



# GYPSY RACE PACKET

SOLAR: Aftermath Continuity Document

By: Valerie Mabry and Matthew Smith

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## 200 YEAR HISTORY

200: After the unexpected death of the King and Queen of the Gypsies, every tribe came together in an enormous gathering and declared themselves one family. The same year, the Romani chose among their numbers and elected a new king and queen. The respective tribes took the time to restructure formally codify their customs into laws. When the deliberations were finally over, the gypsy people as a whole were invigorated with the spirit of change, unity, and family.

170: Maksim, the head of the Nadezdha clan, confessed, from his death bed, his involvement with the former king and queen's death. He claimed the deaths were not accidental, as was believed, but murder.

167: Investigations into Maksim's confession revealed a conspiracy among four of the major clans, but only two actively participated. The Nadezdha and Almassy families were punished for their involvement, but the Bukharin and Batori families were declared *marhime* and banished forever.

165: Angered by their banishment, the Bukharin and Batori families joined forces and declared a silent "war" on the other clans. They campaigned against gypsies wherever they went, calling them liars, thieves, bringers of plagues, witches, and murderers. Thanks to their smear campaign, gypsies experienced distrust, discrimination, and violence where once there had been friendly relations with other races. Gypsies became marginalized and even outright detested in many cities across Radeves. The once-proud race was brought low, and their way of life became nearly impossible to support.

75: Gypsies continued to experience bad relations with other races thanks to the Batori and Bukharin smear campaign, but nearly a century later, a break in the storm clouds appeared when open trading relations with the sarr came about.

70: As trade lines with the sarr kept coin and news flowing, the gypsies finally began to stabilize again, but their alliance with the sarr made humans distrust them more.

50: Enmity between the gypsies and humans finally began to calm. Gypsies were allowed back into communities to trade but under strict rules and intense scrutiny. When the gypsies complied, their reputation slowly started to recover.

30: Humans and sarr began to get along. Trade opened up between gypsies, sarr, and humans. The gypsies' relationship with the two other races grew lucrative, and gypsies began seeing real profit again.

20: Begrudgingly, humans accepted gypsies back into the fold as strange, but tolerable cousins. The gypsies pretended not to notice when humans hid their valuables away when the caravan was in town.



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10: Humans and sarr finally established peace between their people. Despite this, gypsy *drabarni* (fortune-tellers) began warning their clans of a coming disaster.

5: After five years of warning their clans, gypsies warned any and all who would listen of the future calamity and began offering aid.

0: The calamity strikes.

## AN ALEHOUSE TALE

*“Qatar A Lumiesa o’Rom, From the world over, come the Romani. Let me tell you a story. It is a story of heartache, of sadness, of triumph, and of woe. It is the story of our People. Years ago, we were one people. For many years the People wandered this world. We were carefree, unfettered by the chains of gaje bureaucracy. We governed ourselves, policed our own, and upheld our laws. Our People roamed wherever the eye could see, for to one of the People the land upon which they stand is theirs, until they move their feet. We were led by our Riga, the King. He was a great man named Constantin Gregori, and he was a kind, just, beloved king. Constantin had two sons, Alexi and Niklaus, and never were there two brothers who were so different from one another. Alexi was always the adventurer, constantly in trouble no matter where he went. Niklaus loved to sit and read. He was a quiet and reserved child, and that carried over with him into adulthood.*

*In the years before Blightfall the People were numerous! We were as leaves upon the wind, roaming free and prosperous. It was common to see the People in any town, village, fortress, or keep. We were loved and hated by all. We were loved for our good food, good humor, and bad manners, and we were hated by fathers and husbands when our charms swept away their daughters and wives. Then, everything changed. The Blight scourge came upon pamant. Even the People, with all their great knowledge and wisdom of this world, do not know where it came from.*

*Elves, dwarves, and People died by the thousands. The world itself seemed to die. Riga, Constantin, the beloved Riga, died within the first year. So many families disappeared that we lost count. The princes came together to discuss the future of the People and to discuss who should take the throne; but, neither could agree upon a course of action. Months slipped by as rumors were debunked and dusty tomes were combed.*

