

Send all game submissions to: davidmcjames@gmail.com

Blurb information

This section is the “front page” information for the game. The blurb will be on the website, and the information will also be part of the download package.

Game name: **The Fall of the Family**

The Author: **Andrew Smith**

Blurb:

For five hundred years since they conquered Yantary, the tyrannical Drachon ‘First Family’ has bled the nation white.

But their grip is weakening. *The war is lost.* Soldat aerial dreadnoughts control Yantar skies. *The economy has collapsed.* Yantar factories are smoking ruins; Yantar ducats are not worth the paper they're printed on. *Loyalty is criminal.* Revolutionaries of a hundred different ideologies fight in the streets. The only thing they have in common is their desire to see the Drachons dead.

This won't be easy, however: in their fortress-palace, guarded by their Praetorians, the Drachons still think themselves powerful enough to keep ruling Yantary—for another five hundred years.

A nasty awakening for the five members of the Drachon family.



The Phenomenonline Games Rating System	
What's the game again?	An autocrat and his family deal with a popular revolution against their rule, and their own rivalries and hidden agendas.
Seriousness?	On the serious side. Scope for satire and black humour.
Genre/Setting	Art Deco dieselpunk in a sort-of 1920s–30s Eastern Europeanish nationette losing a war with its neighbour. With airships.
Movie Rating	MA (adult themes, violence, potential for supernatural elements)
System	Systemless
GM Style	Narrativist: encouraging the players to extemporise off each other as they respond to the exploding environment. It could probably be ported to Fiasco or similar if a system were desired. Otherwise, an Amber DRPG GM would find this game comfy.
Number of players	5. If 4 players, run the Csar Constantine as an NPC. You'll see why.
Previously run at	Phenomenon 2008 (A Triptych).

All game submissions will be subject to and printed with the following licence requirements. If you prefer a different licencing arrangement for your work, please include this in your submission:

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Any characters or worlds from other authors used in this work remain the sole property of those authors and are included here for personal use only.

Download package

This section includes all the information and materials the GM will need to run the game.

Title page

A single page with the name of the game and the authors. The layout person will set up the download title page using the blurb information.

Character sheets

Include the character sheets formatted for printing as they would be for the con.

Other player-facing materials or printables

Again, anything the players will need to see.

GM notes

GM notes should be in plain text. They don't need to be fancy.

This is the tricky bit, because most of this stuff probably exists mostly in your head. The GM notes should be as comprehensive as reasonably possible, describing how you would run the game. The GM notes should cover:

PLOT - what happens in the game. Plot points, key scenes, decision points, story beats.

STAGING - how the game is delivered. Everything relevant to the game: how characters should be selected and introduced, how to manage different player responses, where the game might go off the rails.

TIMING - where each part of the game fits in, assuming a standard Pheno three hour slot.

ANYTHING ELSE - look, games are complicated. If there's anything you think is relevant to the running or playing of the game, put it in.

You can assume the reader has read the character sheets. You should not assume the reader has played the game!

MY FAMILY

Octavia

My beautiful and regal wife: my Csarina; the mother of my children. Our marriage was only political but over the years I have come to truly love her. Her loyalty is the foundation of my soul. Her wisdom and political acumen, honed in her childhood among the slatcha, serve me well. Her counsel moderates the demands of the Voices. I don't know what I would do without her.

Simeon

My dutiful eldest son. He is intelligent, wise beyond his years, and loyal to me, but these are not enough. Sadly, his blood is too thin to carry the Drachon legacy — he does not need to drink blood, even though he pretends to do so for appearances' sake. The Voices do not want him as my heir. Some of them want me to kill him. I fear that if they take control of me again, they will make me do this. This would be wrong, for free of the Voices, he will be a better Csar than I could ever be.

Anastasia

My beautiful middle daughter. She was such a lovely little girl — my favourite child. She has grown up wild, undisciplined, rebellious. She is not as stolid as Simeon or monstrous as Marcus, and if my ancestors will not let me make Simeon my heir, maybe Anastasia is a compromise they might accept. There has never been a ruling Csarina in Yantary. But if they want the Blood to continue, there may well have to be a first.

Marcus

My youngest son. The Drachon legacy is strong in him: perhaps too strong. The Voices admire this strength and urge me to make him the Crown Prince over Simeon. But he is a monster that I am increasingly ashamed to be the father of. Yantary would be ruined if he were to become Csar. However, unless he attacks me I can not have him quietly disposed of: he is my son. I want to love him, to be proud of him. But he makes it so hard to do so.

YANTARY

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The slatcha advise the Csar through the **Sem**, the upper house of parliament. The **Chancellor** of the Sem is Constantine's eldest son Simeon. The commoner bogatyr and chavny elect members to the **Diet**, the lower house.

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Unfortunately for the Drachons, they are not the vampires of legend: they can not perform mind control or shapechanging, and they are by no means immortal.

CONSTANTINE VII DRACON CSAR OF YANTARY VOYVODE OF VOYVODES



TYRANNY
POWER
CONSERVATISM

FALL OF THE FAMILY

ON REFLECTION

I have a reputation as a reactionary: for being too fond of our glorious past. Unfortunately, it's not my choice. As the crown prince in my father Augustav's time I dreamed of reform in Yantary. We needed to do so very much to bring us into the modern era of warfare and politics, to keep us strong. But on his death-bed my father revealed the Drachon secret to me: as he ordered me, I slit his wrist and drank his life's blood, and the soul it contained. On my own death-bed, I will make the same demand of my own child.

My father's soul passed to me with his blood. Mine will pass to my own heir in this way in time. This immortality appeals to me, but there is a price. Perhaps it is a terrible price. My father lives on within me, watching and guiding everything I do. In turn, his soul contains the souls of all my ancestors, from my grandfather Tiberius right back to Irad the Drachon, Conqueror and First Csar of Yantary. Irad stands behind the others where the mind-shadows are thickest and says the least. But I fear him the most. He still has great power.

My ancestors, the Voices, watch silently over everything I do, everything I am. I can not escape them. Even though I am Csar I am merely a spokesman for the Voices. This is the biggest problem Yantary faces: we are ruled by the past. The Drachon past.

At first I tried to resist the Voices, to assert my own decisions, but they are very strong. Too strong to be resisted for long. They plagued me with migraines so I couldn't think or see straight. They inflamed my rage and hate so that I made terrible, terrible decisions. They threatened to take complete control of my speech and my body, to make of me a true puppet of the dead past — *for ever*. They showed me once what this was like. They made me murder a man, a random chavny revolutionary my commissars had caught. I will never be able to forget the sensation of tearing his throat out with my teeth. The worst thing about this experience, the thing that haunts me, is how horribly *satisfying* it was to feel cartilage parting between my teeth.

Never again, I tell myself. And so I must force myself to do the bidding of the Voices so they never have a reason to make me a monster out of me again.

I cannot even tell my own family what hides in my mind. I will tell my heir when I am dying, but until then, the Voices choke me into silence if I try to explain why I must be such an ogre. They could do far worse, as they have shown me.

