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BABA YAGA

THE FIRST SETTING IN RASSIYA

Michael Fiegel



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Baba Yaga



Contents

Introduction	page 1
Overview	page 4
Inhabitants of Rassiya	page 7
The Three Maids	page 8
The Three Legends	page 10
Monsters	page 11
Animals	page 12
Map of Rassiya	page 14
Map of The Village of Derevna	page 15
Map of Baba Yaga's Hut and Yard	page 16
Places in Rassiya	page 17
Tyomniy Forest	page 22
Mokriy Vale	page 24
Berioza Grove	page 25
Ivangrove	page 26
Kholadna Swamp	page 28
Baba Yaga's Yard	page 30
Traps	page 35
Magic Items	page 37
Treasure	page 41
NPC Stats	page 43
Monsters' Stats	page 47
Animals' Stats	page 51
Sample Expressions of Major Characters	page 53
Plot Hooks	page 57
Appendix A/Lebedinoe Racial Description	page 60
Appendix B/Glossary and Pronunciation Guide	page 61
Appendix C/Rassiyian Naming Conventions	page 62
OGI	page 65

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heart of darkness



In a certain kingdom, in a certain land, there lived an uncertain youth - uncertain of his place in the world, of his purpose in his village, indeed, uncertain of the meaning of life itself. And so one day, despite the pleas of his aged stepmother, he set off for the forest. In one hand he carried a sack full of food - enough for a week, he thought - sandwiches and apples and a fat, juicy pickle fresh from the barrel. In the other hand he held a sturdy cudgel, stout enough to deliver a solid thump on the head of any who would cross his path. And his head echoed with the final words of advice given by his elderly guardian:

***“Be wary of wolves
whilst you sleep,
Be wary of bandits
whilst you walk,
and at all times be wary of
the forest’s dark heart,
for all that lives there is death.”***

But the boy thought he knew better than his stepmother, so he paid little heed to these words and soon forgot them. And so it came to pass that on the very first night he forgot to tie his food to a branch, and the wolves came and ate it in the night, leaving him with nothing.

And on the second day, tired and hungry, he stumbled straight into an ambush on the highway, and the bandits took his cudgel and his boots. Indeed they would have

taken his life as well, but the clever boy managed to slip his bonds and flee, barefoot and frightened, into the darkest part of the woods, hoping the bandits would not follow.

Panicked and lost, with night coming on, and he with no weapon, nor food, nor even boots, he pressed onward, first running, then stumbling, then crawling. And as night



fell, he heard sounds in the darkness, and dared not stop, but instead moved on, moving ever deeper into the forest's black heart. In a blind panic, he ran through a briar patch, and pricked himself on a rose bush, and knocked his head against a low branch. And then darkness took him, and he fell into a troubled sleep.

He awoke in the morning, hungry and afraid, with a strange noise in his ears. Gathering enough courage to lift his head, he peered through the trees. There he saw a clearing, within which was a strange sight: walking about of its own free will a small hut on chicken legs. Standing fully thrice as high as his stepfather, the hut cocked its "head" to one side, peered at the boy curiously, and then went about its business, scratching and shuffling. Beneath its feet real chickens did their best to stay out of its way, fluttering madly about in a flurry of feathers when the hut came too close.

Now the boy was sure enough a fool, to have gotten himself this far through his own ignorance, but he had heard the stories and knew what he was seeing. He had never believed the children's stories, but here at last was the proof. And if the hut was real, then what lay inside... could it be real too?

The boy considered his options. If he asked for help, the asking might very well lead to his death, but there was also a chance of being aided. If he walked away, he would soon die of hunger, or cold, or fear. And so he gritted his teeth and walked to the edge of the clearing, pushing open the rusty gate and stepping in past the rickety fence topped with skulls of various shapes and sizes.



For a moment his knees failed him and he stumbled, but then he drew upon a reservoir of courage he hadn't known he possessed, and before he could turn away he shouted the words every Rassiyen child knew:

**"Little hut, little hut,
turn your back to the forest,
your front to me."**

They were nonsense words - the hut had no front, nor any back being windowless and without any apparent door - but nonetheless effective. Quick as a faerie wink the hut stopped, spun in place, and came to a halt. A blink and a half later, a narrow ladder descended from the bottom of the hut, and a pair of long skinny legs dropped from within the magical hut, followed by a long, skinny torso and a long, skinny nose.

This, then, was Baba Yaga.

For a moment the old witch seemed confused, as if awoken from a deep sleep, but her eyes quickly fell upon the youth and she strode boldly up to him, long, crooked finger pointing at him accusingly. Three questions she had for him.

"Where are you going?" she began. He gulped. Had she not asked who he was because she did not care, or because she already knew? In

either case, he knew he must answer.

"I am going to find meaning," he said, "though I know not where that lies."

"Why are you here?" asked the hag, no sign that she'd heard his reply, or if she had, that she cared for any further explanation. He swallowed



hard and continued.

"I am here by way of fate, which led me to your doorstep blindly, in the night."

"Do you come of your own free will," she asked, "or were you sent?" And as she asked her eyes grew dark and narrow, and her iron

nails flexed, and her lip quivered. He knew that if his answer was insufficient she would surely eat him where he stood. Quivering, trembling like a leaf in a winter breeze, he gave his answer.

"I come of my own choice," he said. "None has sent me, save for myself, and fate."

For a long moment she considered his answers, sizing him up. And then she nodded, gestured for him to follow, and turned back to her little hut. In a flash she was back up the ladder, all angles and joints, bony knees all askew. And he knew two things: first, that he was meant to follow her inside, and second, that his troubles had only just begun.

The preceding bit of folklore demonstrates three key features of Russian folk tales, especially those in which Baba Yaga appears. Keep these three things in mind while crafting adventures for your players and their characters:

Trouble between youth and elders: These fables emphasize the disparity in age between protagonists (heroes) and antagonists (villains). Many of the stories featuring Baba Yaga have a young hero - often a small girl, representing innocence and naïveté - who is sent off to find Baba Yaga by an evil step parent who hopes the witch will eat the child. Other stories feature young

heart to heart to heart



men who stumble upon Baba Yaga while wandering in search of their destiny (be it a young princess, adventure, or merely some good advice). In both cases youth is more a factor of experience, or lack thereof, than age - a "young" hero need not be a child. Of course, even older adventurers are sure to be younger than Baba Yaga herself, who in the end represents the ultimate example of this (im)balance between old and young - everyone is a young rascal compared to this old hag.

Dichotomy between the world of man and the world of nature: The world of man is one of technology, albeit medieval technology, and order. Girls spin and weave on looms, and concern themselves with keeping fires lit and larders well-stocked. Those with wealth further separate themselves, locking themselves in castles and towers in lands that are often unreachable by normal men. The world of nature, on the other hand, is wild and unpredictable. Yet it is into this unknown that children must journey to discover themselves and their destinies. Dark forests loom, dangerous swamps threaten, and wild beasts of all sorts - wolves, falcons, horses, even bees - lurk in the shadows. Many of these beasts are intelligent and capable of speech or human interaction, as with the most chaotic "beast" of all, Baba Yaga's Hut, which walks on chicken

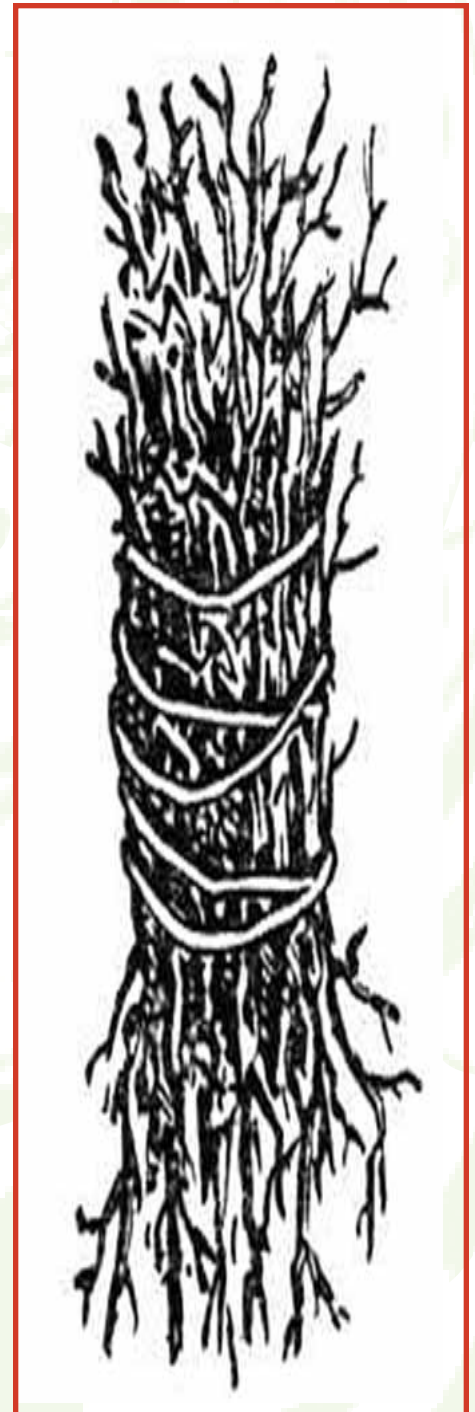
legs of its own volition.

The Rule of Three: Things always happen in threes. If a hero travels to a foreign kingdom, he will be traveling through three, each more opulent than the last and represented successively by bronze, silver, and gold. If Baba Yaga comes to count the spoons in the house, it will be on her third trip that she finally captures the little boy who's interrupted her, and if she instructs a hero on a magical preparation, the ingredients will be in threes:

"To open the lock, find the golden tree and break off three green twigs. Tie them with three strings, and strike the lock thrice. It will fall into three pieces."

On some level the Rule of Three also reinforces the previous two points. Firstly, the balance between child, adult, and old crone - at such times when Baba Yaga takes on multiple personalities in the story (more on that in a moment), there will be three of the old crone, each more wizened and dangerous than the last. This triad also appears in other mythologies (such as the Norse Norns, the Greek Moirae, or the Roman Parcae), although in this case none of the three Baba Yagas is particularly young or beautiful. Secondly, the triad is found in the balance between the orderly world of man and the chaotic world of nature, with the balanced

ground between the two guarded by Baba Yaga herself.



nature's heart



Turning and turning in the widening gyre, The falcon cannot hear the falconer; Things fall apart; the center cannot hold. Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world

- W.B. Yeats

Although she will be described in full a bit later, our setting's main figure bears mentioning in this introduction, for Baba Yaga is much more than she appears. She is not just a witch sitting in the middle of the forest; rather, like William Butler Yeats' falconer, Baba Yaga represents a balance between nature and the orderly world of man, between kindness and wickedness. Unlike the falconer, she does more than stand by while it falls apart.

Many Eastern European fairy tales feature Baba Yaga, and she's different in each one. In some she takes on the stereotypical role of the evil old witch in the forest who eats bad children, and in others she acts as a more complex and decidedly more pleasant character, actively aiding heroes who happen to come her way by giving them advice and powerful magical items. While generally found in her magical chicken-legged hut deep in the forest or swamp, occasionally she ventures out into the world of man, entering their houses to perform the rather dull activity of counting spoons (a bizarre, albeit

witchlike job). From a distance Baba Yaga may appear just a nasty old hag, but up close, viewed through many lenses, she is as much a good witch of the north as a wicked witch of the west.

Taken as a whole Baba Yaga represents balance; however, hers is not a passive neutrality. She doesn't necessarily seek balance between



the forces of nature, or a peace between Koschei the villain and Ivan the hero. On the contrary, she has her own agenda (albeit unknown), and seeks to further her own causes through direct action, whether that means slaking her hunger by devouring a small child, or giving a magical thread to a hero in search of a princess. She repre-

sents the same sort of balance as, for instance, a powerful druid in his grove. Whereas that grove is a place of stability and sanctity, Baba Yaga's "center" is filled with a skull-topped fence and a dancing hut. At the heart of her forest, you find not a placid place of worship, but a dangerous reminder of chaos at its most extreme. Yet even that swirling nonsense is encircled by law, for the hut roams freely only within a stockade and may be controlled by one who speaks the proper phrase. Nature is thus controlled by man, and a balance is struck. This is the lesson of Baba Yaga - that all outlooks, all viewpoints, all living things have their places in the scope of things. She is, in a sense, Mother Nature, and she can be cruel at times.

BABAYAGA'S MANY FACES

In some folktales Baba Yaga is a single character, and "Baba Yaga" is her proper name. In others Baba Yaga functions as more of a title, akin to Grandmother, than a name. In these tales she appears as three sisters, each uglier and older than the last. In this setting Baba Yaga is presented as an individual who occasionally takes on multiple "faces" by means of magic, moving her hut about to where it needs to be.

THE HEARTLAND

Russian folklore is a sprawling affair. Princes and kings traverse great



distances, visiting kingdoms afar, crossing oceans and plunging into vast underground kingdoms. Indeed, Russia itself covers one sixth of the total surface of the earth, with climates ranging from the cold forests of the north to the broad steppes further to the south to the generally mild and pleasant Caucasus.

Stories of Russian folklore, especially those stories in which Baba Yaga appears, generally open with a village on the edge of a forest, and so we will mostly concern ourselves with these northerly areas, known as *taiga*. Winters are long and bitterly cold, and summers are short, mild, and wet with both seasons receiving plenty of precipitation as both rain and snow. Like the weather, plant life is not very diverse - most of the area is covered with evergreen trees such as spruce, fir, and pine, although areas with more moisture may have oak, willow or birch trees in some number. The soil is thin and not well-suited to growing crops, as the cold climate slows decay to a crawl depleting the plants of fertilizer. Animal life includes small mammals such as ermine, rabbit, beaver, elk, and moose, as well as the more dangerous bears, wolves, lynx, and wolverines.

Detailed here is a fictional region called Rassiya, an area covering roughly 450 square miles. The

entire area is small enough, and the descriptions generic enough, that it can be easily dropped into any existing campaign setting without much fuss, provided there are at least a couple of rivers and a lake nearby. The descriptions that follow assume that the adventuring takes place during late spring or summer; if the GM chooses to drop characters into the area during the long winter, she should adjust the descriptions accordingly (deep snows, frigid winds, fewer insects, etc.). It is also worth noting that the Random Encounter tables provided within are on the small side, as befits the relatively tight boundaries and lonely landscape of the land of Rassiya, but the GM should feel free to augment these if this setting is being placed within a campaign that's more populous.

The key village in Rassiya is a small hamlet called Derevnya, which is located between two rivers - the narrow Uzkiy and the Shirokiy, which is broader and flows downstream from Lake Lebedinoe. To the northwest of the city lies the Tyomniy Forest, and to the northeast is the birch-covered Berioza Grove. South of the city is the Chyornoye Sea, and to the southeast is the Kholadna Swamp, a cold marsh that most travelers avoid. References are made to other areas - most notably the capital with its castles and Prince Ivan - but these are intended as background

material. Neither the NPCs nor the player characters are expected to journey to any of these places. Within the fictional world, these other places are themselves as good as fictional.

In some places, the setting uses names for places and people that are Russian-sounding. Some of these make a certain sort of sense, but others are merely nonsense words used to provide flavor to the setting. Although the original stories are perceived on some level to take place in Russia itself, what's presented here is entirely fictionalized in order to give roots to pieces of folklore that have none in the real world. In short, the setting is as real as the stories upon which it's based.

THE HEART OF THE MATTER

The inhabitants of the setting's small villages, such as Derevnya, are generally weak and xenophobic, and they don't like to venture into dangerous areas. They remain in their tiny little villages and do little to change the world around them, which of course inevitably leads to brash youth being sent off (or choosing to go) into the dangerous forests nearby. Constables patrol the town and maintain order (insofar as it can be called order), but they stay out of trouble and encourage others to do the same. Within the walls of Derevnya, the



largest problems are the occasional shoplifter or drunk. Outside the walls, danger is greater, but that (according to the city watch) is "not their problem." This also leads to a sort of xenophobia and suspicion of outsiders, especially those who don't look human. Elves, dwarves, and even half-orcs will not be immediately ostracized, but they will be given a second glance. The world outside the human-populated villages here crawls with faerie creatures and evil spirits, but just because the people believe in such things does not mean they are immediately accepting of them.

The worldview of this setting's peasants is medieval: they are superstitious and religious at the same time, fearing witches and devils and praying to their god(s) for deliverance. While no specific gods are mentioned in this setting (as there are no temples or official representatives of any particular god in this region), the GM may feel free to insert her own setting's pantheon into the action as appropriate. In particular, gods who hold sway over the Animal, Community, Magic, Plant, Travel, War, and Weather domains will have the most influence. Those tending towards extremes of Law and Chaos will be less often worshipped, the general populace tending to prefer a sense of non-involved neutrality in all matters. Those with strong beliefs tend to

view their own belief as the one true way, passing off the gods of others (including outsiders) as superstition or the influence of immortal spirits. Indeed, at least three such forces make Rassiya their home, and, though all are immortal in their own way, none are deities. The first is Baba Yaga. The other two are:

PRINCE IVAN TSAREVITCH

The man in charge of the entire area is named Prince Ivan. Once a humble stableboy, he went on many adventures and fought both Baba Yaga and Koschei the Deathless before becoming leader of the country. Unfortunately, he got a taste for adventure, and so he always seems to be off doing epic things. This allows the populace to live vicariously through his escapades, but it also means that he's somewhat of an absentee landlord with little being done about the day-to-day necessities of running a kingdom. There are guards about, but they mostly protect the Prince's interests, not having been given any other orders. In short, the people are on their own, and depend heavily on adventurers for assistance with Baba Yaga-related issues. Prince Ivan is also a noteworthy heartbreaker, with a habit of falling madly in love with whatever girl he's currently rescuing, marrying her, and then leaving her behind before running off with whoever catches his eye next. He has thus left a trail of broken-heart-

ed women behind him. Because of his lofty station no one will speak ill of him in public except for his sister, Princess Katooshka, who runs the kingdom during his frequent absences. He has achieved a sort of real immortality based on his historical immortality, and as such he does not age.

KOSCHEI THE DEATHLESS

If Prince Ivan represents a force for law and order in the world (albeit a self-absorbed one), Koschei the Deathless represents the same degree of chaos and destruction. As his name suggests, Koschei is an immortal sorcerer who has extended his life beyond the norm through supernatural means involving a hidden magical egg. Despite this fact, like Baba Yaga, he has suffered death at least once at the hands of Prince Ivan. In this setting he achieves his miraculous resurrections through the use of a number of clones and doppelgangers, each imbued with a portion of his power. These incarnations can variously be defeated or "killed" via magical means, be that a set of magical chains or some sort of magic weapon. Coincidentally, Baba Yaga is likely to have access to those means - either she has them in her hut and will exchange them for services, or she knows where they can be found. In any case, the real Koschei the Deathless is - like Prince Ivan - an absentee as far as the story is concerned, important only as an influence.

inhabitants of rassiya



Baba Yaga

Baba Yaga is an old crone with a huge warty nose, skinny legs and black teeth (allegedly made of iron, but in reality due to poor dental hygiene). She is alternately known by such names as Jezi-Baba, Baba Yaga Kostianaya Naga or Baba Yaga Skinny Legs. Like the animals she keeps, Baba Yaga is quite skinny and malnourished despite her reputed appetite. Her physical features are often exaggerated in stories about her; for example, her nose is often described as being so long that it touches the ceiling when she sleeps.

Regarded as "the devil's grandmother," in reality Baba Yaga is an immortal from the realm of faerie, cast out into the real world because of her insistent meddling with the affairs of mortals. In the process, she lost her youth, but retained her immortality, along with her bizarre appearance, innate magical powers over natural forces - including life and death - and a dislike of cold iron. In fact, she is immune to weapons and magic save for those forged from iron. Acknowledging this weakness, she has enchanted her hut to protect her from iron; any items made of metal pass right through her, as if she were immaterial, while she is inside the hut. To deal with this possible handicap, she has magical

hands that flutter about the hut to assist her with tasks requiring that she touch things made of metal, such as the many magical sewing items she possesses.

Baba Yaga rarely leaves her hut, though she will occasionally putter about her fenced-in yard. When she finds reason to leave the hut, she travels about in an oversized mortar, pushing herself along with a giant pestle, often summoning invisible spirits to surround and protect her. She drags a broom made of silver birch behind her to erase all signs of her passing; she uses this same broom to sweep up after herself when relocating her hut. Her hut, by itself a chaotic and mobile entity, tends to move about, and may be found in the darkest forest, within a mysterious birch grove, or deep in the swamps.

When Baba Yaga has visitors, she typically asks them three questions, the third of which is always along the lines of "did you come here of your own free will, or were you sent?" She can tell if people are lying, and if an individual has not

come of their own free will, or lies to her, she is less likely to help them and much more likely to eat them if they fit in her oven. If they are honest and in need of assis-



tance - whether for good or evil intent - she may decide to help them by imparting wisdom or providing various magical items. She has no tolerance for those who betray her trust. Anyone breaking an agreement with her can depend



on her tracking them down to the ends of the earth. Clever and able adventurers may find it possible to trick Baba Yaga, but she will never forget or forgive.

Baba Yaga is often viewed as a foul old witch who eats children, and there are many who want her tracked down and killed for this reason. She has, indeed, eaten her share of children in the past, but she will be quick to point out that those who sent the children off into the forest in the first place should be the ones blamed for their deaths.

The Three Maids

Over the years, Baba Yaga has been visited by many people, young and old, rich and poor, but by far her most common visitor has been of the same sort - a young girl from the nearby town, sent off by a wicked stepparent to be eaten by the witch. Many were never seen again, but three returned with magic items, speaking of adventure. None of them will have anything to do with the other two without convincing (DC 25 Diplomacy check).

Vasilisa encountered Baba Yaga as a young child and survived to tell

about it. After her mother died, she was sent into the forest by her evil stepfather to die - allegedly in pursuit of a source of magical fire - with only a tattered old doll named Kookla (a gift from her mother) to

days. When she came back home, flaming skull in hand, her appearance at her own funeral drove her stepfather to death, and Vasilisa herself into a reclusive and increasingly bizarre existence. Now elderly and quite thoroughly insane, she babbles about what she saw inside and around the hut - talking animals, doors to nowhere, strange horsemen - and communicates mostly through her "talking doll." The townsfolk avoid her when she travels to the market.