*It was after many, many months that Niklaus found a manuscript describing a “shining city across the sea.” It was this which brought on the Great Divide. Prince Alexi argued that they should place as many of the People upon ships as they could and sail away looking for this city, which the manuscript named Terestru, across the sea; but, Prince Niklaus argued the Blight was the world's way of cleansing itself, and that it should be embraced and studied. Lines appeared drawn in the sand among the People—a sad and bitter way for the family to act. In the end, four families followed Alexi aboard his ships. The*



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*Voyani, Marku, Stela, and Alexi's own house, the Gregori, set sail. The remaining great families followed Niklaus, deeming the hotheaded and youthful Alexi too untrustworthy to guide their fates.*

*So the people of Alexi left, and though the Teren weep bitterly for the absent smiles of our kin, we persevere.*

Povestitor Andre Voyani, 36 N.R.

## JANUS'S TALE

*"I will tell you a story. It is not a long story. It is not a complicated story. It is quite simple, actually. We were one People, then we were two. The brothers Gregori could not agree upon who should sit the throne or upon which course our People should choose. Niklaus, in his wisdom, spent months researching possible causes for the Blight. He eventually came to the conclusion that there was no answer. The Blight simply is the way of the world now. It is life and it is death. "Look to the Straad," he said, "to them the Blight is life. It succors them amid the wastelands like no other can claim. On the other side, look at the people of Aftermath. Should any of them venture out with us tomorrow the odds are they would not last the day. So there, you see? It is life and it is death."*

*Niklaus saw the world ridding itself of its excess. He believed only the strongest would survive and make those who accept it for what it is strong like steel and immovable like stone. He showed us the true path, *de Mers pe jos Mana*. Our Riga left his younger brother to flee to the water aboard those ships of his, and led his people out into the wastes. Yes many of us died, but many many more have lived, and thrived. We have seen the truth of the Blight. One day you all will see the truth....."*

Janus Brightwater, Merchants Guild Representative, 36 N.R.

## PLACES OF PROMINENCE

Safe places are marked by a patrin. Places that have been kind to gypsies are the Sarr nations of Tsan and Nyasi and the Half-Ogre home of Altan Gazar. Beautiful cities untarnished by the Blight and left intact are rumored to exist, but no one has been able to prove such.

## WELL-KNOWN PEOPLE OR GROUPS

The gypsies of Radeves were once a colorful lot with a zest for life and carefree attitude that was sure to bring a smile to almost everyone they met. They were masters of storytelling and of the arts. Things changed dramatically after Blightfall. While the world changed around them, so to did the gypsies. Much of the carefree attitude was replaced by the simple need for survival. While many of their beliefs have remained the same, two distinct cultures of the Romani came about during the time immediately after Blightfall, and continue on today. The Mare culture is comprised of those



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families who chose to follow Alexi and took to the seas and waterways of Radeves. The Teren are those who followed Niklaus and continue with their much more traditional, land based, nomadic ways.

### THE MARE GYPSIES

Of the hundreds of families that existed before the Blight, only ten remain organized. Four of these families followed Alexi after the Great Divide and are now nominally called the Mare Gypsies (pronounced *mah-ray*) Those families are the Gregori, Voyani, Marku, and the Doru. After Blightfall these families banded together to sail the seas and oceans of Radeves. After a few years, the families began to branch out and went their own directions. Each family is fiercely loyal to Alexi Gregori, the Mare Riga, and will come to his defense as quickly as possible when called.

#### *GREGORI*

The Gregori family was once the ruling family of all the gypsy families. The line of Gregori Rigas stretches back for many generations. Since Blightfall the Gregori have banded together with the Marku family and created a thriving mercantile operation. While the Marku focus mainly on the merchant aspects of their partnership, the Gregori form the bulk of what could be classified as the military might of the Mare gypsies. They have learned to craft ships that are quick and provide the escorts for Marku transports. Among the Gregori you will find gypsies who believe strength of arms will deliver their people from the Blight.