Unfortunately, if Yantary is to have a future, I must make the Voices understand that they *need* to listen to me! We Drachons, alive and dead, need to fully embrace this century: the new machines, the new way of war, and especially the new politics, this so-called 'democracy'. The people of Yantary have grown powerful. They are not content to be ruled by fear as they always were in the past.

We Drachons have held onto all our power, but not extended it, and we are now badly outmatched. The peasants are at the gates wielding fiery torches and pitchforks, just as in the old stories.

They do not know the monsters from the old stories actually exist in my head.

POWER AND MINIONS

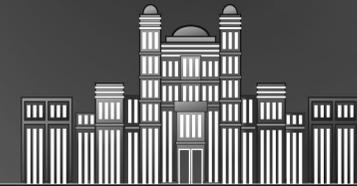
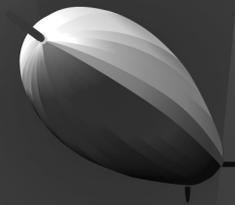
I am the **Csar of Yantary**.

I command the **Yantar military** (Army and Aerial Navy).

I am owed feudal fealty by the **slatcha families**. I can command them to issue justice to their followers and tenants, and supply me with goods, funds or soldiers. I can marry or divorce them, and I settle their inheritances. No slatcha inherits his father's estates unless it pleases me to allow it.

For my own protection my palace is secured by the **Praetorian Guard**.

My secret police, the **Commission for Public Safety**, watch for plots against me in all Yantar cities. There are Commissars through the army and aerial navy. They deal with traitors with ruthless efficiency.



Y A N T A R Y

MY FAMILY

Constantine

My beloved husband. Although truly a Drachon, full of suppressed violence, he has always been good to me. I believe he truly loves me. This gives me great power over him: a lesser wife would balk at this responsibility. He listens to my counsel and often acts on my wishes, so perhaps for the first time Yantary is ruled by two minds rather than one. May it be enough for these tumultuous times.

Simeon

My serious elder son, my husband's heir. As the Chancellor he is my most important ally in the Sem. Despite the rumours Simeon is truly Constantine's son: I did not consummate my affair with Count Rugen until Simeon was two months in the womb. Simeon's weak 'non-Drachon' blood is purely a fluke. He does his best, drinking blood with them even though it nauseates him as it would me. But his weak blood might be enough to force Constantine to give the crown to Marcus.

Anastasia

My beautiful daughter. She is wilful. She believes she can be free of her duties to do what she likes. Her father indulged her as a child; this is the result. Perhaps I should have taken steps to tame her earlier, for now she is an adult, she thinks she is free to defy me openly. I detest her taste in companions. She associates with *Democrats*. Bogatyrs and chavny!

Marcus

My heroic and handsome younger son. As a good mother I try very hard not to play favourites between my children but Marcus makes it so hard not to love him best. He is clever like Simeon but does not let his mind rule his heart. He is wilful like Anastasia but not undirected: he knows discipline. He has his father's power and my regal grace. Although I think Simeon would be, ultimately, a better Csar for Yantary, Marcus would rule us as a hero, as a demigod, as Irad the Drachon did in the legends.

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OCTAVIA CSARINA OF YANTARY 'MOTHER OF THE NATION'



GRACE MOTHERHOOD SUPPRESSION

FALL OF THE FAMILY

ON REFLECTION

My father, Piter XIII Zaharov, the old Duke of Prest, had me raised for one purpose: to be the Csarina, the consort of the Csar. He and the old Csar Augustav made the match when Constantine and I were children. My tutors trained me in every grace and art. Among these was politics. I know how to govern people, including my husband. Since we wed I have become his foremost adviser. In a way, it is me who rules Yantary. The occasions where he goes against my advice are very few. I've noticed he doesn't like me interfering with his military interests, nor is he keen on the kind of economic reform I think is necessary in Yantary. I just have to be more patient when I need to make changes in these sectors. Fiascos like Constantine's current war with Soldat certainly help — I can easily now play the *'If you had listened to me we would not be in this mess'* card for all it's worth.

My other duties as Csarina are public and often tedious. It's a price I must pay. As the 'Mother of the Nation' I tour hospitals and garrisons to inspire our wounded troops. I am the 'little grandmother' of all Yantary's orphans in their orphanages. I lead the nation in piety as the Patroness of the Church. I am loved by my people. This is my duty.

I am proud of my nobility. The slatcha Zaharov family is traditionally accounted the third most noble in Yantary. Its antecedents are mythical and assert descent from the ancient Imperial Exarch of Prest. The Zaharovs are rich and dominate culture in Yantary, and are often regarded as the 'loyal opposition' to the Drachons. Quite unlike the sycophantic Dukes of Aseny, the traditional second family of Yantary. We Zaharovs are also famous patrons of the Church. The slatcha are the guardians of civilisation in Yantary: we must remain powerful or the rabble chavny and upstart bogatyrs will tear down our world.

My greatest shame is that my current wisdom has been learned through youthful folly. When I married Constantine I did not understand that to rule others, I needed to rule myself first. I was arrogant. Behind my husband's back I took a number of lovers from among the other noble slatcha

families, even while I was pregnant with Simeon. Simeon is definitely Constantine's son, however. I did not allow Count Rugen Ostrov to seduce me before Simeon was two months in the womb.

I took far too long to realise my furtive, base encounters made me weak — and weakened Constantine as well. One ill-placed word, or a well-informed blackmailer, and the consequences of my base appetites would have wrecked our marriage and possibly the succession. My own sons might have been disinherited. In Drachon fury, Constantine would avenge himself furiously on my lovers and their families, weakening the slatcha against the upstart bogatyrs.

I knew then I had to be stronger, for Yantary, for the Drachons, for my kin in the slatcha families, and even for myself. I have given Constantine three lovely children. That must be enough for me. I must always choose my head over my foolish woman's heart. I must always remain cool, rational, regal and graceful—a perfect Csarina for Yantary.

For as long as there is a Yantary. I pray my beloved Constantine can captain us through this time of terrible chaos and loss.

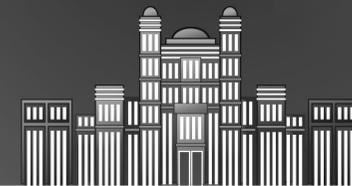
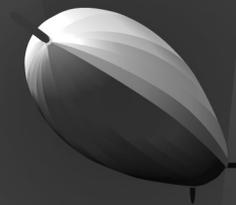
POWER AND MINIONS

I am the **Csarina of Yantary**, beloved by the people.

My family, the **Zaharovs**, are numerous and powerful among the slatcha. My brother **Anton**, the current Duke of Prest, controls a majority voting bloc in the Sem. Many senior army and navy officers are Zaharovs. There are many Zaharov estates and properties across the nation.

The other **slatcha families** are also stalwart allies, but they tend to want compensation for any efforts on Yantary's behalf. *Quid pro quo*, as they said in the ancient Empire: I make them pay dearly for favours from the Drachons.