The middle-aged **Natalya**

is the second of the town's three women who encountered the witch as a youth. Her stepmother, an evil seamstress, sent Natalya into the forest to fetch a needle and thread from her "aunt" Baba Yaga. Kindness to Baba Yaga's creatures - she tied a ribbon around a birch tree, oiled a gate, and fed Baba Yaga's dogs and cat - proved her salvation. In return for her acts, they gave her several magical items that allowed her to elude Baba Yaga (including a

magical comb and towel, described later). Upon arriving home, her father was so overjoyed at her return that he killed the evil stepmother. Unfortunately, he promptly suffered imprisonment for the crime and died of sadness in prison,



keep her company. As her family expected, Vasilisa quickly found the hut, but Baba Yaga discovered her as she tried to steal one of the fiery skulls from the fence. In repentance, Baba Yaga required her to act as the witch's servant for three



making Natalya an orphan. Subsequently she received a gift of a magical loom (described later), allegedly from her "aunt" Baba Yaga (her sole surviving relative). Though Natalya denies it, the loom attracted the attentions of Prince Ivan, who married Natalya many years ago. They were in bliss for about two months before the prince's roving eye looked elsewhere, returning Natalya to a life of squalor.

The youthful **Melinika** is the third of the women who



journey. She ultimately found and married Finist, but soon after she lost her true love in a war against Prince Ivan, and she has grieved for him ever since. All that remains of her true love is a single magical feather (described later).

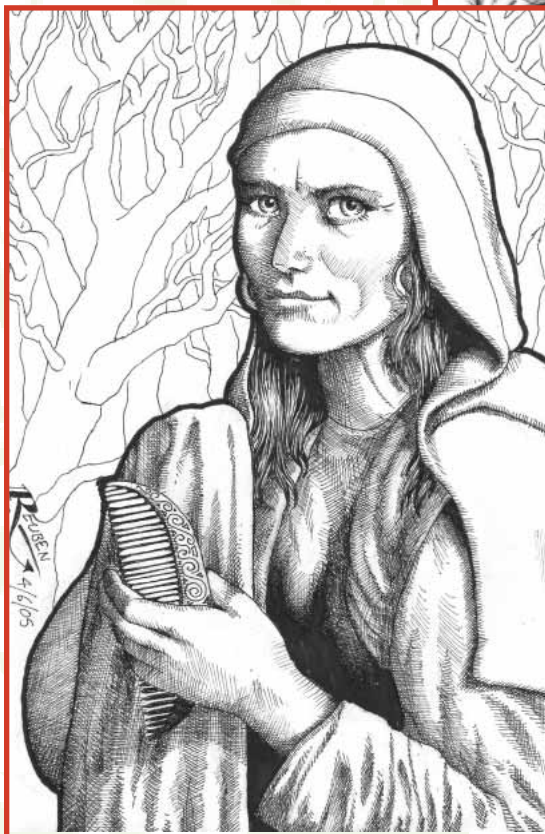
Minor Npc's

These NPCs provide both additional flavor for the setting and an opportunity for more Plot Hooks (described later) should the GM wish to continue the adventures for the PCs.

Afanasi the Beggar

resides beneath the bridge in the town of Derevnya (map location 9) and occasionally demands a "toll" from passers-by. At night he creeps about and steals from businesses, kills livestock, and otherwise causes chaos. In reality he is a clone of Koschei the Deathless, imbued with power over water. He can be defeated with a set of magical chains that have been broken, the links scattered about the forest.

Masha is an 18-year-old girl who once helped a creature named Zhar-Ptitsa the Firebird paint the four Eggs of the Elements to hide them from Baba Yaga. Though wily and distrustful of outsiders, especially Baba Yaga, Masha suffers from



encountered Baba Yaga as a child. She was gifted with a magical feather from her father in her youth, and discovered the love of Finist the Bright Falcon, a prince from a far off land. Finist was ultimately driven away by her evil stepsisters, but he pledged to marry her and take her to his magical kingdom as he fled. She plunged into the forest in pursuit of her love, and three incarnations of Baba Yaga aided her by bestowing upon her several magical items (described later) to assist her in her



a failure to realize that most people aren't necessarily any nicer than the old witch is; all have their own agendas. She and her mute mother raise chickens and sell the eggs - some painted, some not - to the villagers.

Princess Katooshka Tsarevitch

is Prince Ivan's sneaky sister. Though not an evil character, the princess pursues her own goals, and her administration of the kingdom in Ivan's absence means that things often run less smoothly than they might otherwise. Derevnya allegedly owes her taxes, and there is always a slight possibility that she might choose to visit the town to collect them.

The Three Legends

The PCs are not the only heroes wandering the land of Rassiya. Should they need assistance, one or more of these renowned heroes may be nearby to lend a hand.

Ilya Muromets the Strongman,

the son of a farmer, was born paralyzed. On his 33rd birthday a holy man cured him and bestowed supernatural strength upon him.

Ilya became a bogatyr (essentially a paladin) and wandered the countryside defeating giants and other supernatural beasts. As he dresses all in white and carries a sword and lance, he might be mistaken for the White Horseman.

Misha Skomorokh the Clown,

a talented bard, wanders the forest helping travelers and confusing people with tales and rhymes. He may assist players with tasks such as identifying magical items, if they can convince him to help. As he wears all red, he might be mistaken for the Red Horseman.

Marya Moreyna the Skillful

was once married to Prince Ivan, like Natalya and many other women before her. However, unlike all the others, she is bestowed of great military skill, and is renowned for laying waste to entire armies by herself and fighting under impossible odds. She rides a tireless horse given to her by (i.e., stolen from) Baba Yaga. Though quite beautiful, everything about her screams "professional warrior," from her short cropped hair to her quite modest and functional armor, which make her appear to be a man from afar. As she wears black armor, she might be mistaken for the Black Horseman.



monsters



The Three Horsemen

One tale says that each day, Baba Yaga sends three horsemen out from her hut. Each represents a different stage of the day, and a different side of Baba Yaga's nature. While she does not control them, she can call upon them if needed. In the meantime, they may be found wandering the forest covered head to toe in impenetrable armor. They are immortal creatures, and if defeated in battle they will reappear 24 hours later (though with no knowledge of what came the day before).

The White Horseman

is the warrior of the morning, representing dawn. He carries a sword of white, and is dressed all in silver armor that shines in the eastern sun. Baba Yaga calls him "My Bright Dawn," and with good reason. He represents kindness, hopefulness, and new life, and will attack anything he perceives as evil or destructive. He is most often found in the Berioza Grove area between dawn and noontime.

The Red Horseman

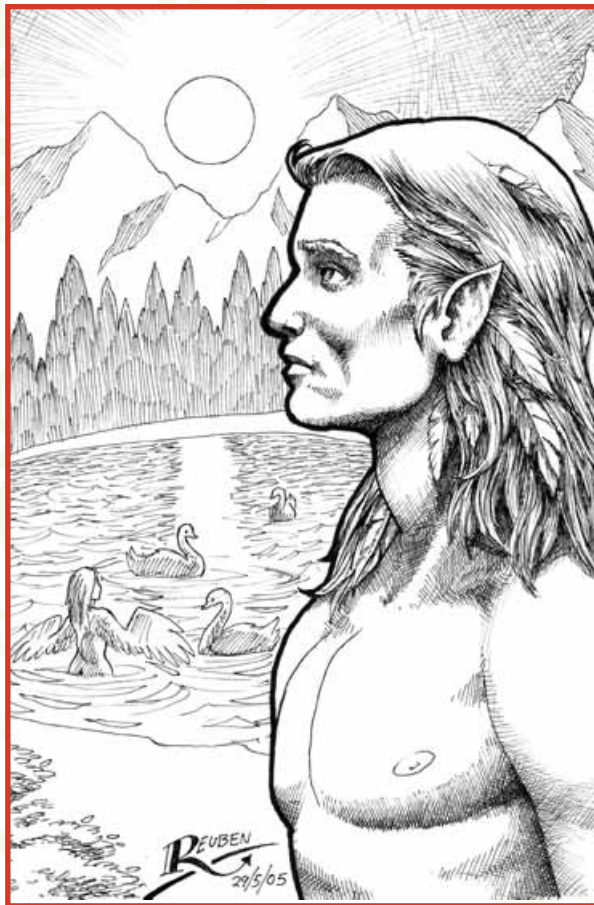
is the warrior of the afternoon sun, called "My Red Sun" by Baba Yaga. He wanders the forest from noon

until sunset, launching flaming arrows from his golden bow. Representing the cycle of life, he works to end conflicts that he comes across, either by intervening to end bloodshed, or by wiping the weaker side out - whichever he thinks will restore a balance the

attack anyone he thinks he can defeat (even in their sleep) when he comes across them. Unlike the other Horsemen, he carries no weapons, and needs none, preferring to let the swamp do his work. He is generally found in the Kholadna Swamp, and he will often appear from the shadows to pull travelers to their demise, should any be so foolish to travel at night.

The Bolotnitsa

are creatures akin to mermaids (also called Vodyanoi, are creatures akin to mermaids. They reside in swampy areas, particularly near dry patches, and attempt to lure travelers to their doom. From the waist up they appear to be beautiful women with long flowing hair, but from the waist down they are snakelike with one or more inky tendrils curling around below the surface of the water. Sometimes they will pretend they are drowning, encouraging heroes to try and save them by diving in, and at other times they will position themselves amidst emerald-colored patches



quickest. He is usually found in the Tyomniy Forest.

The Black Horseman

is the warrior of night, and he rides from sunset to dawn. Called "My Dark Night" by Baba Yaga, he is quite evil and dangerous, and will

es which resemble dry ground, but are in fact thin layers of vegetation atop deep, murky lakes. Anyone venturing onto these green patches is assured a watery doom.

The Lebedinoe,

or "Swan-folk," are relatives of



elves who guard a portal to the land of faerie, which is located beneath their silvery lake within a grove of white birch trees. They normally appear as tall white swans, standing four to five feet tall and weighing about 30 pounds. They will defend their turf with ferocious attacks if they are threatened, first hissing loudly and then attacking with blows capable of breaking bones. Under the light of a full moon, the swans will sometimes reveal themselves for what they really are, beautiful men and women with silvery-white skin who frolic on the shores of the lake. They hate Baba Yaga, though Odette, their leader, has the most enmity towards her. Odile, a black swan who is marginalized by the others for her appearance, is more tolerant of those who come in Baba Yaga's name. Some say this is because she is the witch's granddaughter, although this is unsubstantiated.

The Leshye

are nature-loving relatives of satyrs, capable of changing their size or shape to mimic almost any animal of any size. In their natural form they appear roughly human, though they have blue skin, green hair, goat hooves, horns, and claws, and they cast no shadow despite the brightest sun. Though not evil, they are fond of trickery and will lure humans into dark caves and cul-de-sacs as a prank, using voice mimicry

and clever misdirection. Their victims are then tickled mercilessly or have their equipment taken and scattered about the forest. It is said that walking backwards or wearing clothing backwards confuses the Leshye, since they are not sure if their victim is coming or going, and will cause them to leave the traveler alone.

The Rusalka

are tormented spirits, akin to spectres or banshees, born into the world when a female dies a horrible death via suffocation or strangulation. The unclean spirit violently re-enacts the means of its own death upon others: a girl who drowned in the swamp might seek out other wanderers and pull them down to a watery grave; a woman who was hung by a mob (and lingered for hours before passing on) might attempt to strangle others passing near the tree where she died; the spirit of a child smothered in its crib might seek out other newborn children. In all cases they appear as ghostly, shadowy, tormented versions of their former selves.

Animals

The land of Rassiya is filled with birds and animals enchanted with some degree of intelligence. Many can speak and will readily offer advice (both good and bad) to passing adventurers. Most of what they





have to say will turn out to be non-sense and often contradictory, but a few of the animals are worth a closer look. All of these are treated as normal animals of their type, with the exception that they speak the Common tongue.

Baba Yaga's Oxen

are allowed to roam free inside her fence behind the hut, and produce sour milk that Baba Yaga cooks with. These two score oxen are malnourished and desperately thirsty to the point where they can even drink an entire river dry in a matter of hours. They are quite helpless creatures, and when they do talk (very rarely) it's only to complain.

Catkin

is one of Baba Yaga's pets, enchanted with the ability to talk. Like any cat, it spends most of its time asleep. When it does happen to be awake, it is always in search of food, as Baba Yaga often forgets to feed it. If anyone offers it something to eat, it will gladly give them advice or serve as a distraction. Catkin prefers foods that cats are not supposed to eat - milk, bacon, cheese, etc.

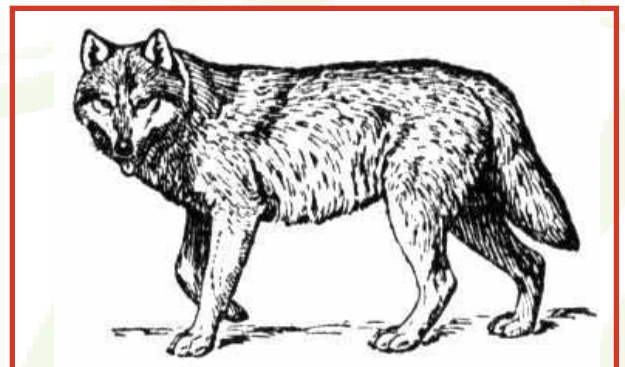
Grey

is a gaunt, sleek, oversized wolf who roams alone, his pack having cast him out long ago. He is quite wise and can chat amiably in several lan-

guages, but he is cursed in that although his advice is always sound, no one will ever believe what he has said (e.g., characters will always sense that he is lying, and spells to detect lies will sense that he is surrounded by untruth). He has a particular hatred of Koschei the Deathless, and will gladly join up on any mission that could harm his foe.

Rip and Torn

are Baba Yaga's guard dogs, immense mutts (Large animals in gaming terms, except for their size, the stats provided are based on Riding Dogs) that look like something out of the pits of hell. They will growl and lunge at trespassers who try to enter the hut, but they are chained down and cannot pursue anyone out of the gate. Although angry, they are also quite gaunt and malnourished, and will let anyone pass if they are fed a snack of some sort. Surprisingly, they are partial to bread - meat only makes them angrier.

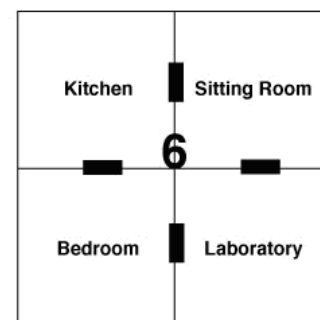
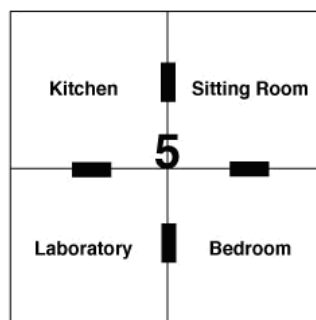
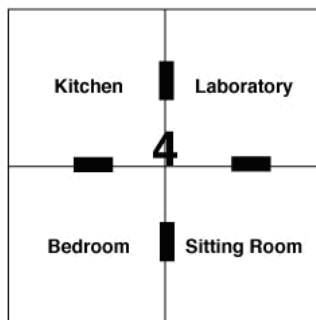
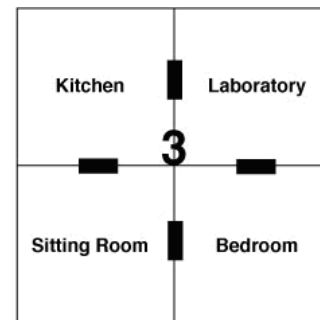
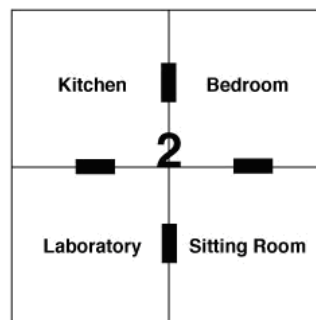
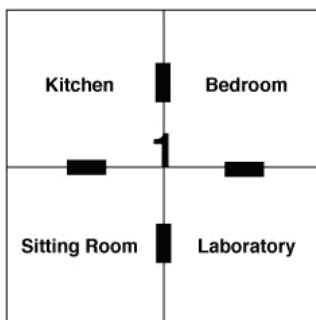




the village of derevna



Baba Yaga's hut



places in rassiya

The Village of Derevna

Tucked in tight along both sides of the riverbank is a small village, a hundred or so stone and thatch buildings nestled like eggs in a nest. The wall surrounding the village seems sturdy enough, and although it's low enough to jump, sharpened wooden stakes deter anyone from trying. Two wooden gates - one on either side of the river - stand wide open, but the suspicious guards posted just outside narrow their eyes as you approach. It appears they don't like strangers here, and you are definitely strangers. With the ever-green trees nearly clear cut for several hundred yards around the town and a straight stretch of open river, the town guard has a good line of sight in all directions. You have no doubt that several archers have had you in their sights for some time now.

The village is really a glorified hamlet, lacking a church or any sort of government. Each of the local guards (NG male human warrior 2) keeps order in his own way, mostly watching out for his own family; each of these has the equivalent of a chain shirt and either a light mace, a short sword, or a shortspear, with 1-in-5 owning a full suit of chainmail, a shield, and either a heavy mace or heavy pick. There's no sign of anyone who might be in charge. It seems that the 500 or so inhabitants run things themselves,

for better or worse, and with at least that many visitors passing through (the village is near two rivers and a good-sized road), everyone has something to sell, though only buildings numbered on the map have signs.

On the left bank of the Uzkiy River is old town, which is clean and welcoming of visitors despite the suspicious guards. The buildings range from one to three stories high, with the tallest being the town's mill (4) and the largest being the open market (7). Also noteworthy are the docks, which can handle surprisingly large vessels, and a large farm (8) stretched out to the south. Just across a stone bridge (9), the right bank contains the city's newer buildings, a mishmash of huts, wooden cubes and canvas tents. The sound of hammering and sawing can be heard at all hours of the day here as the inhabitants try to keep up with the swelling population - despite the fact (characters may make a DC 20 Spot check) that there are no children in town (see Plot Hooks for more on this).

I. Doktor Bolna

The wooden sign above this stone building features a wriggling worm (or perhaps some sort of leech), indicating that a physician of some sort can be found within. The dark, windowless building reeks of alcohol and is sparsely furnished with several ill-kept padded chairs along one wall, a row of



cabinets on the other, and a sturdy wooden table in the center. Dark spots stain the table's wooden surface and the floor beneath where drizzled sawdust has failed to sop up the spilled liquid. From the stench it's clear that at least half of the wet stuff is alcohol of some sort. What the rest is, you don't want to guess at.

The good Doktor Bolna (N male human expert 4) is quite capable of handling minor injuries, and if paid some copper (he never counts the coins, being quite drunk) he will get to work with needle and thread, to the tune of 1d4-2 points of healing (potentially causing damage on a bad roll). He can also apply leeches, which will slow disease or poison (GM discretion). For more serious wounds, he will recommend a bottle from his cabinets ("for a couple silvers"), which he will claim is a healing tonic but is actually just vodka tinted a random color. He is interested in buying a jar of maggots from Baba Yaga's Hut, and will pay as much as 10 gp.



2. Midvyet's Taksadermy

A large black bear stands guard beside this sturdy two-story wooden building, holding a sign between its paws that depicts a smaller bear, also holding a sign. Obviously the proprietor has a sense of humor. Inside the building are a vast assortment of stuffed creatures, ranging from squirrels and snowshoe rabbits to several moose and a strange half-man, half-goat thing with blue skin and green hair. Every horizontal surface is covered in bits of fur, flesh, cotton stuffing and sturdy thread.

The proprietor is not at home. The Leshye (the blue skinned things) did not take kindly to one of their kind being stuffed, and they have kidnapped Midvyet (NG male human ranger 2) and secreted him away to one of their caves in the Tyomniy Forest. If he is rescued, Midvyet will be available to provide taxidermy services. Of potentially greater use to the party, he can identify animals and creatures of all sorts, and can give the PCs an idea of what they might be up against.

3. Vasilisa's House

Hanging crookedly, the sign over the door of this little cottage depicts a spider spinning a web, but it doesn't look like it's open for business. Sitting inside is an old woman, rocking impatiently back and forth and cooing to a small stuffed doll. Bits of half-sewn clothing dangle from the rest of the furniture.

Everything lies beneath a thick coating of dust.

Vasilisa is not keen on visitors, and unless the PCs have good reason to be there she will shout for the guards. If a PC mentions Baba Yaga or children, she may be conned into conversation (described in chapter 7). She possesses two other magical items from Baba Yaga - a spool of thread and a pair of scissors (described later) - and may be convinced to use them to help the characters, but only if they can convince her that they plan to use them to track down Baba Yaga and kill her. Vasilisa blames Baba Yaga for her current condition.

4. Khlep's Bakery

Snuggled tight against the bank of the Uzkiy River, this mill towers over the rest of the village, giving the guards on the roof a good view. A steady squeal comes from the large wooden water-wheel opposite the door, with a dull rumble as the gears and millstone within grind wheat into flour. Somewhat unusually, the delicate scent of fresh baked goods wafts up from the basement of the building, within which is located a full service baked goods shop. Evidently the baker - named Khlep, if the inscription over the door is any indication - handles every aspect of the bread-making process from start to finish.

Unfortunately, the taste doesn't

quite live up to the smell. Khlep's fare - everything from bread, to Pirozhky (apple-filled pastries) to fruitcake - is quite filling and nutritious, and the price is reasonable to boot (just a few coppers). However, everything tastes more or less the same, with a gritty texture reminiscent of gravel. Khlep (NG male human commoner 3) is a short and sweaty fellow who will take horrible offense if anyone insults his wares and shout for the guards, 1d4 of whom are always stationed atop the mill, which acts as a watchtower for the town. Khlep is interested in finding a new millstone, and will pay up to 100 gold for it - Baba Yaga has one, conveniently, but it's very heavy and hard to transport.

5. Chyorniy's Smithy

The wooden sign over the open door of this small stone building is charred black from heat and ash, but the noise and heat coming from inside makes clear what sort of business is done within. Bits of metal and wood jut out from all over, the standard fare for a smithy, but it's hard to make out details since there are no windows and everything is coated in grease and soot. The burly smith, apparently ever-at-work beside his anvil, ignores you as he hammers away. Several constables sit at a table in the back corner, playing a game involving knives, fingers, and copious amounts of alcohol.

