her undoing. Treshélmur hiVriddi met her at a party two years ago and was smitten with her. He's traveled to various cities to meet her where she works. Senértha found this amusing and encouraged him. At the time, he was a Dritlán in the Legion of Searing Flame, but recently he left to run security for the Vriddi in Fasíltum. Treshélmur did this out of clan loyalty, but Senértha despised it as a sign of cowardice.

When Treshélmur invited her to stay at the Vriddi clanhouse after he heard that she was coming to Fasíltum on business, he did so with the intention of asking her to marry him. Senértha accepted his offer in order to observe the inner workings of their clan and reject him to his face. The confrontation came during their private tête-à-tête in the roof garden yesterday evening. Senértha's contemptuous refusal of his proposal so enraged the hot-blooded Treshélmur that he seized his ceremonial dagger and stabbed her to death.

Ironically, Treshélmur killed her only hours before she would have died from drinking the poisoned wine that Osumétlu had given her.

The PCs will not discover her death until they try and find her in the morning.

Possessions

It's very likely that different characters will try and ransack Senértha's apartment. Her personal belongings of note are as follows:

A. Small collection of eyes:

- Eye of Being an Unimpeachable Shield Against Foes
- Eye of Calling Forth an Unconquerable Army
- Eye of Strengthening the Majesty of Weapons
- Terrible Eye of Raging Power

The Eye of Being an Unimpeachable Shield Against Foes provides immunity for 20 combat rounds from all blunt or edged weapons for as many as four people. It doesn't protect against spells, Eyes, or other magical devices. The effect is not immediately obvious.

The Eye of Calling Forth an Unconquerable Army contains an army of up to 100 automatons that are called forth from another plane. If there is ongoing combat when they are summoned, they will fight whomever the holder of the eye orders them to for 20 combat rounds. If there is no combat, they will wait for an order to attack. If no order is forthcoming within 20 combat rounds, they will return to their plane.

The Eye of Strengthening the Majesty of Weapons permanently enhances the effectiveness of weapons and armor. The effect is not immediately obvious.

The Terrible Eye of Raging Power blasts a charge of electricity up to a range of 100 feet. Its beam is a circle roughly 10 feet in diameter and thus can hit 1-10 beings at once. If fired in close quarters, it will rebound upon the user.

B. Letter of complaint from Dlamúz hiSérekel disputing the fairness of a call during a tsahlén match. It contains a threat of bringing a suit before the Palace of the Realm. (Dlamúz is Béshmu's former owner.)

C. Two bottles of dark purple dlél-fruit wine. One is marked with the seal of the Arch of Heaven; it was a gift yesterday from Túlkesk hiFershéna, the High Tower clan-master. The other bears the seal of Weeping Stone and is a gift from the Dritlán of the Legion of Storm of Fire who also visited yesterday.

Note that the third bottle of wine, the one from the Glory of the Worm, which was given to Senértha yesterday by her old Sword of Fire lover Osumétlu hiArusá is missing. Senértha and Treshélmú drank from this bottle during their rendezvous in the roof garden.

D. Contract between the Palace of War and the High Tower clan and the Iron Fist clan. It commissions chlén-hide from High Tower and smithing services from Iron Fist. Iron Fist signed a month ago; High Tower signed yesterday (the purpose of the clan-master's visit).

This contract is corrupt. The Palace of War is paying 25% more than normal and ordering twice as much as they should need. The clan-master of High Tower in Fasíltum is the brother-in-law to the governor's brother (his sister became the man's fifth wife). The governor has thus insisted on this clan as the supplier of chlén-hide. High Tower inflated the price. Senértha knows that their quality is poor (they seem to be cutting corners in the tanning process to make it go faster) and that weapons and armor made from this chlén-hide will fail more often than normal. Thus, she has ordered twice as much as normal so as to insure that replacements will be on hand.

F. Contract commissioning the transport of supplies during the Milumanaya campaign.

Signed by the clans who are a party to it:

Golden Sapphire (foodstuffs)

Black Pinnacle (foodstuffs)

Weeping Stone (wine and liquor)

Turning Wheel (transport of goods)

This is a major contract that needs to be registered at the Palace of War before it is in force. It will profit all the signatories greatly so they will be very upset if it's lost and has to negotiate again.