My family and public piety also give me considerable influence over **the Church**.



Y A N T A R Y

MY FAMILY

Constantine

My fearsome father. I have always been in his shadow. I have become exactly what he wanted me to become — except for my lack of the Curse that threatens to tear us apart. Since we discovered my ‘thin blood’ we have both pretended that it is a trifling thing, but I know it vexes him and makes my inheritance uncertain. I do not know who I would be if I were not my father’s heir. My entire life has shaped me to rule Yantary.

Octavia

My regal mother. She has been as stern a task-master as my father has. I have never seen her lose her cool control of any situation and I admire her poise. She is wise and foresighted, a great Csarina of the Csar indeed. I sense in her sacrifice as profound as my own: she has sacrificed nearly all of herself to be a great Csarina. Like me, she is a puppet of the State.

Anastasia

My passionate young sister. She was not raised to the same strictness of duty that I was. She has grown up a much freer, more passionate person for it. Of late, however, her passion has led her astray: the company she keeps among the revolutionary Democrats is not wise, healthy or safe. I fear she will be betrayed and used against us. Nonetheless, I would kill anyone who hurt her.

Marcus

My bestial little brother. Like Anastasia he was raised without discipline — but where she is wild, he is bad. The Curse is strong in him. He drinks blood often. I think he even goes out to hunt his own from street-fights and sordid encounters in brothels. I am sure he is responsible for the rumours that Mother cuckolded Father and I am a bastard as a result. He is ambitious and ruthless, but clumsy, and so long as I am careful not to turn my back on him, I can deal with his petty intrigues.

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SIMEON CROWN PRINCE OF YANTARY CHANCELLOR OF THE SEM



PRAGMATISM
DUTY
RIVALRY

FALL OF THE FAMILY

ON REFLECTION

I am the eldest son of Constantine VII, Csar of Yantary. I am the crown prince. I will succeed my father as Simeon III, Csar of Yantary. I was raised to rule. In any normal family that would be the end of it, but the Drachons are unique. We have the Curse. At least, *they* have the Curse — my father and my siblings, that is. I did not inherit it.

It is unreasonable that I should fear to lose my inheritance merely because I do not bear the Curse in my blood. Whether I need to drink blood or not has *no* bearing on my ability to rule. I can drink blood: I do participate as a Drachon should in the feasts for appearances' sake, controlling my nausea through sheer willpower. In fact, I believe my lack of the family frailty makes me a *better* choice for Csar than my brother or sister. Unfortunately our family's ancient tradition demands the perpetuation of our distinctiveness. So says Marcus, and Father is tragically silent whenever that argument recurs. It seems Father does not want to make a decision either way. I hope this vexes Marcus as much as it vexes me.

Marcus has muddied the water further in spreading rumours that I am not my father's son — that Mother was unfaithful to her marriage and I am a bastard as a result. It's not true. Mother assures me that although she did have several close male friends in her youth she did not allow any of them to take advantage of her. And apart from the Curse, I have inherited Father's looks, temperament and intelligence. For a fact Marcus takes less after Father and me than he does Mother's family, the Zaharovs. Alas, in him the Curse runs true, and he is a bloodthirsty little monster.

Father's reactionary policies are not helping to solve the current anarchy in Yantary. If he had chosen to stick less rigidly to tradition and made a few concessions years ago, he could have dealt with the peoples' problems and maintained most of his traditional power. Instead, he has just ignored the people of Yantary. It is an insult to loyal Yantars of all classes.

Ultimately, I believe that the chavnys' claims are largely justified: the Csar, the Drachons and the slatcha do hold too much privilege. I am not in favour of losing the Csar as head of state, but perhaps the moderate Democrats could be made into allies if we were to look at becoming a constitutional monarchy, like they have in Soldat.

It is an indication of how seriously Father's policies have weakened us that Soldat, traditionally a nation of fishermen and shopkeepers, can triumph over glorious Yantary. The war that Father started to regularise control over aeonium production has gone very badly for us, thanks to antiquated tactics, mutinous troops and infighting among the slatcha officer corps. Were I still a naval captain I do not believe I could turn the tide that threatens to overwhelm us as a nation.

When I am Csar, assuming we have a nation left, I will offer to compromise with the moderates, if there are any left, and with Soldat, if they will permit us to surrender with honour. Every day we cling tightly to the past, the anarchists inside Yantary and the efficient Soldaten war-machine at its gates, grow closer to destroying us.

And my Father does nothing to stop this.

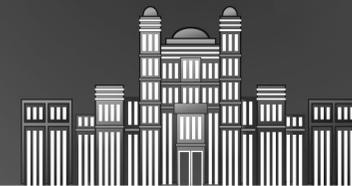
POWER AND MINIONS

I serve Father as his **Chancellor**, the president of the **Sem**. I oversee most of the day-to-day business of the **Bureaucracy**, enacting Father's decisions (...even when I disagree with them).

From the Sem I have made many allies among the noble **slatcha families**. I also have influence with the elected bogatyr and chavny representatives of the **Diet** — what's left of it amid the factional fighting between the Democrats and Liberalists.

I sit on the board of **Savota**, the Yantar state manufacturer. Its factories and materièl stores are pretty much mine to command. What's left of them.

In the years before my promotion to Chancellor I was a captain in the **Yantar Aerial Navy**. I commanded a cruiser, the *Achilles*, in the fleet of the war hero **Admiral-Marshall Demetrius Kutesov**. He is still among my closest friends.



Y A N T A R Y

MY FAMILY

Constantine

My distant father. I remember spending many happy hours with Father when I was a girl but since I grew up I've only been a disappointment to him. But this isn't the 16th Century any more, and I am not just a princess to wed off for political gain or a womb to breed more slatcha. I have my own intellect, whether Father likes it or not.

Octavia

My tyrannical mother. Such a waste. So noble and talented a woman, married off by her father and forced to be completely submissive to her husband. I pity her. I hate her for trying to make me into another trophy doll like her. She has had all the joy and love beaten out of her.

Simeon

My boring older brother. Simeon was always kind to me, but like my mother, content for others to fashion him into a mere puppet. But he's not as hidebound as our parents. Someday he will be the Csar. He is currently Chancellor, and I am hoping to persuade him to defy Father and start the reforms Yantary so desperately needs — if we survive that long. Marcus despises Simeon for his 'weak blood', since Simeon takes after Mother's family the Zaharovs and does not share the Curse: he does not need to drink blood to survive. I wonder sometimes what that's like.

Marcus

My wild younger brother. Like me Marcus is a rebel, but unlike me he is prefers stealth. He is such a hypocrite. He sucks up to Father and Mother and behind their backs runs some kind of criminal gang with a long record of violence. I know he wants to trump Simeon to be Father's heir. Something tells me this would be very bad indeed. Although Marcus is always charming to me, I know he doesn't mean it. Underneath his charismatic mask lurks something fearful.

