

For The Honour Of The Family

A Live Action Roleplaying Game

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Game Master Notes

Here are the notes for the Game Masters looking to run For The Honour Of The Family. Of course no players should be reading these notes before playing this the game.

It is expected that the game is overseen by the Game Masters while this is running; hopefully they will have minimal involvement during the actual running of the game but it is inevitable that something will be required. We recommend 2 or 3 Game Masters are available during the running of the game; they should be familiar with all this material and have at least some previous experience with running a LARP Game of this nature (this is probably quite a difficult game to run if you have never run a LARP before!).

It is strongly recommended that this game is run in costume; we feel that costumes add a great deal to the general atmosphere of a LARP game of this nature. It is intended that the Game Masters will be in costume (and in character when required) as House Guards; this allows them to remain in the background, and get involved as required, without spoiling the atmosphere.

Game Plot

For The Honour Of The Family is set up as a political intrigue game. It is designed to have the players use bargaining and persuasion to resolve the conflicts. It is expected there is no requirement for physical conflict. Hence we have included no specific mechanics in this regard. There are several plots that are mixed into the game of varying importance; the core plot points are covered below to give the Games Masters a basic idea of the critical elements.

The main plot concerns the vote for the new Head of the House. There are 7 voting members; we have deliberately chosen an uneven number to prevent any tie (also for the same reason we have specified to the players that there can be no abstention votes). If there are insufficient players to run all of the characters and some of the voting members must be removed, we strongly recommend the number of voting members remains uneven. We have no discussion on what should happen if the voting process does not provide a clear winner; this should not happen (and is thus not considered further). Of the two candidates, both should have two guaranteed votes (Jelani and Kizzy for Jelani, Gamyuka and Isoba for Gamyuka). This leaves three swing votes, the persuasive abilities of the two candidates and their allies should determine the outcome of this vote.

The other major plot point concerns the murder of Duna Cantacuzino. This was committed by Isoba Cantacuzino. There should be enough information available to the characters to make a clear case for resource and motive against Isoba; but there should also be enough misinformation and mistrust for Isoba to use in obscuring the truth and hiding his secret. We leave it up to the individual players to determine the outcome of this, both in determining guilt and assigning a suitable punishment as appropriate.

Game Structure

There is no set structure for the game, although a definitive beginning and finish is recommended. We expect this game to require somewhere between 3-4 hours with a full cast; although if a reduced cast is required this time could be cut down somewhat (although we would recommend a minimum of 2 hours).

Since this is set at the last wake for Duna Cantacuzino it seems fitting that the beginning of this should consist of some speech or toast in honour of the departed. It would seem advantageous for Jelani or Gamyukā to be seen as taking a leadership role in this regard and making an appropriate speech, but this is not required. We would recommend that this possibility be offered to both characters in advance, but the choice should be left to the players themselves. If no one is willing to get involved in this manner then it would be fitting that the beginning of this game be awkward and uncertain.

The voting process is a natural way to begin wrapping up the game. We would recommend that the voting process be done somewhere about 2/3 or 3/4 through the estimated game length (so about 2 or 3 hours into the game). It is expected that some resolution time will be required once the new Head of the House has been chosen; we would recommend somewhere between 1/2 to 1 hour be given after the voting process to complete any remaining wrap up for the characters. Of course the timing of the game can be increased or decreased as seems appropriate to the Game Masters given the progress of the individual game itself.

Handouts

There is quite a lot of information that needs to be given to each player; if at all possible this should be given to the players well in advance to provide them the maximum amount of time to read and digest what is provided.

Character Sheet and Additional Information: of course this is a character sheet for each of the characters. A number of characters (Amadi, Beniamen, Gamyukā, Isoba, Iulia and Jelani) also have another sheet with additional information that is known only to them; it is critical that each character is given the sheet designated for them as it contains information only they are privy to. Should they wish to share this information in game with other characters, it is, of course, their own decision.

General Knowledge: The General Knowledge handout covers things that each character is expected to know and understand. This covers general knowledge about the current political climate for the Cantacuzino Family, the circumstances surrounding the death of Duna Cantacuzino and his Last Will and Testament, the selection process for the new Head of the House, the roles of Serghei and Ahina and the arranged marriage of Jelani.

Family Tree: This is a copy of the Cantacuzino Family Tree; this is provided more for background information and to give the players a feel for the history of the Family. That being said if the players take careful note of this they will see that Amadi Cantacuzino does not appear anywhere on this Family Tree... We found that when this is printed the black text does not come out well and is very difficult to read, so we have also included an alternate version with white text for printing if required.

Family History: This is a brief history of the Cantacuzino Family Tree; this is provided more for background information and to give the players a feel for the history of the Family. It is not expected that the players will remember any of this (given it is quite long!!) and should be provided to the players well in advance of the playing day. If this is not possible it is recommended that this is not given as required reading but is still made available to the players.

Name Tags and Voting Forms: We have provided a sheet with Name Tags; this can be printed, cut out and provided to each of the characters as appropriate. We recommend this be used as it saves awkward problems with players not knowing who is playing which character. We have also provided voting slips to be given to the seven voting characters. This is used by removing or crossing out the candidate that the character does not want to vote for (or otherwise identifying who they do want to vote for). Providing a physical voting form allows for the possibility of someone trading or stealing votes from other characters.

The Characters

Below is a brief overview of the characters and how they relate to the structure of the game. We have also tried to give some indication of how important each given character is to the overall plot, and thus how easily they can be removed without undermining the basic game setup or expected conflicts.

Duna Cantacuzino: Since Duna is deceased (and not undead!) no one is actually required to play this character (it would be very boring playing dead for 4 hours!). That being said, since the events of the game are centred on Duna Cantacuzino we consider him the 15th character.

Iulia Cantacuzino (nee. Mourosis): Iulia is the old matriarch of the Cantacuzino family; she has years for experience and wisdom that she is determined to pass along to her grandchildren. Her primary goal is to find out who killed her son and she has some information in this regard; also she does support Jelani as the next Head of the House. As a non-voting member of the family Iulia is not essential but is a good background character.

Amadi Cantacuzino: Amadi is actually a house spirit that has spent many generations watching over the residents of the Cantacuzino Family House in Bucharest. He was a young man of the Cantacuzino family who was sacrificed in a ritual to bind his soul to the house as a protector and guardian. He, of course, remembers none of this very traumatic event, and all of the records of this has been destroyed or lost in the family library. Amadi has the ability to prevent any violence within the confines of the house; it is suggested that this power be quite subtle and simply prevents the supposed action taking place (without any other physical – obviously magical – effects). Amadi also has the ability to detect any poisons or other obviously harmful substances within the house (of course this can be avoided by the use of substances that are not in themselves harmful – as discovered by Isoba). Lastly, Amadi usually resides in an invisible spirit form but has the ability to take human form (appearing as he would have looked like had he reached middle age); he will use this to interact with other people when required (like at this wake). He has also used this form when accessing the new family members; Amadi has spent some time playing with all of the children as he tries to understand their nature and guide them towards the right path – being what is best for the Cantacuzino family, since the wellbeing of this family is the single driving force for Amadi himself. Amadi is at this wake in an attempt to track down whoever killed Duna Cantacuzino; he has a lot of information and useful abilities and thus is essential to the game structure and must be played.

Beniamen Cantacuzino (ne. Lior): The husband of Adanna has not had much contact with the Cantacuzino family; he is a well respected and connected Merchant by trade. He is here to support his wife and to increase his connections within the family; if possible he will also look to help the family's trade connections. Beniamen does not have a vote for the Head of the House, but he does have a lot of information regarding the death of Duna (he can provide evidence linking Duna's death directly to Isoba). Thus he is very important (but not essential) to the plot.

Adanna Cantacuzino: The eldest child of Duna, Adanna married Beniamen for the Family and she is not very close to her husband. She has been away from the Family for some time but is now very keen to find out what is going on, especially regarding her Father's suspicious death. As a voting member of the family and the primary supporter of Jelani, Adanna is very important (but not essential) to the plot.

Chanoch Cantacuzino (ne. Abijah): The husband of Kizzy and very much in love; Chanoch has had very little contact with the Cantacuzinos and is yet to be accepted into the family. He is here to support his wife and get to know the family members; he has no real involvement in any of the main plots. Chanoch is not essential and is one of the easiest to leave out of the game, but he is a good background character and adds flavour to the environment.

Kizzy Cantacuzino: The daughter of Jofranka is learning the Gypsy arts from her mother. Kizzy married Chanoch for love and is rather enamoured by him; because of this she has trouble seeing past this to what else is going on in her life. Kizzy is undecided on who she should vote for the Head of the House and thus is open for persuasion; she is also the only one who suspects that her mother had something to do with Duna's death. Thus she is very important (but not essential) to the plot.

Danut Cantacuzino: A more distant cousin of the Cantacuzino family, Danut is obsessed by Vampires (and other supernatural creatures) and will do whatever he can to track them down and destroy them. Danut is convinced that there is a Vampire amongst the Cantacuzino family and that Serghei is assisting him; he will probably cause a number of problems for many of the characters in his attempt to get more information in this regard. Of course there is no such Vampire and Danut is just delusional; he is written up as a more comedic character provided to shake things up and keep the game interesting and lively. As a voting member of the family Danut is important (but not essential) to the plot.