G. Supply of herbs: lisútl root (a contraceptive), tsúral buds (medicine), powdered hmíss-weed bark (medicine), twists of hnequ-weed (a mild stimulant that's chewed).

H. A book, "Korunkoi hiChanmismongedali" [The Book of Great High Cartography], written in modern Tsolyani, which teaches the reading of map symbols.

This is what Senértha studied over lunch yesterday.

I. A map symbol: an oblong of sand-yellow jasper. It's the symbol for Milumanaya.

J. Letter from Zhurak hiKutonyal of Golden Sunburst. It expresses his desire to see her again and praises her beauty.

K. A poem copied out in elaborate calligraphy using gold ink on the finest parchment. It's a love poem written in Engsvanyáli from the works of the great romantic poet Yetil of Gánga. It's from an anonymous admirer.

L. A set of kévuk dice, a set of tsahtén sticks and a dén-dén case.

M. Two small bottles of tshóridu (a potent and very expensive liquor).

N. Jewelry: 3 narrow bracelets of gold, a gold anklet of linked pieces, a necklace set with fire opals, 4 amulets and a brooch set with gems.

O. Clothing: Embroidered tunics of find Gúdrú-cloth, beautiful overtunics of the finest Thésun-gauze, sandals of soft Vringálu-hide, traveling boots of tooled Vringálu-hide, shawls of the softest hmélu-wool, a brocaded mantle sewn with small gems, a belt with plaques of ivory and gold alternating.

P. A locked wooden box filled with káitars, blank Sea Blue writs and blank Palace of War writs.

2. Treshélmur hiVriddi, Clan Master at Arms in Fasíltum, Vriddi, Vimúhla,
Formerly a Dritlán in the Legion of Searing Flame

Treshélmur was a hot-blooded Vriddi elitist. He was among those who believe that Fasíltum should be independent. Or at the very least, a Vriddi should sit on the Petal Throne. Though he'd reached the rank of Dritlán, the clan elders realized he'd never be promoted further. Treshélmur had been far too open about his political opinions. Rather than waste money on fruitless bribes for future promotions, the decision was made to recall him to the clanhouse where his considerable talents could be put to use. Ever loyal, he obeyed and gave up what he thought was a most promising career in the legion.

Treshélmur decided to forge ahead in his new life. It was time to get married and start producing progeny. Being madly infatuated with Senértha, he invited her to Fasíltum in order to propose. When she rejected his proposal in the roof garden, he stabbed her repeatedly in his astonished fury. When he came to his senses and realized what he'd done, he stumbled away and went down to the baths. There he avoided awakening the dozing servants, stripped off his bloody clothing and jewelry and cleansed himself. His clothes he put in the bottom of one of the baskets filled with towels. His dagger he took with him as he stumbled naked back to his apartment. His body-servant woke up on his entry and Treshélmur gave orders not be disturbed for any reason. Once in his bedroom, he flung the dagger against the far wall and collapsed on his sleeping mat with an arm flung over his eyes. He died shortly thereafter from the poisoned wine (from Osumétlu hiArusá) that he and Senértha drank that evening.

Treshélmur will not be missed by the Vriddi clan in the time period of this scenario. His body-servant, Hórga, does not yet know that he is dead. He truly hasn't disturbed him since Treshélmur's wrath can be great.

If Treshélmur is revived, he will not realize that he was dead. Instead, he will merely assume that he's being awakened from his last night's sleep. By this time he will be filled with remorse over his deed and, if accused, will confess to murdering Senértha, though not the reason why. (At least, not publicly. Privately he will tell Méshmue.) He will also volunteer to shoulder alone the shámtla claim from Sea Blue. These actions may go at cross-purposes with Méshmue if Méshmue has decided to blame Senértha or the PCs for the poisoned wine.