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The Diet has become a hotbed of revolutionary fervour advocating the overthrow of the Csar and purging of the slatcha through political means (the moderate **Democrats**), or by mere violence (the extremist **Liberalists**). **The Revolution** spreads anarchy in the streets and has infected many units in the army, causing them to mutiny. Secret police **Commissars** from the **Commission for Public Safety** have failed to suppress the rebels.

The Church is paralysed by internal squabbling. Its bishops are slatcha and prefer the status quo, but its priests are chavny and many of them are Revolutionists.

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Unfortunately for the Drachons, they are not the vampires of legend: they can not perform mind control or shapechanging, and they are by no means immortal.

ANASTASIA PRINCESS OF YANTARY COUNTESS OF VILA



JUSTICE
PASSION
REBELLION

FALL OF THE FAMILY

ON REFLECTION

When I was a little girl I thought it was natural that I was a princess and other little girls weren't. It wasn't until I grew up that I discovered how unfair this was. I had toys and pretty dresses and jewels and a pony. Most little girls in Yantary have one dress and are lucky to eat one meal a day. They must grow up too fast, live lives of drudgery, pregnancy and ignorance, and lose their brothers, husbands and sons to Yantary's pointless, stupid wars.

Women in more advanced nations are lucky. They are allowed to pursue education, to have careers, to choose their lovers. We are not. Even I, the princess, am expected to meekly surrender to the will of my father because that's my 'duty'. I am supposed to marry a stranger for political gain and bear him children. I am not even permitted to share my opinions on politics or government, even though I have spent far longer studying these things at the university than anyone else in my family. They are all as ignorant as the chavny compared to me. But they never listen.

Although I do my duty and attend slatcha balls and the opera, I prefer to spend time with my intellectual peers of the university — even though they are only bogatyr and even chavny. Their lust for learning, their passion for higher principles, their ambition to make the most of their lives, inspire me. Many of them are articulate in support of the Revolution. Yantary needs to reform its government and ownership of wealth. Our neighbour Soldat is a good model for this: only three generations ago they became a constitutional monarchy. Today, they are a far richer nation than we are because their king is accountable to The People.

The Revolutionary I most admire and agree with is my good friend **Julius Theodor**, the leader of the Democrats. His words are a fire that will burn away the darkness of the past. He has a model for a democratic government for Yantary that addresses all the inequalities and injustices we have inherited, without inviting retribution or bloodshed against the slatcha or the Drachons. So far he has been able to suppress the more extreme Revolutionaries like that chavny whore **Jovanna Glasmin**, leader of the so-called

Liberalists. She has begun to urge her deluded rabble that the Drachons and slatcha should be executed for 'treason against the People'. Her words betray her as a mere anarchist, a pirate, and not a true revolutionary.

I have made love with Julius, even though he is only a bogatyr (although he rejects our traditional classes and calls himself a chavny, in solidarity with them). I have even drunk his blood — he was curious about the Curse. I think I might even love him, but since a warrant was put out for his detention, we have been kept apart while he hides from agents of the Commission for Public Safety.

Perhaps after all the fighting is over, when Julius is President, I could be his First Lady. Until then I must content myself to wait for him, keeping my love alight for him in my heart.

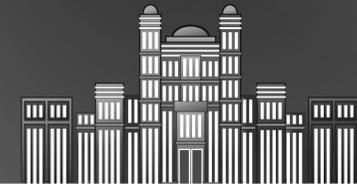
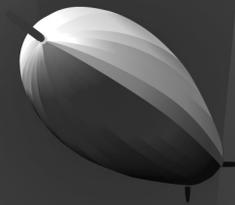
POWER AND MINIONS

Through my friend and lover **Julius Theodor** I have a great deal of influence over the **Democrat Party** of the **Revolution**.

I am admired by the intellectuals and students of the **University of Prest**. I have many friends and admirers in universities in other countries, even over the sea in Amerika.

There are many young **slatcha noblemen** of the Sem and the military who would like to marry me: I am not above manipulating them through their ambitions.

There are many young **slatcha noblewomen** who would scratch their peers' eyes out for my favour.



Y A N T A R Y

MY FAMILY

Constantine

My tyrannical father. In my childhood he only ever spoke to me to scold me for some misdemeanour or other, but now he seems to be trying to make it up to me. I don't know yet what he wants. Until I do, I can at least pretend that I don't remember all the pain he caused me. And afterwards: there's plenty of time to twist the knife...

Octavia

My secretive mother. From her reptilian coldness I could never tell if she loved me, but later I learned that she was always under pressure to be regal and controlled, even when she was alone with family. She has never let her mask drop. Small wonder she had all those affairs when she was younger, to escape from her life of endless duty for a few hours at a time. Discreetly, of course. Mother was never careless.

Simeon

My rigid older brother. He's the crown prince, the Chancellor of the Sem, a war hero, and the apple of Father's eye. He takes himself far too seriously: he's a stuck-up prig who wouldn't know fun if it bit him. But then his blood is thin, and he is probably afraid to sup with real Drachons like dear Anastasia and myself, lest we drink his blood. Thin blood. Prey's blood. Perhaps *Chavny* blood...

Anastasia

My gullible older sister. She sometimes talks as if she believes the claptrap spouting from the mouths of the handsome young chavny of the Democratic Party she encourages. I had a couple of her Democrats murdered by Big Brothers as an example to her but it seems not to have dissuaded her. Perhaps she takes after Mother in needing intrigue to get her going, but she has nothing like Mother's skill in secrecy, poor thing.

YANTARY

Yantary is a nation ruled by the **Csar Constantine VII Drachon**. It is currently losing a war with **Soldat**, a more advanced nation to its north-west. The front line is over the **Voyvode Alps**, where the levitating gas **aeonium** is mined to supply the aerial navies of both nations.

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MARCUS PRINCE OF YANTARY COUNT OF STAVENBURG



SECRECY
RUTHLESSNESS
CHARM

FALL OF THE FAMILY

ON REFLECTION

Father and dear brother Simeon think I'm weak for pursuing idle pleasures while they work to govern Yantary, but what else have they left me to do? I am the younger son, the spare heir. I have always been in my brother's shadow. I couldn't even make a decent career in the Aerial Navy after he captained a cruiser.

No, all I have ever had was parties and hunting trips — and less salubrious entertainments in the dark back streets of Prest. I found unexpected allies there among the underclasses. Once they understood I was infinitely more powerful and ruthless than they could ever be, we got on just fine.

My family do not know how hard I work in the shadows to save us from the Revolution. A beating here, an intimidation there, a gang action to disrupt a rally — these are the tactics I use to cut the heads off the tallest weeds of the Revolution. Often people get hurt. Sometimes they die. But you can't suppress an insurrection without breaking some heads. Father and Simeon seem to think they can make the Revolution go away by ignoring it. It must be fought, with whatever weapons come to hand.

I own safe houses and secret dungeons in many cities. My 'Big Brothers', hard men in black overcoats, are practiced at discreet extractions and interrogations. I could teach Father and Brother many things about extracting information, but I prefer to keep my cards close to my chest.