#### *MARKU*

The Marku family followed Alexi to the waterways. They quickly established themselves as merchants of the water, searching for new ways to find the coin to help Alexi get his new empire under way. One of the major ways they accomplished this was to immediately find and establish trade with various groups of Sea Elves they found scattered throughout the waterways of Radaves. Another trade which the Marku embark upon quite often, is the selling of slaves. Oftentimes those slaves come from the Pirates that the Gregori capture in defense of Marku trade ships. Sometimes they are purchased from those same pirates in fair trade. The Marku have allegedly taken slaves from parts unknown. Nothing cannot be bought, sold, found, or transported by the Marku if the price is right. Following suit from the Gregori, the Marku chose to adopt a set of family colors. They chose blue and gold. Blue for the ocean, and gold for the fortune it has brought them.

#### *VOYANI*

The Voyani family took to the oceans as if they had been born there. The Voyani believed that it was not enough to simply survive until Alexi found Terestru, they wanted to *live*. The Voyani knew the days of carefree life were over, but that did not dissuade them from searching for ways to make their own lives easier. The solution they came up with is found in a common saying among the Voyani, "we take from those who can afford it, and we give it to those who are poor. It is a good thing then, that we are always poor." The Voyani discovered that it can be much easier to take from those who have worked hard than to work themselves. They turned to piracy, and they were *good*



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at it. The Voyani are famous for slipping in quietly and overtaking a ship sometimes before the crew is even aware of their presence. Sometimes they take prisoners, which they trade to their cousins the Marku; more often they take goods and weapons and what luxury items they can salvage. They deal openly with merchants and pirates alike. While no self-respecting gypsy will hold himself to a single set of colors, the Voyani followed the tradition set down by the Gregori. The Voyani family colors are purple for the twilight hour, blue for the open sky above their heads, and silver for the moonlight on the open water.

### *DORU*

The Doru family quickly joined Alexi after the Great Divide. To hear them tell the story, they were the first family, even before Alexi's own family. The Doru long for the days of carefree life, not so long past, and yearn for a world free of the Blight. To this end they have trained themselves in the arts of navigation and cartography and set out to map the world. The Doru are masters of the open water, and have set their minds to the discovery of Terestru. The maps they have created are a jealously guarded secret known only to members of their family and the Mare Riga himself. The Doru often suffer from a wanderlust of sorts, never staying in port for too long. After over thirty years at sea, the Doru are more at home on the water than on land. The Doru pride themselves on their explorations and their seamanship. For which they have chosen special colors to represent them: green for the long lost green lands they search for, blue for the color of the sea they search, and silver for the stars they follow every night on their quest to discover Terestru.

### THE TEREN GYPSIES

The six other families that remain organized after Blightfall chose to follow Niklaus into the Blight. Some chose to follow him because they believed his theory about the Blight while others chose to follow him as simply the easiest way to maintain a semblance of their old lifestyle. Others chose to follow him for no other reason than they did not wish to travel over the water. The collection of land bound gypsies is known collectively as the Teren (pronounced *tee-wren*) gypsies. These families follow Niklaus, who has taken the title of Riga Pecoste, or "King after Blight."

### *SANDU*

The Sandu family was the very first to side with Niklaus during the Great Divide. As such, when his own family chose to side with his brother, Niklaus now claims Sandu as his own blood. The Sandu family, led now by Niklaus, has dedicated itself to the study of the world and the Blight. They believe that the Blight is the world's way of culling the weak from its surface. They tend to be bookish and often use their quick wits and sharp tongues to get themselves out of trouble rather than be bothered with physical combat. For this reason it is quite common to see the Sandu traveling with members of the Petru.



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### *PETRU*

The Petru take the idea that the Blight cleanses the world to an entirely different level. The first trial a Petru child born into this harsh world must face is a night alone outside the *kumpania*. If the child lives, it is worthy to be Petru. Any child born with a deformity is killed outright so that it will not decrease the strength of their bloodline. The Petru do not disdain the magical arts, but prefer instead the feel of a weapon in their hands. Oftentimes you will find members of the Petru escorting the *kumpanias* of the other families. They care little for the "old times," but are more than willing to cut loose like any other gypsy, as long as they are off duty. The Petru chose gray for the steel of the weapons they carry, red for blood spilled in battle, and orange for the flames of their funeral pyres.