In addition to being a smithy - repairing and selling iron and steel



items of all sorts - this building is the unofficial headquarters for the city watch and Id6 guards will always be nearby. In times of crisis, Chyorniy (NG male human fighter 7) will give orders and take charge. Despite this he will steadfastly deny being responsible for anyone's life but his own, and refuses to be called Captain. Gruff and friendly, the smith's prices and selection are all perfectly average. He knows how cold iron affects some creatures, including Baba Yaga, quite powerfully.

6. Viski's Tavern

With a sign depicting a bottle, it's clear that this is a tavern. The stone architecture is as spartan as the interior, which consists of little more than a few wooden tables scattered about the room and twice as many chairs tossed in for good measure. There is no bar, but there is a large, red-nosed fellow seated at a table, tossing darts at the wall while sipping from a bottle of vodka. So far none of the darts has hit the bull's-eye, although several have stuck into the backside of a drunken villager, sleeping off his stupor on the floor.

The big fellow is Viski, owner of the tavern, and he will greet anyone who approaches him, reaching into a pocket for several shot glasses and overfilling them from his bottle, asking a copper a drink. He sips from the same bottle he serves with (if asked, he insists the vodka

kills germs). Aside from having a neverending supply of vodka in a back room, Viski (N male human rogue 4) is also a crack dart thrower, and will hustle anyone who wants to try him, losing a few games and then upping the stakes before showing his skills. While he's hustling he can share info about the town, but if he's caught he will clam up for good.

7. Village Market

The square bustles with activity far exceeding what one might expect from such a small town, noise and

stone building that was once a town hall. Now, however, it's been turned into an extension of the market, the front doors removed and both floors packed with vendors.

The market is a good place for characters to bump into NPCs that the GM needs them to meet, as anyone can be found here at one time or another. There's a 30% chance of finding anything mundane somewhere in the market, and a flat 10% chance of a random magical item turning up. This resets on a weekly basis, as new visitors rotate



color and enticing odors mingling to create a dazzling synesthetic experience. Many of the tents and wagons in this marketplace belong to outsiders who are just passing through, but many of the more permanent structures evidently belong to city residents here to hawk their wares. At the far end of the square stands a two-story

into town.

8. Masha's Farm

Just outside the village, like a wart on a witch's nose, stands a tall wooden building that, judging from the smell, is a farmhouse of some sort. Goats, chickens, rabbits, and several oxen roam about willy-nilly, trampling the



flowers, eating the crops in the field beyond, and generally having the run of the place. Several smaller buildings house grain, straw and other forms of animal feed, with a few private docks jutting out into the river nearby. Inside the farmhouse are several broken pieces of furniture, a confused looking goat, and an 18-year-old girl, hands on her hips, eyeing you curiously through tousled hair.

The girl is Masha, and along with her mute mother Kuritsa she does her best to run the farm. Despite the apparent chaos, she insists she has everything under control, and indeed, she does - to a point. In the past, she helped a creature called the Firebird paint the four Eggs of the Elements to hide them from Baba Yaga, but decided to keep one - the Egg of Soil - for herself. It's buried under her corn patch, and explains how her crops keep coming up so healthy. Aside from everything she knows about Baba Yaga, Masha will sell food to the PCs at a reasonable rate. She might also be able to loan them a cart if they need it.

9. Stone Bridge

Though obviously quite old and evidently on the verge of collapse, this stone bridge somehow manages not to crumble under its own weight. From up top, you can see that a heap of trash has washed up beneath the bridge. Curious, since the bridge is too low for any ships to pass beneath, and the

currents should have swept the debris downstream.

Anyone looking more closely at the trash under the bridge will discover Afanasi, who will immediately hit them up for food, money and (oddly enough) water. If given water to drink he will seem to gain strength and coherence, and will share information about the town with his benefactors. He will also readily state that Baba Yaga is a foul witch who eats children and will encourage the PCs to hunt her down and kill her. He blames his fate on her, in fact, and will hold up his wrist - bound in a band of magical iron - as proof that he was once her slave. In fact, if that last band is somehow broken, he will gain supernatural powers (as befits his status as a clone of Koschei the Deathless) and will wreak vengeance on the town. A better option for the PCs will be to recover the rest of the chains (see Plot Hooks).

10. Melinika's House

A brightly colored feather is painted above the open door of this wooden house, but the odor of paint and thinner from within makes the sign quite redundant. It's clear that the woman within - slender, blonde, and looking quite frazzled - is an artist of sorts. She works furiously, barely noticing that she has visitors, as she moves between a half dozen easels, each featuring a different painting. The walls

are hung with other paintings, and though most are only half-finished, many are quite lovely, turning her studio into a gallery of sorts. Finally, she sets down her brush, smears a streak of paint into her cheek, and asks what you want.

Melinika's encounter with Baba Yaga combined with the loss of her love, Finist, has changed her for the worse. She has been fanatically painting images from her past for years - golden castles, lands where the sky is bright pink, strange creatures - in an attempt to bring Finist back, if only in her mind. She will view any visit as an interruption and will be eager to get back to work, unless the visitor wants to purchase a painting. Most of these are exquisitely rendered, and a few feature a hut on chicken legs and an ugly old hag, which might lead to a discussion of Baba Yaga. Melinika has an assortment of magical items given to her by the old hag (described later), and she will trade them for items she perceives to be of artistic value, provided that the PCs intend them for a good cause. She will in no way willingly participate in any plot against Baba Yaga, as she views the witch as a friend and ally.

11. Sir Yebriniy's Silvers

An oversized spoon dangles over the door, marking this as the home of a silversmith. Inside, an assortment of odds and ends can be seen on various



shelves - everything from silverware, to silver cooking pots, to the occasional silver weapon and shield. Seated in the corner, polishing a helmet to a perfect shine, is the proprietor. He smiles and stands to introduce himself, moving gracefully despite his obvious warrior-like musculature.

A foreigner, Sir Yebriniy (NG male human fighter 9) came to Derevnnya as a traveling knight on a quest to defeat a great beast many years ago. After defeating the beast, he decided to give up the knight business and settled down to run a silver shop, melting down his armor and weapons to get things started. His prices are twice what they should be for silver weapons, but as he's the only source in town he can charge what he likes. If characters spend enough money, he might share that the "beast" he came to defeat was Baba Yaga, and that in truth she defeated him. He knows now that she is not evil, despite what other townsfolk might say.

12. The Snatvornaye Inn

One of the largest buildings on this side of the river, this two-story inn, marked by the bed carved over the door, appears to have room inside for several dozen travelers. Though unremarkable on the outside, the décor in the main room is quite nice with walls painted a deep red trimmed with gold, and the carpet a spiral of deep reds and blues that seem to draw the eye to infinity. Comfortable chairs scat-

tered about the room trace a path towards the simple desk in the center, where the proprietor awaits.

The innkeeper's name is Padushka, and he invites all who enter to spend the night. His rooms are quite comfortable, in fact, and anyone who takes him up on his offer (1 gp per person per night) will heal at twice the normal rate. However, the enchantment laid on the rooms also means that no one will be able to keep their eyes open, which will allow Padushka (CG male human rogue 6/wizard 5) to sneak in at night and pilfer some extra gold (1d10 per person). He's smart enough not to take more, lest he blow his cover. If caught in the act (allow players a DC 25 Listen check), he will give the money back and close up shop for a few weeks till things blow over.

13. Loshad's Livery

The reek of dung surrounds this collection of buildings, three of which house horses and other mounts currently being tended to by an assortment of stablehands. In the fourth building, several more workers polish saddles and repair horseshoes, squatting on the floor beside a small counter. One of the stablehands notes your approach and stands up, dusting his hands off on his trousers.

Loshad (NG male human commoner 4) works side by side with his other employees, which is a great

boost for morale and an unfortunate punishment for his wife, who has to put up with the odor of manure when he comes home at night. The livery is well-equipped to care for any mounts the characters might have with them, at a cost of 1 gp per mount per day, and if needed they can rent out or sell mounts at twice the normal price. Loshad has little to say about Baba Yaga, other than that he's trained his mounts to return to the stables when their riders vanish in the dark forest while looking for the witch.

14. Zlobniy the Sage

A patchwork of quilts has been cobbled together to form a tent of sorts, rigged up around a tall fir tree, the top of which juts out from the tent like a tattered green finger. Somehow the tree has remained alive despite the abuse, which means that the inside of the tent smells strongly of sap. Seated on a pillow beneath one of the tree's lower branches is a broad-faced, middle-aged man with foreign-looking features that you can't quite place. He gestures for you to seat yourselves beside him.

If the characters ask around town for advice, inevitably someone is going to recommend they pay a visit to Zlobniy the Sage (CG male human adept 5), widely recognized as the smartest guy in town. He is, indeed, quite smart, and has used his intelligence to bilk the townspeople out of money for several



years now. He can, indeed, see into the future, but he realized long ago that people paid more if he gave them good advice and kept the bad to himself, and so any predictions he gives (at a cost of 1 sp) will be cheerful and positive, even if danger awaits. However, he does know a bit more about the town's missing children than others are willing to share, and if pressed and plied with gold he will reveal that it is the townsfolk themselves who are to blame for sending their children off into the woods to be eaten by Baba Yaga. He knows the names of three women who have seen the witch and returned to tell about it, and will share their names for additional gold. They are, of course, Vasilisa, Melinika and Natalya.

15. Natalya's Hovel

Leaning against a tall birch tree, this small ramshackle house looks about ready to blow over, and it would surely fall to bits if not for the clever tangle of thread woven amongst the boards. Inside, it is surprisingly warm and cozy, with fabrics of all sorts stuffed into crevices, creating a glorious explosion of color that reflects the light from the small stove in the center of the hut. Seated there, working at her loom, is an old woman.

Natalya is happy to get visitors and will gladly chat about Baba Yaga, whom she views as neither good, nor evil. She will not deny that Baba Yaga might eat children, but will

claim she never saw it happen either. She can also speak widely on methods of getting past Baba Yaga's defenses, and can offer the use of several magical items (a comb and towel), which are tucked into the corners of her hut. Though old, she is also quite capable of creating magical sheets of fabric on her loom (also described later). She will charge dearly for such fabric, however, asking 100 gold pieces per 10-foot length.



Tyomniy Forest

A heavy blanket of thick-barked spruce and fir trees covers the area for miles, seeming to stretch almost to the horizon. Although the treetops appear more or less level from a distance, it's clear that there's a gentle slope within the forest itself, lowest near the riverbank where the trees are tallest, and highest further in, with shorter trees that are starved for nutrition. The ground is strangely spongy and flexible, composed as it is of a mass of evergreen needles and fallen branches that have yet to fully decay in this cold clime. Yet the air is full of life - billions

of flying insects swarm about in the dark, heavy air below the branches, their buzzing drowned out only by the incessant twitter and chirp of thousands of songbirds attracted by the ready food supply.

Deep in the heart of this forest is one of the known locations of Baba Yaga's hut, but since the hut moves around somewhat unpredictably, characters will have little choice but to simply head blindly towards the center (in fact, the hut will only be here on any given day on a result of 1,2 or 3 on a 1d10). There are two main routes characters might take. The first is a lightly traveled hunting trail that splits off the main road (itself little more than a trail) about a mile west of Derevyna. The entrance to this trail is clearly marked by a sign that reads (in the local tongue) "Go forward to be eaten by wolves. Go back to be a failure." The other obvious option is to travel along the river, heading north from town. Whichever path is chosen, several encounters are likely along the way, none with a fixed location. Four times per day, roll d100 [on Table I], ignoring duplicates where they make no sense (e.g., if Misha has joined the party, he won't be encountered in the wild again).

Dark Cave

Hidden beneath two fallen trees (requires a DC 25 Spot check unless Grey the Wolf or Misha is



with the party) is a wide tunnel that leads several hundred yards underground to a damp, low-ceilinged cave. Bits of green fur and hoof-prints that look as if they belong to goats can be found in the muddy earth, mixed among patches of straw. Along the back wall is a small iron-barred cage, inside which can be found the barefoot Midvyet (see Derevnnya, area 2). He was captured by the Leshye during a recent foray into the forest and has been kept here to be tortured (defined as tickling with feathers). He begs for release. The bars are quite strong and will require a combined Strength of 30 to pull apart, though the lock may be picked (DC 30 Open Lock check) or the key may be found beneath a heap of dung (DC 25 Search check).

Grey the Wolf

Just at the edges of their vision, one or more characters will sense that they are being tracked through the

woods. Someone will catch a glimpse of a sleek grey wolf, and since it moves among the brush it may appear that there is a whole pack in pursuit of the characters. In point of fact, it is Grey the Wolf, who is interested in what the characters might be up to. He will stay well out of sight unless he is specifically called to (though since the PCs probably don't know he can talk, they are unlikely to do so). If he's cornered or captured, he will cower and claim he has no desire to do the characters harm. If the PCs spare his life, he can tell them all about the forest, including the locations of the Red Horseman and a strange chap in a cave. He also knows where to find Baba Yaga when her hut is in the forest.

Misha Skomorokh, The Wandering Minstrel

Off in the distance, characters catch glimpse of a figure dressed all

in red. Could this be the fabled Red Horseman? Unlikely, since this individual seems to be skipping through the forest, whistling a little ditty. If hailed, he will wave and wait for the characters to approach, but if left to his own devices he will leave the characters to theirs as well. He does not know where Baba Yaga's hut is, but he might be convinced to come along with the party if he gets his choice of any treasures they might come across.

Red Horseman

Amidst a grove of particularly red-barked trees, a red-armored figure atop a red steed suddenly charges into view, bringing with him the midday sun (regardless of what time of day it really is). He does not speak, and will not attack except in self-defense, or to help resolve a current conflict, in which case he will side with the stronger side.

Rusalka, Hanging

As described earlier, Rusalka are the tormented spirits of those who have died horrible deaths. This one is the spirit of a woman hung many centuries ago for a crime she did not commit. The hanging did not go quickly, and she lingered for many days before passing on, at least, that portion of her that did not stay behind to haunt this place. Now she lurks in the trees and drops nooses to hang others who pass by, inviting them to share in the pain she once suffered.

Table I-Tyomniy Forest

Roll	Monster	No.	Size	CR	Alignment
1-15	Brown Bear (MM)	1d2	L	4	N
16-20	Dark Cave	-	-	-	-
21-30	Dire Bear (MM)	1	L	7	N
31-35	Grey the Wolf	1	M	5	CG
36-40	Misha Skomorokh	1	M	10	CG
41-45	Red Horseman	1	M	10	N
46-55	Rusalka, Hanging	1	M	5	CE
56-70	Swarm, Rat (MM)	1	T	2	N
71-85	Troll (MM)	1d4	L	5	CE
86-00	Wolf Pack (MM)	1d10	M	1	N



Mokriy Vale

An assortment of foliage - mostly evergreen, but with spots of birch, poplar and aspen - spreads across this broad river valley, filling the land between the dark Tyomniy and silvery-white Berioza Forests with lush greenery. Nourished by the flood plain in which they're nestled, the trees here are quite healthy and tall, although large numbers of them have been cut down by the local villagers for just that reason, leaving wide swaths of open field through which small animals frolic. The ground underfoot is spongy and damp, no doubt due to a recent flood - it looks as if this entire area becomes saturated with water when one or both rivers overflow their banks.

This area of the map is unlikely to be a destination for the characters, but in their journeys to and from Baba Yaga's Hut it's likely they'll traverse the area at least once or twice. Thus, this is a good area to spring random events upon them, or to have them encounter NPCs they haven't run into yet, be they foreigners or NPCs from nearby Derevnyna here on a hunting expedition. Anyone skirting the Shirokiy River - the only real thoroughfare in the Vale - is considered to be in this area for purposes of encounters. Twice per day, roll d100 [on Table 2], ignoring duplicates where they make no sense.

Flood

This being a flood plain, a flood is inevitable, and if the characters spend any time here then they will notice the skies turning gray in the nearby hills. Though it will not necessarily rain on the plain, the effect of the torrential rain will be felt here after a few hours, when the water levels start to rise and the rivers spill out over their banks. Six hours after the rains begin, the entire plain will be covered in several inches of water, making the journey difficult and camping for the night nearly impossible. Water levels will peak at 1d6 feet deep, and then recede at a rate of 1 foot per hour.

Leshye

When they are unprepared for it (e.g., trapped in a pit, asleep, etc.), the characters will find themselves suddenly surrounded by 3d6 Leshye (blue-skinned, green-haired satyrs), who will try and subdue the characters so they may be "tortured" with trickery. They may

attempt to get the PCs to follow them into a trap (as they did to Midvyet; see Derevnyna #2) or a dense forested area where their trickery will be more easily accomplished. If the Leshye are attacked, or if the PCs have rescued their prisoner Midvyet, they will instead attack with hooves and horns. Even so, they do not intend to kill the PCs, and anyone who is taken out of the combat will awake to find themselves in the Leshye cave, equipment scattered about the room.

Pit Trap

Numerous traps are to be found all over the area, set by trappers from Derevnyna who are either trying to capture animals for food, or kill creatures that threaten the village. Most of these traps take the form of a broad, deep pit covered with a thin netting that's covered in leaves and grass (DC 25 Search check). Anyone stepping onto the netting will rapidly sink into the pit, pulling

Table 2 - Mokriy Vale

Roll	Monster	No.	Size	CR	Align.
1-15	Air Elemental, Med. (MM)1	M	3	N	
16-20	Doppelganger (MM)	1	M	3	N
21-25	Flood!	-	-	-	-
26-35	Horse, Light (MM)	1d10	L	1	N
36-45	Leshye	3d6	M	2	CN
46-60	Lycanthrope, Wererat (MM)1	M	2	LE	
61-75	Mephit, Air (MM)	1d3	S	3	N
76-80	Pit Trap	-	-	-	-
81-95	Swarm, Rat (MM)	1	T	2	N
96-00	Shipwreck Far From Water	-	-	-	-



will rapidly sink into the pit, pulling anyone immediately behind them in as well - all must make a DC 25 Reflex Save or be pulled into the pit, which is some 15 feet deep. The fall is slow enough not to cause damage, and getting out of the net requires a mere DC 15 Strength check. However, the bottom of the pit is lined with thorny plants that exude a poison that causes 1d6 Strength damage the first round. If the entangled characters remain still, they suffer no further damage, but for every round in which they struggle to get out, they will take an additional 1d6 Strength damage (a DC 20 Fortitude save halves this amount). If for some reason the entire party is stricken by the poison, the Leshye (described above) may happen along to "help" them out.

Shipwreck Far From Water

In the midst of the valley, atop a small rise dotted with trees, lies what appears to be the hull of a single-masted sailing ship, apparently having wrecked when it ran into a particularly large branch. Exactly how the ship got here is apparently a mystery (though if the PCs have already encountered a Flood, as described above, they may figure it out). The ship's hold is filled with rotting grain, and there's no sign of inhabitants or treasure of any sort, but it will serve as a convenient

place to rest for the night (and, if patched up, a suitable ship for surviving an unexpected flood).

Berioza Grove

The view from atop this hillside is impressive; from here, you can see clear across the river valley down to the river delta where Derevnya lurks, and beyond to the sea. However, the real view is closer at hand, for here you are surrounded not by evergreens, but by a massive grove of silver-barked birch trees, glimmering in the light. To the east of the grove, at the base of this rise, you can barely make out a shimmering lake of silvery water, upon which several large white birds frolic and play. The entire area carries an aura of peace and stillness, and for a moment you feel ill-at-ease, as if your mere presence here is somehow a taint on the land itself.

Somewhere in this silver birch grove is another possible location of Baba Yaga's hut (the hut will only be here on any given day on a result of 4, 5 or 6 on a 1d10). However, not only does Baba Yaga's Hut move around, but the entire forest seems to shift around the characters as they move, constantly keeping them in a clearing, the trees always just out of reach (unless for some reason they are not carrying anything made of iron or steel, in which case the grove acts normally - without moving around). Regardless of how the forest treats them, several encounters are likely along the way, none with a fixed location. Twice per day, roll d100 [on Table 3], ignoring duplicates where they make no sense (e.g., if Ilya has joined the party, he won't be encountered in the wild again).

Bandits

The clearing around the characters suddenly doubles in size as the birch forest expands to account for

Table 3 - Berioza Grove

Roll	Monster	No.	Size	CR	Align.
1-15	Archon, Hound (MM)	1d3	M	4	LG
16-30	Archon, Lantern (MM)	1	S	2	LG
31-35	Bandits	2d6	M	2	NE
36-40	Ilya Muromets	1	M	10	LG
41-50	Lycanthrope, Werebear (MM)	1	L	5	LG
51-65	Owl, Giant (MM)	1	L	3	NG
66-75	Sprite, Nixie (MM)	1d4	S	1	N
76-80	Swan-folk	1d6	M	2	LG
81-95	Unicorn (MM)	1d2	L	3	CG
96-00	White Horseman	1	M	10	LG



the quantity of steel suddenly appearing - much of it carried and worn by the bandits now surrounding the party (1d4 of them per character, each the equivalent of a first level rogue). The bandits will attempt to convince the PCs that the odds are in their favor, preferring to just take whatever wealth they have in lieu of fighting, but if the characters refuse to give it up then the bandits will attack en masse, distributing their attacks so as to keep characters from helping one another. If the PCs need help, it is possible that Ilya or the White Horseman (2) might happen along in the nick of time.

Ilya Muromets the Strong

A figure appears on the edge of the birch grove, armored in silvery-white armor, watching the characters, unafraid. If ignored, he will remain on the edge of perception, but if hailed or approached he will hold his ground, and will question the characters thoroughly about their intentions in the grove. If anyone in the party is evil-aligned or dishonest about their reasons for being there, he will attack (if he feels he can win) or else warn them that they should leave, before leaving to warn the rest of the grove. Good-aligned characters might convince him to join their efforts, in which case he will introduce himself, declare that he is a bogatyr (or paladin), and accompany them for

the next 1d6 days, before declaring that he has other work to do elsewhere, and wandering off. He does not flaunt his strength unnecessarily, but if forced into combat he will not pull punches.