Gamyuka Cantacuzino: Intelligent and experienced, Gamyuka is the brother of Duna and has spent some time working with him. An ex-military man who believes in rational and logical decision making; he is also quite mindful of his wife's strong will and will do what he can to appease her. He is running for Head of the House and so should be spending most of his time with his wife trying to get votes; he also is interested in finding out who killed his brother. Since Gamyuka is a candidate for Head of the House he is essential to the game structure and must be played.

Jofranka Cantacuzino (nee. Kalderas): The wife of Gamyuka is a very ambitious and strong-willed person. She is also involved in gypsy craft and is teaching her daughter the trade; this includes how to appear in public as a typical social butterfly. Through her husband Jofranka intends to gain some power within the Cantacuzino family, so she should be pushing her husband around the voting family members trying to get votes in their favour. She also wants to keep her involvement in the death of Duna a secret, and since she has helped Isoba arrange the marriage for Jelani this must happen as well. Although this character is not a voting member of the family she has a lot of useful information and is a push for Gamyuka so she is quite important and should not be dropped unless absolutely required.

Isoba Cantacuzino: The current Guardian of the Cantacuzino family has long been involved in all aspects of family affairs; he was working alongside Duna before his death. Isoba is a very well connected man and knows a great deal about a number of things - especially about the other family members. Since Isoba is the one who murdered Duna he needs to be present to sow seeds of doubt (with lies and rumours as appropriate) and defend himself if necessary; thus he is essential to the game structure and must be played.

Jelani Cantacuzino: A young and headstrong member of the Cantacuzino family, Jelani is ruled more by the heart than the head. Jelani should be focusing on gathering votes for Head of the House; he also wants to find out who killed his Father but does not have a lot of information relevant to this issue. Since Jelani is a candidate for Head of the House he is essential to the game structure and must be played.

Wadim Cantacuzino: A more distant cousin of the Cantacuzino family, Wadim is a merchant by trade. He requires a large sum of money in order to start up a trading venture; this would bring great wealth if it is successful but could also be very costly if it fails. The Family can provide the required money to Wadim; but it would leave them with little funds left and thus it is very risky to provide this. This sum of money is much more than any individual would have, and cannot be obtained from anyone else. Wadim does have a vote for the Head of the House and will probably use this as leverage to get what he requires. As a voting member of the family Wadim is important (but not essential) to the plot.

Serghei Popescu: The Popescu family is an illegitimate line of the Cantacuzino family and has been serving the household for generations. Carrying on this tradition as Head Butler, Serghei was quite close to Duna and wants to find out who killed him. Also as someone with a lot of close contact with Duna he is going to be under quite a lot of suspicion and will probably need to ensure he is not framed for the murder. Serghei also has the role of keeping the household in order and assisting with the duties of the evening (including the voting process), thus he is very important and should not be dropped unless absolutely required.

Ahina Popescu: The sister of Serghei, Ahina is also serving the Cantacuzino family as the Head Housekeeper. She has had a lot of contact with Duna's children; since Duna's wife died at a young age the task of raising the children was left mostly up to Ahina. She was also quite fond of Duna; she saw Amadi rushing to the scene of Duna's death and thus suspects that he is the culprit; she will attempt to prove this accusation. Along with her brother, Ahina is charged with overseeing the duties of the evening (including the voting process), thus she is important (but not essential) to the plot.

Props

Here we discuss some recommended props and their inclusion in the game. Of course none of these are required but anything that can be done to provide a suitable atmosphere will go well towards a better game.

Voting Box: Since the voting process is done with a physical ballot, a suitable box for the characters to cast their vote into would be best. A simple covered box with a hole in the top would be sufficient (but make sure you can get the votes out afterwards!).

Wine Bottle: It is not certain that this is required but since Duna Cantacuzino died shortly after drinking a bottle of wine it seems likely that this may be requested at some point. If something suitable can be provided this would be excellent. A simple glass bottle with the labels washed off would be sufficient.

Keys to House Cantacuzino: Serghei Popescu and Ahina Popescu currently hold the Keys to House Cantacuzino. It is expected that these are relinquished to the new Head of the House once this has been decided; to allow a more formal and meaningful presentation it would be good if Serghei or Ahina could hold and physically hand over the keys. Large iron keys would be the right look and feel; the more elaborate the better.

Wall Display Showing the Family Tree: Although the Family Tree is provided to all of the players as part of the handouts it is useful, as a plot point and as a general talking point, to have part or all of the Cantacuzino Family Tree displayed in the main hall. Either print all or part of the Family Tree handout on A3 sheet (preferably colour but black and white would look OK) and frame if possible.

Portrait of Duna: Since this is a wake it would seem appropriate to have images or keepsakes of the deceased present. A large painting of Duna Cantacuzino prominently displayed would be ideal. The easiest way to do this would be to find a suitable photo and run this through an oil-paint filter (to give this the right look), then print this in colour in A3 and mount within a simple wooden frame.

Locations

It is expected that the game will run primarily from one room. That being said, it is common for characters to want to see specific parts of the house for a given reason, or simply to get out of the common room to have a private conversation. Below we have covered some additional locations that might be required.

When running the game one room would be sufficient but if there are other rooms available this would be advantageous.

Library: The Family Library is very large and contains a lot of books. The vast majority of the volumes in here are normal fiction and non-fiction works that have been collected by the generations; a sizeable corner of the library is devoted to the Family Records of House Cantacuzino. Should any character want to look at the history records of the Cantacuzino Family this would be the place to come; note that due to the sheer volume of information in this section any specific information required would take a long time to discover (old Families like this kept any and all records going back many generations). How much (and what) information can be found by the characters in the short timeframes they will have to look through the library is up to the discretion of the Game Masters.

Duna's Room (The Master Bedroom): As the scene of Duna's death it is highly likely the some people will want to have a look around this room. This has remained mostly untouched since his death and only when the new Head of the House requires the use of this will it be tidied up and prepared. A few personal items that were listed in Duna's Last Will and Testament have been removed and given to the appropriate people, but otherwise this room has been left as is. Duna lived quite a simple life and there is nothing of particular interest in this room. There are a large number of papers and documents relating to family business; although finding anything specific in here will require some time and sorting. Also in this room is the bottle of wine that was provided to Duna shortly before his death.

Personal Rooms: Each family member who does not live permanently at House Cantacuzino will be given one of the large (and numerous) guest rooms for the duration of their stay. This will have the basic furniture provided; anything else specifically required can be provided by the House Staff upon request to Serghei and/or Ahina. Also if required a House Guard can be requested to stand over the door to any given room and prevent the entry of anyone other than the designated guests (although this would be considered quite impolite and should be done only for short periods of time and a very good reason).

Frequently Asked Questions

Lastly here are some common questions that may come up during the running of this game; we provide an overview of the recommended response that should be given (of course this can be changed by the Game Masters as they see fit).

The Voting Process: As mentioned on the General Information handout to all the players there is only a limited number of votes and there can be no one deciding not to vote. The candidate with the most votes should be declared the winner; this process is designed to provide a clear outcome from an uneven number of voters. It is possible for any voting character to give their vote to another character (rather than making the decision themselves). Also because this is done via a physical ballot, it is possible to steal someone's voting form. If this happens and is noticed by the players it is up to the characters to deal with the situation; although re-running the voting process using a different ballot process would seem the most sensible approach. If a non-voting character is able to steal or obtain a vote using another method and this goes unchallenged by any other characters, then this would, in our view, seem a natural component of the game (although it would be interesting to discuss this during any post-game wrap-up session).

Mention of Amadi in the Family Records: Since Amadi is quite a mysterious character there may be questions about him. First: Amadi is not mentioned in the Family Tree; when asked why he does not appear anywhere on the Family Tree simply reply that "that is a very interesting question". When looking through the family records Amadi will be mentioned only in the oldest records; these will be the scraps of documents that managed to survive the conversion from Craiovești to Cantacuzino (see the Family History

for more information on this). Any information about Amadi will require a lengthy and arduous search through the oldest records of House Cantacuzino and will take much longer than is available during the game. The information about the Family records will be minimal at best and simply discuss him in relation to other family members, there will be nothing of him motioned after he reaches his late teens (when he is sacrificed to become the House Spirit).

Duna's Last Will and Testament: A brief description of Duna's Last Will and Testament is provided in the General Knowledge handout provided to the players. If the question of possible illegitimate children being identified in this document is raised, confirm that there is nothing said or implied in the document to this effect. If the characters wish they can confirm this themselves by reading the document itself; it is available for reading in the House Library.

Duna's drinking habits: Since it seems most likely that Duna was poisoned via a glass of wine, the question of Duna's drinking habits might be raised. Duna usually drank wine during evening meals and sometime over lunch if hosting guests; he also occasionally drank beer when this was diplomatically advantageous. He generally had something to drink each night and would constantly have a bottle in his room for this purpose. Duna did not drink heavily and would go through one bottle every few days. He would either send for a bottle (and thus this would be provided by one of the house servants) or he would go down to the cellar and select a bottle for himself. On the night in question Duna was finishing off a bottle and this was selected by himself about 2 nights ago; this has about half a glass of wine still in the bottle.

