

Gypsies

"Listen to the memories I shall share,

Listen to the story I shall tell,

Once there was a Prince who was the King to Be; the King to Rule. But his 9 Brothers were jealous and fearful for much change he would bring. In the desert they did betray; they did slay.

The brothers went back to leading their cousins but always did the memory haunt. Suffering and destruction came to our people; and the Prince would become King but not of the clans as was good and just. He ruled the Gadje until they cried for help. In their cries the clans did aid; In this aid was the Marheim King slain. None can ever know that our betrayal of our own lead to the suffering of all.

Listen to these words,

Listen, for I am the Blood."

The Romani, Wanderers, Familia, or Gypsies of Terna are in equal measures the most and least unified of all the races of the continent. The Rom are the free spirits, poets, and warriors who roam the landmass and the seas with ease. Wayside is the ancestral homeland of Gypsies in Terna, having several large meeting places for the caravans, and in fact has perhaps the only permanent Gypsy settlements. This is in part due to the large Gypsy presence near the port city Arbor, as many Gypsies are masters of the sea. It is rare indeed to see a ship leave the port that does not have a Familia pilot or first mate. However, it is very rare to see a ship captained by one. This is a hold over to the days of persecution that they faced during the Vampire Wars, or Targoatian Crisis as many historians now prefer to call it.

The Vampire Wars were instigated by the Romani Vampire Rheinious Thargatien. Born to be King of the Wanderers but betrayed by his brothers in life, he worked in death to destroy the Romani of Terna. Targus, as he was known, manipulated events in the world to set the Gadje against the Gypsies, some of whom went so far as to create an organization known as the GFW: Gypsy Free Wayside. While things are improving, many in Terna still hold a negative view of the Romani.

The Gypsies of Terna are descended from nine clans, each of which had numerous families associated with it. Over the years they have via calamity, unions and alliances, and in some cases simple convenience, been reduced to four major clans. Many individual families will by isolation become independent for a time, but in the end they will make allegiance to one of the four. A handful of truly independent families still exist, usually claiming vendetta against one or more of the clans. However, this does not mean they will not welcome other Gypsies with open arms when they chance to meet on the road: what this means is they may well cross swords with you after words.

The Gypsies interact well with any race as long as the other race is open to them. They live a different lifestyle than most other races, which can lead to conflict. Gaje, all those who are not Romani, are foreign in thought, word, and deed and most can never truly understand a Gypsy. For instance, most Gypsies never lie—from their point of view—but they might not give the whole

truth, either. However, some Gaje who have proven to be trustworthy can be made Rai - a term recognizing them as family to the Familia. They may not truly be Romani, but they are as close as an outsider can ever get. Ternian Romani laws forbid intermarriage with outsiders who are not Rai, and condemn someone who race changes to Rom without permission to death. These rules are meant to keep the blood pure, but are viewed with suspicion.

Of Leadership

The King to Be; The King to Rule or The Queen to Be; The Queen to Rule is a long standing legend amongst the Rom. It is believed one day that a ruler will unite all Rom and bring them to a new homeland that they will be safe from old enemies, as no one can stand before the Rom if they are ever truly united. It is the Utopia of the Clans.

Gypsy seers wear silver sashes across their chest to show their status. And are respected for their words of wisdom. But none as much as The Mother Dumari. She is the lead advisor to all the clan elders and is the closest thing the Rom have to a single leader. Female seers are often thought to be more accurate than men and has lead to the tradition of calling great seers Mother.

Bandoleers are the true leaders of the Clans and wear a gold sash to show rank. They are the leaders of caravans, major families, and or people of great wisdom. They often convene what is known as a Cris or gathering of equals to rule on a topic where they take the lead. In the end major decisions rest in their hands but without fail the good ones listen to their advisors and cousins.

Klaives are the equivalent of Rom sheriffs. The Rom have fewer laws than the Gadje which usually are enforced by the Bandoleers but when blood shed is the only way clear or in the case of Marheim...It is the Klaives who take action.