### *BITTAN*

The Bittan of Radaves are probably the closest thing to the "old times" gypsies that remain. They carry on the wandering traditions of the gypsy as best they can amid the Blight. They attempt to carry a light heart, although any who know them well see the sorrow and sadness that lies underneath the lighthearted demeanor. The Bittan wander the world, swapping stories with the travelers they meet, and spreading tales of how the world used to be. Avid storytellers and artists, the Bittan struggle to bring back the color and joy they once knew to the face of Radeves. They know they fight a losing battle, but they carry the struggle still. The Bittan chose green to represent the color they remembered the land used to be, yellow for the sun they hope will rise over a better place, the blue for the color of the water as they remember it, and white for the purity of their hope.

### *ALAIS*

The Alais are ruthless businessmen, and shrewd negotiators. The Alais have fostered trade agreements with the *straad* and *lizardkin*. It is even rumored they have traded successfully with the *Skaar*, but this cannot be confirmed. It is very common for one to enter into a bargain with an Alais and oftentimes get a bad deal but walk away from the table thinking they got the better bargain. Alais take agreements very seriously, and will go to great lengths to collect a debt. If one should ever find themselves in debt to an Alais, it is best to settle that debt as quickly as possible. The Alais chose to represent themselves with the colors tan, to represent the binding agreements they make with others, and gold for the money they hold in such high regard.

### *GAVRIL*

The Gavril chose to follow Niklaus for many of the same reasons as the Alais. They saw opportunity in the desolation of the world around them. The Gavril took to the fringes of society quickly, taking Niklaus's ideals about the Blight in a different direction. They believe that the Blight is not the only force that should cull the weak of the world, and as such they often prey upon the weak and hopeless. They pillage and plunder, taking from those who will not defend themselves, however the Gavril are not honorless thieves like their cousins. They hold strength in high regards, and they are willing to lend their strength to help those of strong character defend themselves. "Cull the weak



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and uplift the strong” is the motto of the Gavril. The Gavril chose orange to represent the cleansing fire, red for strength and courage, and purple for the nobility behind their purpose.

### *STELA*

The Stela are thieves almost one and all. Where their cousins, the Gavril, have noble intentions behind their culling, the Stela do not. They take whatever they can, when they can, and from whomever they are able. They follow Niklaus only because it suits their purposes and would be just as likely to betray him as come to his defense if ever called. The Stela do not care about what the Blight is nor why it is here. They only care about living as richly as possible before the world comes crashing down, which they believe is inevitable. The world is ending, and so they take what they wish. They live each day as if it were their last, and their own fulfillment is of utmost importance to them. They chose yellow for the happiness they take for themselves, green for the envy they believe everyone feels towards them, and black for the destruction they feel is surely coming.

It should be noted that although the Mare and the Teren have different belief systems, they do not hate each other exactly. Both groups tend to believe that the other is wrong in its beliefs. All that being said, should a Mare ever find a Teren in dire straits, they would come to the Teren’s aid (and possibly for a “fee” after the saving is done). The families hold gypsies above all others, and they are distrustful of the *gaje*. They believe only the gypsy hold the keys to finding a better world.

*It should be noted that even though each family has adopted a set of colors to represent themselves, the gypsies do not limit themselves to those colors alone. Gypsies pride themselves on self expression and though the bright and boisterous days of carefree living may be over, some gypsies do still choose to express themselves with bright and flamboyant clothing.*

## COMMON KNOWLEDGE

Gypsies are nomadic humans who do not settle in any place for very long. They speak a language all their own and have an outrageously distinct accent. They are superstitious, tight-knit, and do not trust outsiders.

Due to their inherent superstitions regarding death, spirits, and the afterlife, gypsies are very careful about who and what they offend. Necromancy is not forbidden to the gypsies, but it is regarded as a tool to be used with extreme caution.

