

Cry Wolf!¹

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¹This adventure is based on the Cry Wolf! adventure hook by Sean Meaney. It draws further inspiration from two crime novels: “Fiori alla Memoria” by Lorian Macchiavelli and “L’homme à l’envers” by Fred Vargas.

Introduction

This booklet include a short investigative adventure, *Cry Wolf!*, set in the village of Vandevicsny in southwestern Karameikos, as well as a guide to that region. *Cry Wolf!* is an adventure for 2-4 characters of levels 2-4. It assumes that one or more characters have a connection to the village of Vandevicsny or its ruler – they are not just adventurers passing by. It is also an investigative adventure – the characters are not required to fight to successfully handle most encounters.

Chapter 1

Adventure: Cry Wolf!

Background

In a cave in the Chernye Gora lies the lost hideout of the Traladaran rebels of Commander Lishka, who were surprised by a Hattian cavalry detachment led by Ludwig Von Hendricks and killed to the last 30 years ago. At the time, it was said that someone had betrayed Lishka to the invaders, but the traitor was never identified. Actually, the identity of the traitor was uncovered a few months ago by two villagers of Vandevicsny, , who started blackmailing him. Then, a werewolf struck near the village, killing a sheep or two. Using the werewolf paranoia as a cover, the traitor killed one blackmailer while the other was away, then ambushed the other before he could be back to the village.

There are several complications in the plot. First, a messenger from Radlebb Keep arrives soon after the with notice of a bounty on the werewolf's head – delivery at Fort Doom! The PCs – and everyone else at Vandevicsny – know this means the werewolf is wanted by the Baron or one of his lackeys, perhaps the infamous magist, Bargle.

Second, a local werewolf clan from the Vukodlaka Les will move in to help the werewolf in Vandevicsny, a mere cub who is almost defenseless against adventurers with some experience. They may help clean the blame from the cub, or contact the PCs with information, but the werewolves can also become opponents that the PCs cannot hope to win against.

Third, the second victim was well known for wom- anizing, and several villagers are thought to have

been cuckolded by him, and have therefore reason for killing him, which makes the list of suspects much longer than what appeared initially.

Finally, the main villain of the adventure is posing as a mid-ranking priest of the Church of Traladara, and will use his position to misdirect the investigators.

Adventure Hooks

While able adventurers may simply find themselves recruited as deputies to help the local constable with an investigation that is clearly beyond his skills, some types of adventurers may have additional motives to embark in this quest.

Cleric: the traitor and assassin, acting as Vicar of Vandevicsny, will ask a PC cleric of the Church of Traladara to investigate – he thinks the PC is an incompetent novice and will help clear him of any blame by catching the werewolf (or by getting killed trying).

Magic-User: if the PC Magic-User is native of Vandevicsny, he is likely an apprentice of Lord Gustav Vandevic, since the lord is the only wizard in town. He will be asked by his master to assist with the investigation.

Lycanthrope: the lycanthrope PC has been discovered and imprisoned, even though he likely didn't kill anyone. Lord Gustav follows the old saying – it takes a thief to catch another thief – and offers the PC to commute imprisonment with banishment in return for help with the investigation. Alternately,

if the PC is living among the humans of Vandevicsny, he may want to quickly close the case, to avoid a lycanthrope hunt that might endanger him.

Elf: the Radlebb Woods are the home of the Callarii, and a lycanthropic plague would be a catastrophe for the elven folk – not mentioning the fact that it could lead to a new Silver Purge and hostility between humans and elves. Thus, any Callarii Elf PC should be interested in catching a murderous lycanthrope. Moreover, one of the PC's relatives might have died of lycanthropy in the Silver Purge age (that would make it a grand-uncle or someone equally near to the PC's generation).

Act I: Investigation

In the initial part of the adventure, the PCs become aware of the werewolf threat. They can collect information from several sources, including the crime scenes of the first murder, the site of a werewolf attack on livestock, and a Darine carnival. During this stage, the PCs may also want to interview the locals, looking for witnesses and potential suspects.

Scene 1: The first murder's crime scene

Time Day 1, morning

Location Vandevicsny, a farm on the outskirts of the village.

Events A young farmer, Matai Kratek, is found murdered in a granary by other peasants, who immediately call for the constable, master Petru Brezeanu.

Clues Apparently, all clues on the scene of murder point to a werewolf or a similar creature – there are paw prints in the mud, and claw marks on the victim. Only an experienced eye (a difficult skill check using the Tracking skill, or standard check if the PC has previous experience with werewolves) can detect the traces as not truly corresponding to those left by a werewolf. A Lupin or lycanthropic character does not find any residual werewolf scent, though this can be

justified by the heavy rain that has been falling for hours.

The murdered man, one Matai Kratek has no known enemies, and only few friends; he is also known for being somewhat of a loner, and not very bright.