I love intrigue and misinformation. I spread rumours of Simeon's illegitimacy on a whim and was surprised by how effective they've been with Father at undermining Simeon's claim on the Czarship. I wonder what else I can make up about him.

I have contacts even among our Soldaten foes. Before the war began in earnest I discovered the Soldaten were recruiting spies out of their embassy. My people infiltrated their organisation, and eventually I had cause to abduct their spy-mistress, **Countess Drusilla Van Eugen**. I let her go soon after — one can't make the ambassador's daughter disappear for very long. Since then we've been friendly rivals

and lovers. We keep in touch even now. I would marry her, but I think I would prefer to have her as my prisoner again, to crush the will out of her properly. I believe she'd even enjoy it — she had an amusingly broad mind for such things.

Everybody thinks I am but a playboy prince, a gadabout, a wastrel only ever found with a glass of champagne in my hand. But it's a mask. I bide my time and work my schemes to crush my enemies, outside the palace and inside. I can indeed be charming. But when it comes down to it, I can also be ruthless. I acknowledge my appetites, all of them. By channelling them I have become far stronger than I appear.

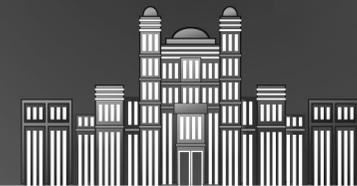
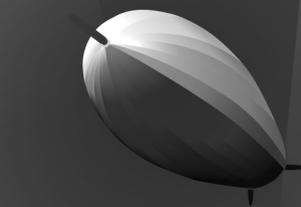
Father and Simeon are too attached to the past to find prosperity in the uncertain future. In a way the Revolution and the war with Soldat could be my greatest opportunity to triumph. I just must not be careless enough to fall to folly.

POWER AND MINIONS

My **Big Brothers** are a force for order and terror in Prest. They cooperate grudgingly with Father's Commission for Public Safety, but there is a lot of rivalry. I encourage that. My Big Brothers have safe houses, unmarked cars, silenced guns — all sorts of toys.

My contacts in Prest's underworld go all the way to the top, the superficially jolly family man **Karim Bey**. He's a foreigner, a Khalvar immigrant from across the Mindersee. He's the head of the Khalvar community in Prest, a big man with many cut-throat 'nephews'.

Through **Drusilla van Eugen** and her father **Prinz Ambrose van Eugen**, the ambassador, I have access to Soldaten intelligence and agents — when it suits their purposes. They're friendly to me because they think they are using me. Perhaps they are. I am certainly using them.



Y A N T A R Y

THE FALL OF THE FAMILY

For five hundred years since they conquered Yantary, the tyrannical Drachon 'First Family' has bled the nation white.

But their grip is weakening. The war is lost. Soldat aerial dreadnoughts control Yantar skies. The economy has collapsed. Yantar factories are smoking ruins; Yantar ducats are not worth the paper they're printed on. Loyalty is criminal. Revolutionaries of a hundred different ideologies fight in the streets. The only thing they have in common is their desire to see the Drachons dead.

This won't be easy, however: in their fortress-palace, guarded by their Praetorians, the Drachons still think themselves powerful enough to keep ruling Yantary — for another five hundred years.

A nasty awakening for the five members of the Drachon family.

By Andrew Smith, for Phenomenon 2008

Pheno ratings		
Characterisation 5	Genre 1 (Dieselpunk political)	Rules knowledge 0
Story/plot 4	Seriousness 4	Advisory rating MA (adult themes, violence)

Overview

This is a game about the end of a reactionary regime in a fantastical dieselpunk reflection of an Eastern European nation. It was inspired particularly by the fall of the Ceaușescu in Romania. And vampires: a common trope in the White Wolf vampire society, the Camarilla, is that it is ruled by old tyrants who don't know when to leave, or even to bend to the wind. It always ends in violence.

The player characters

The PCs are the ruling family of Yantary.

Csar Constantine is an ageing autocrat whose grip on national affairs is slipping, along with his mental health.

Csarina Octavia is his beloved wife and adviser, the mother of the nation and daughter of the nobility.

Crown Prince Simeon is a naval officer and chancellor of the upper house of (advisory) parliament. He is dutiful and efficient, but disliked by his father and siblings for his 'weak blood'.

Princess Anastasia is a modernist with contacts among the intelligentsia and revolutionaries.

Prince Marcus is a charming dilettante predator with ties to the underworld, and possibly worse.

A supernatural element is the Drachon family curse: vampirism. The curse is a pretty light form of the fiction, at the biological end of the spectrum—the Drachons (except for Octavia and Simeon, who are just human) are sensitive to sunlight and drink blood, but they are alive, mortal and easily killable. The hidden element is that the blood also carries the voices of the Drachon ancestors. These are operant in the Csar and he is at risk of becoming their literal puppet. This is the reason for historical Drachon reactionism and Yantary's inability to modernise: the Drachon voices fear change.

The character sheets

The character sheets were designed as double-sided A4 z-fold pamphlets. They *should* work OK printed greyscale, but colour would work better.

Objective

The point of the game is to destruct-test the PCs' conservatism and their relationships with each other, as their world falls apart around them. As written the PCs start with high-autocratic power over Yantary and access to powerful factions within the nation. These are not enough to resist the force of history, however. A democratic revolution led either by the moderate middle class or the outraged working class will sweep them away. They can use their leverage to roll with this, and survive, or fight it, and almost inevitably lose. Maybe if they cooperate completely they could ride it out and transform Drachon Csarism into a constitutional monarchy, but don't hold your breath.

Structure

Action occurs across 3 scenes of unspecified duration. This is drama, not history. By all means have everything happen in one night if that fits the tempo; if the players want a more considered story than it can run across weeks of tense scenes between fast-forwarded boring bits.

In Aristotelian terms *Fall...* is a tragedy. The PCs should lose entertainingly and cathartically if their players can't find reason in them to change. Poor Constantine the Csar is the worst at this: his ancestral voices will gut him rather than change anything.

Setting: Yantary

Yantary is a nation on the southern coast of the continent **Europa**. It is bounded by the nations of **Soldat** and **Spica** to the west and **Obless** to the north-east; by the small, bitter sea **Chernomorsee** to the east and the larger **Mindersee** to the south. The **Voyvode Alps** define much of the border between Yantary and Soldat. The **River Shavchen** runs from the region of the Soldat capital **Remagen** through the terrifying **Gates of Crom**, a 20km gorge with sides up to 300m high that cuts right through the Voyvode Alps. From the Voyvodes the Shavchen slides across a relatively high plateau at the centre of Yantary, via another rift valley through the **Slutes**, a smaller barrier-range of ancient mountains, to a marshy estuary (the **Priepets Marshes**) on the Chernomorsee. Yantary's capital **Prest** is some 50km inland.

Another important Yantar city is **Vanat**, overlooking the Gates of Crom. This is the centre of extraction and refining of **aeonium**, the powerful lifting gas that allows ships to fly.