3. Méshmuel hiVrídidi, Clan-elder, Vrídidi, Vimúhla

Méshmuel has heard that Senértha carries with her a Thoroughly Useful Eye (an extremely rare eye, it re-charges other eyes). He greatly desires this eye, as the Vrídidi clan possesses an Eye of Revivification that they believe to be out of charges. It actually has one charge left. It simply failed to work last time because the intended recipient was beyond even the Eye's ability.

The rumor is false. The Sea Blue clan does have a Thoroughly Useful Eye, but it's not in Senértha's possession. But since Méshmuel believes this to be the case, he will try almost anything to search her quarters and steal whatever eyes she possesses. He will first send servants to ascertain Senértha's whereabouts. If he can verify that she's out of her apartment, he'll send more servants to lure the PCs away. Then a Vrídidi guard will quickly search her rooms and steal the eyes, if they are present.

Note that the clanhouse is heavily warded against spells so he can't simply use Clairvoyance. Also, Senértha (indeed, anyone) would consider it a grave insult if she detected it.

Méshmuel's course of action will be as follows:

Ascertaining Senértha's whereabouts

1. If the PCs declare she is out, then he will immediately proceed to step two, trying to lure them away.
2. If the PCs stonewall the servant or declare that she's in:
 - A. Badger with a strongly worded request to see her immediately, ostensibly to discuss the Fasíltum legions.
 - B. Deliver a message from the Palace of War that her presence is required immediately (a Vrídidi there is primed to receive her if she comes).
 - C. Invite her to lunch with the elders.

If the PCs refuse to respond to any of these, Méshmuel will become suspicious and proceed to start trying to lure them away.

Luring the PCs Away

1. A couple servants will come and invite them to attend a party going on in the kitchen for the servants in honor of a local Vimúhla holiday. Of course, there is no holiday, but since the servants were promised a party if the slaves came, they will try and be as persuasive as possible.
2. A chamberlain will deliver a summons to report to a Vrídidi clan steward for a lecture on how to behave while staying in a noble clanhouse.

3. If the PCs have so far refused to budge, Méshmuel will now simply send in guards, strong-arm them to a different location of the clan-house and then accuse them of a theft. He only needs 5-10 minutes (less than half a kirén) to search for the eyes. Once that amount of time passes, he'll accept whatever excuses or denials the PCs offer and release them with a warning.

If the PCs have figured out that Treshélmú is the likely murderer and accuse him to Méshmuel, Méshmuel will take their accusations seriously. After all, he'll still be able to search for the Thoroughly Useful Eye, and if he finds it, he can revivify Senértha and give Treshélmú up. In addition, the murder of a Sea Blue clan member within the walls of the Vrídidi clanhouse is explosive, politically and socially. He will take them to Treshélmú's apartment and get them inside. Once they discover Treshélmú is also dead, Méshmuel's reactions will depend greatly on how diplomatic the PCs have been. If they have shown proper deference, he will entertain the theories they advance. If they have been aggressive, accusatory or arrogant in any way, he will accuse Sea Blue of murdering Treshélmú and excuse Treshélmú's actions as self-defense. It will also be difficult to get him to listen to theories of a third party's involvement.

Possible scenarios Méshmuel will entertain, depending on the PCs actions:

1. It was a murder-suicide. Treshélmú murdered Senértha and then committed suicide. Thus, very little shámtla will be owed to Sea Blue since it's mostly been paid through Treshélmú's death.
2. It was Senértha's fault. She served Treshélmú poisoned wine, he realized it and attacked her in self-defense. The Vrídidi clan will seek shámtla from Sea Blue if Sea Blue dares to demand shámtla.
3. It was the PCs' fault. They poisoned the wine and provoked Treshélmú's attack.