The PCs are summoned when the constable and other people, including the local priest, Mihas Plesu, have already arrived on the scene. Mihas Plesu is the real culprit, but is adept at masking his true intentions (he's been posing as a priest of Halav for years!), and comes readily to the scene of the crime to further confuse any trace he might have left, such as his scent.

Scene 2: Werewolf attack site

Time Day 1 or 2 (the attack happens at day -2)

Location Chebishev Farm, just outside the village of Vandevicsny

Clues Clues pointing to the real werewolf attack; a very knowledgeable PC might get suspicious of the differences.

The PCs may wish to survey the scene of the supposed werewolf's previous crime. Otherwise, they are directed to do so by one of their contacts, possibly Lord Gustav or even Mihas Plesu himself. It is also possible to stage the attack to the farm of some relative of a local character. Anyway, the attack, resulting in the death of one sheep, is a genuine werewolf attack.

A Tracking skill check at standard difficulty will reveal the traces of an unnaturally large wolf. If no PC has the Tracking skill, higher difficulty (-4) checks on Survival (Forest) or other related skills may convey the same information. Otherwise, an helpful NPC will point out the tracks.

A very successful skill application (4 points or more beyond the required score) allows the PCs to detect specific differences between these tracks and those at the murder scene.

Finding the tracks earns the party 100 XP, and detecting the differences earns another 200 XP.

Scene 3: The Darine

Time Day 2, morning

Location Vandevicsny

Clues Red herring (one of the troupers has the "mark of the beast"); possibility of getting a card reading from the raunie.

Events A Darine troupe arrives in Vandevic.

Early in the second day, a family of Darine gypsies arrives in Vandevicsny. The family is led by the raunie, Viorica Zaituc, an older woman.

Dorinel Zaituc, Viorica's son, has the ill luck of bearing the "mark of the beast", a physical trait that supposedly marks werewolves. In his case, the mark is quite trivial: Dorinel has joint eyebrows, and generally looks feral and wolfish, even more than his relatives – who *all* look fairly roguish.

Thus, a mob of frightened villagers decides that Dorinel is the werewolf, and seizes him with the intention of cutting his stomach open – according to another local superstition, werewolves in human form have hair *inside* their bodies rather than outside.

The PCs may use skills like Leadership or Oratory to first gain the attention of the mob, and then persuade the villagers of Dorinel's innocence – or at least that they should try other methods of investigation before killing him. Else, they may have to use non-lethal force to dissuade the villagers from lynching Dorinel. Note that Dorinel and his family claim to have been performing in Ourosco at the time of Matai's murder – and their alibi can be checked easily enough.

Opponents: Villagers, NM (15), XP 75. Defeating the villagers without killing anyone gives the PCs 150 XP. Persuading the villagers to give up their murderous intentions fruits 300 XP. Killing villagers does not give any XP – these people are not a real challenge to adventurers, and killing them would not solve the scene.

Act II: Wolf hunt

In the second section of *Cry Wolf!*, the PCs are led to follow the tracks of the real werewolf. This part of the adventure revolves on the PCs' decision on whether to pursue the fleeing werewolf, or to focus on the other suspects. In any case, they can obtain more clues to the real villain, this time from less conventional witnesses – faeries and werewolves.

Scene 4: Bargle's messenger

Time Day 3, evening

Location Vandevicsny

Clues There is really a werewolf, and the messenger has a portrait of him.

Events A messenger from Radlebb Keep arrives with notice of a bounty on the werewolf cub/whelp's head – delivery at Fort Doom! The werewolf escapes before the PCs can catch him.

In the evening, when the PCs are reporting their findings to Lord Gustav or are enjoying their dinner at the local inn, a messenger from Radlebb Keep arrives. The messenger, Boris Cornelian (F1), is a mounted soldier from the Radlebb Keep garrison, and bears the notice of a bounty set on the head of a werewolf – wanted dead or alive. The werewolf (or his head) must be delivered to Lieutenant Iulius Gallus of the Black Eagle guard.

The werewolf's name is Annius Plautianus. He is a young Thyatian who has been working as a seasonal construction laborer for a few weeks now. He does not have any of the signs superstition attributes to werewolves, so he has not been a suspect for the crimes. Moreover, he has an alibi, though a weak one: he was back from a drinking evening at the pub on the night of the murder – unfortunately, the witnesses, two fellow laborers, were all quite drunk.

The werewolf catches wind of the bounty notice as soon as he sees the cavalryman entering the village, and flees towards Ourosco, and then the woods. The PCs can find this easily by asking the locals.

Scene 5: The second murder's crime scene

Time Day 4, morning

Location Road to Ourosco (Runic stones)

Clues A Sidhe living in the mound under the runic stones has seen the murder scene; he knows the culprit was a large man, but cannot identify him. The PCs must be friends of the faeries, or accept to be bound for a future service, in order to obtain the information.