Typical gypsy attire and adornment tends to be lavish and colorful. Gypsy status is usually conveyed by attire. A gypsy is never “ragged.”

Gypsies have been known to curse people who harm them. These curses range in power and effect, and there is no telling what curse a gypsy may use on someone.





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Gypsies celebrate their unification into one family every year during Ibis, gathering in large groups and throwing a party they call the Barri Romani Abiav.

## CULTURE

Gypsy culture is nuanced and mysterious to outsiders. This is because gypsies believe that outsiders are untrustworthy and do not have good intentions thanks to their treatment in the past. There are strict rules that all gypsies must follow, mainly associated with cleanliness and behavior. Failure to follow these rules may result in punishment by levied fines, community service, or banishment. The ultimate punishment for a gypsy is exile, wherein a gypsy is stripped of their family ties and their right to associate with the community. There are no executioners or jails in gypsy culture, as gypsies do not believe that it is their right to kill or imprison another gypsy.

Cleanliness is extremely important to gypsies, especially when the Haze is thick. Despite living their lives on the road, gypsies disdain filth. Water is rare in Radeves—clean water especially. A bath is a luxury no gypsy can refuse. It is a common courtesy among the *kumpania* to offer visitors a basin of water with which to wash.

Gypsy customs regarding behavior can seem complicated to outsiders, but to other gypsies, these rules are very simple. You are either a gypsy, or you are not. Gypsy rules do not apply to *gaje* -- outsiders. Universal gypsy rules are as follows:

- Do not lie.
- Do not steal.
- Do not murder.
- Do not fraternize with *gaje*.
- Do not covet.
- Do not flaunt your wealth, but be generous with it.
- Keep yourself, your dwellings, and your surroundings clean.
- Keep a healthy respect for life, as well as for death.
- Be faithful to your spouse and reserve yourself for them alone.
- Reserve your love and loyalty for your family.



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### *BIRTHS*

Birth is the most important event in gypsy culture. At birth, a gypsy mother whispers her baby's secret name in its ear. This name will never be repeated or revealed, and if there are others in the birthing tent when this happens, they will cover their ears to keep the name a secret. The baby will then be given a second name—their common name among the gypsies—to be used only while among gypsies. A gypsy may choose many different names over the rest of their lives to use among the *gaje*, but among other gypsies, they will always use their common name. A gypsy mother will bathe her baby properly as soon as she has gathered her strength after birth. This is done before the first feeding. If a mother is too exhausted to do so, a grandmother will step in after permission is given and perform this important task.

### *MARRIAGE*

Marriage and family are extremely important to gypsies, as marriage is the second most important event in a gypsy's life. It is imperative that the family line survives. Gypsies tend to marry young, in their teens, to ensure they have time to rear children. Gypsies do not practice plural marriages; in many gypsy *kumpanias*, it is unheard of for a gypsy to marry twice, even if their spouse dies. From time to time, this tradition is discarded if a gypsy's spouse dies while they are both very young, but only if they have not yet had children together. Gypsies will not marry a *gaje*; he or she must be accepted into the fold for them to ever have a life together. Gypsies are often flirtatious with *gaje*, but it is important for gypsy, man or woman, to save themselves for their spouse. To do otherwise is to be considered *marhimé* (unclean). Gypsy marriages are typically huge affairs. The families of the bride and groom spare no expense. Dancing, music, drinking, and food are expected. Each family has their own customs regarding the wedding ceremony, but the bride and groom usually share their first kiss on their wedding day. At some point during the wedding party, the bride's family unbraids her hair, signifying that she is no longer a bachelorette. The bride's family gifts the groom with a neck scarf, and the groom's family gifts the bride with a head scarf. At the end of the festivities, they retreat to their *vardo* to be alone together for the first time. They are considered husband and wife after the night passes, and they both wear their scarves to showcase their marital status.