Marheim are those who have betrayed the Familia so completely as to warrant a curse from the blood that marks them with a glowing M across their face. These men and woman are to be hunted to the end of their days. All Rom are to hunt them but Klaives do so endlessly and without mercy.

Rudari may revel in the strongest of all the wanderlusts. They find it truly hard to sit still in one place for long. They follow astronomical signs and events from one coast to the other. In this tradition of astronomy comes an even stronger tradition of celestial magic. The Rudari have numerous small caravans and a couple of flotillas that follow the coast as well. Every three years a Rudari will travel far to the Northlunds to witness the Witchlights (Aurora Borealis). Rudari are superstitious even by Romani standards as they look for signs and portents in much of what they do. Almost every Rudari carries a gem to represent their zodiac sign and their ties to the stars.

Targoatians are sell swords of the highest caliber. They have many pirates, mercenaries, and assassins in their number. They also form a backbone of blade masters for the Familia when they march to war. Every child is given a knife and taught how to use it from an early age. Their word

is their bond. They make Vendetta an art form, and yet are incredibly forgiving as they suffered more than any at the hands of the Gaje in the recent years.

Dumari are the largest of the clans and boast nearly half of all Rom in their numbers. This is largely due to their talented seers and fortune tellers. A Dumari fortune teller is often hired for many Gaje events and celebrations as they are known to be unerring. Despite having some of the most talented seers the Dumari are not especially superstitious. They tend to root themselves in the simple things. The Dumari are more likely to settle in one place for a long period of time and to farm the land than the other clans. Two major caravans one going south and one going north circumnavigate the continent continuously. Many smaller caravans will branch off of these or will form one of the communities mentioned above.

Kopanari are a clan within the clans. By far the smallest of the major clans, most if not all members take oaths to one of the other clans, only gathering together for matters of particular importance. They are a family of staunch traditionalists - Kopanari are often disliked as they can be closed-minded and violent in their defense of the old ways, particularly with respect to intermarriage and keeping Romani secrets away from Gaje ears.

Important Holidays

Day of Hope - When the caravan wheels are stuck in the snow if you light a candle at sunrise and it stays lit for an hour the winter is not over. If it gets put out by the wind then winter is almost over and you should prepare the caravan to move. This is done on the 15th day of each February and is a reason for celebration at one of the bleakest times of the year.

Days of Dreaming - All caravans stop and walk for a day barefoot; upon the second day they honor requests and throw a festival. This festival is the most raucous of all Rom parties and to outsiders appears just that. However, the Days of Dreaming commemorate the fallen King to Be and the betrayal that came at the hands of his brothers. The fact that it is a time of shame, sadness, and general contrition is hidden. During this time, Romani will not refuse a request for forgiveness or a reasonable favor. The festival is July 1st – 10th, one day per clan elder who killed Targus and a final day to remember him.

Roast Pig Day- Is the celebration of the years end and of gift giving to those you care for. This is a day of celebration and gift giving. Which usually features a roasted pig. Typically Rom will jump fires and break eggs during a hearty hand shake for good luck during this feast. Any feuds between relatives are forgotten during this day with bottles of wine and fellowship.

Important People

The Mother Dumari is the chief seer to all the clans and it is considered terrible luck to disobey her word. She is a kind woman who cares deeply. Many have served with this title and many more will serve.

Bandoleer Kristoff Vistok Vasil Dumari is the head bandoleer of the Dumari and a talented seer who often reaches out to the adventurers when he sees a need.

Bandoleer Solar Nicolai Rudari Pendari is the head bandoleer of the Rudari and also one of the Grandmasters of the Celestial Guild of Wayside, or Solars Guild as it is known. He is a skilled astronomer and ritualist.

Couso is the Targoatian lead spokesmen. He represents the council of elders who remain secretive as Targoatian Bandoleers have been put to death more than once in recent memory.

Prince Rheinous "Targus" Targoatian was a Rom Prince who was long ago killed by his people. He returned a Vampire of great power; who conquered the Gaje and hunted those Rom who did not serve him. He was slain several years ago.