As the PCs track down the fleeing werewolf, they come upon a second murder – which they could easily attribute to the Plautianus himself. The second murdered man is another villager of Vandevicsny, Emil Capraru, a young trader of herbs and spices. His body is found near the runic stone circle along the road to Ourosco. The body has signs of claws, though these have been cleverly faked using hooks by the assassin.

If the PCs have been following the werewolf's tracks, they find that the tracks suddenly become more difficult to follow just before the ruins, and they cannot discover whether Plautianus continued along the road or cut into the forest. When they check the runic circle, they find Capraru's body.

A local PC with appropriate skills will know that the faeries are believed to inhabit the mound, as well as a suitably silly way to evoke them (like making the circuit of the mound jumping on the left leg while singing a specific passage of the Song of Halav that tells of Halav's first encounter with Zirchev).

Foltchaín, a Sidhe noble, lives indeed in the mound with his small court. The Sidhe have seen the murder scene, and know that a tall human killed Capraru using some iron blades. How the PCs can acquire this information depends on the degree of familiarity they have with the Wee Folk. If they are friends, a small offering or service will be enough, but if they have never met any fee creature of the area, they will have to offer to help Foltchaín at some (unspecified) point in the future. This may be the starting point of another adventure, of course.

Obtaining the information from Foltchaín earns the PCs 250 XP.

Scene 6: The pack

Time Day 4, evening

Location Woodlands around Vandevicsny

Clues The werewolves claim their friend didn't kill the two victims.

Events if the PCs try to track down the fleeing werewolf, they are intercepted by a pack of werewolves.

It takes the party the rest of the day after the end of their meeting with Foltchaín to find the tracks of Plautianus, which lead into the forest. When the darkness falls, or when the PCs are about to retrace their steps and retreat to Vandevicsny, werewolves from the pack of Vukodlaka Les surround them.

One of them, a grizzled Traladaran werewolf, Vasile, tells them curtly that Plautianus, like the Vukodlaka folk, does not kill humans, and specifically did not murder Matai or Emil – two of their own followed him from the woods during his flight from Vandevicsny, and called out to him right before the runic circle, where he joined them and left the road for the forest.

Opponents: Vasile Munteanu (WW3), Werewolves (2) and Grey Wolves (4). Note that the encounter is purposefully beyond the means of low-level characters: they are not supposed to fight the werewolves. If the PCs are strong enough, the encounter should be modified to fall in the Risky challenge level at least.

Act III: Truth Unveiled

In the closing section of the adventure, the party closes in on the assassin. This is the only part of the adventure where combat is unavoidable, as the PCs will have to explore the Chernye Gora wilderness and face the assassin himself.

Scene 7: Ladies' man

Time Day 5 or later

Location Vandevicsny

Clues The second victim was well known for womanizing, and several villagers might have been plotting revenge.

At this point, it should be clear to the PCs that Annius Plautianus, the werewolf, is not the murderer, and that someone has taken advantage of his presence to kill Matai and Emil. Thus, the investigators should be back looking into the lives of the two victims.

They can discover that Emil was well known for womanizing, and several villagers are thought to have been cuckolded by him, and have therefore reason for killing him. The list of suspects includes the local herbalist, Emil Yonescu, as well as a rich farmer, Simion Dalakis, and constable Brezeanu himself. If the PCs manage to speak with the wives of these three people (Nadia Yonescu, Otilia Brezeanu and Violeta Dalakis; all three are between 20 and 30 years old, and all three had indeed brief flirts with Capraru), they can discover that Emil Capraru and Matai Kratek were longtime friends, and used to go hunting on the Chernye Gora.

If the PCs ask the herbalist about Chernye Gora, he will tell them of a water spring frequented by hunters, reputed to have healing properties. Matai used to bring back some of the healing water to several people, including the herbalist himself, Brezeanu and the Vicar, Mihás Plesu. He also knows that a third person, someone who did not live in the village, also went with the two villagers on their hunting trips. Emil Yonescu also says that Brezeanu or Plesu might know this person, Teodor, a woodsman who lives in a cabin near the slopes of Cheryne Gora.

Discovering each of these items of information yields 100 XP to the party.

Note that, at this point, the herbalist should not be a suspect – he's a short, middle aged man who doesn't match Foltchain's description at all. Brezeanu and Dalakis are the primary suspects, at this point, but their relation with Matai is obscure.

Scene 8: Chernye Gora

Time Day 6 or later

Location Chernye Gora

Clues There's a cave on the slopes of Chernye Gora, which may point the PCs in the direction of Lishka's story.

Events Attack by a large boar.

The remaining part of the investigation is driven by the actions of the PCs. Most likely, they will try to contact the third friend, who lives near the Chernye Gora. Teodor's cabin lies near the healing spring, and the PCs will need to use it as a starting point in their search for Teodor.