The Swan-Folk of Lake Lebedinoo

The birch grove parts suddenly to reveal the shimmering, still surface of a lake, giving off a mirror-perfect reflection broken only occasionally by the swans that occasionally move about at the lake's center, ducking and surfacing as they evidently search for food. PCs who watch for a while will note that the swans seem to surface more often than they dive; this is because the lake's surface is actually a portal of sorts to the land of faerie, and the swans are faerie-creatures diving in and out of this world. Anyone of evil alignment who enters the lake will take 1d6 points of damage per round, but those of neutral or good alignment will be invigorated by the water, healing 1d6 points of damage (once per day). In either case, any armor or steel that touches the surface of the water sizzles and rusts apart immediately, and only those of faerie blood may enter the portal. If the PCs try to talk with the swans, or if conflict is started, they will undoubtedly be introduced (one way or another) to Odette, the leader of the swan-folk (LG female swan-folk paladin 7), and her black-feathered sister

Odile (LG female swan-folk sorcerer 7). Odette despises Baba Yaga and will give advice on where to find her if the PCs say they intend to destroy her, while Odile will only help them if the opposite is true. Both of them prefer to avoid combat, diving underwater where characters cannot follow if attacked and encouraging their entourage to follow. If the characters pursue, they will undoubtedly be at a disadvantage, since most spells will be useless underwater and the lake's magical properties will dissolve their armor and weapons almost instantly.

The White Horseman

Covered in resplendent white armor and mounted atop a white steed, the white horseman brings with him the new dawn (regardless of what time of day it really is). He will ignore characters for the most part, but if anyone of evil alignment is within the grove, he will attack them, doing his best to drive them out of the grove.

Ivansgrove

Surrounded by low scrub on all sides, this long, narrow grove seems an anomaly. Obviously tended carefully (as opposed to the wilder forests to the west and north), the grove consists of a mixture of evergreen trees and birches, trimmed in many areas to allow those riding horses to travel through the grove more easily. Every



few hundred yards, a small wooden sign - painted bright red - declares that this area, dubbed Ivansgrove, is "Zapovednik", whatever that means. There are no further details, but you get the impression that the area is off limits. This hasn't stopped the birds and beasts; the tree branches are full of songbirds, squirrels and other creatures, hidden in shadow.

This "zapovednik" is a private hunting ground, set aside for Prince Ivan and his retinue's use. Anyone caught trespassing in the area will, if they are discovered by the guards, be surrounded, questioned, and officially charged with a violation of some obscure order (Ivan's soldiers will initially have a hostile attitude towards the characters, and a DC 35 check is required to adjust this to friendly - the soldiers are susceptible to bribes, which will give a +10 circumstance bonus on the check). At its narrowest point (where the eastern road cuts through, near the sea), the PCs will only be within the grove for a few hours, at most, and so the chances of getting through without being seen are fairly good. However, if they go back and forth, or dally in the area, they will almost certainly encounter something. Four times a day, roll d100 [on Table 4].

Moose

The area is obviously well-stocked with animals, for it is rare enough to see a single moose, much less

2d4 of them, as is the case here. Unafraid, the moose will allow characters to come right up to them and pet them, and they are stupid enough to stand dumbly by even as they are shot down with arrows or hacked to bits. Although they are here to be hunted, the Prince hasn't actually hunted in years and years, so they don't realize that people can be dangerous.

The Prince's Guards and "Prince Ivan"

A party consisting of 2d4 guards (CG male human fighter 2), decked out in silver and red, surrounds the



characters, insisting that they wait for "the Prince". Moments later, another guard (CG male human fighter 4), dressed up like Prince Ivan, rides out and plays the part of the Prince. Since it is unlikely that any of the characters have ever met the prince, they are unlikely to realize they are being duped, although something will seem "off" about the performance. The entire episode is merely an attempt by these corrupt guards to fleece the characters, who will be accused of trespassing and poaching (whether true or not). An exorbitant fee of several hundred gold coins will be demanded, though characters can argue that down to a handful if they are charismatic or threatening. They might even get off for free if they direct the guards to the traveling merchant who passed by recently (if they've met him; see below). If they attempt to flee without paying, however, they will be attacked; these guards can't let any survivors escape to tell the tale. Each of the

Table 4 - Ivansgrove

Roll	Monster	No.	Size	CR	Align.
1-15	Boar (MM)	1d4	M	2	N
16-30	Brown Bear (MM)	1	L	4	N
31-40	Dire Badger (MM)	1d4	M	2	N
41-45	Dire Boar (MM)	1	L	4	N
46-60	Horse, Light (MM)	1d10	L	1	N
61-75	Moose	2d4	L	1/2	N
76-80	Prince's Guards & Ivan	2d4	M	3	CN
81-85	Real Guards & Princess	(see text)	M	4	LN
86-90	Traveling Merchant	1	M	1/2	N
91-00	Wolverine (MM)	1d4	M	2	N



guards is armored head-to-toe in banded mail, and carries a long-spear (for charging), a scimitar and 6 javelins.

The Prince's Guards and Princess Katooshka!

This group is similar in nature to that described above, but it is slightly larger (3d4 guards, each a fighter 3, with 1d4 officers, each a fighter 5) and is headed by an actual authority figure. Princess Katooshka (LN female human aristocrat 7) is in no mood for arguing - she's on her way to Derevnya to collect taxes (or possibly on her way from that town, if the PCs met her before) - and she wants to be done with these adventurers as soon as possible. If the PCs are merely passing through, they will be accused of trespassing and asked to pay a fine (and attacked if they do not pay). If they have been poaching then they will be ordered to throw down their weapons and accept their fate - death. The Princess will ride off at any sign of battle, escaping and sending more guards to plague any surviving adventurers in the future. As above, each of the guards is armored head-to-toe in banded mail, and carries a long-spear (for charging), a scimitar and 6 javelins. The officers also carry shields and a heavy pick and have banners proclaiming them as Prince Ivan's men. Katooshka wears a

chain shirt under her robes of office and wields only a small dagger.

Traveling Merchant

Driving a wagon pulled by two mules, this merchant (N male human expert 1) is heading towards Derevnya, and he can not only sell characters many items (base 10% chance to have anything they want, at twice the normal price), but he can share with them information about the Swamps beyond. He is in somewhat of a hurry, as he wishes to avoid the Prince's Guards so he can avoid their "tax," and if characters dally too long he will drive off without completing transactions, encouraging them to be on their way too.

Kholadna Swamp

The thick, lush forests to the north and west are a stark counterpoint to the

stunted, twisted growth that surrounds you here. Slowly drowning in the water that gives them life, the trees here are all askew, many on the verge of tumbling to the sodden ground. Nearly every inch of visible ground is covered in a thick, green moss, though there are several patches of crystal clear water here and there, as well as several patches of what appears to be



meadow, surrounded by healthier trees and topped with bright yellow and blue flowers. That life could survive in such a bleak place is a miracle.

As long as the characters stick to the road - consisting of well-tended raised-earth and several wooden bridges - they will be safe from the

Table 5 - Kholadna Swamp

Roll	Monster	No.	Size	CR	Align.
1-5	Black Horseman	1	M	10	CE
6-10	Bolotnitsa	1d4 + 1	M	6	NE
11-25	Gray Ooze (MM)	1	M	4	N
26-30	Marya Moreyna	1	M	10	NG
31-35	Mephit, Ooze (MM)	1d4	S	3	N
36-50	Ochre Jelly (MM)	1	L	5	N
51-60	Rusalka, Drowning	1	M	5	NE
61-75	Sinkhole	-	-	-	-
76-90	Vargouille (MM)	1d4	S	2	NE
91-00	Will O' Wisp (MM)	1	S	6	CE



swamp's dangers. However, if they wish to locate Baba Yaga's Hut (here only on a result of a 7, 8 or 9 on a 1d10), they will have to head into the heart of the swamp. Only deep in the swamp might they encounter the beautiful meadows that actually hide a watery grave or the sinkholes hidden beneath the moss. Twice per day, roll d100 [on Table 5], ignoring duplicates where they make no sense (e.g., if Marya has joined the party, she won't be encountered in the wild again).

The Black Horseman

Shrouded in black armor and mounted on a black horse, the first sign of this warrior's approach is the sudden onset of thick, inky blackness approaching from the distance. His horse seems sure-footed on the mossy surface of the swamp, and he is never in danger of sinking into the swamp. Indeed, he is quite fond of pursuing those he comes across into more dangerous parts of the swamp, then watching them slowly drown. If he happens across a group of adventurers who are sleeping in the swamp, he will sneak up and attempt to drag them off to their demise, vanishing if the victim makes a fuss, and leading the rest to believe it was all a bad dream.

Bolotnitsa

Amidst the squalor of the swamp, this appears a veritable paradise - a meadow of green grass, covered

with flowers, scattered with chirping birds and small mammals. And in the midst of the meadow, a beau-



tiful young woman, apparently in quiet repose against a log. Looking up, she will wave for characters to approach - and if they do, they will discover that the "meadow" is actually an inch thick, covering an icy green lake beneath. It is then that the woman - a mermaid-like creature called a bolotnitsa - will attack (possibly with her sisters - 1d4 total), attempting to rend the character to pieces.

Marya Moreyna

Covered head to toe in black leather armor, and mounted on horseback, it is impossible to ascer-

tain immediately if this figure is male or female, or what good or evil it might foretell. Luckily for the PCs, it is the heroine Marya Moreyna, and her only intentions are to assist those in need - provided they are of good intent. Anyone who appears lost or in need of help will be escorted by Marya to her "zemyanka", an underground dugout in what is apparently the driest land in the entire swamp. Here, hidden beneath a roof of moss, she has several cots, a whetstone, food and water, and a small stove to provide heat and comfort. She may also be encouraged to accompany the characters on their adventures, although she is not keen to visit Baba Yaga, since the horse she currently rides is stolen from the old witch.



Rusalka, Drowning

As described earlier, Rusalka are the tormented spirits of those who have died horrible deaths. This one



is the spirit of a woman who was drowned in the swamp by her husband after he accused her of an affair (she was innocent). Held underwater for long minutes, she finally died, but her spirit remains, dragging others under the surface of the swamp to share in her last moments of agony.

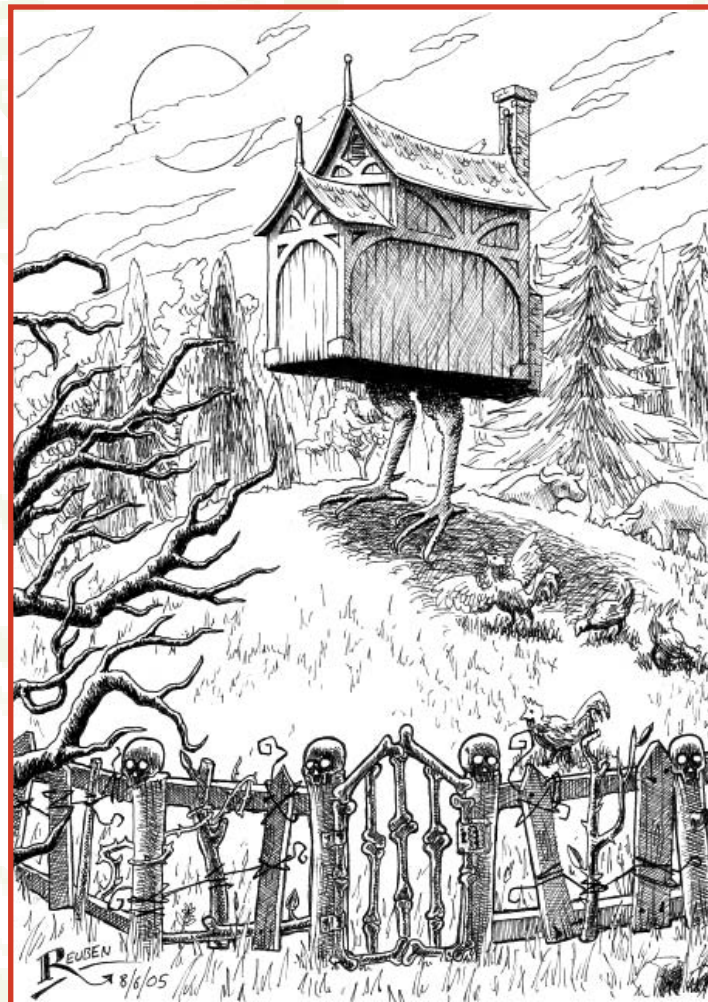
Sinkhole

As described earlier, much of the swamp is actually little more than a thick blanket of moss and dirt, floating atop a hidden sea beneath it. In many areas, the turf is several yards thick - enough to support small shrubs and fallen trees - and, although spongy, safe to walk across. However, in places the mud and moss is much thinner, and these thin spots are almost imperceptible (DC 25 Spot check). If a character fails to spot one of these areas, the moss suddenly caves in, and plunging them into a seemingly bottomless pit of icy-cold water. Though there are no creatures beneath, anyone wearing heavy armor or unable to swim will be in serious trouble unless they can be pulled out.

Baba Yaga's Yard

Almost magically, the trees and grass around you fall away into a circular

clearing of barren earth several hundred yards across. Surrounding the clearing is a high fence, constructed nest-like - woven together from bits of sticks and stones, straw and bones. There are hundreds, perhaps even thousands of bones, a dozen of them topped with human skulls that glow with an inner light. The two largest of these are set on either side of a small gate, which lies directly before you beside a single, blackened birch tree. Off to one side, a dozen or so withered oxen pick at the last remnants of grass, several chickens scurrying about underfoot. But the yard's most obvious feature is the little hut in the center, standing on two scrawny chicken legs. You get the distinct impression that it is watching you.



clearing of barren earth several hundred yards across. Surrounding the clearing is a high fence, constructed nest-like - woven together from bits of sticks and stones, straw and bones. There are hundreds, perhaps even thousands of bones, a dozen of them

if it's always been right where it is, with the yard around it worn down by years of abuse.

Within the yard are several obstacles which characters will have to overcome, unless for some reason



they are accompanied by Baba Yaga (in which case the obstacles will face them on the way out!). If for some reason the PCs opt to enter in traditional "hack and slash" form, note that everything within Baba Yaga's yard and hut resets itself when the hut undertakes its daily move. This includes all of Baba Yaga's pets, so even if the players chop down the tree, smash the fence and kill the dogs, they will all be back the next day - and they will remember what was done to them! For this reason, the more diplomatic methods described below are much more advisable.

The Fence of Bones

The high fence around Baba Yaga's hut consists of wood, bones, wire, and thorns stretched around a frame of twelve posts, at least ten of them topped with skulls in various stages of decay. Each of the skulls glows with an inner fire and seems to look back at you as you stare at it. On one side of the fence, just beside the large, black birch tree you spotted, is a gate apparently constructed of human leg bones. The gate's lock, made of human teeth, seems to smile at you.

If the characters attempt to enter the gate without oiling it (whether physically, with oil, or metaphorically, with words), the gate will emit an unholy screech as it is opened drawing the attention of every creature in the yard, including Baba

Yaga herself. However, if the gate is well oiled first, it will open without a sound. It's also quite friendly to those who treat it nicely, and can share information about anyone who has ever passed through before. Should the PCs attempt to hop the fence, the thorns and wire will snag them every time, making it impossible to climb over.

One or more of the skulls (10% chance, or GM discretion) might very well have something to say if characters are inclined to speak with the dead. One of these skulls in particular, which calls itself Mortis, will whisper "Hey Chief" and will try to con the adventurers into taking it with them, convincing them that it can give them advice on all sorts of things. In truth, it knows little, and is not to be trusted, even though it seems quite sincere while it's helplessly stuck on a post. Removing any of the skulls from the post will set off the gate's screeching alarm, although merely talking to the skulls will not.

The Ugly Birch Tree

This is by far the ugliest tree you've ever seen. It seems as if it must have once died, been burned to ashes, then somehow reconstituted and glued back together at random. It's that ugly. All of the leaves are gone, and the bark - once a bright white, almost silver - has faded to dull black. The few branches that remain hang limply, swaying slightly in the breeze. The

entire tree seems to groan under the weight of time.

Anyone touching the tree (100% chance) or passing near or through the gate (50% chance) can attract the attention of the ugly birch tree beside the gate, which will begin to attack whoever touched the fence (Atk +15 melee (branch, 1d20+10 damage)). Apparently having survived every possible force - of nature and man - over the years, it is incredibly tough and is thus impervious to all weapons and spells. However, as it is rooted in place it is easy enough to escape its wrath, and it will cease its attacks immediately if the PCs move away, or if one of them praises the ugly tree for its "beauty" or otherwise beautifies it (such as by tying a pretty bow around its trunk). One popular bit of folklore in the village is that the tree is also capable of speech, though it will only speak to "innocent females," a term left undefined. Whether or not this is true is up to the GM.

Rip and Torn

As you begin to pass through the gate, two massive dogs suddenly lunge up out of the shadows, where they were lying in small depressions in the earth, escaping the weather. Each one looks like something from out of a nightmare, fangs dripping with saliva as they snap and snarl, straining at the thick, heavy chains that tie them down. You're safe outside the fence, but



there's no way to get inside the yard without dealing with these two monsters.

These are Baba Yaga's guard dogs, huge mutts that, despite their apparent ferocity, are actually quite docile - their bark is far worse than their bite. They look like something out of the pits of hell only because they are filthy, unwashed and underfed. Being gaunt and malnourished, they will let anyone pass if they are simply fed a snack of some sort. They prefer bread, surprisingly. Otherwise, they will growl loudly, eventually attracting the attention of Baba Yaga (if she's home), and will bite at anyone who tries to enter.

Assuming they get past the gate, the birch, and the dogs, the characters will have to deal with the hut itself.

Baba Yaga's Hut

Standing as tall as three men, this little hut watches as you approach. It's impossible to tell if anyone is home at all, since there are no doors or windows visible. As you get closer to the strange building, it suddenly scurries back on its two chicken legs, keeping its distance, and begins to spin around, emitting a screech that makes your skin crawl.

The hut will continue to spin and move about until a character speaks the magic words: "Little hut, little hut, turn your back to the for-

est, your front to me." A bard has a chance of knowing the words on a successful DC 25 Bardic Knowledge check. Any of the three maids from town will also know the words, as does Marya Moreyna and Kookla the doll. Kookla is more apt to play games with the characters, however, attempting to get them to say silly things before ultimately giving them the real answer. When the words are spoken...

The tiny hut cocks its "head," as if listening, and suddenly comes to a halt. It spins a final time and crouches down slightly, as if laying an egg. From the bottom of the hut, a small trap door flops open, and a long wooden ladder descends to the earth.

There is a 50% chance that Baba Yaga is home, in which case she will come out to greet the characters and question them thoroughly. If she is attacked, she will simply flee inside her hut, within which she is essentially invulnerable. Not only does the inside of the hut occupy much more space than is actually physically possible, but the rooms themselves have a tendency to shift. Each room connects to two other rooms, at random, and when characters pass through a doorway the rooms all move around in relation to one another (so that the door you just came through might not go back where you were). In addition, the four rooms themselves shift on a constant basis,

items moving of their own accord, furniture disappearing, etc. The hut exists on several planes of existence at the same time.

When the characters enter, roll 1d4 and consult the map on p. 16 to see which room the characters find themselves in. Then roll 1d6 and consult the possible layouts for Baba Yaga's hut, shown earlier. Each day, the alignment of the rooms with one another will change, but the trap door will always be in the room it was when the PCs entered. There are no windows, so it's impossible for anyone inside to orient themselves.

Baba Yaga's Kitchen

Though the room is windowless, several lanterns hanging from the rafters give off enough light to see by, filtering down through the haze in the air. Every wall of this small room is filled with cabinets and counters; from the myriad smells in the air, it seems this must be a kitchen, or at least what passes for one in this hut. In one corner a pot of stew bubbles noisily over a small smokeless fire, venting off into some unknown corner of the room. A small larder off to one side contains baskets of bread, jars of pickled eggs, and bottles of honey and mead, while several hunks of meat sit on the counter, some in the process of being salted, some in the process of going moldy. Beside them sit baskets of mushrooms and berries, though it's impossible to tell if they're of the edi-



ble or the poisonous kind. Strangely enough, it appears as though there's a small root cellar beneath one of the counters, though how a hut on stilts could have a cellar is unimaginable.

If Baba Yaga cooks, all of the food will be tasty and nourishing, if mundane. If the PCs sample ingredients themselves, however, there's a 10% chance that it will have a strange effect - if so, roll on the Traps table below, ignoring the "Type" column. Note that items of a particular sort have different effects on everyone, roll for each character tasting, not each item - just because one person eats the mushrooms in wine sauce and survives doesn't mean everyone else will too.

Although they might appear anywhere in the hut, this room is the most likely location that Baba Yaga's strange disembodied hands will be found, mixing the stew, chopping vegetables, and otherwise keeping busy.

Baba Yaga's Bedchamber

A strange, directionless light fills the room, perhaps filtering through the thatch roof from outside, or perhaps coming from a hidden lantern somewhere. Indeed, there are plenty of places to hide lanterns in this room, since every wall is covered in cabinets and containers, half containing clothing of various sorts, the rest filled with

boxes and jars. Three items stand out amidst the clutter. One is a tall, wide bed - large enough, easily, for four grown men - covered in feather pillows and topped with a goose down comforter. The second is an old wooden tub, half-filled with cold, brackish water. The last is an old mirror on one wall, swirling with a dark mist.

The mirror is the *Mirror of Reality*, and it is fixed to the wall and impossible to steal. Not that anyone would want to try. Anyone looking into the mirror for a few moments will notice that it casts no reflection, though out of the corner of their eye they will see strange shapes. If they somehow manage to focus on these images without looking directly into the mirror (DC 20 Wisdom check), the character will glimpse a random event from their near future, twisted to show the worst possible outcome (usually their own death, or that of a cherished friend or loved one). This future is not fixed, but it will no doubt give them the willies when the event it predicts appears to come true. The mirror may also have other effects, depending on when and how it is viewed; these are left up to the GM.

If Baba Yaga is aiding the characters and they are wounded or otherwise require rest, she will place

them together in this giant bed. While unseemly (and a bit smelly), the bed is comfortable, and wounds heal twice as fast while they remain in the bed, under the covers.