Testing for Poisons: Since Beniamen is an alchemist it is possible for him to test the liquid remainder of Duna's last drink for poisons. This will take quite a bit longer than the time available during the evening (it will take several hours to get even preliminary results). Also this will require some basic kitchen cookware (not quite as good as a proper alchemical setup but the best that can be done on limited time) and a few live animals (rats will do) to conduct some testing on. What is being tested for must be quite clear since the wine contains bee poison which is not a common or generally accepted "poison", this will not be found unless specifically identified. To test for this one component will take a few hours at a minimum and can be done in the evening only if started early on. Also any testing will require intermittent supervision by Beniamen.

References to allergies in the Family Records: The Family records held in the library will record major events in the lives of Family members; although to find specific references to events like this will require quite a lot of searching taking significant time (so unless the characters want to spend much of the game looking through records this information is likely to remain buried in the Library). As a child Duna was stung by a bee and nearly died as a result; this incident will not have gone unremarked in some of the personal journals of the prominent Family members. Since this allergy is present in the bloodline of the Cantacuzino Family it will show in a few other family members; again this fact will be remarked upon as and when this becomes apparent. None of the other characters present in the game have such a severe allergy to bee poison.

References

Lastly, we have used a number of sources of information to assist in writing this game. Where possible, online resources are referenced here.

We used Wikipedia for much of the history and setting information.

Wikipedia entry for Wallachia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wallachia>

Wikipedia entry for Romania:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romania>

The Family Crest came from the following website:

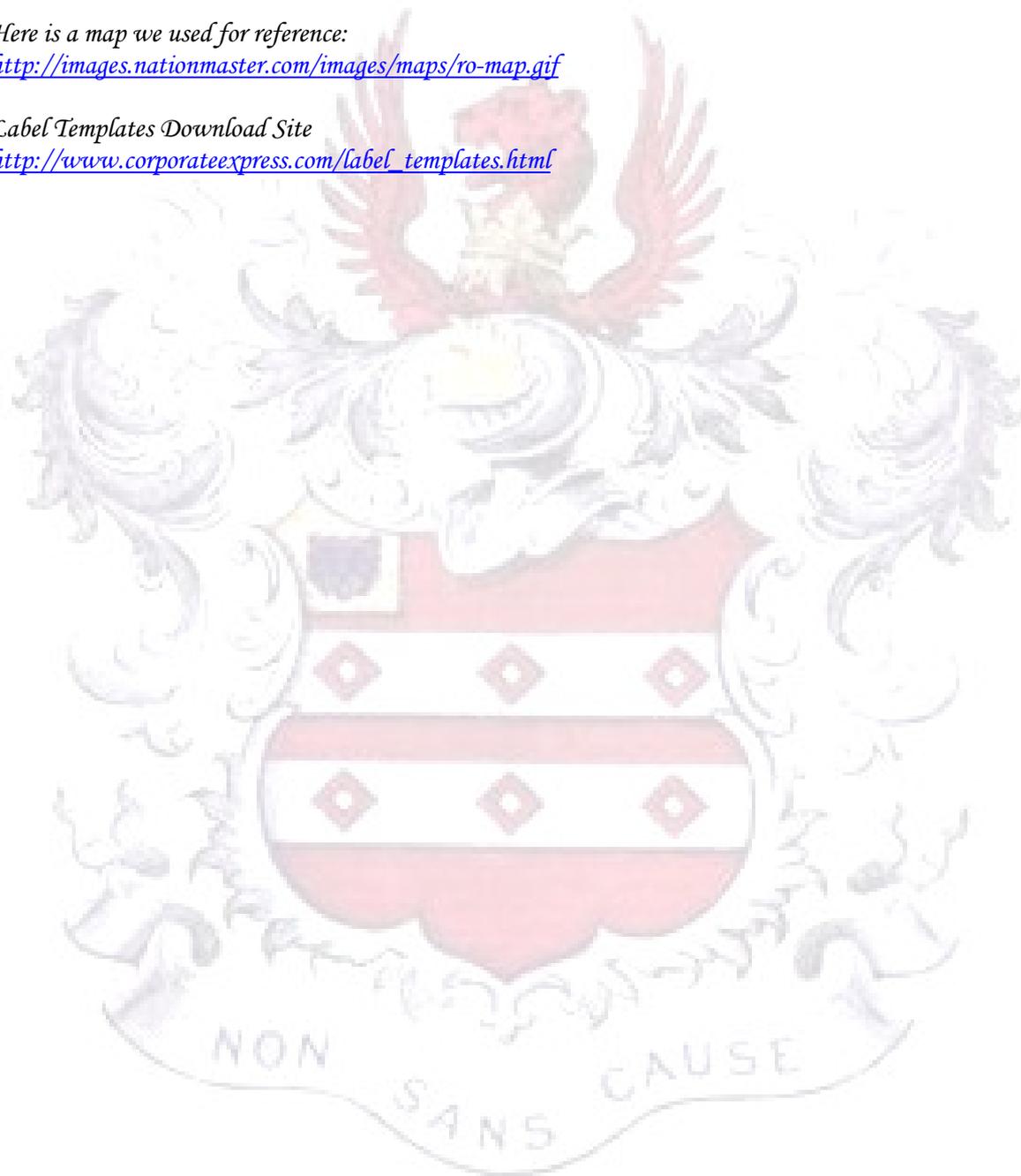
www.geerfamily.org

Here is a map we used for reference:

<http://images.nationmaster.com/images/maps/ro-map.gif>

Label Templates Download Site

http://www.corporateexpress.com/label_templates.html



For The Honour Of The Family

Summary

Seventh day of June, in the year 1826. For centuries the Cantacuzino Family, as one of the great houses, have been at the centre of politics and trade in Wallachia. Built on a foundation of tradition and tight family ties, the Family has weathered many changes and survived many attacks in its attempt to build, and ultimately profit from, a strong and just Wallachian society. And now the Head of the House, Duna Cantacuzino, is dead. Following the old ways, his body lay in state within the Family house in Bucharest for a period of 100 hours, and is now being transported to the ancient Cantacuzino graveyard in Craiova for internment.

With the funeral period over the rebuilding task can begin: starting with the selection of a replacement for Duna. As tradition dictates, direct family members will select the new Head of the House, by vote, before the next New Moon leaves the dusk horizon. On the final night those within travelling distance have gathered together for one last wake and to discuss the future. However, without much time a decision will have to be made tonight. And with the suddenness of Duna's death causing suspicions amongst the Family members and a possible alliance with your oldest rivals the Bălenu Family, the future fortunes or fate of the Cantacuzino Family is very much at stake.

Past List

Head of House Candidates

Jelani Cantacuzino (Gent): The son of Duna is young, headstrong and an exceptional duellist. He is a passionate man who wishes to marry for love, not for his family's interests.

Gamyuka Cantacuzino (Gent): The brother of Duna is an ex-military man who is more rational and intellectual; Gamyuka is running for Head of the House at his wife's insistence.

Other Family Members

Jofranka Cantacuzino nee. Kalderas (Lady): A social butterfly who has married into the Family, Jofranka is of gypsy descent. She is Gamyuka's wife and wants him to be the next Head of the House.

Isoba Cantacuzino (Gent): He is Duna's cousin and was very close to him; Isoba knows a lot about a great number of things. Isoba helped arrange the marriage between Jelani and Narcisa, the daughter of the mainline Bălenu Family (the ancient rivals of the Cantacuzino's) and wants to see this arrangement honoured.

Adanna Cantacuzino (Lady): The daughter of Duna desperately wants to find out who killed her father. She is quite close to Jelani and supports her brother for Head of the House.

Beniamen Cantacuzino ne. Lior (Gent): Husband to Adanna, he is a merchant and brought great wealth with him when he married into the family. His family is rumoured to be heavily involved in the trading of exotic and expensive items.

Kizzy Cantacuzino (Lady): Daughter of Gamyuka and Jofranka, she takes after her mother a great deal. Kizzy married for love and so she supports Jelani's decision on marriage, but she also wishes to support her father, and so is undecided on who to vote for.

Chanoch Cantacuzino ne. Abijah (Gent): Husband to Kizzy, he is a well-respected Jewish scholar. Chanoch is fiercely proud of the Cantacuzinos, despite not being accepted by most family members.

Iulia Cantacuzino nee. Mourosis (Lady): Mother to Duna and Gamyuka, Iulia is insistent on dishing out the years of wisdom and experience she has to her children and grandchildren. Iulia is fond of Jelani, but disagrees with him on some issues.

Amadi Cantacuzino (Gent): Cousin to the family, Amadi is well versed in the history of the family and knows a lot of things. Well loved, but is quite solitary and thus tends to be quite forgettable. He is not overly interested in politics but wants to find out more about Duna's death.