When they reach the Chernye Gora, they discover that the "healing spring" simply produces sulfate water (with a pungent odor). If the PCs look for tracks in the vicinity of the spring (at a -4 penalty), they find a set of week-old tracks leading to a ledge. Climbing down the ledge, they can find, hidden from the view by plant overgrowths, a cave entrance.

Old weapons and equipment are stored in the small cave complex. An Appraisal or Weaponsmith (or other appropriate skill) check tells the PCs that the weapons have been left untended for decades, probably since the foundation of the Grand Duchy. It is easy to understand that someone has been here recently, and that objects have been moved around. A Local History skill check will allow the PCs to link the cave to Lishka's insurgents and their tale. A very successful roll will also allow them to remember the part related to the traitor who was never discovered. Otherwise, the PCs can rely on Lord Gustav Vandevic for antiquarian lore, or on the Vicar – though the latter will just relate the most basic information, claiming he was too young and did not join in the political events of that time. Discovering each piece of information earns the PCs 100 XP.

While the PCs are looking for the cave, or when they come back, two large boars will attack them. The animals are unusually large, and seem determined to kill the PCs, rather than just chasing them away – they are actually controlled by Mihás Plesu,

who is trying to kill off the PCs, now that they have proved to be so dangerous. It is possible to evade the chase by climbing on trees, or the PCs can simply face the boars in combat.

Opponent: 2 large boars, HD 3+3*, AC 6, Atks 1, dmg 2d4+1; XP 150.

Scene 9: The Traitor

Time Day 6 or later

Location Vandevicsny

Clues Closing up to the people who know of the third friend and of the discovery of the Chernye Gora cave, as well as the description from the Sidhe, only the priest can be suspected.

Events Fight with the traitor while he tries to kill the third friend.

After the discovery of the cave, it is clear that Simion cannot be the murderer, since he is too young. Petru Brezeanu and Mihas Plesu are about the only people who match the description of the assassin, and are old enough to have been involved in the war.

However, only the third friend, Teodor, is now likely to know the identity of the traitor. So, finding him before the assassin finds him is vital to the PCs' quest. The PCs can easily reach the cabin.

If they arrive by Day 6, Teodor is missing. If the PCs wait for him, he returns home in the evening, having been off to Sulescu for the last week. He knows nothing of the events that have transpired, but knows of Lishka's cave, and tells the PCs that Emil had discovered a journal, and was going to blackmail the Mihas Plesu, who had betrayed Lishka years ago.

If the PCs arrive during Day 7, they hear noise of battle. They arrive in time to see Mihas kill Teodor, and must face him in combat.

If the PCs arrive by Day 8 or later, they find only Teodor killed. An exam of the body will let them conclude (with a Medicine or similar skill roll) that Teodor has been dead for a day at most.

When they come back to Vandevicsny, they can easily find that Petru Brezeanu has not left the

village, while Mihas Plesu has just returned from Ourosco.

In any case, the final proof lies in Lishka's journal, which is now locked in Mihas' chest at the priests' quarters of the Church of Traladara.

Opponent: Mihas Plesu, C5 of Orcus; 300 XP.

Conclusion

When the PCs capture or kill Mihas Plesu, the adventure ends. The party receives the congratulation of Lord Vandevic, as well as a goal bonus of 500 XP for each character.

Their findings, though cause great turmoil in the Church of Traladara. The discovery of Mihas' true nature follows in short time, leading to an increased awareness of the threat of the Dark Triad cults.

Then, the party may be involved in the exploration of the dark heart of Southern Radlebb, as well as an entire campaign to end the threat of the Boar of Radlebb Wood and the Dark Triad's hold on the region.

Dramatis Personae

This section describes the NPCs involved in the adventure. Other NPCs useful to enrich the description of the Southern Radlebb region can be found in the gazetteer part of this booklet.

Mihás Plesu, the Traitor

Cleric 5 of Orcus, C, Age 56

AC 5 (3 vs demihumans), HP 21.

Str 12, Int 13, Wis 15, Dex 10, Con 9, Cha 14.

Weapon Masteries: Skilled: Mace; Basic: Staff.

General Skills: Religion (Church of Traladara) 15, Ceremony (Orcus) 15, Religion (Dark Triad) 15, Ceremony (Halav) 15, Knowledge of the fief of Vandevicsny 13. Languages: Traladaran (native), Thyatian 13.

Equipment: Ring of Protection +1, mace, staff, holy symbols of the Church of Traladara and of Orcus, leather Armor, shield.

Spells:

1. Protection from Good, Cure Light Wounds
2. Silence 15' radius, Confuse Alignment

Mihas Plesu is a man with two faces: the one under which he is commonly known – that of the fatherly Vicar of Vandevicsny, a devout priest of Halav devoted to managing the church and easing the work of the (very busy) Patriarch, Jozsef Kazmarek; and his true one, that of an evil priest of Orcus. Plesu started his career in the Church of Traladara early in his life, about 40 years ago, when Karameikos was still the Province of Traladara.