History

After the fall of the ancient empire (an Eastern Roman Empire expy), Yantary became a patchwork of petty autarchies. Misery ruled: perpetual warfare between the petty lords, as well as famine and pestilence, devastated the Yantars. Then the Red Death struck hard between 1450 and 1480, killing a third of the population. At the height of this **Irad the Drachon** arose. Across 20 years he defeated his rival lordlings and unified Yantary. He brought order and a low kind of prosperity. His descendants of the **Drachon Family** still rule.

Irad's descendants the Drachon Csars have kept Yantary relatively stable and well-fed, if not rich. But times have changed and Yantary has struggled to follow. Yantar industry is obsolete by modern standards, even though the quality of its product is high. Practices in agriculture, medicine and even culture are also antique. Yantary's formerly formidable military has been increasingly handicapped by obsolete equipment and doctrine: advocates for change only get heard when the old ways are proven to be fatally flawed. Yantary's neighbours, particularly **Soldat**, have become overwhelming rivals through modernisation.

The new power in the world is the **United States of Amerika**, across the oceans to the west. Soldat has cultivated strong ties of commerce and alliance with the USA but Yantary has not, despite it being the homeland of many of the USA's European immigrants.

Politics

The Drachon **Csar** is an autarch or absolute monarch with complete power over Yantary. Officers of the executive enact his will; the legislature and judiciary advise and interpret it.

Nobility (Slatcha)

Descendants of the former rulers of the petty states conquered by Irad or later Drachons, descendants of warriors ennobled by Drachons, and lucky opportunists. The Yantary families overtly rank themselves by wealth, power and influence. This ranking changes gradually across generations, particularly in the lower half of the top ten. The top five are fairly static.

Noble families send representatives to the **Sem**, a council that advises the Drachon. Nobles are immune to many taxes.

The top ten noble families

1. Drachon
2. Aseny
3. Zaharov
4. Ostrov
5. Berman
6. Zelezny
7. Varhors
8. Vaduz
9. Pindar
10. Malek

The middle classes (Bogatyr)

Yantary's middle classes are much like those of surrounding nations. They are relatively disaffected in Yantary, however, as the Drachons have never done more than pay lip-service to democracy, and has retained its wealth and control over the military. Merchants and industrialists dominate the **Diet**, an assembly of commoners that balances the prestige of the Sem in advice to the Drachon.

An intelligentsia of mainly younger bogatyr has sprung up in the universities of Prest and Tatraberg. This is the guiding force for the Revolution. Of course, the Revolution's worst enemy is the Revolution. Cooperation between its component movements is poor.

The middle classes, being commoners, pay many taxes.

The lower classes (Chavny or Proletariat)

Collective farms are still widespread in Yantary. Tenanters, who farm land owned by the nobility

and pay for the privilege, are also widespread. Smallholders are comparatively rare.

With Yantary's slow industrialisation there was a drift of workers from the farms to the cities. This hasn't been as productive in Yantary as in other nations: after the city workers got hold of the concept of emigrating and left for the USA, their country cousins came to the cities only to make enough money to follow them.

The city proletariat have responded favourably to the pro-democracy and socialist propaganda being produced by the Revolution. Militant unionism and gangs plague most cities.

The chavny traditionally pay many taxes and their folk-heroes are mostly cunning tax-evaders.

The Church

Hierarchy: Patriarch, Archbishop, Bishop, Priest. Conflict within the church parallel to Revolution (rural priests) vs First Estate (rich bishops and metropolitans). The Church does not pay tax.

Industry

Yantar industry is dominated by **Savota**, the Drachon-owned manufacturing concern. It is not the monopoly it used to be, and its management is distinctly incompetent, reactionary and corrupt.

The Military

Yantary has traditionally fielded a large and well-disciplined **army**. However, its recent poor showing against Soldat's forces have broken it. Discipline is as poor as morale. Entire units have defected to the Revolution rather than face the superior firepower and leadership of the Soldaten.

Marshall-General Alexius Zaharov, Octavia's cousin, is in charge of the defence of Vanat. He can not hold out much longer against the Soldaten besiegers.

Yantary's **aerial navy** is better disciplined and more loyal than the army, mainly because it has not suffered such severe losses and it is much better funded. Yantar aerial battleships are slower than their Soldaten counterparts and have considerably less range and accuracy on their guns. At point-blank range, however, their damage output is superior, and their heavier armour serves them very well. Since the Yantar aerial navy can't bring the Soldaten to a conclusive battle, it is using its ships in a defensive role that so far, Soldat has not been eager to test.

Marshall-Admiral Demetrius Kutesov is a chavny made good, a brilliant tactician and strategist whose enemies even acknowledge his crucial role in the defence of Yantary.

A Yantar super-dreadnought, the *Csar Irad*, is four weeks from completion and will sway the balance of the war in the air.

The Drachon curse

The Drachons must drink human blood. It's not much: perhaps a pint a week is sufficient, although they often prefer to drink more (a pint or three a day). Without this, they develop porphyriac symptoms such as abdominal pain, neuropathies (sensation of being stabbed), seizures, hypersensitivity to sunlight (exposure causes painful blistering), mood swings (hysteria), anxiety and paranoia, and potentially seizures and agonising death. Urine goes purple, nails and teeth are discoloured red.

It's widely known that the Drachons are blood-sucking fiends. Like the vampires of folklore, they're supposed to be supernaturally fast, tough and hard to kill, and to be able to use hellish powers to pursue their victims. Pity they got the economy version of the inheritance...

The slatcha are somewhat better educated, but still suspect there's more to the Drachons than a mere genetic foible. The Drachons play it up a bit with things like the **Feast of Sacrifice** (Scene I), where the head of each family renews his family's fealty by donating a pint of blood to the Drachons.

The Revolution

A mood of discontent and desperation has possessed Yantar society. The formerly ever-present quasi-military police and secret police Commissars (the Commission for Public Safety) have been decimated by transfers to the war front, and badly-suppressed news of the carnage there have made chavny families bitter for their lost sons and daughters. Bogatyr agitators have taken the lessons of similar movements in other nations and have fashioned a revolutionary movement for Yantary.

The revolution has two main factions:

- The **Democrats** are moderates. They want a rewritten constitution leading to a constitutional monarchy and are prepared to negotiate a sensible transition of power. They have the best arguments and plans, and many supporters among the bogatyrs and even the slatcha. They are led by **Julius Theodor**, a bogatyr tutor in literature at the University of Prest.
- The **Liberalists** are militant extremists. They want immediate change to rule by a one-party Diet dominated by chavny unionists and anarchists, even if that means executing the Drachons and any slatcha or

bogatyrs who disagree. They are relatively disorganised but very numerous, and their ranks are swelled by deserters from the army so they are also comparatively well armed. They are led by **Jovanna Glasmin**, a chavny of uncertain antecedents.

Technology

Yantary is a dieselpunk setting inspired by art deco and the period between World Wars I and II. Its major difference from our world is the presence of aerial shipping enabled by **aeonium**, a powerful lifting gas that can also be made to explode powerfully. Europa's major source of aeonium are the mines at Vanat, which Yantary is about to lose to Soldat.