Baba Yaga's Laboratory

Strange, twisted things peer down upon you from the high shelves upon every wall of this room - jars stuffed



with eyeballs and squirming insects, bottles filled with strange potions, dried herbs bundled and stuffed into every corner, and all of it covered with spider-webs, thick and heavy with dust. Faces seem to watch from every corner and shadow, some of them



tricks of the strange, flickering candle-light, others very real, belonging to creatures trapped within glass, some obviously dead, others seemingly alive.

It is from this room that characters might be most tempted to take things that do not belong to them, but doing so will be quite difficult. Removing items from a shelf without being seen by any of the "watchers" in the room will require a DC 25 Sleight of Hand check, and a second DC 25 Sleight of Hand check will be required to take the item without disrupting any of the cobwebs around the room.

One pair of eyes will always see them, and those belong to Catkin the cat. He doesn't particularly love Baba Yaga, but he will rat out the characters if they don't bribe him with some sort of food. He will also readily help them with advice if they keep feeding him, following them all over the hut for the duration of their visit (though he will not tag along if they leave the hut).

Baba Yaga's Sitting Room

A large, roaring fireplace dominates one wall of this room, giving off light enough to see by and just enough heat to keep everyone comfortable. Indeed, everything here seems to be geared towards the comfort of those within, particularly the large stuffed arm-

chairs facing the fireplace with large carved bear paws as arms. The corners of the room seem to be made from tree trunks, swooping upward overhead to form a canopy of sorts, within which several songbirds and more than a few bats roost above you. Scattered about the "roots" of these trunks, mingled with years-worth of



swept up dust and detritus, are an assortment of colorful stones and more than a few skittering bugs.

Though everything is comfortable (the chairs will conform to the body of whoever sits in them), the room seems to constantly be striving to retain a previous state.

Anyone who moves anything - a chair, a stone from the floor, etc. - will find that it has moved back the moment they take their eyes off of it. This is most noticeably true with the pieces of amber on the floor, many of which contain bugs preserved within; anyone moving these (or pocketing one) will be horrified to see the amber scuttle back to where it was, as if the bug within were still alive.

In reality, these things are being moved back into place by three pairs of permanent mage hands, which Baba Yaga summoned into existence long ago. They have since made themselves permanent residents, and she now relies on them to move things about for her, including items made of iron, which she cannot herself abide. The hands will flicker in and out of view as they work. They cannot be destroyed or dispelled, and only Baba Yaga can command them to do her bidding. They may occasionally be found in other rooms of the Hut and in the yard, but they cannot travel further than that.

Another notable feature of the room is that although everything strives to organize itself, it is not likewise focused on cleanliness. The roaring fireplace has burned non-stop for somewhere between several years and an eternity, and in that time it has coated everything



with a layer of soot. Anyone spending any time in the room, or sitting in one of the chairs, will eventually be coated with grime along with everything else.

Traps

The inside of Baba Yaga's hut contains no end of dangerous items, many of which are trapped. All of these are treated as mechanical in nature. Baba Yaga is not the sort to cast magical traps in her own home. Instead, the items there have taken on a personality of their own, and have evolved natural defenses. All of these are strangely random in function and form, which will allow endless hours of fun as characters turn themselves purple or have their gender reversed while trying to open or disarm things.

To determine if a particular item is trapped roll 1d10 - on a result of 1, 2 or 3, the item is trapped. If this is the case, roll 10d10 and, taking each

die in a row, interpret the results on the chart accordingly. Obviously, this can take some time, so the GM may wish to generate a handful (or two) of traps ahead of time.

Type - The physical manifestation of the trap itself.

Effect/Affects - What the trap does, and what it does it to. While the effect on vision or hearing is largely up to the GM to interpret, ability score effects should be determined based on the information below:

Reverses: The ability modifier of the affected ability score reverses - a +2 ability modifier becomes -2, a -1 becomes +1.

Confuses: Replace the affected ability score with the result of a single d20 roll. This effect typically is accompanied by more traditional damage in the amount determined

under the damage column.

Removes: The affected ability score becomes a one. This effect is treated as a curse and can be reversed before the end of the rolled duration by the application of a Remove Curse spell.

Alters: Roll the damage dice... if the result is an odd number, subtract it from the ability score as ability damage. If the result is even, add it to the ability score for the duration indicated. Ability score increases never last for more than one week, even if the duration rolled exceeds this length. Ability score damage from this effect cannot take the victim below an ability score of 1.

Curses: Roll the damage dice. Subtract the resulting amount from the ability score as ability drain which may be converted to ability damage by the successful use of a Remove Curse spell. The curse will automatically expire on its own at

Table 6 - Traps (10d10)

<u>1d10</u>	<u>CR</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Effect</u>	<u>Affects</u>	<u>Duration</u>	<u>Color</u>	<u>Search</u>	<u>Disable</u>	<u>Save</u>	<u>Damage</u>
1	3	Needle	Reverses	Strength	Instantly	Red	DC 16	DC 16	FOR DC 16	CRd8
2	2	Gas	Confuses	Dexterity	1 round	Orange	DC 18	DC 18	REF DC 16	CRd6
3	2	Blade	Removes	Constitution	1 minute	Yellow	DC 20	DC 20	WIL DC 16	CRd4
4	1	Dart	Alters	Intelligence	1 hour	Green	DC 22	DC 22	FOR DC 20	CRd3
5	1	Noose	Curses	Wisdom	1 day	Blue	DC 24	DC 24	REF DC 20	CRd2
6	1	Liquid	Reverses	Vision	1 week	Violet	DC 16	DC 16	WIL DC 20	CRd2
7	1	Noise	Confuses	Hearing	1 year	Brown	DC 18	DC 18	FOR DC 24	CRd3
8	2	Insect	Removes	Memory	Permanent	Black	DC 20	DC 20	REF DC 24	CRd4
9	2	Adhesive	Alters	Color	1 season	White	DC 22	DC 22	WIL DC 24	CRd6
10	3	Explosive	Curses	Gender	Delayed	Gray	DC 24	DC 24	None	CRd8



the end of the duration indicated.
Duration - How long the effect lasts.

Color - This is wide open to interpretation, and can be used to determine the color of the effect, the color of the trap, or the color the character turns when the trap affects them.

Search/Disable - The DC checks to Spot and Disable the trap. Search or Disable checks of DC 24 will add +1 to the CR of the trap.

Save - The Save Type and DC; a successful save results in no effect. A Save DC of 24 will add +1 to the CR of the trap. Add +2 to the CR of any trap with a saving throw of "none."

Damage - The amount of "damage" applied (if appropriate) or any other needed variable, with the number of dice being equal to the

CR of the trap (e.g., CRd4, CR:2 is 2d4 - use the CR as determined by the die roll, ignore other modifiers such as those of a high Save DC).

Note that the following are not dealt with:

Trigger - All traps in Baba Yaga's hut are triggered when they are touched or opened.

Reset - All traps in Baba Yaga's hut reset automatically if the item is replaced.

Bypass - No traps in Baba Yaga's hut have a bypass; however, none affect Baba Yaga.

Market Price - None of the traps may be recovered and/or sold for profit; they are all considered to be integral parts of the item in question.

Example 1.

"2,2,6,8,10,2,4,8,6,4" = CR 2, Gas, Reverses, Memory, Delayed, Orange, Search DC 22, Disable DC 20, Save Will DC 13, 2d6.

When the trap goes off, the character is sprayed with an orange mist. No immediate effect will be apparent, but 2d6 days later they will suddenly have 2d6 memories reversed if they fail a Will Save at DC 13. If this is a spellcaster, 2d6 spells will fire off with reverse effects. If a non-caster, memories of recent events will have changed for that character (e.g., someone who was nice will be remembered as being foul-tempered and evil).

Example 2.

"7,9,5,1,3,3,7,9,1,5" = CR 1, Adhesive, Curses, Strength, 1 Minute, Yellow, Search DC 18, Disable DC 22, Save Fort DC 16, 1d8. This trap exudes a thick yellow adhesive which sticks to the character's flesh. If not removed within 1 minute (with alcohol or fire), the victim must make a Fort save. If they fail, the adhesive seeps into their skin and curses them by removing 1d8 points of Strength. A Remove Curse spell will be required to restore the lost Strength.

Table 7 - Magical Items (6d10)

1d10	Material	Object	Effect	Affects	Duration	Die
1	Gold	Egg	Increases	Strength	1 round	1d2
2	Silver	Needle	Decreases	Dexterity	1 minute	1d3
3	Bronze	Axe	Reverses	Constitution	1 hour	1d4
4	Iron	Doll	Confuses	Intelligence	1 day	1d6
5	Stone	Broom	Heals/repairs	Wisdom	1 week	1d8
6	Clay	Mask	Damages	Charisma	1 year	1d10
7	Wood	Sword	Creates	Life/health	Once only	1d12
8	Straw	Basket	Alters	Speed	Permanently	2d6
9	Linen	Mirror	Blesses	Death/damage	When worn	3d6
10	Painted	Loom	Curses	Wealth	1 season	1d20



The chart can also be used to determine the effects of traps that might be laid elsewhere across the land, as with the pit traps found in the river valley. Such traps need not be magical, or even man-made:

Example 3.

"3,8,2,6,3,3,4,3,5,1" = CR 2, Insect, Confuses, Vision, 1 Minute, Yellow, Search DC 22, Disable DC 20, Save Ref DC 20, 2d4.

This trap is actually a hornet's nest, which will be dislodged from a low-hanging branch if a DC 22 Spot check is not made. A swarm of hornets will plague the character, disrupting his vision for 2d4 rounds as the stinging yellow insects defend their hive, inflicting 2d4 points of damage each round, unless a Reflex save is made. If the hive is spotted, it may be disabled on a DC 20 Disable Device check by plugging it with mud.

Magic Items

Baba Yaga's hut is stocked to the rafters with magical doo-dads. When a character grabs an item, roll 1d10 six times and interpret the results accordingly, using Table 7. All attempts to divine the nature of items are fruitless - imbued with Baba Yaga's magic, they radiate no alignment, no school, and no domain. Characters will have to discover their effects by trial and error. Note that whether positive

or negative, these effects are the purpose of the item and no save is allowed.

Effects/Affects:

Increases: Add the resultant value to the ability score. If life/health is indicated, this increase is treated as temporary hit points which may exceed the characters normal maximum hit points. If speed is indicated, multiply the resulting value by five, and add it to the character's speed. If death/damage is indicated,



using the item causes the character to suffer the amount of damage indicated. A wealth increase causes coins to magically appear in the character's possession, the type of coin should be determined by the GM based on the needs of his/her campaign.

Decreases: Subtract the resultant value from the ability score. If life/health is indicated, this decrease is treated as damage. If speed is indicated, multiply the resulting value by five, and subtract it from

the character's speed. If death/damage is indicated, using the item causes the character to heal the amount of damage indicated. A wealth decrease causes coins to magically disappear from the character's possession, the type of coin should be determined by the GM based on the needs of his/her campaign.

Reverses: This effect on ability scores should be treated per the description of the same effect in traps, above. The effect of reversing life/health depends on the character's status - if alive and healthy, the character dies; if alive and diseased, the character is cured as though a Cure Disease spell had been cast; if dead, the character is returned to life as though a Raise Dead spell had been cast. Reverse speed should have a game effect

of the GMs determination. One possibility is that the character is cursed to move at 1/2 movement except when walking backwards - be creative. Reverse death/damage has the effect of a Raise Dead or Heal spell, as appropriate. Reverse wealth will cause the character to suffer a dramatic gain (if poor) or loss (if wealthy) in their holdings - again the GM should be creative here, a wealthy character might suddenly discover that their castle had crumbled to dust overnight, while a poor one discovers that



their last copper is a rare coin and is offered a king's ransom for it.

Confuses: This effect on ability scores should be treated per the description of the same effect in traps, above. The effect of confusing life/health causes the character to take the die roll in damage. Confusing speed causes the character's base speed to become a swim or fly speed, their land movement is reduced to five feet as they can only crawl. Confusing death/damage results in the character healing the die roll in damage - note that a dead character will be affected as though a Raise Dead spell has been cast. Confusing wealth is done as follows: All the character's copper pieces become gold pieces, all silver pieces become platinum pieces, all gold pieces become silver pieces, all platinum pieces become copper pieces, all gemstones become worthless river stones, beautiful but worthless - note carefully the duration for this effect.

Heals/Repairs: Heals ability score damage if an ability score is affected, having no effect on a score that has not been damaged. This result has the effect of a Heal spell on life/health and Raise Dead on death/damage. This result has no effect on speed or wealth.

Damages: Causes ability damage to affected ability score. The affect on life/health is regular hit point dam-

age. Death/damage suffers no effect from this result, nor does speed. Wealth damages the characters wealth directly, damaging or destroying coins or gems in the amounts indicated (the GM determines which items, coins, or gems are affected).

Creates: This effect is left to the GM's creativity. See example 2, below, for a good indication of how to use this effect. GMs who feel a need for a documented and concrete game effect should use the text for 'Increases,' above.

Alters: This effect on ability scores should be treated per the description of the same effect in traps, above. Use the same mechanic for a gain (or loss) in hit points for life/health and death/damage. The affect of 'Alter' on speed or wealth is the same as for 'Confuses,' above.

Blesses: This effect provides a morale bonus to the affected ability score. When affecting life/health, it provides temporary hit points similar to the effect of an Aid spell. Its effect on death/damage is that of a morale bonus to attack and damage rolls. A blessing of speed will allow the character to move at twice their usual movement rate. The blessing of wealth subtly increases a character's negotiation and bartering skills, allowing them to reduce the price of an item by as

much as half with a successful Diplomacy check - the affected character receives a circumstance bonus equal to the die roll on Diplomacy checks made for this purpose.

Curses: This effect on ability should be treated per the description of the same effect in traps, above. A curse affects life/health by causing damage or disease (GM's option). A character whose speed is cursed by this effect becomes incapable of normal movement and in combat requires a standard action to move 5 feet and loses the ability to take a five foot step. A death/damage curse will kill the victim and must be removed before the character is raised lest the still present curse strike them immediately dead (again). A character suffering from a curse on their wealth cannot retain coins, gemstones, or other material wealth, for the duration of the curse their touch will actually dissolve any coins or gemstones it touches - jewelry also suffers these effects, though magical items do not. All of these effects are subject to removal before the end of their duration by a Remove Curse spell.

Example 1.

"10,4,2,6,8,2" = Painted, Doll, Decreases, Charisma, Permanent, 1d3.

This porcelain doll begs to be picked up. The desire is so over-



whelming that anyone picking it up can't help hugging it close. But the doll is quite fragile, and it shatters in their grasp. A small gasp of air escapes its lips, and the character feels tainted, losing 1d3 Charisma.

Example 2.

"3,1,7,9,7,5" = Bronze, Egg, Creates, Death, Once, 1d8.

This exquisite bronze egg appears to be worth a veritable fortune, and is easy to pocket. However, if concealed in a warm place it shatters open, hatching into 1d8 small basilisks. These treat the character as their mother, and everyone else as dinner.

In addition to the many random items that might turn up, Baba Yaga has many magical items in circulation outside her hut (some purposefully, and some released inadvertently, through theft or trickery). These are all unique items, not subject to normal item creation rules and include the following:

Baba Yaga's Mortar and Pestle

Instead of flying on a broom like a "normal" witch, this strange device is how Baba Yaga gets around over long distances. Anyone standing inside the tall, narrow mortar can push themselves along at a speed of up to 240 feet, traveling over any solid surface. However, the mortar is stopped by swiftly flowing water

or tall obstacles such as trees and walls. Not just anyone can use the item, of course; it requires a Wisdom score of 19 for anyone but Baba Yaga to use. Asked how it works, Baba Yaga describes it thusly: "The mortar doesn't move anywhere. It stays in one place while the pestle pushes the world along."

Baba Yaga's Broom

Rather than being used for flying, this silver birch broom has a more mundane (but still magical) purpose. Dragged behind any individual, it erases all their tracks so completely that they cannot be tracked by any non-magical means. While in use the broom seems to swirl with a strange wind; Baba Yaga insists that these are spirits caught up in her wake who confuse the trail behind her.

Eggs of the Elements

These four magical eggs represent light, wind, water and soil, and are painted accordingly; anyone holding one will be able to tell innately what the egg is all about. These powerful artifacts are quite good at masking their true purpose, and they will be useless until they are completely surrounded by their element on all sides (i.e., the egg of light must be bathed in light or fire on all sides; the egg of wind must be tossed into the air; the egg of water must be submerged in water; and the egg of soil must be buried in the earth). When placed in the

appropriate element, the eggs accelerate natural processes around them: the egg of soil will cause crops to grow faster; the egg of light would cause a volcano to erupt if it were thrown inside; the egg of water might cause a river to flood; and the egg of wind might create a tornado. Legend says that the person who gathers all four eggs will become a god of sorts, but thus far no one has managed to pull off that feat. Baba Yaga, Koschei the Deathless, and just about everyone else is looking for them, but only Masha knows where they are and she's not talking. In fact, only the egg of soil is right where Masha last put it (underneath her crops) - the other eggs should be scattered about by the GM as needed to serve the plot. None should be easy to find, and none (save the egg of soil) is currently surrounded by its element.

Flaming Skulls

The fiery skulls on Baba Yaga's fence - all that remains of thieves that tried to steal from her in the past - burn with a neverending (but heatless) flame. If one is taken from its post and carried about it will continue to glow for 1d10 days, providing light equal to a lantern, before the light suddenly fades and dies, releasing the spirit trapped inside. Most of these spirits are silent, but, as described earlier, one of the skulls - named Mortis - is eager to move on to the next life,



and will say or do whatever it takes to be removed. Baba Yaga might lend one of these skulls to the characters, or anyone else for that matter, if asked nicely. There are always new skulls waiting to take their place.

Finist's Bright Feather

This rainbow-tinted feather, currently possessed by Melinika, is all that remains of the once proud prince, Finist the Bright Falcon. It still maintains its enchantment, and when waved to the right great riches appear. These can only be touched by the wielder of the feather, and any attempt to sell or trade them makes them vanish. When the feather is waved to the left, the riches vanish. Melinika will part with the feather only if convinced that it will be used for some greater good, and even then she will demand it be returned as soon as possible.

Kookla the Doll

Vasilisa talks to this doll as if it were alive, although for her it no longer seems to respond - only she can "hear" its replies. Although it appears to be little more than a ratty, moth-eaten doll with messy hair, the doll is actually magical. If the characters can convince Vasilisa to part with it, and it is "fed" with bread or crackers, it will come to life for up to 8 hours in any given day. When conscious, the doll can offer all sorts of advice on matters

throughout the land, including Baba Yaga, the three maids, and the like, all delivered in a singsong voice, often in rhymed verse. The doll has a personality of its own, and it is quite chaotically inclined - fond of joking and misdirecting to see what amusing events unfold as a result. In the end it will always have the right answers (assuming it has any at all to offer), and it will never intentionally bring its present "owner" to harm. While unconscious the doll is unaware of its surroundings, but it does retain memory of past events.

Melinika's Golden Egg and Silver Dish

Separated from one another these two items are valuable, but otherwise useless. However, if the egg is tapped three times on the plate by a hungry person, the plate will be filled with a nutritious meal for one. This food may be shared, but the plate can only be used for this purpose twice per day, and is intended for a last resort when traveling into barren lands where food is scarce.

Melinika's Golden Embroidery Frame and Silver Needle

Separated these items are useless, although they appear beautiful and valuable. However, if the needle is stuck into the frame, it will magically embroider all by itself, creating whatever image the wielder had in their mind at the time. This can be

used to embroider images that the user cannot actually see; for example, a thought of Baba Yaga's hut might embroider a picture of the hut amongst birch trees, revealing its present location. This power can be used only once per day.

Melinika's Golden Spinning Wheel and Silver Spindle

Without one another the wheel and spindle are mundane items, but if the spindle is used with the spinning wheel, then the entire lot can literally spin gold thread out of straw, linen, or any other material that can be fed into the wheel. Up to 1d10 x 100 gold pieces worth of thread can be spun at one sitting, after which time the wheel must be rested for 8 hours. Used in this way the wheel can perform three times per day; if it is used too much, however, it will "burn out" and be unusable for 1d10 days while it recharges.

Natalya's Loom

Natalya possesses a loom (a gift from Baba Yaga) that creates high quality magical linen, so fine that it cannot be pierced by needles, arrows or other piercing weapons (the equivalent of plate mail armor, though with negligible weight). The catch is that only thread from the same loom can be used to sew it together, and it takes a magical needle (Melinika has one that works) and magical scissors (from Vasilisa) to create a useful garment. Alone,



the loom can be used to produce enough linen to clothe a single man in one day; with the other pieces, said linen can be made into wearable clothing in 1d4 weeks. Getting the three maids to cooperate will not be easy.

Natalya's Magic Comb

Given to her by Baba Yaga's cat to aid in her escape long ago, this magical comb will spring up into a dense wall of tangled trees a mile long when it is thrown to the ground, preventing any creature from passing through, over, or under it. The wall of trees lasts for 1d6 hours, after which time it shrinks back down into a comb again. The magic of the comb creates real trees, and anything caught in the crossfire when the trees suddenly spring into being will be tossed in the air and possibly destroyed.

Natalya's Magic Towel

Also stolen from Baba Yaga by her cat, this magical towel turns into a swiftly flowing river when thrown on the ground. The river magically begins a mile upstream from the character (in a random direction) and churns downstream continuously while the river is flowing (1d4 hours). Though the effect is magical the water is quite real, and anything suddenly trapped in the deluge will be affected as one might expect. The river is ten feet deep

and impossible to cross by any means other than flying. However, Baba Yaga's oxen have drunk this river dry once already, so there are magical ways to get around this obstacle if one is clever and resourceful.

Vasilisa's Scissors

This magical set of shears appears ordinary, but their magical power becomes clear when they are applied to a material not normally suited for cutting by scissors. Metal, stone, wood, flesh... the scissors cut through any material as if it were fine paper. As a weapon they ignore all armor and do 1d6 points of damage to their target. As a tool their utility is quite endless.

Vasilisa's Spool of Thread

This magical spool, when placed on the ground, will reel out a long thread that leads the wielder to any desired destination. Generally the thread can be used to lead one to Baba Yaga's Hut, and if used in this

way the thread will "lock down" the Hut in a single location provided that the person using it travels continuously. If the user sleeps for the night, then Baba Yaga's Hut may "reset" and pop up elsewhere, meaning that the thread will have to be unraveled again, possibly in the opposite direction from the day before. This thread is impervious to all weapons and elements - save, perhaps, for Vasilisa's Scissors.