He studied theology for years, and was surprised by the sudden change of political regime. Mihas thought it was the right time to reclaim independence, and restore the Traladaran kingdom. He was sorely let down by his superiors, who refused to act and submitted to the new Duke. Mihas snapped, and was easily turned to the worship of Orcus by an infiltrate of the Dark Triad. He secretly assisted Traladaran freedom fighters, but betrayed them when his contacts from the cult of the Dark Triad falsely told him the partisans were going to betray him to his superiors in the Church of Traladara. This betrayal led to the death of the freedom fighters, and consolidated the hold of the Dark Triad over Mihas. Since then, Plesu has been a spy of the cult of Orcus, raising within the hierarchy of the Church of Traladara up to the rank of Vicar of Vandevicsny.

Mihas Plesu is rather tall for a Traladaran, but thin. His face is dominated by a large forehead, highlighted by thinning light brown hair. He has thin lips and nose as well as light grey eyes.

Petru Brezeanu, Constable of Vandevicsny

Fighter 3, L, Age 48
AC 5, HP 16.

Str 13, Int 11, Wis 12, Dex 8, Con 10, Cha 11.

Weapon Masteries: Skilled: Light crossbow; Basic: Long sword, Club, Dagger.

General Skills: Knowledge of Codes and Laws 12, Riding (Land-based) 8, Knowledge of the fief of Vandevicsny 11.

Languages: Traladaran (native), Thyatian 11.

Equipment: Chain mail, shield, sword, club, dagger, crossbow and 20 quarrels.

Petru is a solidly built, middle aged Traladaran soldier. A veteran of the Duke's army, Petru retired eight years ago to take a position with Lord Gustav and create a family. He is not a genius detective, but he is less superstitious than the average Traladaran, knows the village and his surroundings well, and is respected by the locals, which is usually enough to perform his duties.

Dorinel Zaituc, Darine Gypsy

Thief 2, N, Age 32

AC 6, HP 6.

Str 12, Int 10, Wis 11, Dex 14, Con 9, Cha 13.

Weapon Masteries: Basic: Dagger, Short bow.

General Skills: Animal Empathy 13, Juggling 14, Dancing 14, Storyteller 13.

Languages: Traladaran (Darine dialect, native).

Equipment: Leather armor, 6 daggers.

Dorinel is a member of the Zaituc Darine clan. Like most of his relatives, he has roguish looks, bordering on the feral. In his case, the wolfish look is improved by joint eyebrows, which in popular superstition mark the werewolves. However, Dorinel is not a lycanthrope – actually, his looks are not matched by his mild personality, and his combat proficiency is more show than actual skill. He does have some theatrical skill, though, and his knife-throwing show, accompanied by his tall tales, is quite effective.

Annius Plautianus, Werewolf

Magic-User 1/Werewolf Cub, N, Age 16

AC 9/7, HP 4/6.

Str 9/11, Int 14, Wis 8/6, Dex 11, Con 13/14, Cha 12/11.

Weapon Masteries: Basic: Dagger, Staff.

General Skills: Knowledge of the Black Eagle Barony 14, Stealth (Forest) 11, Knowledge of Magic 14.

Languages: Thyatian (native), Traladaran (14), Cruth Orcish (14).

Equipment: Clothes.

Spells: none currently memorized, and has no spellbook.

Annius Plautianus hails from a family of retainers of the Black Eagle. His magical potential was recognized at an early age, and he was apprenticed to the Black Eagle's magist, Bargle the Infamous. Unfortunately, what Annius has in magical potential he lacks in caution – he tried to befriend a werewolf prisoner, and was almost killed. After transforming for the first time, and killing two guardsmen while in wolf form, Annius fled Fort Doom and reached Vandevicsny, where he poses as a travelling seasonal laborer.

Annius is quite short, with dark curly hair and olive complexion. He has grown a thin mustache after leaving Fort Doom.

Other NPCs

Viorica Zaituc Darine Raunie: Wise Woman 2, N, Age 46, AC 9, HP 6.

Viorica is an old Darine woman, and the leader of the Zaituc clan. The Zaituc are a clan of Darine, gypsies of Traladaran origin who have in time become a separate people. They wander the land, performing as a carnival troupe, as well as travelling herbalists and blacksmiths.

Vasile Munteanu Werewolf leader: NM/WW3, N, Age 38, AC 9/5, HP 6/27.

An old but though looking Traladaran, Vasile Munteanu is a leader of the Vukodlaka werewolf clan. He is not a bloodthirsty monster, though – rather a skilled hunter and a stern but caring leader. He does not condone attacks against humans or demihumans, and strives to keep the Vukodlaka Les free of sentient species other than werewolves.

Emil Yonescu Herbalist (suspect): NM, L, Age 57, AC 9, HP 3.