The chrome

- Post WWI: diesel, steel, electricity. Art Deco.
- Long distance communication: semaphore, sonophore (parabolic sound transmitter), spotlight morse, telephone, telegraph
- Detection: acoustic, visual (no radar)
- Travel:
 - premium – aerial ships held aloft with aeonium gas, driven by propeller engines.
 - subpremium – automobiles, trains, trucks, ships
 - chavny – foot, donkey cart, commuting on trains, buses
- Killing things: firearms
- Medicine: early antibiotics (sulfanilamide) (imported into Yantary from Amerika, thus rare and expensive)

Culture

- Art Deco. 1920s – 30s. The euro-stylish bits. *Cabaret*. Nice suits and the Dior New Look.
- Emancipation of women is only starting to hit Yantary, driven by labour shortages. Chavny women are comparatively equal with their men, although among the slatcha women are also traditionally wilful. Sex role differences are greatest among the Bogatyr, as allowing a 'housefrau' role has been acculturated as a mark of wealth.
- In short, Eastern European military-elite lording it over an angry proletariat.

Crime and espionage

Along with the revolution there is a lot of crime, ranging from street gangs of angry, disaffected chavny youths through organised crime to big-end corruption among the directors of Savota. The **Big Brothers** are a fascist, revanchist group that victimise revolutionaries and their supporters. It is run secretly by Marcus as an amusement, and in case he needs an army of blackshirts for his own coup.

Yantar espionage and counter-espionage services have been overrun by Soldaten and other nations' agents. Prince Simeon's Commission for Public Safety is the overt secret police, and even it is struggling to stay on top of the chaos.

Inclusiveness

Fall of the Family was written in 2008 when I was less aware of the importance of inclusiveness. The balance of sexes (implied by their names at least) among the player and non player characters defaults to an early 20th Century European take on gender roles, and should be adjusted to your group's preferences. Yantary is a fictional place after all.

LGBTIQ+A+ is probably easier to adjust for. Apart from the biological necessity of the Csar and Csarina having produced three children together, there are some sexual relations noted in the PC backgrounds that imply preferences without being definitive that these are their only choices.

Names

Slatcha

Surname	First (male)	First (female)
Aseny	Alexius	Alexandria
Zaharov	Antonius	Anastasia
Ostrov	Cosimo	Flavia
Berman	Demetrius	Irena
Zelezny	Honorius	Julia
Varhors	Julius	Gregoria
Vaduz	Paulo	Helena
Pindar	Severan	Sethra
Malek	Stephen	Theodora
Plater	Victor	Victoria

Bogatyř – use Slatcha first names and chavny surnames

Chavny

Surname	First (male)	First (female)
Boroi	Andrei	Beatricze
Cuza	Bogdan	Bogdana
Iovaneau	Enric	Danu
Mondragon	Giorgi	Gracja
Prug	Mikhail	Ioana
Radu	Pietr	Klara
Stolan	Serguei	Mirela
Tarus	Vadim	Ruta
Vlas	Yevgeny	Stela
Zeklos	Yusif	Violeta

Some characters

Admiral-Marshall Demetrius Kutesov	In command of the Yantary fleet, an important ally of Simeon. Loyal to Yantary above all, but predisposed to seeing things Simeon's way.
General-Marshall Alexius Zaharov	Commander of the Vanat garrison that will surrender to the Soldaten in Act I. A cousin of Octavia's.
Anton Zaharov, Duke of Prest	Octavia's brother and head of the Zaharovs.
Karim Bey	Underworld boss, head of the Khalvar immigrant community. A jolly, avuncular, ruthless ally of Marcus.
Drusilla Van Eugen	Spymistress daughter of the Soldaten ambassador Prinz Eugen. An ally of convenience and lover of Marcus.
Ambassador Prinz Ambrose Van Eugen	The Soldaten Ambassador. Arrogant and "English"
Prime Minister Joachim Voess	The Soldaten Prime Minister. An outrageous commoner but a fearsomely clever politician.
Ostrov	Constantine's valet and spymaster. An obsequious and inscrutable villain. Loyal to Constantine.
Marshall Gregorian Sarmar	Commander of the Praetorian Guard. Hysterically loyal to Constantine.
Marietta Vaduz	Octavia's maid. Completely loyal and fond of exploiting her proximity to the Csarina.
Julius Theodor	The leader of the Democrat revolutionaries, recently deposed President of the Diet, and Anastasia's lover. If he lives past Act I, play him as a hero: forthright, principled, passionate, a bit gullible.
Jovanna Glasmin	The leader of the Liberalist revolutionaries. Play her as charismatic, ruthless, backstabby, cruel, competent. What you get if you cross Lenin and Stalin, in a dress.
Father Gemetri Hundegott	The priest who tries to assassinate the Drachons with silver-poisoned blood in Act I.
Archbishop Lucius Zaharov	Octavia's uncle. I mentioned somewhere that the Zaharovs were everywhere, didn't I?
General Viktor Zelezny	Constantine's Chief of Staff: military liaison. Cordially dislikes Ostrov.

How it all goes bung

Act I Things fall apart

The Drachon Palace, evening/night, 15 February. It's cold and wintry outside. The thunder of the guns at Vanat is inaudible but subliminally still present.

The purpose of this act is to galvanise the Drachons into action, initially through reaction to catastrophe.

Scene: "Long live the Csar! Long live the Csar!"

This is **The Feast of Sacrifice**: On this night the slatcha gather at the Drachon Palace for a night of glittering entertainment culminating at midnight with the ritual donation of a pint of blood to the Drachons by the heads of each of the families there. Describe the gathered nobles, smug and sleek but fearful as well. Time to answer player questions. Time for players to get into character and start sniping at each other based on their character backgrounds.

Anton Zaharov, Duke of Prest, Octavia's cousin, offers a toast to the Csar and is the first to cut his wrist to bleed into the sacred tureen.

Father Gemetri Hundegott, a revolutionary priest, is caught slipping poison (colloidal silver) into the blood collected in the sacred tureen.

Scene: News from the Front

An army major (Pindar, if you need their name) brings a **telegram** to the Csar or Simeon (last page of this file). **Vanat's** besieged garrison will finally surrender to Soldaten forces at midnight. **General Alexius Zaharov**, Octavia's cousin, has been in charge. This collapses Yantary's front line — the Soldaten will be able to strike out of the Voyvode Alps at any time. The Yantar army is broken and now consists of untrained conscripts and old men. The Yantar Navy has retreated and is in better condition (80%). Remind Simeon and Constantine Yantary's solid, powerful aerial warships have been badly matched against the lighter, faster, longer-ranged Soldaten cruisers.

Obviously, this is what the Csar gets for trusting the Zaharovs.

Scene: Purge the Moderate

Moderate revolutionary leader of the Democrats, **Julius Theodor** has just been betrayed to Simeon's Commissars by Jovanna Glasmin, revolutionary leader of the Liberalists. Julius has been brought to the cells under the palace for interrogation (or to feed a hungry Csar, if the voices tempt him to...).