"Re-Charging the Eye of Revivification"

If Méshmuel has been successful in retrieving Senértha's eyes, he will try to "re-charge" the Eye of Revivification in order to bring back Treshélmú and Senértha. He'll first ask the PCs if they know which eye is the Thoroughly Useful one. If Darkán doesn't try and narrow down the choices, he will pick randomly. If Darkán assists, he'll pick randomly from the ones left. He'll test an eye first by firing it (at a wall or a PC, depending on how interactions with the PCs have gone) before trying to recharge his own eye. If nothing appears to happen, he'll assume it is the Thoroughly Useful Eye and have a guard "re-charge" by placing the two eyes face to face and pressing the stud on the Useful Eye. Afterwards, he'll pick it up and try it on Treshélmú. Most likely, the PCs won't figure out what he intends to do (and thus won't be able to try and persuade him to raise Senértha first), unless they are given hints. The easiest way would be to simply have Méshmuel starting talking aloud as the "re-charging" proceeds, recounting past tales of famous Vrídidi restored to life, speculating on how this will enhance Mirusíya's chances of obtaining the throne.

Now, while nothing will appear to happen when the Eye of Being an Unimpeachable Shield or the Eye of Strengthening the Majesty of Weapons are tested by Méshmuel, the other two are another question entirely. If the Eye of Calling Forth an Unconquerable Army is tested, the army will appear and will have to be dealt with (see its description in Senértha's NPC description). If the Eye of Raging Power is tested, have some fun with it. Be sure to remember that if fired in close quarters, it will rebound upon the user.

When Méshmuel has used the last remaining charge in his Eye of Revivification and it fails when he tries to revive a second person, he will be extremely frustrated and puzzled and will take out his frustration on the PCs. The only happy ending for him is for Sea Blue to arrive and for the two clans to realize what the other has and work out a mutually beneficial arrangement.

4. Osumétlu hiArusá, Poet, Sword of Fire, Vimúhla, 36

Osumétlu is an old lover of Senértha. Like many of her other lovers, she met him at a party. It was in Béy Sü many years ago when they were both in their early twenties. At the time Osumétlu still harbored ambitions of being a famous poet. They saw each other for almost two years before drifting apart as Senértha progressed in her career and he concentrated on his poetry. This was long enough ago that none of the PCs will recognize him.

Osumétlu's life has been a disappointment. His poetry was dismissed as trite and inferior. Humiliated, he left the party scene in the cities and began to wander. His travels took him to Yán Kór where he watched the rise of Baron Ald. It occurred to him that this would make the subject of a great epic. It also occurred to him that if the Baron defeated Tsolyánu, the scope of the epic would be even greater. To help this fortunate ending come about, Osumétlu offered his services to the Surgéth, Yán Kór's secret police.

When the Surgéth discovered his prior relationship with Senértha, they gave him the mission of removing her as an active player in the Palace of War. The method was left up to him. His plan was to have her fall in love with him again and then she would do his every bidding. If it looked like she was resisting him, he would kill her.

When he heard that Senértha was coming north to Fasíltum, Osumétlu decided to pay her a visit and feel her out. He brought along a bottle of dlél-fruit wine brewed by the Glory of the Worm that had been adulterated with epéng poison. [He opened the bottle, added the poison, and then went back to have them seal it again. They were puzzled, but complied. If Glory of the Worm is questioned, they will quickly confirm this.] He waited to give it to her until the end of his visit (after he ascertained that she could not be turned), a breach of etiquette that was noted by Sríma, the body-servant.

Osumétlu is somewhat deranged, which has left him overconfident. He sent the fruit and the summoning plaque to try and immediately find out if his plot was successful. If summoned, he will come again to the Vriddi clanhouse without delay. If questioned, he will deny poisoning the wine, but he'll also refuse to drink any of it. He will explain that he has a mission that he must complete. If pressed about this rather surprising statement, he will become increasingly agitated, talking about art and the great epics and the tragic sweep of history. It's up to the referee's discretion on whether he'll actually break down and tell all (though if he does, it should include the name and description of his Surgéth handler). If he is actually confronted with Senértha's corpse, this will help to break him down.

5. Túlkesh hiFershéna, Clan-master, High Tower, Hrü'ü

Túlkesh visited Senértha yesterday and signed the contract for the chlén-hide. (Iron Fist signed earlier. Senértha was in the final stages of readying this contract.) His visit was quite amicable. He presented her with a bottle of dlél-fruit wine brewed by the Arch of Heaven. Then they exchanged pleasantries about the weather and the city and then signed the contract. Since Senértha had decided to accept the political realities of the situation, there was no conflict between them.