Danut Cantacuzino: (Gent): Cousin to the family, Danut has become involved in strange occult practices. Since the death of his wife and child, he has spent his life tracking down and destroying supposed "Vampires" and other strange abominations. Danut is considered the black sheep of the family.

Wadim Cantacuzino (Gent): Cousin to the family and a merchant by trade, Wadim is looking for financial support to a promising new venture. Wadim has a number of connections and could be very helpful to the family.

Non-Family

Serghei Popescu (Gent): Head Butler to the family, Serghei comes from an illegitimate family line that has served the Cantacuzino family for generations. He was close to Duna and is very keen to find out more about his sudden death.

Ahina Popescu (Lady): Sister to Serghei and Housekeeper to the family; Ahina sees a lot of what happens around the family home. Since Duna's wife died at an early age, the task of raising the children mostly fell to Ahina, Thus she is very close to Adanna, Jelani and their siblings.

Matters of General Knowledge

The Current Political Situation

Things have been relatively stable in Wallachia for some time. The Ottoman Empire keeps a tight hold on the 'ruling' Ghica family. Russia is too powerful to seek an alliance of freedom with, and besides, they wiped out Pârvu Cantacuzino's rebellion back in 1768 and old and powerful kingdoms have long memories. The Balkan states are too fragmented and small to ally with. For now, the state of affairs will have to continue.

However, Russia is looking at moving in on Wallachia. It is possible that they will defeat the Ottoman Empire this time. The Grigorie IV Ghica is having some trouble subduing the various factions. It may be worth overcoming ancient hatreds and drawing the Bălenus away from the ruling family, especially as they have discretely started to distance themselves already.

If Russia wins, new trading opportunities will open up and the Cantacuzinos are in a neat geographical position to take advantage of this, with the river near Craiova making shipping very easy and the Family already having trading interests in the region.

The Death of Duna Cantacuzino

Duna was found in his study after he collapsed; efforts to revive him failed. Amadi and Isoba were the first people on the scene, followed shortly after by Ahina. It seems like Duna was alone just before his death and there are no signs of a struggle. The evidence indicates it was sudden but non-violent; yet many family members are still suspicious as Duna seemed in good health.

The following family members were living in the house at the time of Duna's death: Iulia, Amadi, Gamyuka, Jofranka, Isoba, Jelani, Serghei and Ahina.

The Last Will and Testament of Duna Cantacuzino

Duna Cantacuzino's Last Will and Testament has been read and discussed during the mourning period that has passed. This document is also available for inspection by anyone in the Family Library. As is traditional all of the material wealth and possessions of the Cantacuzino Family have been left in the care of the next Head of the House. Duna had a few treasured personal possessions and mementos, and these have been gifted to family members as he saw fit.

Selecting the Successor of the Head of the House

Traditionally the replacement for the departed Head of the House is not automatic and a vote must be called to name the next successor. After the death of the Head of the House, the Family has until the next new moon leaves the dusk horizon (in this case three weeks) to grieve for their loss and choose a replacement - or disaster will befall the Family. Usually the vote is delayed as long as possible to allow as many members of the Family to gather at the House in Bucharest; that time has now passed and the decision must be made by the end of the evening.

Non-blood relatives of the Family (in-laws) do not get a vote to select the new Head of the House; only blood members of the Cantacuzino Family do. The people who get a vote are: Isoba, Gamyuka, Kizzy,

Wadim, Danut, Jelani and Adanna. No voting Family member can abstain from casting their vote and must choose one of the candidates: Gamyukā or Jelani Cantacuzino.

The voting process will be facilitated by Serghei Popescu and Ahina Popescu, overseen by the House Guards. It will consist of each voting family member casting their vote by a secret ballot box. The results of the vote, and thus who will be the new Head of the House, will be announced directly after the ballot has been counted.

Keys to House Cantacuzino

Since both Duna and his wife Stefania are dead, Head Butler Serghei Popescu and Housekeeper Ahina Popescu hold the Keys to House Cantacuzino (the residence in Bucharest) until a new Head of the House is chosen and the Keys are passed over. This means that they are currently in charge and run the household; they have full authority over the other servants and House Guards.

Also during this transition phase Serghei and Ahina are here more in the capacity of Family friends than servants; when the replacement Head of the House is chosen that person will formally take the house Keys and become master of the House. Until this happens it is tradition that Serghei and Ahina should be seen as close friends and not as servants or inferior in any respect. They will ensure a smooth transition from Duna's reign to that of the new Head of the House.

Jelani's Arranged Marriage

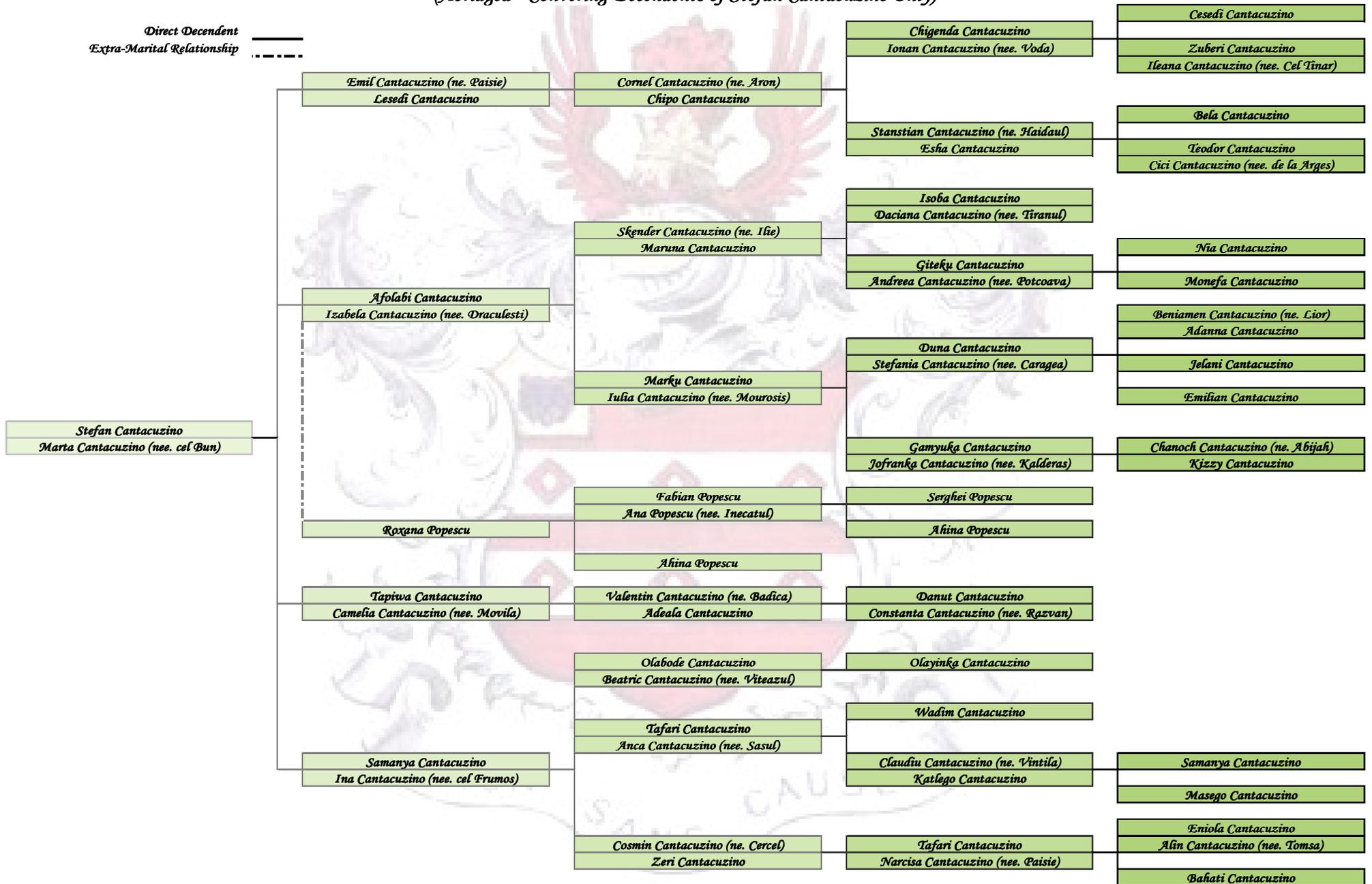
Isoba and Jofrankā have spent the last two years organising a marriage between Jelani and Narcisa Bălenu, the daughter of the mainline Bălenus (the ancient rivals of the Cantacuzinos). To refuse this marriage now would be a grave insult to the Bălenu Family. However Jelani has fallen in love with Viorica Peterscu, a girl from a poor and unsuitable family not nearly the equal of the Cantacuzino's.

If it is absolutely necessary not to marry as directed Jelani can elope, although being in love with someone else has traditionally not been a good enough reason. That being said acting against the will of the Family would be greatly disrespectful and the Head of the House would be well within their rights to bestow any number of punishments, from withdrawing financial support to complete banishment from the Cantacuzino Family.