### *DEATH*

Death is another important event in gypsy culture. When a gypsy is dying, others come to pay their respects, ask forgiveness for past transgressions, and wish the dying gypsy a peaceful and happy farewell. All mirrors are covered while a gypsy is dying and for a month afterward. Candles are lit around the clock to guide the gypsy's spirit to the afterlife, as it is believed that darkness brings evil spirits and they may come to prey upon the gypsy. He or she is bathed one last time before death and dressed in their finest clothes. While some families maintain the tradition of returning to the earth from whence they came, some families believe that cremating the body and allowing the wind to scatter the ashes pays the ultimate tribute to the gypsy's free spirit. There is no squabbling over the gypsy's property or wealth. It is distributed evenly among the family, down to the last coin. It is



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believed that the spirits of the dead follow the *kumpania* for all eternity, sticking nearby for protection and guidance. It is therefore very important that the memory of the deceased be honored and the proper respects be paid.

### *IDLENESS*

Gypsies do not suffer idle hands. There is always something to be done. Men and women alike work to bring in coin and take care of the family. Horses, rare treasures in the world today, are imperative to the gypsy way of life, and so most families keep their horses healthy and well-tended. Trade skills, such as leatherworking, smithing, cobbling, candle-making, and so forth are taken up by men and women in families that practice work over piracy. Traditionally, only gypsy women perform fortune-telling, but this is done as a way to make money from *gaje*. A gypsy fortune-teller is referred to as a *drabarni*. Within the *kumpania*, fortune-telling is not usually done except in times of desperation, and with the utmost respect toward the spirits that they are asking for help.

It is considered tasteless to flaunt one's wealth. Wealth is to be shared generously among the gypsies, not used as a signifier of status.

### *CLOTHING*

Men wear vests and pants, while women wear skirts and blouses. Black and white are usually mourning colors, and so they are avoided. Red is a color associated with weddings, as many gypsy brides wear red on their wedding day.

### *JOINING THE KUMPANIA*

Though the gypsies of Radaves are much different since Blightfall, one thing is still clear. It is possible for someone to join a family and become a gypsy even though they were not born that way. The exact process is a carefully guarded secret, and has slight variations from family to family. It is uncommon for a *gaje* to be accepted into the gypsy way of life, but some can be inducted through a long period of learning gypsy ways, proving themselves worthy and loyal, and finally being declared a gypsy through ceremony. It is easier for a *gaje* to be adopted into a gypsy family during childhood.

### *SOCIETY*

*Riga* and *Regina*—the king and queen. These are the absolute authority for all disputes and all matters dealing with their respective *natsia*, or nation. The King and Queen of the Gypsies are chosen among the clans once the old king and queen die.

*Ducé* or *Ducesá*—the title which the leader of each familia is called. These individuals answer only to the riga or regina and hold absolute authority over the family in their absence.

Bandolier—the leader of a single group or *kumpania*. For the Teren it would be the caravan leader, and for the Mare, this title would go to the captain of each ship. The Bandoliers are responsible for the day to day happenings of the group. They deal directly to settle disputes, perform marriages,



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and other civil matters within the *kumpania*. This person is chosen for his/her age, experience, and wisdom. The bandolier of a gypsy community is a person who inspires respect by his/her strength and intelligence, a person who by his/her own life sets an example for the others.

*Povestitor* - The *Povestitor* of each *kumpania* is charged with the keeping the oral history. They are the classic storytellers. They are also responsible for making sure that gypsy traditions and laws are passed down to each new generation.

*Drabarni*—the mystics *kumpania*. They oversee births, and they use their magical powers to heal the sick and foresee the future.

*Gaje*— outsider. This is the term used to describe all those who are not gypsy.

## COMMON NAMES AND FORMS OF ADDRESS

There are no common names among gypsies. When naming a gypsy, consider Eastern European, Indian, or Russian names. Keep away from names that imply death or violence, as this is bad luck.

## HISTORICAL OR NATURAL ENMITIES & ALLIANCES

Gypsies consider any *gaje* as untrustworthy and untruthful.

Sarr and half-ogres can be trusted more than other human *gaje*. They helped gypsies when no one else would.

Additional lore is available! Contact the general manager or continuity officers if you purchase [Knowledge Lore: Gypsy](#) for your character!