If summoned, Túlkesh will come quickly. When he finds out that slaves summoned him, he will not be pleased. They will need to point out the advantages of clearing suspicion from his clan before he will answer their questions. He'll identify the bottle he gave and truthfully report what they discussed. If questioned about the fairness of the contract (especially if confronted with the Dritlán's complaints), he'll obfuscate. It's a fair price; chlén-hide is in demand these days; must work hard to keep the beasts properly fed. If the contract wasn't reasonable, why did Senértha order so much from them? (He actually doesn't understand that part. He's not aware of the extent of the damage caused by their new "quick" tanning procedure.)

6. Kánbe hiTuplángte, Dritlán, Legion of the Storm of Fire, Vimúhla

The Dritlán visited Senértha yesterday in order to try and bribe her into securing a good contract for their weapons and armor. (The Palace of War passes on the cost of the contracts to the appropriate legions.) Unfortunately for him, Senértha was set on going through with the corrupt contract and refused to negotiate with him. When he inquired as to the specifics of the contract, she refused to show it to him, knowing what his reaction would be. Instead, she quoted Imperial law that a contract isn't binding until registered with the Palace, and that it was going to be registered until tomorrow. He left quite abruptly after that, visibly angry.

He will send a kási today to try to go behind her back and bribe a servant into revealing the contents of the contract. If it is indeed corrupt, the kási is instructed to try and determine who met with Senértha and bribed her.

If he is summoned, he will come, suspicious but hopeful that Senértha has changed her mind about the bribe. If accused of the murder, he will be filled with righteous indignation, threatening shámtna against Sea Blue. He will be able to point out which bottle of wine he brought and can supply witnesses to this effect (he took it from the legion's stores).

Timeline of Events

Yesterday (Background Information)

- * Senértha breakfasted in her room on food prepared by Sitláya. Sitláya also prepared the food for all the other PCs.
- * Sitláya went food shopping in the morning, accompanied by two bearer slaves from the Vriddi clan. Chargésh acted as a chamberlain for the entire day, admitting and announcing all of Senértha's visitors.
- * Clerks from the Palace of War came and went all morning. Sríma was in attendance, fanning Senértha constantly.
- * Sitláya prepared lunch for all. Everyone ate in their own quarters. Senértha studied her Book of Great High Cartography to improve her reading of the Milumanaya map symbol.
- * Sitláya went food shopping again, accompanied by the same two bearer slaves.
- * Sríma fanned Senértha all afternoon, making her privy to all the conversations.
- * Senértha received Túlkes hiFershéna, the High Tower clan-master, and they signed the corrupt contract. Túlkes arrived and left very happy. He gave a bottle of wine as a gift.
- * Senértha received Osumétlu hiArusá, her old Sword of Fire lover now Yán Koryáni spy. Osumétlu tried to revive their love affair so he could convert her into spying for Yán Kór. When that failed, he gave her the poisoned wine and left. He arrived looking cordial and left looking upset.
- * Senértha received Kánbe hiTuplángte, the Dritlán from Legion of the Storm of Fire. He gave her a bottle of wine as a gift. He tried to bribe her into committing them to a fair contract. She refused to negotiate or share any information on the contract. He arrived looking tense and left very angry.
- * Senértha and the PCs attended a Vriddi feast in the evening. Senértha sat with Treshélmú, who began his wooing. Timúna, Chémýal and Rachán performed. This is the performance where Timúna felt the ténturen was out of tune.
- * Late in the evening, Senértha took Osumétlu's poisoned bottle of wine and retired to the roof garden with Treshélmú. The PCs know nothing beyond this point of what she did.
- * Senértha and Treshélmú both drink the poisoned wine. Treshélmú proposes, Senértha turns him down contemptuously and Treshélmú stabs her to death in his anger.

* Treshélmú cleans himself in the baths, returns naked to his apartment and collapses on his sleeping mat where he dies from the poison several kirén later.

* By early morning all the PCs have fallen asleep before Senértha returns.