Cantacuzino Family Tree

(Abridged - Converting Decedents of Stefan Cantacuzino Only)

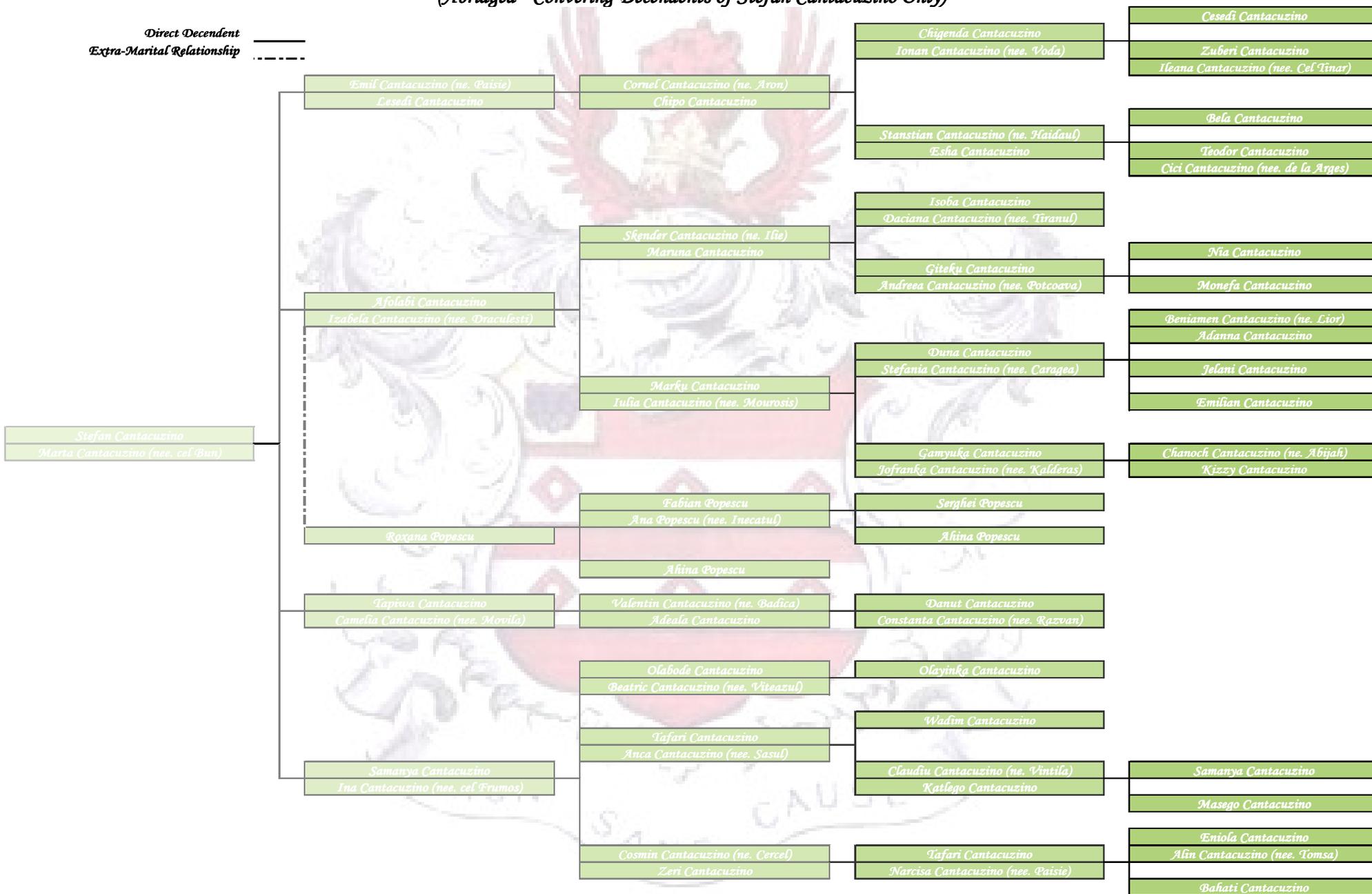
Direct Decendent ———
 Extra-Marital Relationship - - - - -



Cantacuzino Family Tree

(Abridged - Converging Decendents of Stefan Cantacuzino Only)

Direct Decendent ———
 Extra-Marital Relationship - - - - -



History of the Pantacuzino Family

(Abridged)

Early to Mid 1300s

During the early and mid 1300s there was a number of events, including the unification of Wallachian politics and the rebellion of Basarab I to free Wallachia from Hungarian rule, that worked towards the creation of an independent Wallachian country. During this time Andrei Craiovești, the first notable member of the Craiovești family, had three children: Andrei II, Dana and Dragomir. These three individuals became independently wealthy but looked to pool their resources into a unified family; this was the beginnings of the Craiovești Family traditions.

1388

The Craiovești Family home is purchased in Oltenia, the south-west countryside of Wallachia. Over the course of the next few centuries this place was a central point for a number of travellers and traders passing through; as a result a sizeable town developed and would come to be known as Craiova.

Late 1300s; Early to Mid 1400s

During the late 14th century the Craiovești Family spent significant time and resources building up their influence in Wallachia. By the beginning of the 15th century the Craiovești had become a leading and extremely rich dynasty and had developed to become the virtually independent rulers (known as “Boyars”) of Oltenia. The Craiovești Family (who at this stage was of the Greek Orthodox faith) spent significant amounts of money building churches on Mount Athos (in Macedonia, northern Greece).

1453

The fall of Constantinople to Sultan Mehmed II signalled the rise of the Ottoman Empire and their increasing interest in other locales – including Wallachia. The Craiovești Family became strong allies of the Ottoman Princes in exchange for local authority over Oltenia.

1462

With the assistance of John Hunyadi, Regent of the Kingdom of Hungary, The Drăculești family gathered their forces together and rebelled. Vlad III Dracula cut off all links with the Ottomans, and, defeated Mehmed II's offensive during a fierce battle (known as “The Night Attack”) before being forced to retreat to Târgoviște. Over the coming years there would be much conflict as Vlad III Dracula continued to maintain resistance against the Ottomans.

1746

After the death of Vlad III Dracula an informal truce was declared where specific areas of Wallachia could be ruled by the local boyars. In return each province would resume paying (slightly reduced) tributes to the Ottoman Princes.

1512

With the support of the Ottoman Princes, the Craiovești family replaced Mihnea cel Rău as ruler of the greater Wallachia and installed on the throne Neagoe Basarab (a Craiovești by blood). Neagoe's peaceful rule lasted for almost a decade. This was noted for its cultural aspects (the building of the Curtea de Argeș Cathedral and Renaissance influences), and also saw an increase in influence for the Saxon merchants in Brașov and Sibiu.

Lastly this also marked a brief period of alliance between Wallachia and Hungary arranged by Louis II of Hungary. The Craiovești family spoke out strongly against such an alliance as this would be in direct opposition to the Ottoman Princes; unfortunately other influences in the Wallachian Court prevailed.

1526

As predicted by the Craiovești family the Ottoman Empire moved against Hungary and Wallachia was forced to honour the previous agreements. In the Battle of Mohács (fought near Mohács, Hungary) forces of the Kingdom of Hungary (aided by the Wallachian Army) led by King Louis II were defeated by forces of the Ottoman Empire led by Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent.

1529

Changes were instituted by the Ottoman Empire with an attempt to regain tight control over Wallachia. This danger rallied many the local boyars in support of Radu de la Afumați; he raised an army against the Ottoman forces but lost the battle after an agreement between the Craiovești Family and Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent. Prince Radu de la Afumați eventually confirmed Süleyman's position as suzerain, and agreed to pay an even higher tribute.

Mid to Late 1500s; Early to Mid 1600s

Ottoman suzerainty remained virtually unchallenged throughout the following 90 years. The Ottoman Empire increasingly relied on Wallachia and Moldavia for the supply and maintenance of its military forces; the local army, however, soon disappeared due to the increased costs and the much more obvious efficiency of mercenary troops.

1659

After a number of uprisings from boyars the local Ghica Family was instated on the Wallachian throne. The reigns of Gheorghe Ghica and Grigore I Ghica, the sultan's favourites, signified attempts to prevent such incidents; however, they were also the onset of a violent clash between the Băleanu and Craiovești families, which was to mark Wallachia's history until the 1680s.

1678

The Craiovești, threatened by the alliance between the Băleanus and the Ghicas, backed their own choice of princes before promoting themselves — with the ascension of Șerban Craiovești.

After the ascension to the throne, there developed a disagreement of ideals between Șerban Craiovești and his father Constantin Craiovești.

1689

Constantin Brâncoveanu, the nephew of Constantin Craiovești (but also related to, and supported by, the Băleanu Family), soon became involved in the conflict between Constantin and Șerban Craiovești, and rose to the throne after the latter died in mysterious circumstances. He was initially supported by Constantin Craiovești, but the two ended up facing each other in a violent competition. Constantin Craiovești was exiled, and began advocating his son Ștefan's candidacy to the throne.

1698

Constantin Brâncoveanu wanted Wallachian politics closer to his centres of power and Bucharest became the permanent location for the Wallachian court.