A short, mild mannered Traladaran in his late fifties, Emil is the local herbalist. He married a woman much younger than he is, Nadia, arising a lot of gossip, not always unfounded.

Simion Dalakis Farmer (suspect): NM, L, Age 29, AC 8, HP 5.

Simion, an independent farmer whose family has been living in the area for centuries, is quite burly for a Traladaran, but otherwise unremarkable. He works hard and has raised the fortunes of his family quite a bit, allowing him to enlarge his parents' farm by buying wooded lands from Lord Gustav and cleaning them for cultivation. Simion has very little time left after his work, but lacks the imagination to do anything with it, so he does not mind.

Boris Cornelian Messenger from Radlebb Keep: F1, L, Age 23, AC 5, HP 6.

Boris is a soldier of the "Hell's Jailers" battalion. The very prototype of the New Karameikan – his father is a retired Thyatian veteran and his mother a Traladaran from Specularum – he has lighter complexion than a Thyatian, but very dark hair trimmed short in a military style. Boris has little combat experience, since he was just assigned to Radlebb Keep.

Foltchaín Sidhe of the Runic Stones: Warrior Sidhe 5, C, Age N/A, AC 5, HP 23.

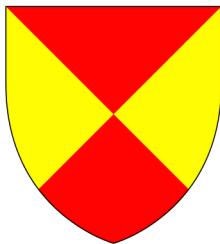
Foltchaín is a typical Sidhe noble. He looks like a wiry elf with delicate facial features, and dresses in flowing robes of green and silver. In battle, he wears bronze plate mail and wields spears and short swords. He is also a competent spellcaster.

Chapter 2

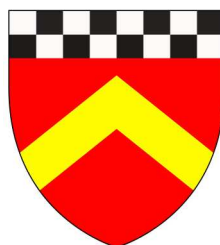
A Guide to Vandevicsny and the Southern Radlebb Woods

2.1 Locations

In this section, we survey the villages of the Southern Radlebb Woods as well as several other notable locations.



Vandevicsny The village of Vandevicsny was founded a century ago by Jan Vandevic, a mercenary of Glantrian origin (a member of a family of half-Flaem, half-Thyatian warriors who left Glantri after the Light of Rad). The village is fairly small, about 200 people including the household of the Vandevic family. Another 200 or 300 people live in the countryside and in the woods that comprise the fief of Vandevicsny. The village itself has a small port that can house a single small sailing ship or galley and a few fisherman's boats, a single inn and a smithy. Its major constructions are, however, the Vandevic mansion and the Church of Traladara. The local lord, Gustav Vandevic, and the patriarch of the Church of Traladara for this region (the province of Ourosco), Jozsef Kazmarek, live here.



Strolojca A village of about 150 people on the Stolos river, Strolojca has been part of the Halag principality until the religious wars of the V century, when it achieved a small degree of power and independence. Currently, it serves as a trading (and smuggling) post between the Black Eagle Barony and the fiefs of the Zelena Bay. There is also a small fishing fleet, mostly manned by exiles from village of southern Halag. The local lords belong to the Strolojca family, of ancient but minor nobility. The current ruler, Marius Strolojca, is a misanthrope who leaves the administration to his nephew and heir, Marek. Marius' brother, Anton, is a vice-minister of trade in Specularum.

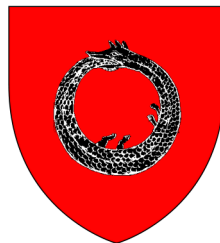




Figure 2.1: Map of Vandevicsny and the Southern Radlebb Woods.

Ouroscó The ancient center of power of the region, Ouroscó has dropped to 100 inhabitants at most, but the fief still includes a large tract of coastal land inhabited by some 300 people. The village, matching the current ruler's mood and appearance, is quite a dead town, with several buildings barred up for lack of inhabitants. There is a single, small inn managed by a surly, dark-haired, long-moustached Traladaran named Sergej Branov, and no other services at all. The lord's mansion, a dark, looming castle perched on a hillock overlooking the bay, is the only stone building in this village. The ruins of the town walls, destroyed after the Traladaran conquest, can still be seen in the outermost areas of the village.

Darinov Darinov is the siege of the Moubotka family, in the middle of Darinov Bay between Ouroscó and Sulescu. The village is, compared with the two neighbours, fairly large and thriving, at 250 inhabitants, 15% of which are of Thyatian origin. There are several modern buildings, including the Moubotka mansion, the Church of Traladara, a small shrine to Vanya and Valerias, and a large, well-appointed inn. A smithy and a general store complete the set of available merchants.

Battle of Stolos' Ford This ford is the site of a battle fought between Svogan and Church of Traladara forces circa 450 AC; the pitched battle was resolved by Strolojca's forces switching sides to the Church of Traladara.

Runic Stones This prehistoric complex is composed of a circle of standing stones marked with runes and an adjacent mound. The mound is inhabited by a number of powerful faeries (mostly Sidhe).