Today

Note: All events in the early morning are designed to spur the PCs into searching for Senértha. In general, space events out so that the PCs are kept busy but not so busy that they don't have time to talk and strategize among themselves.

* The PCs are in the midst of their morning routines. Let them know that this is a much more leisurely start to the day than yesterday. As Sitláya prepares breakfast for everyone, a Vriddi slave, Marján, knocks on the door. He is bearing a basket of fruit (mash-fruit, dlél-fruit) and a summoning plaque. The plaque bears the emblem of Sword of Fire on one side, and an "O" on the other. Marján will wait for a reply, explaining that he needs to relay it on the slave who brought the items and who's waiting in the outer courtyard.

These are from Osumétlu, of course. He's trying to ascertain whether Senértha's still alive. He plans to do this every day (under the guise of a persistent lover) until he receives the bad news.

Senértha's door will still be closed. If they talk among themselves, the PCs will realize that no one knows when (or whether) she came back last night. Sríma was supposed to stay awake until she returned, but was so exhausted from the fanning that she fell asleep.

Senértha's reacted variably to being disturbed in the past. If she felt it was for a trivial reason, she's become angry. Otherwise, she's accepted it calmly enough.

Marján will be reluctant to accept that she can't be disturbed (Sword of Fire is a noble clan after all). If they tell him she's out, he'll accept and leave.

* A clerk from the Palace of War arrives and expects to meet with Senértha to get her signature on some documents. He'll be puzzled about why she's not available since he was expected. He'll insist on waiting as he's been told not to return without her signature.

Use the clerk's continued presence to pressure the players if they haven't started searching for Senértha yet.

* A Vriddi chamberlain, Tháron, arrives asking to speak with Senértha. (He's sent by Méshmuel who's trying to figure out her whereabouts.)

If they tell him she's out, he'll leave immediately and tell Méshmuel.

If they give him any other answer, he'll be persistent in asking to see her. (Only under great stress will he give the "reason": a private matter concerning Vriddi-sponsored legions.

* A soldier from the Legion of the Sweet Singers of Nakomé arrives, escorted by Marján. He will announce that the legion accepts Senértha's gracious offer of a performance of The Hymn to Na-Iverge.

This is the first the PCs have heard of this. (Senértha was going to mention it this morning which is why she told Chémial, Rachán and Timúna to speak with her.) The soldier will not know when the performance is to be. If pressed, he'll guess this evening.

* A) If Méshmueel hasn't been told that Senértha's out: another clerk from the Palace of War will arrive, delivering a verbal message that Senértha's presence is required there immediately.

He won't be able to say why, but he can give the title of who needs to see her. This will anger the other clerk if he's still waiting. Like the chamberlain, he'll accept that she's out but will persist if given any other answer.

B) If Méshmueel knows she's out: Sivusé and Hémeth, the two bearer slaves that befriended Sitláya yesterday, will come and invite them to attend a party in the kitchen in honor of a local Vimúhla holiday ("Feast of the Sun" since Firasúl, the hottest month, is approaching).

* A Kási from the Legion of the Storm of Fire will arrive, sent by his angry Dritlán who visited yesterday. He'll ask not for Senértha but to see the contract. He's hoping to gather information behind Senértha's back and will bribe to be able to do so. If he sees the contract, he'll be upset (the prices listed are far too high and the quantity is far too great). He'll pry for information about who else met with her, who might have influenced her.

* A) If Méshmueel still hasn't been told that Senértha's out, the chamberlain Tháron will return with a luncheon invitation from the Vriddi council of elders. (It should be near lunchtime by now).

B) If Méshmueel now knows that she's away, Tháron will instead deliver a summons for the slaves to report to a Vriddi clan steward for a lecture on how to behave while staying in a noble clanhouse. He will strongly imply that they've acted ignobly and are in great trouble. If they go with him, they'll get a watered-down version of the "theft" lecture (see below) from a steward without any guards present.