1714

Ștefan was involved in his father's intrigue against Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu and denounced him to the Ottoman Empire (Wallachia's overlord); he also surrendered Brâncoveanu's secret correspondence to the Habsburg Monarchy. After obtaining the Prince's deposition, he took the throne in Bucharest as an Ottoman appointee.

1716

Lingering tensions between the Craiovești Family and the closely related Brâncoveanu Family exploded into open hostility. This conflict centred on mutual denunciations for treason to the Ottoman overlord and despite the previous alliances with the Ottoman Empire, both families were played against each other and ultimately betrayed. Ștefan's rule ended after he was arrested together with his father and uncle (Mihai Craiovești). Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu was also arrested by the Ottoman empire. All of these men were executed in Istanbul and the Ottoman's began an attempted destruction of the Craiovești and Brâncoveanu Families.

As a survival strategy the Craiovești Family did the only thing possible to avoid destruction. The core Family members sacrificed themselves to satisfy the bloodlust of the Ottomans and officially the Craiovești Family was wiped out, while everyone else relocated to the Family holdings in Bucharest and re-emerged as the Cantacuzino Family. This process forced the alteration or destruction of many of the records and history of the family (in both official and unofficial records) to remove any evidence of the misdirection; this meant that all of the traditions have since been passed down by mouth and memory only. The Cantacuzino Family then set about the difficult task of rebuilding the family honour, wealth and influence.

It was later discovered that, before his untimely death, Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu was taking part in secret negotiations with the Habsburg Monarchy and Peter the Great's Imperial Russia. In light of the

terrible betrayal by the Ottoman Empire and certain elements of Wallachia, these negotiations were continued by the remaining successor Ștefan II Cantacuzino.

Mid 1700s

Following Ștefan Cantacuzino's death, the Phanariote rule in Wallachia was established as a way to ensure a tighter Ottoman control over Wallachia and its citizens.

Wallachia also became the battleground in a succession of wars between the Ottomans on one side and Russia or the Habsburg Monarchy on the other.

Both of these pressures caused old grievances within Wallachian politics to resurface. The next half-century was marked by bitter feuds between the major families (including the Cantacuzino, Băleanu and Ghica Families) that prevented the Wallachian Court from operating in any unified manner or with any effectiveness.

1768

During the Fifth Russo-Turkish War, Wallachia was placed under its first Russian occupation. This was helped along after the Cantacuzino Family allied itself with Russia. The current Head of the House, Pârvu Cantacuzino, assisted the Russian army by conducting his own rebellion against the oppressive Ottoman Empire. In return, the Russians betrayed their agreement with the Cantacuzino Family and put Nicholas Mavrogenis (a Băleanu by blood) on the Wallachian throne. The Treaty of Kucuk Kaynarca allowed Russia to intervene in favour of Eastern Orthodox Ottoman subjects, curtailing Ottoman pressures, including the decrease in sums owed as tribute. In time, this also increased internal stability while opening Wallachia to more Russian interventions and external trading.

1789

Habsburg troops, under Prince Josias of Coburg, again entered the country during the Russo-Turkish-Austrian War, deposing Nicholas Mavrogenis. A period of crisis followed the Ottoman recovery: Oltenia was devastated by the expeditions of Osman Pazvantoglu (who was closely related to the Băleanu Family), a powerful rebellious leader, whose raids and pillaging was only halted by the death of Prince Constantine Hangerli in a fierce battle.

Late 1700s to Early 1800s

After the Peace of Bucharest, the rule of Ioan Gheorghe Caragea (although remembered for a major plague epidemic) was notable for its cultural and industrial ventures. During the period, Wallachia increased its strategic importance for most European states interested in supervising Russian expansion; consulates were opened in Bucharest, having an indirect but major impact on Wallachian economy through the protection they extended to traders.

1821

The death of Prince Alexander Soutzos started another grab for power in Wallachian politics. The parallel uprising in Oltenia carried out by Tudor Vladimirescu, although allied with the boyars while seeking Russian support, was devastating to the homeland of the Cantacuzino Family and was bitterly opposed. Fortunately the attentions of Vladimirescu turned to greater things and he relocated to Bucharest. For the following weeks, relations between him and his allies worsened (especially after he sought an agreement

with the Ottomans), until Vladimirescu was executed by his own allies. These violent events made the Ottoman Sultan Mahmud II place the Principalities under its occupation again and they placed Grigore IV Ghica on the Wallachian throne. Recent rumour has many of these events were orchestrated by Grigore IV Ghica, using the Ottomans as allies, to allow him to make a grab for power.

1826

The treaty (known as the Akkerman Convention) between Russia and the Ottomans sealed a truce and allowed Wallachia to freely trade with countries other than the Ottoman Empire. This signalled substantial economic and urban growth, as well as improving the situation for the local populations. The duty of overseeing of the Principalities was left to Russian general Pavel Kiselyov; who has signalled his intention to return power of Wallachia to local boyars (via some sort of Legislative Assembly) and perhaps also intends to reinstate the Wallachian Army.



*Iulia
Cantacuzino*

*Chanoch
Cantacuzino
(ne. Abijah)*

*Amadi
Cantacuzino*

*Kizzy
Cantacuzino*

*Beniamen
Cantacuzino
(ne. Lior)*

*Danut
Cantacuzino*

*Adanna
Cantacuzino*

*Gamyuka
Cantacuzino*

*Jofranka
Cantacuzino
(nee. Kalderas)*

*Wadim
Cantacuzino*

*Isoba
Cantacuzino*

Serghei Popescu

*Jelani
Cantacuzino*

Ahina Popescu

*For Head of the House
I cast my vote for:
Jelani*

*For Head of the House
I cast my vote for:
Gamyuka*

*For Head of the House
I cast my vote for:
Jelani*

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Adanna Cantacuzino

(Adanna means "Father's Daughter")

You are the eldest child of Duna and Stefania Cantacuzino, and you loved your father dearly while he was alive. Your mother died after giving birth to your littlest brother, Emilian, and you were half-raised by the housekeeper, Ahina Popescu. Because of this you were always very close to your father even though he never seemed to have enough time for you and your siblings.

Following your sixteenth birthday, you were engaged to and then married Beniamen Lior, of the Lior merchant family. This was an arranged marriage, to try and bring more money into the family, and it worked. You don't feel that you really connect with your Husband and there is not a large amount of affection between the two of you; the marriage is really for the Family rather than something you want. There is even less affection between you and your father's cousin Isoba Cantacuzino, as he was the one who suggested the marriage to your grandparents and father. You never trusted Isoba even before – he had a lot of closed meetings with your father, and you hated being apart from Father

After you married Beniamen, you drifted away from the family, being drawn into the politics of the Lior household. The Lior family is heavily involved in trade and commerce, although they are also involved in alchemy and run a secret business of acquiring unusual goods (especially alchemy equipment and poisons). While Beniamen was always courteous and even kind to you, you never got along with your adopted household. This meeting of your true family is a bittersweet reunion: you finally meet your family members for the first time in years, when you have just lost one most dear to you.

Changes have been happening. Your brothers have grown up, and Jelani Cantacuzino, the middle child, has fallen in love. You are now torn in indecision: you love and support your brother, and want him to be happy, but there is no denying that the arranged marriage is necessary for the family. Asking the Bălenus girl to marry the younger child Emilian when Jelani was promised is a horrendous breach of etiquette, and may result in all alliance talks being called off. Also, there are talks of your father's death being murder, as it was sudden and unnatural.

When it comes down to it, you will support your brother in becoming Head of the House, because you love him, and he loves passionately. Beyond that, you know your father would have wanted Jelani to succeed him and be the next Head of the House.

What You Want

Find out who killed your father Duna Cantacuzino. His death was too sudden and unnatural, and someone must have done something to your father. You need to find out and expose whoever committed this treacherous act. Talk to Isoba about this since he always knows much of what is happening in the Cantacuzino family, and he definitely knows more than he is saying in this matter.

Support your brother in his quest to become next Head of the House. You do not wish your brother to suffer the same fate that you have had, and you believe that everyone deserves a chance to be happy - even if this might cause political difficulties for the family.

Make connections with your cousin Wadim and help him out. You know that Wadim is looking to improve trade relations for the Cantacuzino family. You can help him somehow – maybe you could help by introducing him to your husband?

Catch up with the housekeeper, Ahina – you haven't seen her in years. It would be lovely to reminisce with her...

The Other Family Members

Duna Cantacuzino: Your beloved father, he was going to allow Jelani to marry for love. You miss him dearly, and the rumours of murder make you angry and upset.

Iulia Cantacuzino (nee. Mourosis): Your grandmother, you always liked and respected her, and, despite being a Cantacuzino only through marriage, she has always been devoted to the family and its needs.

Amadi Cantacuzino: A family cousin; you vaguely remember him from when you were young. He knows a great deal about the family history, and you love him dearly. Despite that, he's quite forgettable.

Beniamen Cantacuzino (ne. Lior): Your husband. He belongs to the Lior family, a family renowned for dabbling in alchemy and poisons. You're not very fond of him.