Treasure

As with other items, Baba Yaga's hut is filled with endless types of treasure, some valuable, some quite worthless except as conversation pieces. As always, the GM should try to balance the amount of treasure the characters obtain with their level. Note that stealing priceless items from Baba Yaga tends to earn the perpetrator her enmity. To determine what characters might get their paws on, roll 1d10 five times [consulting Table 8] and interpret results accordingly.

Table 8 - Mundane Items (5d10)

1d10	Material	Object	Quality	Value	Purpose/Symbol
1	Glass	Box	Broken	Worthless	Commerce
2	Silver	Toy	Poor	1d4 copper	Religion
3	Leather	Jar	Poor	1d10 copper	Scientific
4	Copper	Book	Average	1d10 silver	Magic
5	Brass	Tool	Average	1d10 gold	Romance
6	Platinum	Bottle	Good	2d10 gold	Knowledge
7	Wood	Statue	Good	5d10 gold	Entertainment
8	Gold	Jewelry	Very Good	1d100 gold	Decoration
9	Linen	Trinket	Excellent	10d100 gold	Healing
10	Bronze	Gadget	One-of-a-kind	Priceless	Travel



Example 1.

"2,4,6,8,10" = Silver, Book, Good, 1d100 gold, Travel.

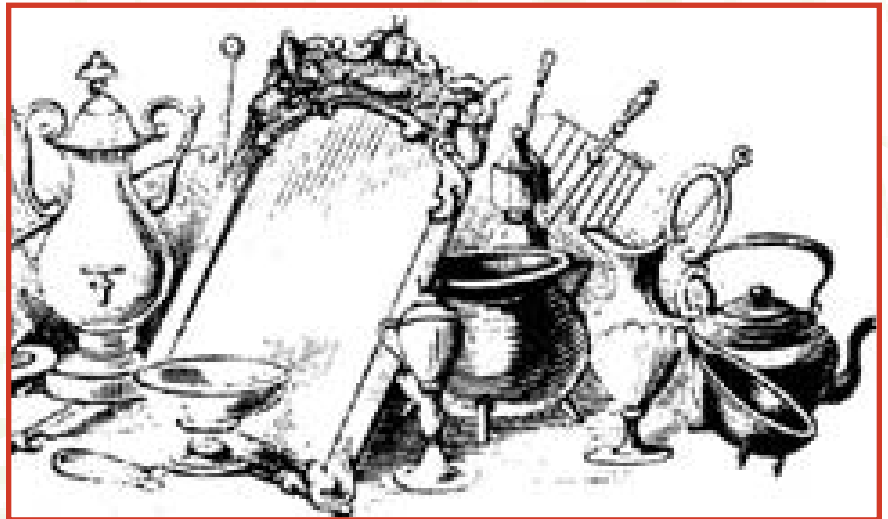
This small silver-bound book discusses the various roads and river routes of some foreign country. It's in good condition and will fetch 1d100 gold from an interested buyer who can decipher the language it's written in.

Example 2.

"1,3,5,7,9" = Glass, Jar, Average, 5d10 gold, Healing.

This glass jar contains thousands of wriggling maggots, busily feasting on a piece of rotting meat. Although foul to look at and smell, it might be sold to a healer for 5d10 gold, as it has some application in the mundane healing arts.

Obviously, the same chart can be used to generate random items found elsewhere across the land, many of which no doubt belonged to Baba Yaga anyway at one point or another.



major npcs



Baba Yaga: female expert 20; CR 20; Medium fey; HD 20d6, hp 81; Init +6; Spd 30 ft; AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +15; Grp +16; Atk +16 melee (1d4+1, claw); Full Atk +16/+11/+6 melee (1d4+1, claws); SA craft ritual, devour; SQ damage reduction 15/cold iron, limited immortality, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +12, Will +16; Str 12, Dex 22, Con 11, Int 19, Wis 19, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +20, Climb +20, Craft (alchemy) +8, Craft (blacksmithing) +11, Escape Artist +11, Forgery +8, Handle Animal +20, Hide +6, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (arcana) +24, Knowledge (nature) +10, Listen +8, Move Silently +6, Profession (hunter) +20, Search +6, Sense Motive +24, Sleight of Hand +11, Spellcraft +16, Spot +29; Alertness, Craft Wondrous Item, Skill Focus (Knowledge [nature]), Skill Focus (Profession [hunter]), Skill Focus (Spot), Skill Focus (Craft [alchemy]), Skill Focus (Spellcraft).

Limited Immortality(Ex): Baba Yaga has faerie blood in her and one of the benefits is that she is effectively immortal as long as she is not killed outside of the boundaries of her hut or yard. This property extends to any living thing that is killed while inside the property lines, save for things Baba Yaga kills herself. If so killed, Baba Yaga (or whoever the victim is) wakes up at midnight the next day, alive and at full hit points.

Devour(Ex): Baba Yaga has a reputation for eating other beings if they cross her, and it is well deserved. Given cause, she will kill and eat anyone, without compunction. The devoured creature's maximum hit points are added to Baba Yaga's own (in effect healing her) for a duration of one week. This total may exceed Baba Yaga's normal maximum hit points. The creature's soul is free to pass on to whatever realm it was destined for regardless of any curse, geas, or other enchantment that may have been involved.

Craft Ritual(Su): Baba Yaga is reputed to be a demon, a sorceress, a witch, a demigod, or possibly all four. In

actual point of fact she is really just a powerful hag who has faerie blood. However, her vast stores of knowledge allow her to bend the rules a bit. Not only can she craft magical items, but she can also craft rituals that can replicate the effects of any spell of any level. Such rituals may be performed by her, but are generally given to others who come to her for help. They are always complicated, and involve long journeys, difficult-to-find ingredients and vague directions. If they are not followed to the letter, they will fail. The GM is invited to think up rituals that will challenge, bewilder, perplex, amuse, and frustrate the PCs. In all cases, they should involve an appropriate amount of effort and at least one day, one ingredient, or one specific direction per level of the spell. Where appropriate the spell level of the resulting effect is equal to Baba Yaga's level. Some sample rituals follow:

Ritual of Cleansing (Replicates Remove Curse, Cleric 3)

"The accursed one shall leave henceforth and travel three days east, without pause. When the moon is at its height each night he shall bathe in the nearest water for three hours, and on the third night must sacrifice that which he holds most dear to the water. Then shall his curse be lifted."

Ritual of the Arachnid (Replicates Spider Climb, Druid 2)

"Two days south of here shalt thou find a cave. When the night is blackest, enter it forthwith, but take no light with thee. In the darkest corner of the cave shall be a web, and in that web two egg sacs. Shed two tears for each sac and remove them. Within two days, use the egg sacs by squeezing each one, and you will gain the power of the spider to clamber where thou wilt."

Ritual of Finding (Replicates Discern Location, Wizard 8)

"Ah, so you would find Prince Ivan himself? Here is the way: Take seven companions, no more, no fewer, and travel eight



days journey to the south, o'er land and sea. There shall ye find an island, upon which are eight stones. Ask each stone its name, and when you have them all, give all to each, and the last will grant you a question. Ask where Ivan is, and it will show you."

Ritual of the Steed (Replicates Phantom Steed, Bard 3)

"Three hours hence, there shalt descend a thick fog on the valley floor. Hurry there, for where the fog is thickest ye will find thrice nine horse, all of mist. Feed to them secrets, one each, and then grab one by its mane and ride. Twenty hours shall it transport you, and then begone."

Vasilisa, female human expert 2: CR 1; Medium humanoid (human); HD 2d6-2, hp 10; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp -1; Atk or Full Atk -1 melee (1d3-2, fist); AL N; SV Fort -1, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 6, Dex 15, Con 8, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 6.

Skills and feats: Balance +7, Craft (weaving) +10, Hide +2, Knowledge (local) +7, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +7, Listen +1, Move Silently +2, Open Lock +6, Perform (dance) +3, Perform (wind instruments) +2, Ride +4, Sense Motive +4, Spot +1, Survival +4; Alertness^B, Skill Focus (Craft [weaving]).

Natalya, female human commoner 3/aristocrat 1: CR 3; Medium humanoid (human); HD 3d4-3 plus 1d8-1, hp 6; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk or Full Atk +3 melee (1d3+2, fist); AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 9, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 11.

Skills and feats: Bluff +2, Craft (weaving) +5, Hide +1, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +3, Listen +4, Move Silently +1, Ride +3, Spot +9, Swim +8; Alertness^B, Dodge, Skill Focus (Craft [weaving]).

Melinika, female human expert 5: CR 4; Medium humanoid (human); HD 5d6+10, hp 29; Init +3; Spd 30 ft; AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk or Full Atk +5 melee (1d4+2/19-20, dagger); AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Skills and feats: Craft (sculpting) +6, Craft (weaving) +7, Craft (painting) +10, Craft (stonemasonry) +8, Craft (trapmaking) +8, Handle Animal +10, Hide +3, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +12, Listen +2, Move Silently +3, Open Lock +11, Perform (act) +10, Perform (string instruments) +7, Profession (hunter) +7, Spellcraft +8, Spot +9; Combat Expertise, Point Blank Shot, Skill Focus^B (Knowledge [nobility and royalty]).

Possessions: Dagger

Minor Npc's

Afanasi the Beggar, male human rogue 2: CR 2; Medium humanoid (human); HD 2d6+2, hp 10; Init +4; Spd 30 ft; AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk or Full Atk +2 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ chained, evasion, trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +7, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 15.

Skills and feats: Bluff +7, Climb +5, Hide +9, Intimidate +9, Listen +1, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +9, Sense Motive +2, Sleight of Hand +11, Spot +1, Swim +6, Use Magic Device +7, Use Rope +9; Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge.

Chained(Su): Afanasi is actually an incarnation of Koschei the Deathless. At present his powers are severely restricted because he wears an iron manacle on his left wrist, the last link of a set of magical chains



that can destroy him forever. If the last link is removed (GM discretion as to how this is to be done), Afanasi the Beggar will become "Koschei the Deathless" (see below).

Possessions: Dagger

"Koschei the Deathless", male human rogue 2/necromancer 14: CR 16; Medium humanoid (human); HD 2d6+2 plus 1d4+14; hp 53; Init +4; Spd 30 ft; AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 10; Atk +9/+4 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); SA sneak attack +1d6, spells; SQ chainable, incarnation of Koschei; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +11, Will +10; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 22, Wis 13, Cha 15.

Skills and feats: Appraise +11, Bluff +7, Climb +5, Concentration +10, Hide +9, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (geography) +20, Knowledge (history) +21, Knowledge (local) +17, Knowledge (the planes) +19, Listen +1, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +9, Sense Motive +2, Sleight of Hand +11, Spellcraft +20, Spot +1, Swim +6, Use Magic Device +7, Use Rope +9; Brew Potion^B, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge, Empower Spell, Improved Counterspell, Maximize Spell^B, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll^B, Still Spell.

Prohibited Schools: Abjuration, Illusion.

Special Qualities: Incarnation of Koschei, Chainable

Wizard Spells Prepared (caster level 14): 0th -- Acid Splash(2), Mage Hand, Read Magic. 1st -- Cause Fear(2), Charm Person, Magic Missile(2), Ray of Enfeeblement, Unseen Servant. 2nd -- False Life(2), Ghoul Touch, Rope Trick, Scare, Shatter, Spectral Hand. 3rd -- Fireball, Lightning Bolt(2), Vampiric Touch(2), Water Breathing. 4th -- Bestow Curse(2),

Enervation(2), Lesser Geas, Polymorph. 5th -- Blight, Magic Jar, Summon Monster V(2), Symbol of Pain. 6th -- Acid Fog, Control Water, Eyebite, Summon Monster VI, Symbol of Fear. 7th -- Finger of Death, Insanity, Summon Monster VII.

Wizard Spells Known: 0th -- Acid Splash, Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Message, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Touch of Fatigue. 1st -- Cause Fear, Charm Person, Erase, Grease, Hypnotism, Jump, Magic Missile, Magic Weapon, Ray of Enfeeblement, True Strike, Unseen Servant. 2nd -- Continual Flame, Eagle's Splendor, False Life, Ghoul Touch, Knock, Rope Trick, Scare, Shatter, Spectral Hand. 3rd -- Fireball, Lightning Bolt, Vampiric Touch, Water Breathing. 4th -- Bestow Curse, Enervation, Lesser Geas, Polymorph. 5th -- Blight, Cloudkill, Magic Jar, Sending, Summon Monster V, Symbol of Pain, Transmute Rock to Mud, Waves of Fatigue. 6th -- Acid Fog, Control Water, Create Undead, Eyebite, Summon Monster VI, Symbol of Fear. 7th -- Finger of Death, Insanity, Summon Monster VII, Symbol of Stunning, Waves of Exhaustion, Vision.

Chainable (Su): If the magical chains are reforged (see Plot Hooks), and PCs can somehow get them on "Koschei", then he will immediately lose all his powers, forever, and become Afanasi the Beggar again.

Incarnation of Koschei (Su): As an incarnation of Koschei the Deathless, this "Koschei" thinks he is actually the real thing, and behaves as if he were, with all the memories the real Koschei would have.

Possessions: Dagger, Spell Component Pouch

Koschei the Deathless is an enigma. Granted immortality long ago by some unknown power he has existed for almost as long as Baba Yaga herself. The same power that granted him his eternal life also created dozens of copies and clones of Koschei, scattering



them across the country side. Afanasi the Beggar is one such copy. All of the copies share the same memories up to the point of their creation. After that point each has followed his own path, becoming in essence a different person, although with the same motivation of causing the most pain and misery as possible.

Most of the clones have been eliminated over time, and now very few still walk the earth. Each has a particular weakness built into him, and no two have the same weakness. The band of steel around his wrist is the last remnant of the magic that binds Afanasi and keeps him from using his great powers of death and destruction.

Masha, female human commoner 4: CR 3; Medium humanoid (human); HD 5d4, hp 12; Init +4; Spd 30 ft; AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +2; Grp +3; Atk or Full Atk +3 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Craft (painting) +2, Jump +8, Profession (farmer) +8, Ride +7; Endurance, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus^B (Profession [farmer]).

Possessions: Leather armor, dagger, Egg of Soil (buried in garden)

Princess Katooshka Tsarevitch,

female human aristocrat 10: CR 9; Medium humanoid (human); HD 10d8+10, hp 55; Init +3; Spd 30 ft; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +7; Grp +8; Atk +9 melee (1d4+2/19-20, +1 dagger); Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d4+2/19-20, +1 dagger); AL LN; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +9; Str 13, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Hide +1, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (nature) +12, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +8, Listen +2, Move

Silently +1, Perform (sing) +13, Perform (string instruments) +15, Spot +2; Leadership, Skill Focus^B (Knowledge [nobility and royalty]), Skill Focus (Knowledge [nature]), Skill Focus (Knowledge [arcana]), Skill Focus (Perform [sing]).

Possessions: Chain Shirt, +1 dagger

Ilya Muromets, male human paladin 10: CR 10; Medium humanoid (human); HD 10d10+10, hp 91; Init +1; Spd 20 ft; AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +10; Grp +24; Atk +25 melee (2d6+14/19-20, greatsword); Full Atk +25/+20 melee (2d6+14/19-20, greatsword); SA smite evil, spells, turn undead; SQ aura of courage, aura of good, detect evil, divine grace, divine health, lay on hands, remove disease, special mount, supernatural strength; AL LG; SV Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +10; Str 39, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 18, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +14, Diplomacy +14, Handle Animal +11, Hide -5, Knowledge (nature) +4, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +8, Knowledge (religion) +13, Listen +6, Move Silently -5, Ride +5, Sense Motive +17, Spot +6; Alertness^B, Combat Reflexes, Leadership, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

Paladin Spells Prepared (2/2; save DC 14 + spell level): 1st - bless weapon, divine favor; 2nd - bull's strength, zone of truth.

Possessions: White Banded Mail, Greatsword

Misha Skomorokh, male human bard 10: CR 10; Medium humanoid (human); HD 10d6+10, hp 53; Init +4; Spd 30 ft; AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +7; Grp +8; Atk +8 melee (1d6+1, short sword), or +11 ranged (1d8, arrow); Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d6+1, short sword), or +11/+6 ranged (1d8, arrow);



SA spells; SQ bardic knowledge +13, countersong, fascinate, inspire courage, inspire greatness, legendary lore, suggestion; AL CG; SV Fort +4, Ref +13, Will +9; Str 13, Dex 19, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 19.

Legendary Lore (Sp): Misha may spontaneously cast Legend Lore in place of any other spell, of any level.

Skills and Feats: Craft (alchemy) +11, Craft (weaponsmithing) +9, Diplomacy +15, Hide +3, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Listen +2, Move Silently +3, Perform (comedy) +17, Perform (dance) +13, Perform (poetry) +15, Perform (oratory) +12, Perform (percussion instruments) +15, Perform (sing) +18, Perform (string instruments) +16, Perform (wind instruments) +17, Sleight of Hand +16, Spot +2; Combat Casting^B, Eschew Materials, Heighten Spell, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perform [sing]).

Marya Moreyna, female human fighter 10: CR 12; Medium humanoid (human); HD 10d10+10, hp 70; Init +5; Spd 20 ft; AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +10; Grp +14; Atk +16 melee (1d8+4/17-20, longsword); Full Atk +16/+11 melee (1d8+4/17-20, longsword); SQ grace under pressure; AL NG; SV Fort

+8, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Climb +11, Decipher Script +3, Gather Information +4, Hide +0, Intimidate +15, Listen +3, Move Silently -5, Ride +14, Spot +3; Alertness, Blind-Fight^B, Cleave^B, Combat Reflexes, Greater Weapon Focus^B (longsword), Improved Critical^B (longsword), Improved Initiative^B, Power Attack, Quick Draw^B, Weapon Focus^B (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Grace Under Pressure (Ex): Marya fights best when surrounded by many foes and gains a +1 bonus on attack roles for each person attacking her. In addition, when attacked by 4 or more opponents and using the full attack option Marya gains the ability to use Whirlwind Attack, as the feat, despite lacking the usual feat prerequisites for this feat.

Possessions: Black Banded Mail, Longsword

Monsters

The Three Horsemen CR 15; Large outsider; HD 15d8+90, hp 160; Init +4; Spd 60 ft; AC 25, touch 13, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +15; Grp +28; Atk See Below; Full Atk See Below; SA mounted mastery, spell-like abilities, weapon mastery; SQ aware, daily rebirth; AL See Below; SV Fort +15, Ref +13, Will +10; Str 28, Dex 18, Con 22, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Hide +18, Intimidate +19, Jump +27, Listen +21, Move Silently +22, Ride +22, Spot +21, Swim +27; Alertness^B, Blind-Fight^B, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Mobility, Mounted Combat^B, Power Attack, Trample^B.

Aware (Ex): The Three Horsemen are preternaturally aware and gain Alertness and Blind-Fight as bonus feats.





Daily Rebirth (Su): Each Horseman is reborn at the appropriate time of day at a random place in the land. The White Horseman appears at dawn, the Red Horseman at the sun's highest point, and the Black Horseman at sunset. If they were killed the day before, they will reappear at the place they died.

Mounted Mastery (Ex): The Three Horsemen are composite creatures and as such "mount" and "rider" act in perfect unison. Each of the Horsemen gains Mounted Combat and Trample as bonus feats.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will - ethereal jaunt

Weapon Mastery (Ex): The Three Horsemen are perfectionists with their weapons, focusing all their energy on being masters of their chosen weapon. Each gains the following feats as bonus feats, regardless of any missing prerequisites, with their chosen weapon: Greater Weapon Focus, Improved Critical, Weapon focus, Weapon specialization.

Red Horseman Only: Atk +20 ranged (1d8+11/19-20/x3, longbow, composite); Full Atk +20/+15/+10 ranged (1d8+11/19-20/x3, longbow, composite); AL N; Point Blank Shot, Shot on the Run.

White Horseman Only: Atk +25 melee (2d6+15/17-20, greatsword); Full Atk +25/+20/+15 melee (2d6+15/19-20, greatsword); AL LG; Cleave, Great Cleave.

Black Horseman Only: Atk +25 melee (1d4+11/19-20, gauntlet, spiked); Full Atk +25/+20/+15 melee (1d4+11/19-20, gauntlet, spiked); AL CE; Spring Attack, Whirlwind Attack.

Although they appear like horsemen, each of them is actually a composite creature: Rider, horse, and weapons are all part of the same being, and none can be separated from the other.

Bolotnitsa

CR 3; Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic); HD 3d8+6, hp 19; Init +1; Spd 10 ft, swim 40 ft; AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +3; Grp +7; Atk +7 melee (1d4+4, claw); Full Atk +7 melee (1d4+4, 2 claws); SA spell-like abilities; SQ amphibious; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 19, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +7, Concentrate +5, Hide +4, Listen +6, Spot +6, Swim +12; Alertness, Toughness

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day- charm person (DC 13), suggestion (DC 15). Caster level 6th. The save DCs are Wisdom-based.

Bolotnitsa (also known as Vodyanoi) are mermaid-like creatures who reside in Rassiya's plentiful marshes. From the waist up, they appear to be beautiful, topless women with long brown hair, but below the waist they are a twisted mass of long, inky squidlike tendrils that are constantly curling and writhing to keep them in place. Their favorite tactic is to either lurk near patches of floating moss or turf that resembles solid ground, luring travelers with their feminine wiles, although some pretend to be drowning instead in order to draw rescuers into their grasp (as well as getting an unwary adventurer out of his protective armor). Smart travelers can avoid them simply by choosing to avoid the most likely habitats, which are generally those that appear to be the safest (but are, in reality, the most dangerous) - supposedly dry areas in the midst of swamps, small pools of crystal clear water in the midst of gloom, and the like. Although they do not breathe water, they can remain submerged for up to an hour, far longer than any normal air-breathing creature, and they use this to their advantage - many Bolotnitsa will forego the above tactics and simply lurk beneath patches of water near dry ground, springing up to grab passers-by and pulling them deep under the water,



where they have the advantage. Bolotnitsa are motivated only by hunger, and will use whatever tactics are necessary to kill their prey and drag them to the bottom of the swamp to "soften up."