If the PCs refuse to move for this, Tháron will simply call out for the guards. Vriddi guards will come and strong-arm them to a different location of the clanhouse where Méshmueel will be waiting. He will accuse them of a theft at the feast last night. He only needs to detain them for 5-10 minutes (less than half a kirén) to allow time for his guards

to search for the eyes. Once that amount of time passes, he'll accept whatever excuses or denials the PCs offer and release them with a warning.

Investigating

Note: Since the PCs are slaves, they'll have a free run of the Vriddi clanhouse (except for the most sensitive areas) as everyone will assume they're running errands for Senértha.

Roof Garden

If the PCs go to the roof garden to see if Senértha's still there, they will stumble over her dead body. The scene they will find is as follows: Senértha's body will be soaked in blood, half-lying on top of a pile of mats. A pool of blood will have congealed around her. She is dressed as she was last night, in a gown of Thésun-gauze with sandals of soft Vringálu-hide and an ornate collar of gold, gems and beadwork. The gown is shredded, and her torso bears multiple stab wounds. A second pile of mats, in slight disarray but with only a few drops of blood on them is next to hers. A bottle and two glasses (both partially shattered) lie nearby. If tasted, they will prove to have contained dlél-fruit wine. Anyone who tastes the wine will detect a bitter aftertaste and start to feel sick in a short while. If the bottle is examined, it will bear the seal of Glory of the Worm. No weapon will be found if the area is searched. However, there is a faint trail of blood that can be tracked down to the bath areas.

If the servants in the bath areas are questioned, no one will remember anyone coming there covered in blood (they were all asleep at the time). If the bath area is searched more than minimally, Treshélmú's clothing will be found under the towels in a basket, though nothing identifies the clothing as being his in particular. No weapon will be found.

Treshélmú's Apartment

If the PCs remember that Senértha went to meet him last night, they may come here first, assuming that she spent the night with him. If they do, they will not get very far. Treshélmú's servant (Hórga) will be waiting in the antechamber with breakfast. He will be very surly as he hasn't eaten yet (cannot eat before Treshélmú eats) and will refuse to disturb Treshélmú or tell them anything. If they are persistent, he will threaten to call for guards (a bluff, there are no guards in the vicinity). If they want to strong-arm him and force their way through, they will be able to do it, assuming that there's at least three of them.

If the PCs come here after visiting the roof garden and/or the baths, Hórga will be more cooperative. He'll still announce that Treshélmú doesn't wish to be disturbed, but by this time he's very bored and curious as to what's going on with Treshélmú. If they describe the murder, he will be alarmed and will tell all he knows, one slave to another. What he knows is this: Treshélmú returned very late last night, waking him up from his doze (he'll look slightly embarrassed). He was very upset and headed straight for his room,

giving orders not to be disturbed for any reason. Hórga won't think to mention Treshélmú's nudity unless the PCs ask about it. If they ask about a weapon, he won't remember if Treshélmú had one or not. If they want to disturb Treshélmú, he'll beg them not to, explaining that Treshélmú is a very harsh disciplinarian. Instead, he'll propose they go to a clan-elder and then let the elder disturb him.

Once Treshélmú's bedroom door is opened, he will be discovered laying on his sleeping-mat with an arm flung over his eyes. His ceremonial dagger is in plain view across the room against a wall (it is cleaned of all blood). His body will be cold to the touch. There is no sign of violence on his body.

If Méshmuél is present, see below under "Notifying the Vríddi."

Summoning Suspects

If the PCs wish, they can use Senértha's summoning plaques (which Chargésh has) to summon anyone who visited Senértha yesterday. A Vríddi slave will obey their instructions to go and deliver the plaque(s). No one should respond too quickly, but don't make them come at the end of the scenario either. See their NPC descriptions for how each will react to the questioning.

Notifying the Vríddi

At some point, the PCs may wish to notify the Vríddi of what has occurred. They will be taken to Méshmuél. If presented just with the fact of Senértha's death, he will suggest talking with Treshélmú since everyone knew they were together on the roof garden last night. (They were deliberately given privacy. A marriage with Sea Blue would redound to the clan's credit.)