Chanoch Cantacuzino (ne. Abijah): A Jewish scholar, he is husband to your cousin Kizzy. He makes her happy, and is very knowledgeable but, when it comes down to it, he is a Jew.

Kizzy Cantacuzino: Your cousin. She's very lovely, but a bit over-romantic. She married for love – you were even a bridesmaid!

Danut Cantacuzino: Your mad cousin, his wife and son died in childbirth. Their death snapped his mind, and he now believes in vampires and demons. Every family has one.

Gamyuka Cantacuzino: Your uncle, he is in the running to be Head of the House. He's very rational and militant, but you know your brother would be better to lead the Cantacuzino Family.

Jofranka Cantacuzino (nee. Kalderas): Your aunt and a gypsy, she's quite the charming social butterfly and very lovely to talk to. There are all kinds of rumours that she has magic in her blood, but you don't put a lot of stock in that.

Isoba Cantacuzino: Your second cousin. You distrust him, and have since as long as you can remember. He arranged your marriage to Beniamen.

Jelani Cantacuzino: Your little brother; he's passionate about the family, and wants to marry for love. You think he's make a fantastic Head of the House, as he seems to have become a decent, understanding man.

Wadim Cantacuzino: A merchant whom you have only met once, he wants people to invest in what sounds like a risky business venture. Your father was all for it, and it sounds like it would help bring in money for the family, so you support him in this regard.

Serghei Popescu: The butler, he was always slightly cool towards you as a child, but that's just his usual manner. He always knows more than he says, and can usually be relied upon for decent information.

Ahina Popescu: The housekeeper and sister to Serghei, she half-raised you and your brothers. You love her and have missed her dearly.

Ahina Popescu

(Ahina means "To Soothe")

All your life you have worked in the Cantacuzino household, since you are family it was your destiny. You were raised in the oldest Cantacuzino home in Craiova, and along with your brother treated as one of the family. Your father Fabian Popescu taught you the traditions of service within House Cantacuzino; instructions which guided you well in the many years you have been in service to this great house. Like your brother, Serghei, you believe in dignity and formality, and that the Family and its traditions come first.

Any why should you not? Working for the Family (as was expected) has reaped you unexpected rewards. You have had the honor and privilege to raise the sons and daughters of Lord Duna; when his wife Stefania died during the birth of her youngest child the task to raise the children fell to you. As any mother cares for her own flesh and blood so you have nurtured and loved these children. Over the years they have become everything to you, and now they are all becoming their own people and moving towards their own destinies. And so the murder of their father Lord Duna could not have come at a worse time for the children.

More importantly you know who is responsible – that mysterious person Amadi. You only rarely see him, and never manage to catch him alone at any time. As far as you can tell, there is no room set aside in the family home for him (although given the size of the house it is not inconceivable he may be staying somewhere in the house – but not anywhere you can find). You don't quite know what he does or even his exact relationship to the family; given his facial features he is definitely a Cantacuzino relation. But upon hearing the shouts as Lord Duna's body was found you were on the scene within seconds – but still beaten there by Amadi (Isoba was also there when you arrived but given how much time he and Lord Duna spent in meetings together it is natural he would be close by)! You had recently seen Amadi in another part of the house and it is unlikely in the extreme that he could have beaten you here unless he was there when Lord Duna died...

What You Want

You are sure that Amadi killed Lord Duna, but you don't know how or why. You need to get more information about this nasty affair, and prove the guilt of Amadi.

You love Lord Duna's children like they were your very own, and want to see them do well. You believe that, despite coming off as a little immature, Jelani would be the ideal and natural replacement for Duna. Besides you have never trusted Gamyuka and his devious wife. Do what you can to assist Jelani become Head of the House.

Above all you believe in the formality and tradition. As tradition dictates, until the new Head of the House is chosen you hold the Keys of the House. It is therefore your duty to ensure the House is run correctly. As a friend of the family it is also your responsibility to ensure the voting process for the new Head of the House is conducted in a fair and honest manner; and you will ensure this is done. Through the House Guards you have the power to enforce the peace and ensure everything is done as it should be, and so it will be done.

The Other Family Members

Duna Cantacuzino: Always busy with the affairs of the House, Lord Duna did not have much time for the children. This notwithstanding, he was a kind and gentle man and you will miss him.

Iulia Cantacuzino (nee. Mourosis): The matriarch of the Cantacuzino House is wise beyond her years. The younger generations don't see this and don't give her the attention and respect she deserves. She has much to teach them about the traditions and family values of House Cantacuzino.

Amadi Cantacuzino: You have seen Amadi only rarely and he never talks to you; although he does seem to take an interest in Lord Duna's children and spends some time with them. You do not know what Amadi stood to gain by killing Lord Duna, although it might have something to do with the children. Cold and distant, you have never seen this man smile.

Beniamen Cantacuzino (ne. Lior): A merchant with many connections, he has done well providing a steady income to the family in these times of difficulty. He seems nice enough.

Adanna Cantacuzino: Sister to Jelani, she also takes after Lord Duna quite a bit. She has married and left the Family home now, and so you see her only rarely. It would be lovely to catch up with her.

Chanoch Cantacuzino (ne. Abijah): A scholar highly placed in the Jewish community, Chanoch seems quiet but very devoted to this adopted family.

Kizzy Cantacuzino: The daughter of Jofranka takes after her mother and is very nice - if a little lacking in intellect. It would be worth talking to her as she might unknowingly provide information that could be useful to you.

Danut Cantacuzino: A cousin who is not seen often by the family; he seems to have a fixation on some weird notions. Just make sure he does not cause any trouble.

Gamyuka Cantacuzino: Lord Duna's brother always seemed too cold and calculating to you, although he does have an excellent speaking manner and seems nice enough. He was never quite the same after returning from his time in the military.

Jofranka Cantacuzino (nee. Kalderas): The wife of Gamyuka, she always treats you like a friend and is lovely to be around. but there is an air of insincerity around Jofranka that makes you mistrust her very much.

Isoba Cantacuzino: A quiet man but fiercely devoted to the Family. Isoba was very close to Lord Duna and spent much time talking to him in secret meetings. Although they disagreed often, he has spent his whole life working for the betterment of the Family and can be trusted.

Jelani Cantacuzino: An emotional yet strong willed person, Jelani takes after his father in a lot of ways. He loved him a great deal and will feel his loss heavily.

Wadim Cantacuzino: A merchant from out of town, he has visited the Family home on occasion. You have had little to do with him and do not know his character at all.

Serghei Popescu: Your brother was good friends with Lord Duna (a little more than you though appropriate) and is taking his death rather hard. As Head Butler he will help you enforce the peace during these proceedings.

Amadi Cantacuzino

(Amadi means "Destined To Die At Birth")

You are the House Spirit; you protect the house and the people within from harm. You don't really remember how you came to guard this house. You were a child of the house and born here, you know that, but you're not quite sure how you ended up protecting the family. You think you were a deliberate sacrifice, a volunteer, but that is only speculation. You're fairly sure you were originally a Craiovești, only, of course, you changed to Cantacuzino when the Family did.

You have met every one of the Family at least once. It's Family tradition that each child of each line will be brought to the House in Bucharest where they will be acknowledged by the Head of the House. You welcome the fact that they spend time in the nursery, where you join them and play with them, bringing them into your protection while under this roof. You love them all because they're Family, but at the same time, you know they will die and you will remain to protect the next generation.

You were created, at least in part, to guard against assassinations in the House, all those turbulent centuries ago, both from external forces and family disagreements turned violent. In all your long existence, you have never failed your duty of keeping the Head of House safe. Now the unthinkable has happened: Duna Cantacuzino, the Head of House has died suddenly and unnaturally – although non-violently – while in the House and you were unable to reach him.

You knew something was wrong, of course; it's part of the magic that binds you here. You tried to bring your awareness and focus to the study where Duna was, but something was preventing you from getting there. It would have taken too long to break through the barrier, so in desperation you shifted into your little used corporeal form and ran there, footsteps echoing on the polished wooden floors.

But it was too late.

Isoba (Duna's cousin and currently the Family Guardian), arrived much the same as you did, bursting through the opposite door. Shortly after, the Housekeeper, Ahina (daughter of the family but from an illegitimate line some generations back), arrived, drawn by your frantic attempts to shake the life back into him and you faded into the background, there being nothing more you could do.

Duna was allergic to bee poison and since his initial allergic reaction in the house when he was a child; you have prevented bees from entering the house or the grounds while Duna is in residence. The way he died now looks much like that reaction years ago. But who would know about the allergy, have access to bee poison (you weren't even aware that bee poison could be extracted) and be able to prevent your spirit from getting to Duna? More importantly, who did this and why? You know there are currently disagreements between Duna and other Family members, particularly Isoba regarding Jelani's marriage. And Isoba seemed to arrive very quickly after you sensed danger, almost like he was there all along.

You don't usually attend the family gatherings in a corporeal form. It isn't necessary. You usually choose the most appropriate person to suggest to the new Head of House to be Guardian and then present that candidate at a later date. This time, you've decided to attend in person. You're not going to vote, of course, but you want to see how it works out.