Lebedinoe: CR 1; Medium fey (shapechanger); HD 1d6+4, hp 8; Init +6; Spd 30 ft, swim 20 ft, fly 60 ft (average, in swan form only); AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +0; Grp +1; Atk or Full Atk +1 melee (1d6+1, wing buffet) or +1 melee (1d3+1, unarmed strike); SQ alternate form, damage reduction 5/cold iron, low-light vision, swan empathy; AL LG; SV Fort -1, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Balance +6, Handle Animal +5, Jump +5, Listen +7, Spot +7, Swim +13; Improved Initiative, Toughness^B

Alternate Form (Su): Lebedinoe can change from human form to that of a giant swan (and vice-versa) at will. In their humanoid form they have abilities appropriate to whatever class they are trained in; if they are not trained, they maintain the same basic build, skills and abilities as their giant swan form.

Lebedinoe, or "Swan-folk", are extra-dimensional immortal creatures from the land of faerie that are closely related to elves. In their natural form they appear to be tall white (or, rarely, black) swans, standing as tall as a dwarf or small human and weighing between 30-40 pounds. However, at will (or under the light of a full moon), they gain mass as they shapeshift into elf-like creatures of the same color and general size as their swan forms. They access this realm through watery portals deep below the surface of magic lakes, enchanted to prevent others (particularly those who would do them evil) from entering. Such entrances are generally found amidst great, unnatural beauty, and are fiercely guarded and defended (though

not always openly). They prefer to let wanderers simply leave of their own accord, but if their homeland is desecrated or they are attacked, they defend ferociously. In swan form, they will hiss a warning before attacking with bone-shattering beak strikes, and in humanoid form they will use both magic and mundane weapons (tending to be lighter, as befits their slight build). In changing form, any gear they are carrying is left behind, meaning that most choose to ignore arms and armor and remain naked whenever possible, donning clothing and acquiring weapons that they have hidden in the trees and bushes when they encounter outsiders. They are almost always Lawful Good in alignment, trained from the time they are hatched to live within the orderly rules of their society, and to focus on the good of the group, even before their own needs. Some few stray from the path, but most find that their rules serve them well throughout their lives.

Odette: female lebedinoe paladin 7: CR 7; Medium fey (shapechanger); HD 7d10+24, hp 65; Init +6; Spd 30 ft, swim 20 ft, fly 60 ft (average, in swan form only); AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +7; Grp +10; Atk +10 melee (1d3+3, unarmed strike); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d3+3, unarmed strike); SA smite evil, spells, turn undead; SQ alternate form, aura of courage, aura of good, damage reduction 5/cold iron, detect evil, divine grace, divine health, lay on hands, low-light vision, remove disease, special mount, swan empathy; AL LG; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Climb +3, Disable Device +4, Heal +8, Hide +2, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +12, Knowledge (religion) +12, Listen +5, Move Silently +2, Search +4, Sense Motive +10, Spot +5; Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Toughness^B.

Alternate Form (Su): Lebedinoe can change from human form to that of a giant swan (and vice-versa) at



will. In their humanoid form they have abilities appropriate to whatever class they are trained in; if they are not trained, they maintain the same basic build, skills and abilities as their giant swan form.

Paladin Spells Prepared (2; spell DC 14 + spell level):
1st- bless, divine favor.

Odile: female lebedinoe sorcerer 7: CR 7; Medium fey (shapechanger); HD 6d4+3; hp 21; Init +6; Spd 30 ft, swim 20 ft, fly 60 ft (average, in swan form only); AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +3; Grp +4; Atk or Full Atk +4 melee (1d3+1, unarmed strike); SA spells; SQ alternate form, damage reduction 5/cold iron, familiar (Odile currently lacks a familiar), low-light vision, swan empathy; AL LG; SV Fort +0, Ref +4, Will +7; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 18, Wis 15, Cha 19.

Skills and feats: Bluff +14, Concentrate +10, Hide +2, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (the planes) +7, Listen +4, Move Silently +2, Sense Motive +4, Spot +4; Alertness, Eschew Materials, Improved Initiative, Toughness^B.

Sorcerer Spells Known (caster level 7; 6/7/6/5): 0 -- Dancing Lights, Detect Magic, Ghost Sound, Light, Mending, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st -- Charm Person, Floating Disk, Magic Missile, Protection from Evil. 2nd -- Detect Thoughts, Invisibility, Whispering Wind. 3rd -- Hold Person, Suggestion.

Leshye: CR 4; Medium fey; HD 5d6+5, hp 22; Init +1; Spd 40 ft; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp +2; Atk +2 melee (1d6, head butt) or +2 melee (1d4 Str, claw); Full Atk +2 melee (1d4 Str, 2 claws); SA ability damage, spell-like abilities, tickle; SQ damage reduction 5/cold iron, low-light vision; AL CN; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +9, Hide +13, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (nature) +9, Listen +15, Move Silently +13,

Spot +15, Survival +4 (+6 in forests); Alertness^B, Dodge, Mobility

Spell-Like Abilities: At will-polymorph (any animal or humanoid form, no limit on duration)

Tickle (Sp): Leshye are fond of torturing their victims with tickling and laughter. If a Leshye successfully hits with both claw attacks during a full attack, it may opt (in lieu of causing damage) to instead inflict Hideous Laughter (as the spell) upon the victim. No save is allowed in the first round, but if the Leshye continues to tickle in successive rounds, a DC 15 Will save negates the laughter. The save DC is Charisma-based. However, the DC is increased by 1 for each additional Leshye who participates, up to a maximum of +7 (for 8 Leshye). There is no particular ill effect to being so tickled, other than that it renders one helpless.

Like Satyrs, Leshye have a +4 racial bonus on Hide, Listen, Move Silently, and Spot checks.

Leshye are northern-dwelling relatives of satyrs, and share much in common with their cousins. In their natural form they appear to be old, bearded men with blue skin, green hair and the requisite goat hooves, horns and claws. However, they can change their size and shape to mimic that of any animal, and are most often encountered in this form (although the onlooker has no idea what they are really seeing). In any form, they can be identified by the fact that they never cast a shadow. They are renowned for their love of trickery, luring hapless travelers (with voice mimicry and misdirection) into tricks and traps for their own amusement. Torture of captured prey almost always involves some sort of humiliation; tickle torture is quite popular, as is stripping their victims naked and scattering their belongings throughout the forest. In some cases, their "pranks" do turn fatal, something the Leshye find quite amusing, but they are not of evil intent and never set out to intentionally cause harm to others. Allegedly, the only defense against Leshye is wearing ones clothing backward and walking backwards (since



they are confused about whether one is coming or going), but this is often thought to be merely an old wives' tale.

Rusalka: CR 5; Medium undead (incorporeal); HD 6d12, hp 50; Init +6; Spd Fly 80 ft (perfect); AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk +5 melee (1d8 Str, incorporeal touch); Full Atk +5 melee (1d8 Str + strangle, incorporeal touch); SA ability damage, strangle; SQ darkvision 60 ft, incorporeal traits, undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +6; Str -, Dex 15, Con -, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Hide +11, Intimidate +11, Listen +12, Search +10, Spot +12; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative

Strangle (Su): A rusalka who hits with its incorporeal touch attack while making a full attack may make an immediate second attack roll to attempt to psychically strangle the victim. Any living creature who is successfully hit by this second attack roll must make an immediate DC 15 Will save. If the victim fails this saving throw they become helpless and the effects of the attack continue as follows: in the first round of the strangling attack, they take an additional 1d8 strength damage, but in the second and successive rounds they suffer as if drowning; in the second round, the character falls unconscious (0 hp), and in the third they drop to -1 hit points and are dying. In the fourth round, they die. Any cure wounds spell cast on the victim while suffering a rusalka's strangle attack will delay these effects by one round, but the effects of multiple cure wounds spells cast on a strangling victim in the same round are not cumulative.

Rusalka are closely related to spectres, but they are not affected by sunlight, do not create spawn when they kill, and are not at all perceptible by animals, only appearing (and threatening) other humanoids who might understand their plight.

Rusalka are the remnants of girls and women of all ages who suffered unspeakable torment as they choked to death, via strangulation, suffocation, drowning, hanging or some other means. Somehow, their spirit's slow, painful struggle allows them to continue living as their body dies - to the detriment of others. Related to specters or banshees, they appear as ghostly, shadowy versions of their former self, with their sole purpose being to violently re-enact the cause of their own death upon others: a girl who drowned will attempt to drown others, and a woman who was hung from a tree will try to hang others from the same tree. In this way, it is believed that clever and determined individuals might theoretically be able to discern the Rusalka's former identity, and to right the wrong that caused them to be so tormented. However, there exist no examples of a Rusalka who has been put to rest, and many believe that they are doomed to simply torment others until they are violently driven from this world, their tainted souls destroyed forever.

Animals

Baba Yaga's Oxen: (40): CR 1; Large animals; HD 3d8+9, hp 20; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; AC 13, touch 10, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +2; Grp +9; Atk +4 melee (1d4+3, hoof); Full Atk +4 melee (1d4+3, 2 hooves); SQ low-light vision, scent, insatiable thirst; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +6, Spot +6; Alertness, Endurance

Insatiable Thirst: Baba Yaga's Oxen are severely malnourished, underfed and always thirsty. Whenever they encounter a source of water, they are each able to drink at a rate of 30 gallons per round, indefinitely (for a total of 1200 gallons per round, or 12,000 gallons per minute).



Catkin: CR 1/4; Tiny animal; HD 1d4, hp 2; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +0; Grp -12; Atk +4 melee (1d2-4, claw); Full Atk +4 melee (1d2-4, claws) and -1 melee (1d3-4, bite); SA trip; SQ ability to talk, low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Climb +6, Hide +14*, Jump +10, Listen +3, Move Silently +6, Spot +3; Weapon Finesse

Skills: Catkin has a +4 racial bonus on Climb, Hide, and Move Silently checks and a +8 racial bonus on Jump checks. He has a +8 racial bonus on Balance checks. He uses his Dexterity modifier instead of his Strength modifier for Climb and Jump checks.

*In areas of tall grass or heavy undergrowth, and within Baba Yaga's Hut, the Hide bonus rises to +8.

Grey the Wolf: CR 1; Medium animal; HD 2d8+4, hp 15; Init +2; Spd 50 ft; AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, bite); Full Atk +3 melee (1d6+1 bite); SA trip; SQ ability to talk, cursed, low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +2, Listen +3, Move Silently +3, Spot +3, Survival +1*; Track^B, Weapon Focus (bite)

Trip (Ex): If Grey hits with a bite attack he can attempt to trip the opponent (+1 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip him.

Cursed (Su): Although Grey can talk, everything he says somehow comes across as sounding like a lie. Sense Motive may (if successful) reveal that he is enchanted, and that he seems to be lying, but it will not

reveal if the enchantment is causing him to lie, or if it's only making him sound like he's lying.

Skills: Grey has a +4 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

Rip and Torn: CR 1; Large animals; HD 2d8+8, hp 24; Init +1; Spd 40 ft; AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +1; Grp +11; Atk +6 melee (1d8+9, bite); Full Atk +6 melee (1d8+9, bite); SA trip; SQ ability to talk, low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 23, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Jump +12, Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +7, Survival +1*; Alertness, Track^B

Trip (Ex): Each round, Rip and Torn can collectively try to trip one opponent with their chains (+1 circumstance modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip them.

Skills: Rip and Torn have a +4 racial bonus on Jump checks, and a +4 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.



sample expressions of major characters



Baba Yaga

Baba Yaga has been around a long, long time, and is far older and wiser than even her aged frame would seem to indicate. She is also not one to hold back. She will speak her mind and let her opinions be known. Though not opposed to helping others achieve their goals, Baba Yaga considers her own needs paramount. She knows when someone lies to her and treats others with the same degree of respect (or lack thereof) that they show her. She will use intellect, wit, and charisma to persuade or, if necessary, mislead those she meets.

First Encounters:

Baba Yaga prefers to greet people by commenting on their odor, which she always seems to think is quite foul.

"Is that a Rassiyian odor I smell? Fie on thee!"

"Methinks I sense a flowery, elvish air about thee, eh pointy-ears?"

"You reek of mushrooms, dwarf. Have you been in my root cellar?"

Three Questions:

Before she gets down to business, Baba Yaga has three questions for each member of the party; she asks once, and will wait patiently until everyone has answered. The questions vary slightly in their wording, but are the same in their intent:

"Where are ye going?"

"Why are ye here?"

"Do you come of yer own free will, or were ye sent?"

The "correct" answer to the last question is "free will." Those who have been sent by someone else (such as children sent off by their step parents) often don't have any personal reason to be here, and such individuals may be put to hard labor or even killed. Those of honest or pure intentions will be assisted on their way, though at a cost.

Chores:

Those who are put to work by Baba Yaga will be treated politely but brusquely.

"Serve me well and ye'll be rewarded well. Serve poorly and ye shall be eaten."

"First, my darling, ye'll spin this yarn to thread. Then prepare a fire and set the table. And after dinner, ye get to wash me in the bath. Ye'll love that, I bet."

"Water my oxen from the river, my precious, then mend the fence with wire and yarn, thrice around, no less. Listen not to the skulls, lest ye join them!"

Advice:

Baba Yaga's advice often contains

repetitions of threes and bizarre and seemingly mundane activities that, when combined, have a truly magical effect in the end. Likewise, her directions often seem obscure, though they make sense if followed literally.

"If ye seek the lost child, go beyond thirty lakes. There, look for twenty stones, and take ye ten green needles, tracing her name upon each stone thrice. Hurl the stones into the last lake and the water will show you where she lies."

"So ye seek the Black Horsemen, eh? If ye would survive, follow the sun for three days, then on the third find a birch and take three green branches. With each draw a circle around yer-self, and as night falls call out thrice 'Darkest Night, Come Hither,' and he will come. So long as ye stay within the circles ye be safe."

Baba Yaga's Strange Nature:

Baba Yaga often speaks of herself in the third person, though in an odd manner. Often she will direct others to "go seek my sister" or "go to the swamp to Baba Yaga," which has led some to believe, incorrectly, that she is actually more than one being. She is essentially immortal. Though she has been pushed into ovens countless times and had her head chopped off, she will be back for more the very next day when her hut pops into existence somewhere else. She will not, however,



forget what happened to her - an enemy is an enemy for life.

"Go seek ye my sister, Baba Yaga, who lies in the birch grove beside the lake of swans. Give her this trinket and she will aid ye."

"A curse on ye, trickster. Cuts off my head, will ye? Strike twice while ye can, for tomorrow ye'll not have a second chance."

"Immortal? Nay, I am no more so than the earth or the sky or the water. All have their time, and all will pass, some sooner than others. And in the end, are we not all merely air, and earth, and water inside?"

On Specific People:

Baba Yaga has strong opinions about people she's met.

"Prince Ivan? A trickster, he is. Helped him once, and what to show for it but he ups and cuts my head straight off. Hasn't been seen since, and if he know what's good he'll stay gone for good. Hmph."

"Marya Moreyna? Ah, yes, lovely Marya. I'd love to have her for dinner some day. Pretty Marya. Stole my horse, did I mention that? Cursed wretch."

"Vasilisa? Aye, I remembers her. Came to me as a babe, half-grown, sent by her 'da with a little raggedy doll, and tried to steal my fire. But she worked

hard and I sent her back with the skull. Heard her 'da died and she's gone batty. Sad fate."

"Natalya? The seamstress' daughter as I recall. Foul little thing, came to me for needle and thread, and tricked my pets into helping her off. Stole my best comb and towel to boot! Hee, but I had my revenge, I did. Gave her a magic loom to attract a prince, and come he did, to marry her and leave her as he does with them all. Pretty, lonely Natalya. Teach her to steal from Baba Yaga."

"Melinika? Ah, yes, we helped her find her love, the bright falcon, who lived beyond the sea. Gave her pretties to help her, and she found him and they married. And then Prince Ivan the bold came along and killed him over some bit or other. You know princes. Give Melinika my best if you see her. I've naught against that girl, and she's had it harder than most."

Kookla

If properly fed and coaxed away from Vasilisa, Kookla the doll will come to life and offer advice. Over time, Kookla's personality adapts to match that of the person carrying him, tending to swing towards extremes of chaos or lawfulness.

For those more chaotically inclined, he tends to speak in singsong rhyming couplets, as one might speak to a child in a nursery rhyme or folk tale. Not everything he says

is a rhyme, but he never misses the opportunity to stick one in if he can:

"There are fires that you cannot see! Come brave one, and follow me!"

"Chin up, hero, don't despair! We'll get help from another pair."

"The cat's the way to save the day. Talk to him or else we'll pay."

"Baba Yaga's coming back! Best get busy or she'll attack."

"The secret's there, it's plain to see. Follow your nose and let me be."

For the more lawfully inclined, and in particular for those of an intellectual bent, he swings to the other extreme, taking on a fatherly tone and peppering his speech with big words that even he might not really understand completely. Often this comes across as sounding as much like gibberish as his chaotic singsong.

"What, the three old maids? They ain't nothing but matryoshka. You know? Those wooden nesting dolls. Little inside the big inside the bigger inside the biggest. And you know who that is, right? Baba Yaga herself."

"Don't let his crepuscular magnificence's reticence fool you. The cat's inclined to clandestine involvement, if you catch my drift."



"She's got a predilection for pernicious malificence, but I think her decrepitude has more to do with being abstemious and less to do with anything pernicious. "

"It's a veritable phantasmagoria of sanctimoniousness in here all of a sudden. Your capricious jurisprudence leaves me pondering the level of your mendacity. "

"Your beauty has plunged me into a precipitous fit of paroxystic palpitations, my lugubrious one. I am in blithe ignorance as to the motivation behind the salubrious attraction some people have for "voluptuous" women. "

"Why don't we just slip her a soporific, and while she's somnolent we up and defenestrate her. Though admittedly that would be obstreperous, due to the fact that this hut presently lacks windows. "

On Specific People:

He hasn't met many people, but those he's met he speaks of.

"Baba Yaga? Immortal witch. From what I hear she's quite a... witch. I mean, disagreeable, you know? Eat you up as soon as she'd help you. Or them, if the rumors are true. Baba Yaga, witches three. But she's just one if you ask me."

"Vasilisa? I'm hers, and don't you forget it. Belong to her ma, long ago, and now I'm all she's got. Not even her

mind, though I wouldn't say that around her. Not that I could, since she don't feed me no more. Barely feeds herself, most weeks. It's a pity. She was quite a looker when she was young, and whip smart. To have her life destroyed like that... you ask me, I blame the witch. Baba Yaga."

Melinika

Melinika tries to imbue meaning into everything she says, unless she's talking about her own art, which she belittles. She views the world as a portrait, and she is a part of it, even if her particular scene has been doused in shades of grey since she lost her true love, Finist the Bright Falcon. She views everyone with an artist's eye (including herself).

On Her Work:

Melinika is quite humble and shies away from flattery, though she'll be eager to make a sale if someone compliments her work.

"Oh this old thing? It's nothing. Just a depiction of Prince Finist's final charge into battle against the corrupt Prince Ivanovich, no relation to the real Prince Ivan, of course. This is fictional. Pure fiction. Of course. Hmph."

"You like that? That's one of my new pieces. I call it 'Hut on Chicken Legs Twenty'. Not that the hut has twenty legs. I mean, it's the twentieth in a series. I've painted that one a lot. Can't

get the image out of my head, I guess."

"I see you admiring the still life on the wall. I call it 'Fallen Feather'. It's a sort of tribute to my dear Finist. Do you like it? It's one of my favorites, and I hate to part with it, but I can wrap it up if you like."

On Specific People:

Melinika has strong opinions about several people, but one gets the sense that she's holding much back.

"Finist? Ah, there's a story then. My one true love, found and then lost. It's really quite a long story, a parable really, and I'd hate to trouble you, unless you have time? Well, since you insist, it all started when I was just a small girl..."

"Baba Yaga? Which? I mean, which witch? There are three, you know. I've been to all of them. They helped me find Finist when I was a girl. Gave me treasures. I can show you, if you like? I'm not using them, and for the right price..."

"Prince Ivan? I'd say I wished he were already dead, but that would mean I couldn't kill him myself. Less said about him, the better."

Natalya

Wise and suspicious, Natalya chooses her words carefully, and in many ways shares mannerisms with



Baba Yaga, to whom she is allegedly related. Her life has been full of ups and downs, and although she is not well-off, she accepts her fate with a sort of tough optimism that things are as good as they could possibly be.

On Her Work:

Natalya is quite eager to sell some of her stitchery, though she's honest about what her capabilities are.

"Why certainly, I'd love to sew you some clothing. But I can't. Well, I mean, I can make you the fabric, but I can't actually sew it. Why not? Let me tell you..."

"Word is there's a pair of magical scissors out there that can cut this stuff, but frankly I don't know who besides my... Baba Yaga might have them."

On Specific People:

Natalya waffles a bit about the people she knows, as if eager to maintain a balance of some sort.

"Baba Yaga? She's nice enough. Lots of folk say she's an evil witch, but I wouldn't call her that. Witch, sure, but evil? Nah. She's done as much good as evil, maybe more. She was even nice to me after I... took some things from her as a girl. Nothing big, just a comb and towel. But afterward she gave me a loom, this loom, and that's how I met the prince. I wish that would have worked out."

"Prince Ivan? I wish him the best, truly I do. I don't understand what I did wrong, but obviously he felt he had to move on after two months. I guess I just have to enjoy the memories I had instead of pining for what I can't get."

"Catkin. That's the name of Baba Yaga's cat, and believe me, if you want to get around in her hut you'll need him on your side. Feed him and he's yours. Same goes for her dogs, her fence, her tree... be nice to others and they'll be nice to you, but then isn't that always true in life?"

Vasilisa

Vasilisa is brilliantly, absolutely insane. She's conscious enough to be able to feed herself occasionally, and moves around with purpose when she wants to, but everything she says is a mishmash of truth and half-imagined fiction from the depths of her ruined mind.

On First Meeting Her:

Vasilisa is suspicious and paranoid of everyone around her.

"What's this then, visitors? I didn't call for no doctor. Don't you touch me. I told you I'm fine now. Get out then. Kookla, make them go or we'll call the guards."