Once Méshmuél knows that Treshélmú is also dead (either by being told by the PCs or by being present when his room is entered), he will decide to test the eyes so as to re-charge the Eye of Revivification and bring them back. He will naturally want to use it on Treshélmú first since he's a Vríddi and his death is the most puzzling one. He can be talked into using it on Senértha first. (See his NPC description under "Re-charging the Eye of Revivification").

Accusing Osumétlu

At some point, hopefully by deduction from Treshélmú's death and which wine was consumed last night, suspicion will fall on Osumétlu. If the case is made to Méshmuél, he'll desire to summon him. No matter who summons him, Osumétlu will come (see his NPC description).

Other Possible Actions

1. The PCs can obviously change much of this by the actions they choose to take. If everyone leaves the apartment to investigate where Senértha is and then who killed her, Méshmuél will obtain the eyes (unless the PCs, especially Darkán, have taken them) but will not feel the need to experiment with them yet. Have Marján and other servants run across them in various parts of the clanhouse and relay the messages of those who have arrived and are waiting.
2. The PCs may wish to get help from the Palace of War or the local Sea Blue clanhouse. No matter what, outside help should not arrive until near the end of the scenario. The Vrídidi clan will not let more than one or two slaves leave the clanhouse. The messenger will have to work his way up through the bureaucracy of either organization. No one will jump just by being shown a summoning plaque. Workers at each level will stall until bribed. If the PC messenger didn't think to bring cash or valuables to use as bribes, the character will have to return and retrieve some. No writs or verbal promises will be accepted.

To do this properly, just have the PC messenger sit at the table until enough in-game time has passed for him to reach his location. Then take the PC into another room and role-play the encounters. Return to the table and wait until enough in-game time has passed for the PC to return his results. This will take most of the scenario, especially if the PC did bring bribe money and works his way up the hierarchy. (If he didn't, it's a wasted errand as there's no time for a second trip). From the Palace of War, the PC will return with a 15th-Circle bureaucrat, a Palace of the Realm bureaucrat, recorder-scribes and a semetl of soldiers. The Palace of War bureaucrat will arrest everyone with any kind of bearing on the case (all the PCs, all the Vrídidi servants) and serve summons on specific Vrídidi clan members.

This will end poorly for all. There will be bad feelings between Sea Blue and the Vrídidi clan. The case will probably drag on for years and, without outside intervention, all those arrested will rot in prison until it's resolved. The investigators also won't bother with the lowly task of examining physical evidence but will rely on interrogations (physical and mental). Osumétlu will probably escape.

If Sea Blue arrives, there is a possibility of a fortunate ending. Méshmuél will attempt to explain what's happened. When he reaches the part about the Eye of Revivification failing, the Sea Blue elder will realize the great benefits of the two clans working together with Sea Blue's Thoroughly Useful Eye and Vrídidi's Eye of Revivification. In that case, all will be forgiven and everyone (including the PCs) will benefit from the general goodwill.

Conclusion

The levels of success in descending order are:

1. Revivify Senértha and uncover Osumétlu, the Yán Koryáni spy.

And/or bring Sea Blue and the Vríddi clan together to mutually benefit from each other's rare eyes.

2. Uncover Osumétlu.
3. Keep blame from Sea Blue for Treshélmú's death.
4. Prove that the Vríddi owe Sea Blue shámtla for Senértha's death.
5. Don't get blamed for either death.
6. Don't get imprisoned.
7. Don't get killed.



On the Lords of Stability

On one hand, there's the worshippers who enjoy things just as they are. For them The Lords of Stability urge an unhurried, but deliberate journey to a final end the other of absolute changelessness. Those who serve hand, there these Gods already claim victory since they are the wor- dogma of continuous change espoused shippers who by their opponents is in itself a defi- push everything to nition of constancy. They appreci- the limit. For them the ate having warm feet and a dry Lords of Change advocate clanhouse after a long day's an uncertain, interminable work. They can take and always fleeting existence comfort in there al- resulting in ever more change, ways being a new They cannot compromise with the fol- tomorrow that lowers of Stability. They enjoy not know- they under- ing what tomorrow may bring and must al- stand. ways seek the Dark and help bring about the fi- nal Nullity so that the cycle may begin again.