If he's killed the revolution will go loud. Keeping him on ice is the smart move but he really does know too much, and he's a sarcastic idiot who will try to goad the Csar particularly into killing him.

Any Drachon can arrange to free him but keeping him alive afterwards is another matter...

Act II Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world

Later. The Feast has ended in bloodshed, both intended and unintended. Now the bloodletting starts.

This act serves as the crucible for the Drachons to react to the collapse. They gather information about how bad the world is—and blame each other. Things develop from decisions in Act I:

Scene: It's the Revolution, baby!

Jovanna Glasmin makes her move now Theodor is out of the way. The army garrison of Prest mutinies and defects to the Liberalists, seizing its barracks and executing its slatcha officers. The soldiers declare themselves the 'Revolutionary Guard' and invest Prest to capture key points around the city: the post office, the docks, the railway, the airport, the Diet and Sem. They are slow to capture the post office, which means the PCs can still contact their allies in Prest via telephone and telegram until the end of this scene. Or they can pile into the pimped out family limousine and go gangsta style on the anarchists themselves.

Prest is convulsed by anarchy and violence that the Revolutionary Guard will struggle to contain, particularly when Marcus or Anastasia interfere.

Jovanna is far cleverer than the PCs and will be impossible to catch unless the players are rewardably smart. Even if she is killed, however, the revolution will continue.

Scene: Considering the options

If there's a gap in the action, or when Constantine or Simeon ask for options, these are:

- The Army is now broken and unreliable: most units are rife with revolutionaries, and the rest are unpaid, unequipped and liable to break under pressure. Only the Praetorians remain as elites; only the Praetorians remain loyal... for now.
- The Navy have remaining stockpiles of aonium good for 8 weeks normal operation.
- This stockpile could be used to **fuel the super-dreadnaught *Csar Irad***, an impossibly unbeatable aerial warship whose completion can be pushed forward to a week, if everything else in the nation is stopped.
- This stockpile could be used to create a **single bomb of terrifying explosive power**. This single bomb could turn the Soldaten capitol Remagen (or Prest, for that matter) into a glassy crater.

Scene: Round 2

Once the Revolutionary Guard control the telegraph office, they will send out the call to mutiny to other army garrisons and within a few days, 60% of the remaining Yantar army will be part of the Revolution. Only 20% declare for the Drachons, with the other 20% holding position and not declaring either way.

Soliloquies: reflections and ancient voices

When there are players not involved in arguments, ask them in ones or twos how they're going and poke them with stuff from their character backgrounds. Contrast then and now:

- Remind Constantine of the night the old Csar died and he received the Voices. Tempt him again that if he gives in to them totally, they can save Yantary for him.
- Reminisce with Anastasia and her modernism, such as the night she announced to her parents that she was enrolled at the university.
- Ask Marcus what his first crime was, and how it escalated.
- Suggest to Simeon that all he is doing to suppress the revolution is probably not enough to win his father's favour.
- Describe that photograph of Constantine and Octavia's wedding day.

Etc.

Act III A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun

Later, and onwards. This act is the bitter future. The Drachons will lose (unless the players are inconceivably brilliant). What remains is to see how much they lose, and who dies first.

Scene: Welcome to the Revolution Ia

If somehow **Julius** lives, the Democratic Diet will convince the Sem to pass a motion of no confidence in the Csar and set up a **Constitutional Congress** made up of Sem and Diet leaders to act as a provisional government. They dissolve the Sem and Diet because as members of these they were sworn to obey the Csar. Their first orders of business will be to take control of the Yantar government, assets and military; to make peace with Soldat, and to begin the arduous task of writing Yantar's first constitution. The Congress will write a respectful letter to the Csar asking him to voluntarily relinquish power to the Congress. The Revolutionary Guard will take up positions at a respectful distance from the palace to prevent the Drachons fleeing, but their cordon is lax.

Scene Welcome to the Revolution Ib

If **Jovanna** is in charge then only members of the former Diet will make up the Congress. The Liberalist Congress swear up the Revolutionary Guard and send it marching on the palace. Constantine might get a semaphore message to surrender unconditionally and allow the Drachons to be placed under arrest, or they might just start with the artillery. The cordon this time is tight and the Drachons will have to fight to flee.

Praetorians — Massively outnumbered and soon outgunned when the Guard bring up their artillery, the Praetorians will fight to the death to allow the Drachons to escape.

Flight — If it's a good plan, the Drachons may well escape into exile and bitter regret. Mostly though they will be arrested, or betrayed and arrested, or hospitalised and arrested.

Scene: Just desserts

If the **Democrats** prevail then the Csar will be kept under house arrest until the new constitution is finalised and he signs it. It's effectively a one-way sentence to rubber-stamp obscurity – epilogue a counter-revolution if you like.

If the **Liberalists** win then there will be a show trial begun for the Drachons' 'Crimes Against the People', but several days into this they will be abruptly taken from their cells in the night and loaded into a train boxcar. The train will be driven to a siding in the distant Slutes, the Drachons unloaded, lined up against the wall of a ruined storehouse, and shot by firing squad. This was in response to a powerful Navy-Soldat coalition force being sent to rescue the Csar, but it arrives too late.

Scene: I am Irad, wolf of nations

Under dire pressure Constantine can allow himself to succumb to the will of the Voices entirely and so become a puppet of them forever after. They will use his body as an adrenal-fuelled killing machine whose entire purpose is to perpetuate his blood and bloodline. Fully crazed combat chassis, very tough, very hard to stop.

Coda: Slouching towards Bethlehem

Explore what the players' choices mean. Usual epilogue stuff.

The PCs: hooks and levers

Constantine

He's not a bad man, just a victim of the horrible things in his head. Whisper to him. If he starts to get reasonable, to want to compromise with the revolution or worse—the future, punish him.

Octavia

Her power is the aristocracy and tradition. She craves stability and noblesse oblige: she is gracious as long as she is respected. But she is also feared, and if it comes to a direct confrontation, no revolutionary would dare assault her (right up until the end).

Always mention the losses the slatcha are facing and the destruction of culture and art they represent.

Simeon

He is actually a pretty good leader, and should be the next Csar. But the voices in Constantine hate him for his weak blood and will see him die before he takes the throne. Tell him sensible things that will help everyone resolve things, that sound dangerously modern to his parents.

Anastasia

Yantary's best answer to feminism. She has some sway with the moderates, the Democrats, as long as Julius Theodor lives. Remind her how old-fashioned her parents and elder brother are.

Marcus

Let Marcus indulge his charming evil. The rest should follow.

A telegram from the front at Vanat

AT MIDNIGHT THE GARRISON OF VANAT WILL
SURRENDER TO THE SOLDATEN COMMANDER.

MARSHAL-GENERAL ALEXIUS ZAHAROV REGRETS
UNABLE TO CONTINUE DEFENCE OF VANAT WITH
STICKS ROCKS AND BREAD CRUSTS.