On Baba Yaga:

Vasilisa doesn't remember much about Baba Yaga, but she remembers she hates the old witch.

"Baba? Jezi-Baba? Baba Skinny Legs? I'll tell you of Baba, won't I Kookla? Yes, we'll speak of Baba, but first we'll get some sun. It is sunny out, isn't it? How I hate the rain. It makes my old bones ache terribly. Terrible pains."

"Baba Yaga? You seek Baba? Do please tell her I love her and then kill her for me, for us all. She's the cause of this, you know? She put me here. Put us all here. Lovely, wonderful Baba Yaga. How is she? Is she well? Speak, child, speak."

"Baba Yaga, yes, gave me the skull, she did, the skull all pretty and afire. Killed daddy, yes, killed him dead, like I was, 'cept I wasn't, not really, not like her, Baba Yaga, foul witch, can't die you know, can't never never die."

On Kookla:

Vasilisa loves one thing in this world, and that's her doll Kookla.

"Kookla? Fine little friend, isn't he? Quiet lately, but don't mind him, he's just shy around strangers. Talks to me all day, keeps me up nights with his babbling about this and that, Baba Yaga and her beasties. Fine little Kookla."



plot hooks



Your first impulse at reading through this guide might be to say "there's a lot going on here!" and indeed there is -

which is exactly the point. Though representing a relatively small portion of the world, the land of Rassiya is packed full of intrigue and adventure. Characters have numerous avenues of adventure to pursue, and it is unlikely that they will be able to follow all of them. Many pieces of these various plots have been discussed already, but they are not the only possibilities.

This setting is populated with ordinary people who are guarded by slightly more skilled individuals, all of them existing in a world where legendary figures occasionally do battle and influence events from afar. Young girls visit with immortal witches, and young boys set off to do battle with powerful sorcerers. As such, it's possible that characters of any skill level might find a place here, in any of the following plots, depending on what purpose they serve in the story. For example, powerful characters might feel capable of taking on the beggar Afanasi in his true Koschei-empowered form, but weaker characters might simply be employed to recover the chains that will bind him, with Ilya, Marya or even Baba

Yaga guiding them and stepping in at the end to bind the powerful sorcerer.

It's also important to note that none of these plotlines excludes any others, and none is designed to railroad characters along a single path. The world is wide open to explore, and if various hooks criss-cross one another time and again as the PCs scamper willy-nilly all over the land, all the better. All of these plot hooks might be going on simultaneously, or only some of them, as suits your campaign.

Stranded!

The heroes' ship vanishes one night after dropping them off in Derevnnya (or perhaps it sunk mysteriously) and now they have to wait around until they can hitch a ride with another ship. Word is, Baba Yaga can help them find a ship lost long ago in the swamps that will get them home.

Drought!

The river that feeds Derevnnya, watering its crops and providing a lifeline to the sea, has suddenly gone nearly dry. The heroes are dispatched upstream by the local constables (as always, reluctant to leave the city) to find the cause. Could it be something magical in nature, or something as mundane as Baba Yaga's thirsty oxen drinking the river dry?

Missing!

There are no children in Derevnnya. Characters who ask around will learn that this is because the evil witch Baba Yaga has been eating them. The characters are dispatched to do away with her. The villagers would rather see the adventurers die on a foolish mission than reveal that they themselves are to blame for the missing children, for it is they who send the children off to die. Why?

Treasure!

Characters of a more selfish or evil persuasion learn that there are great riches and magical wealth to be found inside Baba Yaga's mysterious hut. Several old women in town bear artifacts from the old witch, and there must be more. Great rewards come to those who pilfer items from the hut, as well as great danger, of course.

Out of Time!

Time seems to be stuck! Either a permanent night has fallen on the land, or permanent dawn, or a permanent midday sun. Diligent investigation by the characters will reveal that two of the Three Horsemen are missing. The characters must set things right, and that starts with tracking down Baba Yaga. If the day does not proceed, spellcasters can't regain spells, wounds never heal, children will never get older, etc.



Unchained!

Derevnya's town vagrant Afanasi is actually behind much of the mischief in town, including perhaps the missing children. To undo his magic the heroes will have to find Baba Yaga, who can tell them where to find the missing links of the magic chain that can bind this incarnation of the evil sorcerer Koschei.

Egg-citing!

The Four Eggs of the Elements are scattered across the land, and the heroes have been asked (perhaps by Baba Yaga) to track them down. Although the eggs can be anywhere, their suggested locations are: Soil - in Masha's garden, in Derevyna; Wind - in a small pond in the center of Mokriy Vale; Light -

deep under the muck in the Kholadna Swamp; Water - in a dragon's nest in Tyomniy Forest. Aside from Masha's garden, none of these locations is detailed above, allowing the GM to further expand Rassiya and invent hazards and obstacles for his PCs to overcome.



lebedinoe racial description



Personality

Lebedinoe are generally honest and direct about their intentions, being animalistic at heart. For them, life is basically about the essentials - food and sleep - though they also have a great love of play, and enjoy a good game or joke, even if they are the butt of it. However, amongst non-friends they are quite shy and aloof, and prefer lurking to mingling when strangers are around.

Physical Description

In their natural forms, lebedinoe appear to be 4-5 foot tall swans, indistinguishable from one another by most other races. When they shift into their humanoid forms, however, each takes on a unique appearance. In humanoid form, something about them rings as vaguely elven, and many confuse them for elves unless looking at the two standing side-by-side. In point of fact they most closely resemble half-elves, standing around 5 feet tall and weighing about three-to-four times as much as their swan forms (i.e., about 90 to 120 pounds). Males and females have the same general build, and all share the same pale skin tone and black eyes. In some odd cases (less than 1% of the time), a lebedinoe is born with black feathers, and in their humanoid form these Swan-folk have deep ebony skin. Lebedinoe reach maturity quickly, around age 5 or so, and are effectively immortal, changing little thereafter provided they can take regular trips back to their realm (at least once a year). Those who are kept away

from their pools will age like humans, living no longer than 120 years.

Relations

Lebedinoe are quite aloof and prefer their own kind almost exclusively, though they get along reasonable well with elves, gnomes and some half-elves. They see most humans and dwarves as brooding and boorish, and avoid half-orcs at all costs, believing them to be unrefined, evil beasts. In all cases, they prefer the wilderness to the city, and will not willingly spend any significant time in an urban area.

Alignment

Lebedinoe are almost exclusively lawful and good in alignment, seeing a structured system of rules and a self-sacrificing attitude as necessary for preserving the future of their extended families. However, their interpretation of "law" and "good" might prove to be at odds with those held by others, for they know little of the rules of society at large and live by their own code. They are immensely trustworthy, and their word is as good as law if they deign to give it.

Lebedinoe Lands

Swan-folk live on the border between the material world and the world of faerie, preferring to inhabit protected lakes and ponds in remote areas of great beauty. Their faerie realms are protected and inaccessible to non-faerie creatures, and the waters they call home are often enchanted to prevent others from desecrating them

with their presence. Given the opportunity, they spend nearly half their time in the water, both awake and asleep.

Religion

Lebedinoe worship no deities, but they do show reverence towards nature-loving deities.

Language

Lebedinoe speak their own Swan-tongue, though when not in their swan form they speak it clumsily and slowly, at best. Most (90%) take the time to learn Common, and many others also learn Elven and the languages of other wilderness-dwelling races.

Names

Lebedinoe use no names amongst themselves (their language has no word for "me," but over a hundred ways to speak about their flock), but among humans and other races they generally adopt human naming conventions.

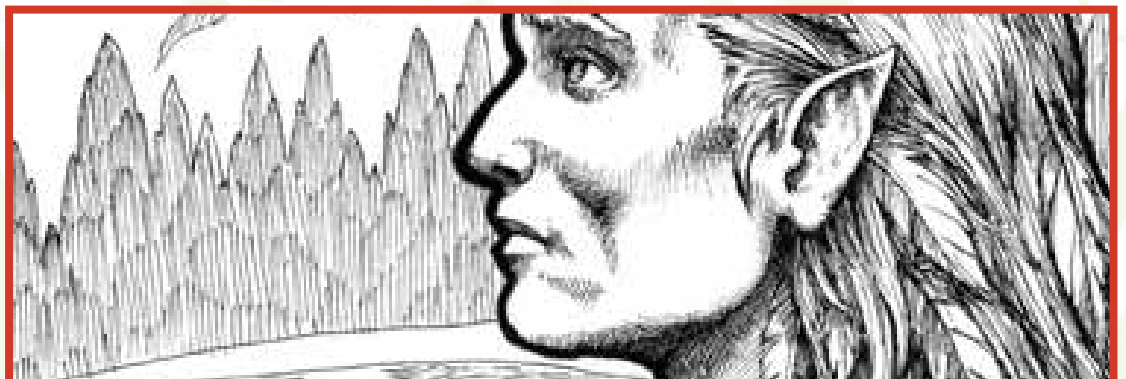
Adventurers

Lebedinoe rarely go adventuring without cause, preferring to stay amongst their own kind in safety. In times of great need they might take up a quest that would serve their flock's best interests, and in some rare cases (especially with black swans) they might willingly exile themselves, feeling outcast and choosing a life of solitude, ironically because their absence is perceived as a benefit to those they are leaving behind.



Racial Qualities

- Ability Scores Adjustments: Str +2, Dex +4, Con +2, Int +4, Wis +4, Cha +2
- Speed: Land speed is 30 ft, and when in swan form they gain a fly speed of 60 ft (average) and a Swim speed of 20 ft
- Low-light Vision
- Automatic Languages: Rassiyen, Sylvan
- Favored Class: Paladin (white lebedinoe) or Sorcerer (black lebedinoe)
- Lebedinoe have a racial bonus of +8 on Swim checks.
- Fragile Health: Despite their constitution bonus, as fey creatures lebedinoe have a strangely fragile health and suffer a racial penalty of -2 on all Fortitude saves. This is balanced by an inner resilience, and all lebedinoe gain Toughness as a bonus feat.
- Damage Reduction 5/cold iron. The lebedinoe is reliant upon regular immersion in the waters of their faerie realm. A lebedinoe who is away from their faerie realm for one week will find its damage reduction temporarily impaired (damage reduction 2/cold iron). The lebedinoe must have a full day of rest in the faerie realm or immediately adjacent waters to regain its full damage reduction.
- Swan Empathy: A lebedinoe can communicate with normal swans to a degree by using a form of empathic transfer.
- Alternate Form (Su): Lebedinoe can change from human form to that of a giant swan (and vice-versa) at will. In their humanoid form they have abilities appropriate to whatever class they are trained in; if they are not trained, they maintain the same basic build, skills and abilities as their giant swan form.
- Level Adjustment: +3



glossary & pronunciation guide

- Afanasi (AH-fuh-NAH-see)** - Beggar in Derevnnya, actually an incarnation of Koschei.
- Baba Yaga (BA-ba YA-ga)** - Immortal faerie-blooded Rassiyan hag.
- Berioza (bear-ree-OH-zuh)** - Literally, "Birch"; portal to the land of the Lebedinoe.
- Bogatyr (boh-guh-TEER)** - Rassiyan version of a Paladin; Ilya Muromets is one.
- Bolotnitsa (bo-lut-NEET-suh)** - Evil, mermaid-like, swamp-dwellers.
- Chyorniy (CHYOUR-nee)** - Literally, "Black"; blacksmith of Derevnnya.
- Chyornoye (chyour-NOY-ee)** - Also "Black"; name of the sea south of Derevnnya.
- Derevnnya (duh-REV-nee-yuh)** - Literally, "village"; a small town and key trading hub.
- Doktar Bolna (Dock-TAR BOWL-NAH)** - Derevnnya's town physician.
- Finist (FIN-ist)** - Deceased falcon prince, once beloved of Melinika.
- Ilya Muromets (ILL-ee-yah MUR-oh-metz)** - Renowned strongman and bogatyr.
- Ivan Tsarevitch (EYE-vin SARR-uh-vitch)** - Perpetually absent ruler of Rassiya.
- Katooshka (Kah-TOOSH-kuh)** - Princess and sister of Ivan, ruling in his absence.
- Khlep (KHLEP)*** - Literally, "bread"; Derevnnya's local baker and miller.
- Kholadna (kho-LAHN-nah)*** - Literally, "cold"; southeastern swamplands.
- Kookla (KOO-kluh)** - Vasilisa's magical talking doll.
- Koschei (KOH-shay)** the Deathless - Immortal sorcerer and perpetual villain.
- Lebedinoe (luh-BED-in-oh)** - Literally, "swan"; name of the faerie-blooded Swan-Folk.
- Leshye (LESH-yuh)** - Satyr-like half-men who dwell in the woodlands of Rassiya.
- Loshad (lo-SHAHD)** - Literally, "horse"; Derevnnya's senior stablehand.
- Marya Moreyna (MAR-yah mor-AIN-yah)** - Legendary female warrior of great skill.
- Masha (MA-shuh)** - Small Derevnnyan farm girl with a powerful secret.
- Matryoshka (ma-tree-OHSH-kuh)** - Rassiyan wooden nesting dolls.
- Melinika (mel-in-EEK-uh)** - Derevnnyan artist, one of three to meet Baba Yaga and live.
- Midvyet (mid-VYET)** - Resident taxidermist of Derevnnya.
- Misha Skomorokh (MEE-shuh SKO-mo-rokh)*** - Legendary clown and bard.
- Mokriy (MOH-kree)** Vale - Broad flood plain north of Derevnnya.
- Natalya (na-TAHL-yah)** - One of three women to have met Baba Yaga and lived.
- Padushka (pa-DOOSH-kah)** - Literally, "pillow"; owner of Derevnnya's Snatvornaye Inn.
- Rassiya (RAH-see-yah)** - Name of the land in which Baba Yaga lives.
- Rusalka (roo-SAHL-kah)** - Evil spirits of women who have died of suffocation.
- Shirokiy (shee-ROW-key)** - Literally, "wide"; a river flowing northeast of Derevnnya.
- Snatvornaye (snat-VOR-nay)** - Literally, "sleeping pill"; Derevnnya's most popular Inn.
- Tyomniy (TEEYOM-nee)** - Literally, "dark"; name of the forest north of Derevnnya.
- Uzkiy (OOZE-kee)** - Literally, "narrow"; a river flowing north of Derevnnya.
- Vargouille (VAR-goo-eel)** - Evil, swamp-dwelling disembodied head.
- Vasilisa (vas-ah-LEES-ah)** - Insane old woman, one of three to survive Baba Yaga.
- Viski (VISS-kee)** - Literally, "whisky"; Derevnnya's tavern owner.
- Yebriniy (YEB-rin-ee), Sir** - Literally "silver"; Derevnnya's resident silversmith.
- Zapovednik / Zapovedniy (zap-uh-VED-nick / nee)** - Forbidden princely hunting grounds.
- Zemylanka (zem-ee-LAHN-kah)** - Underground dugout, used for shelter by hunters.
- Zlobniy (ZLOB-nee)** - Derevnnya's resident sage and wise man.

*Kh like the ch in the German "Ich" or the Scottish "Loch"

rassiyen naming conventions



It would take many pages to detail a complete guide to Rassiyen names, as many of the "rules" for creating them are really more like "rough guidelines" riddled with exceptions, special cases and countless variations. This is to say nothing of the fact that early medieval, late medieval and modern Russian naming conventions are all markedly different from one another. Suffice to say that the following is only a summary, and is far from a definitive guide.

Medieval Rassiyen names are generally composed of up to three types of elements. The first is the "imya," or given name (Ivan, Mikhail, Zlobniy, etc.). This is the name most often used in conversation, and up until the 10th century it was often the only name used to identify someone and was often abbreviated as a nickname (particularly among peasants, but also amongst the upper class). The second part of the name is the "otchestvo," or the patro/matronymic name (meaning that it is derived from the name of one's father or mother). It was not until the late 17th century, however, that the third piece of the puzzle - the "familiia," or the surname - became more common; prior to that time, a more common replacement was the "byname" describing a person based on physical appearance, or their job.

The most common order for such names can be abbreviated as "GPB," which stands for Given Name, Patronymic, Byname. But this is far from the only possibility: one might use two given names; a given name and byname only; a given name and patronym only; a given name and two patronyms; two given names, two patronyms and a byname; and so on, with the order of the names being of little consequence. Little wonder that most people merely use their given name in conversation.

GIVEN NAMES

Some sample names follow, along with their meanings:

Male Names

Afanasi	immortal	Oleg	successful
Aleksander	defender of men	Pavel	humble
Aleksei	helper or defender	Petya	rock
Andrei	man	Sasha	defending men
Borislav	fame in battle	Sergei	servant
Dmitri	variant of Demetrius	Vadim	to rule with greatness
Edvard	rich guard	Valentin	strong and healthy
Evgeni	well born	Vasili	king
Garsha	old	Viktor	victory
Gennadi	noble		
Georgi	farmer		
Grigori	watchful or alert		
Ilya	variant of Elijah		
Kazimir	to destroy greatness		
Konstantin	constant and steadfast		
Leonid	lion		
Maksim	greatest		
Mikhail	godlike		
Miroslav	great glory		
Misha	nickname for Michael		
Mstislav	vengeance and glory		
Nikita	unconquerable		



Female Names

Aglaya	beauty	Nadya	hope
Aksinya	hospitality	Natalya	day of celebration
Alana	light	Natasha	nickname for natalie
Aleksandra	defender of men	Nina	little girl
Boleslava	fame in battle	Oksana	hospitality
Bronislava	victory in battle	Serafima	fiery one
Galina	calm	Toma	spice
Irina	peace	Ustinya	justice
Katinka	pure	Valentina	strong and healthy
Katya	purity	Valeriya	to be strong
Larisa	citadel	Varya	foreign
Ludmila	favor of the people	Veronika	true image
Marina	of the sea	Vladimira	to rule with greatness
Marya	rebelliousness	Yevgeniya	good birth
Masha	nickname for mary		
Matrona	lady		
Milena	gracious		

PATRONYMICS

When composing Patronymics, suffixes are added to the father's name as follows, each addition basically meaning "son of" or "daughter of." If the subject is a woman, the patronymic is also suffixed with an "-a":

Parent's Name...	Rule Followed	Example
ends in consonant	add "ov"	Mikhail Ivanov or Marya Ivanova
ends in "ov" or "ev"	add "lov" or "lev"	Ivan Ivanovlov or Varya Ivanovlova
ends in "a"	drop "a", add "in"	Vasilii Mishin or Nadya Mishina
ends in "ia"	drop "ia", add "yn"	Mikhail Naumyn or Marya Naumyna
ends in other vowel	drop vowel, add "ev"	Ivan Radkev or Varya Radkeva
ends in two vowels	drop vowels, add " 'ev"	Ivan Vasili'ev or Ivan Vasili'eva

The following words might also appear before or after the name of a relative to indicate relationship:

Prefix	Meaning	Example
syn	son of	Ivan syn Mikhail
doch	daughter of	Marya Mikhail doch
pravnuk	great-grandson of	Ivan pravnuk Mikhail
pravnuka	great-granddaughter of	Marya Mikhail pravnuka
vnuk	grandson of	Ivan vnuk Mikhail
vnuka	granddaughter of	Marya vnuka Mikhail
ziat	son-in-law of	Ivan ziat Mikhail
zhena	wife of	Marya Ivanova zhena

Nobility are also entitled to add a "-vitch" or "-vich" suffix to their patronymic; if the name ends with a v already, the second v is dropped; for example, Ivan Mikhail becomes Ivan Mikhailovich. The aforementioned rule about suffixing with an "-a" also applies here, as with Kadooshka Tsarevitcha.



BYNAMES

Some individuals further identify themselves by means of descriptive elements known as bynames.

These might refer to animals, occupations, personal attributes, place names, titles, etc. In some cases, these take a patronymic form, and follow the rules listed for patronyms. For example, with Prince Ivan Tsarevitch the title of Tsar gains the patronymic "-vitch" suffix. When the word is the name of a place, it becomes known as a toponym, and is used to identify the person's place of origin or residence; for example, one might be called Ivan Derevnyavich (literally "Ivan son of Derevnya"). In other cases, the byname is merely an adjective added after the person's name - for example, Ivan Shirokii is Ivan "The Wide" with the proper ending: masculine endings include "-ii", "-oi", and "-yi", and feminine endings include "-aia" and "-iaia."

TITLES

Individuals who hold title might prefix their entire names with a title, as follows:

Title	Meaning
Gospodin	Lord
Gospozha	Lady
Graf	Count
Kniaz	Prince
Velikii Kniaz	Great Prince

Resources

The following websites were of great help in compiling this information and are recommended for further research into this topic:

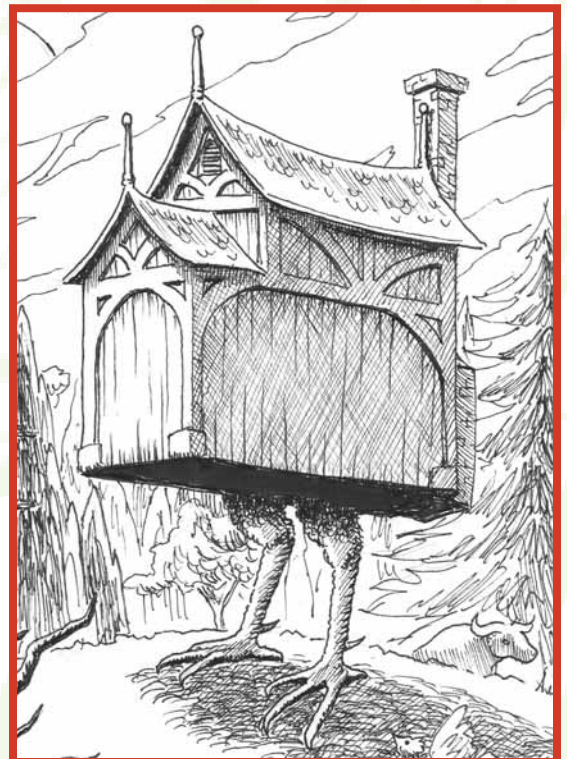
<http://www.sca.org/heraldry/paul>

<http://www.geocities.com/Colosseum/Track/7635/names.html>

<http://masterrussian.com/aa031001a.shtml>

<http://learningrussian.com/name.htm>

<http://www.s-gabriel.org/names/predslava/bbl>



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