Zirchev' Lamp This lighthouse was built by the Ouroscó family using Minrothaddan funds before 400 AC. The Minrothaddans specifically required its construction after one of their merchantmen shipwrecked on the dangerous waters near the lighthouse. After Ouroscó's loss of power in 900 AC, the lighthouse is barely maintained, manned by a single keeper and irregularly restocked with new fuel and provisions. The

Minrothaddan merchantman that shipwrecked here centuries ago is said to have carried a great amount of riches, including a load of Ierendi gold. Some of its treasures could still be recovered.

The Duke and Knight Inn The Duke and Knight is an inn midway between Ouroscó and Darinov, founded by Lucius Lentulus, an adventurer of Thyatian descent who is trying to attract new settlers to this wilder area and obtain a fief from Duke Stefan.

Shrine of Zirchev The Shrine of Zirchev is an ancient meeting ground for the local priests of the Traladaran Immortal patron of hunters and woodsmen, as well as for the woodland beings of the area. This temple is not tended by a permanent staff, but magical wards guard against intruders. The forest south of Chernye River is tended to by a group of six Treants. The Shrine of Zirchev was built over a pre-existing structure, a Traldar temple of Nyx, which in turn raised over an earlier Taymoran temple of the same Immortal. The Taymoran ruin holds a portal to Limbo — the legendary entrance to the land of the dead that the locals say to be found on the slopes of the Chernye Gora.

Ancient Burial Grounds One of the last battles of the ancient Beastman War was fought north of Chernye Gora. A large mound was raised over the bodies of the dead, and can still be seen among the woods. Visions of battle and death are said to haunt those who would spend the night in the area.

Temple of the Dark Triad Just outside the region patrolled by the Boar of Radlebb Wood lies an underground temple to the Dark Triad. The temple holds relics that are key to the removal of the Boar's curse. The area is dangerous, as it is patrolled by the monstrous boars spawned by the Boar of Radlebb Wood.

Ruins of Old Svoga Old Svoga was abandoned during the Traladaran Wars as the majority of its population migrated to the Savage Coast. The almost depopulated city was then stormed by forces loyal

to the Church of Traladara. The ruined city is now inhabited by small goblinoid tribes, undead spirits of ancient Traladaran heretics, and wild beasts.

Vileraider Outpost The Vileraider bugbears keep an outpost east of the Stolos river, used as a stop for slave caravans and as a lesser slave market for the tribes of Old Svoga and the bandits of the Southern Radlebb Woods. About 20 bugbear warriors can be found here at any time

Chernye Gora The "black mountain" is actually little more than a hill rising above the flat terrain of southern Karameikos. It is mostly known for the dark woods that surround the Chernye river. It has an ambivalent reputation in Traladaran lore, both as a place where woodland beings convene and as a haunt of ghosts and vampires. According to local legends, the entrance to the land of the dead is located in a cave somewhere on these mountains.

Ruins of Demiatia The town of Demiatia was destroyed in the Thyatian invasion of 900 AC. For some times it was a frequent stop for travellers to or from Specularum who wished to avoid Sulescu, but the threat of werewolf attacks is such that most people prefer to travel by sea, or along the coast.

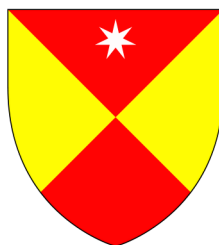
Vukodlaka Les These woods are the hunting grounds of an aggressive pack of werewolves. While anyone who enters the woods or travels in the area is likely to be attacked, the werewolves avoid the coastal areas and the village of Sulescu.

Lair of the Beast of Radlebb Wood The beast of Radlebb Wood is an enormous boar — actually a Traladaran Wereboar who challenged the cultists of Orcus and was cursed to remain stuck in his beast form.

2.2 Nobles, Natives and Nosferatu

Lord Zemiros Sulescu Lord of Sulescu, M9, N
The undead ruler of Sulescu is aloof, but cares for his subjects. Most people in the village understand that he is a Nosferatu, but will not speak of the matter to outsiders.

Lord Gustav Vandevic Lord of Vandevicsny, M7, N

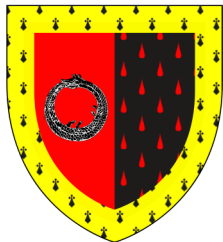


Lord Vandevic is a middle-aged man who in his youth travelled across Karameikos and spent several years in Specularum. He is a competent mage, but too lazy to become truly excellent. As an administrator, he is only marginally competent, but is lucky enough to have competent and honest employees.

Lady Selena Vandevic Lady of Vandevicsny, NM, L

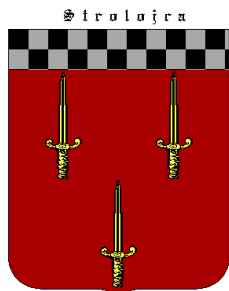
Lord Gustav's wife, Selena, is a middle-aged woman from one of the old noble clans of Halag, the Andros. She has survived most of her relatives, who died either in the "conquest" of Halag by the Black Eagle or in the Marilenev Rebellion, or in skirmishes against the northern goblinoids. She has withstood all of this by devoting herself to the church (she's the primary supporter of the Church of Traladara in the region). Her favored activity in Vandevicsny is tending to her garden.

Lord Vasil Ourosco Lord of Ourosco, NM, N



The last descendant of one of the major Traladaran clans, Vasil Ourosco looks like the stereotypical vampire nobleman – aloof, darkly minded, with pale complexion and dark hair. The fact that he lives in an outmoded, overly large and almost empty mansion only adds to the stereotype. The appearance, however, is misleading – Ourosco is just a shy man with a naturally pale complexion (like many Traladarans) who inherited a mansion that had housed a large clan in better times. He also happens to have chosen the wrong seneschal – Crispus Lucanus, a man of Thyatian origin who is diverting funds from castle maintenance to his own pockets.

Sir Hugo Strolojca Knight, F9, N



This scion of the Strolojca line is an arrogant nobleman in his late twenties. A good swordsman and duelist, Strolojca figures himself a ladies' man – though he rarely wins any favor due to his arrogance and outright brutality. Sir Hugo is the nephew of Marius Strolojca, the current Lord of Strolojca. He doesn't stand to inherit the fief, though, since he has two older brothers, Marek and Barris.

Lord Petr Moubotka Lord of Darinov, NM, N

The lord of Darinov is an elderly but cheerful man, and the head of one of the major surviving noble clans

of Traladara. While he is not entirely incompetent as a ruler, and tries to remain popular with the common folk, Moubotka's favorite activity is partaking and organizing banquets and feasts, which absorbs a large part of the domain finances. He is also extremely fond of his only son, Iajo, which makes him blind to Iajo's shortcomings.

Iajo Moubotka Heir to Darinov, NM, N

Son of Petr Moubotka, Iajo stands to inherit a large fief with a solid economy based on fishing, agriculture and logging. However, he is not at all ready for the role of landed lord, as he is totally naive. He is also not especially brilliant, and will make a mediocre ruler at best. Iajo shares his father's love of banquets, but not his organizational drive.

Lord Crispus Lucanus Seneschal of Ourosco, F2, C

The Seneschal of Ourosco is a Thyatian man from a family of low-ranking bureaucrats specializing in the administration of small fiefs (one of his cousins holds a similar position in a fief in eastern Darokin). He is thoroughly corrupt, and exploits his master's shyness and odd reputation to steal tax money and put the blame on Lord Ourosco.

Patriarch Jozef Kazmarek Patriarch of Ourosco, C9, L

The major representative of the Church of Traladara in this region, Jozef Kazmarek is a middle aged priest from Vandevic. His family originally came from Demiatie, but moved to Vandevicsny after the Traladaran conquest. Even though he is formally Patriarch of Ourosco, he resides in Vandevicsny. Patriarch Kazmarek is considering the endeavour of Lucius Lentulus – he would like to see Demiatie restored, but not dominated by the Church of Karameikos.

Father Taras Itinerant priest of Zirchev, C3, L

Taras is a wandering priest of the Church of Traladara. From his base in Vandevicsny, he makes a regular tour of lesser settlements (homesteads, logging camps, etc.) between Vandevicsny and Ourosco.

A friendly, stout man always wearing the distinctive brown robes of the priests of Traladara, Father Taras will generally help fellow travelers with advice and company – and healing magic, if needed.

Lucius Lentulus Squire of the Order of the Three Suns, owner of the Duke and Knight Inn, F5, L
Lucius Lentulus is a former adventurer, about 35 years old. Born in Port Lucinius, he moved with his family to Karameikos when he was very young and considers himself a Karameikan rather than a Thyatian. After Shearing, he enlisted in the Duke's army, where he made a quick career, mostly thanks to his heroic behaviour in a short but bloody campaign against the Cruth Ogres. Lentulus was then promoted to Sergeant and sent to the Castellan's Keep, where he was instrumental in rooting out a cell of Dark Triad cultists who were raising a goblinoid army to attack the town of Penhaligon. This earned him the induction into the Order of the Three Suns. On the other hand, he was passed over for promotion in favor of a newcomer who had better connections at court. So, Lentulus opted out of the army and set upon a different way to improve his station. He had money enough from treasures collected during his adventuring career and from Lady Arteris' prize for his role in the Dark Triad affair, so he built the Duke and Knight Inn midway between Darinov and Ourosco. Lentulus hopes to establish a power base in this underdeveloped region, attract some colonists and finally obtain permission to either establish a new coastal fief or to resettle the ruins of Demiatric.