You are Amadi Cantacuzino which is true. You are a cousin of the family, which is also true. And the magic makes people think you trustworthy and unmemorable, appearing as a man of middle age. You will reveal yourself if necessary, but you would really rather not.

What You Want

Find out who killed Duna Cantacuzino. You have guarded this House for centuries. Duna is the first Head of the House to die under your watch. You already have some idea of where to start: the only person who could have got to the scene as quickly as you did must be the murderer.

Evaluate the Guardian Candidates and decide which one would work best with Jelani and which one would work better with Gamyuka. The Guardian is the third protector of the Family; besides you and the Head of the House, and it is your responsibility to advise the new Head of the House on the selection of the Guardian.

Danut Cantacuzino is mad; the entire Family knows this. If he decides you're a danger, he might try to interfere with you. That would not be good for the Family and you will take steps if necessary.

Hear about the world outside the House. Your boundaries are defined by the grounds; you can't remember what it's like to go beyond them. It would be nice to hear how things have changed since you were last in the world.

The Other Family Members

Duna Cantacuzino: The recently deceased Head of the House, and as much as you have friends, he was one to you. The two of you had worked together for years. Now he has been killed under your watch and you want to find his murderer.

Iulia Cantacuzino (nee. Mourosis): Duna's mother. She married Marķu Cantacuzino and adopted the Family for her own, passionately so, as if she was born to it. Very devoted to Family traditions.

Beniamen Cantacuzino (ne. Lior): Adanna's husband. He hasn't spent much time with the Family, but seems well enough, although interested in poisons and the like. Might be worth talking to...

Adanna Cantacuzino: Duna's daughter and eldest child. She was married off at 16 and has spent much of the time since with her husband's family. You look forward to seeing how she has changed from the girl you knew.

Chanoch Cantacuzino (ne. Abijah): You have only seen him in the house as Kizzy's husband. He seems very interested in the Family, as though he wants to belong.

Kizzy Cantacuzino: The daughter of Gamyuka and Jofranka, until recently she spent her time here with her parents. Now, she brings her husband with her when she visits. She too, has the occasional feel of magic about her, but it's never as strong or focused as Jofranka's.

Danut Cantacuzino: Another cousin whom you have rarely seen since he was a child. You have heard that since the death of his wife and child his mind has snapped, and he does seem to have some strange notions now. You probably want to avoid him as much as possible. However, if he attacks any family members you will step in with whatever power is necessary.

Gamyuka Cantacuzino: Duna's brother and the man who has been the acknowledged second for years. A calm and rational man, he served his time in the military before retiring to spend half his time in Bucharest and half his time in Craiova, bringing his wife and daughter with him. You respect him and think you could work with him.

Jofranka Cantacuzino (nee. Kalderas): Gamyuka's wife is a bright, vivacious and social woman. You think she is good for him, but you don't know much about that side of life. The feel of magic clings to her and this concerns you.

Isoba Cantacuzino: Duna's cousin. Isoba was the Guardian of the Family up until Duna's death. He has a logical inquisitive mind, which means you have stayed away from him over the years. He and Duna have been arguing lately and he arrived in the study at the same time as you did and he knows about Duna's allergy to bee poison. This seems very suspicious to you and more than a coincidence.

Jelani Cantacuzino: Duna's son and heir, he is a bright, passionate young man who acknowledges his duty to the family. He has the potential to be one of the Cantacuzino's great leaders, but his personal feelings clearly conflict with this.

Wadim Cantacuzino: A cousin whom you have not seen since he was brought to the House when he was a child. He is now a merchant who aims to prosper the Family.

Serghei Popescu: An illegitimate family member from a couple of generations back; he has worked as the House Butler for years. Duna was always pleased with his work. You have not actively avoided him, but neither have you spoken to him.

Ahina Popescu: Brother to Serghei, she has filled the role of the Housekeeper for years, having even more responsibility after the death of Duna's wife, Stefania. She was often there when you spent time with the children as she mothered them. You respect her abilities and commitment to the Family.

Things You Know

Other members of the Cantacuzino Family will know none or only some of the following information.

Guardian Of The Cantacuzino Family

The Guardian is the secret protector of the Family; working best in the shadows and from behind the scenes. A thankless but necessary task, the Guardian works very closely with the Head of the House and watches the Family's blind side. The Guardian is expected to be politically savvy, maintain a large number of contacts and be well-informed - especially on issues that directly affect House Cantacuzino. This information is then passed to the Head of the House to assist him in his duties for the Cantacuzino Family.

Isoba Cantacuzino occupied the role of Guardian while Duna Cantacuzino was Head of the House.

As the House Spirit you choose the Guardian based both on the candidate's ability to work with the new Head of the House and their ability to protect the Family from outside threats. As such, a new Guardian is chosen for each new Head of the House.

Traditionally, the Guardians are blood members of the Family. However, this is not actually necessary. The current Candidates are: Jofranka, Beniamin and Chanoch.

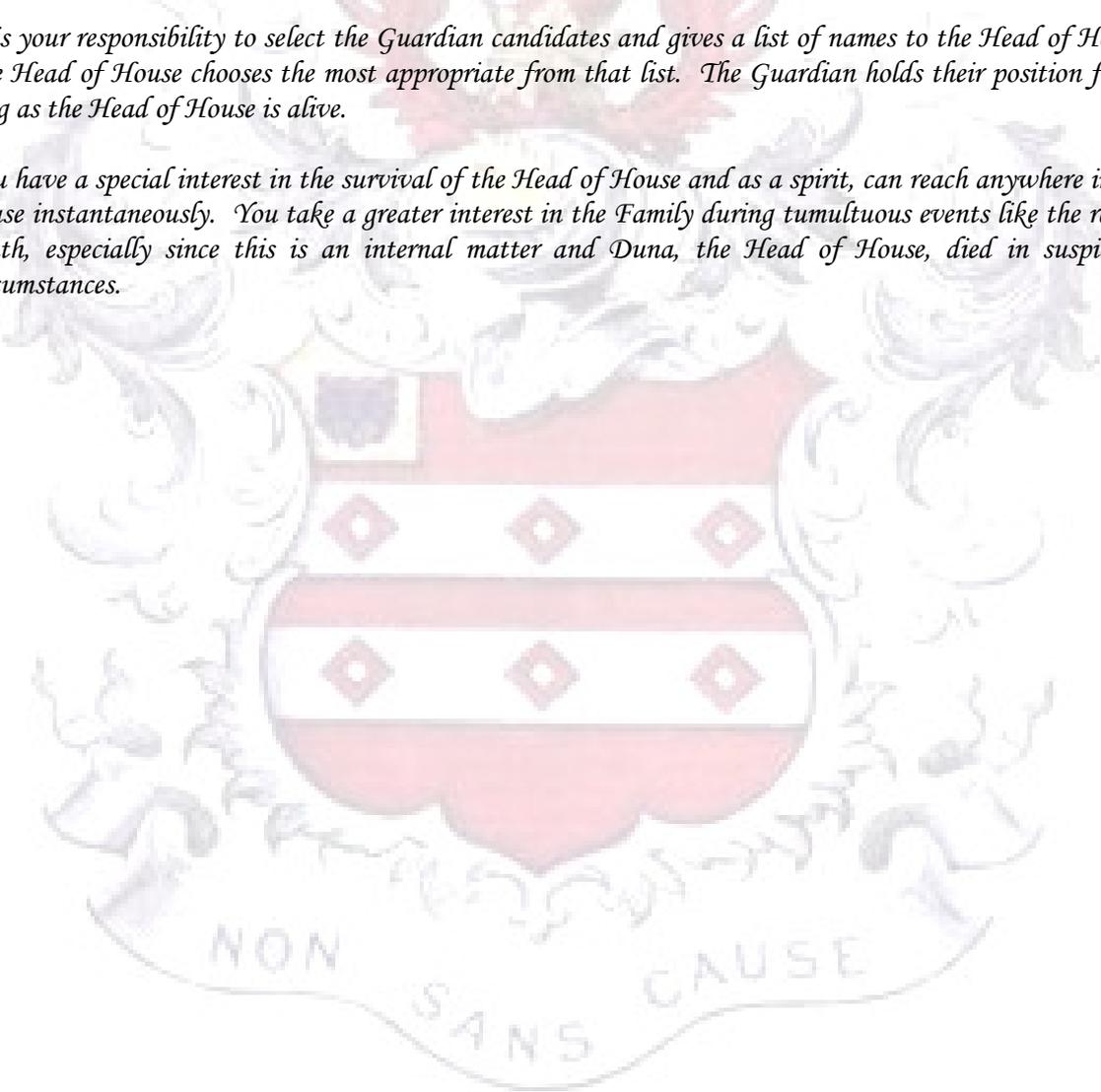
Protector Of The Cantacuzino Family

As the House Spirit you have guarded the Family house in Bucharest for a very long time. Important members of the mainline Family know about the House Spirit, but the Guardian, who often works in conjunction with you, knows even more.

You are able to protect anyone within the walls of the Family house; both from physical harm and other forms of attack (poisons etc). This protection is usually extended to any guests residing in the house provided they do not display any ill intentions. You have the ability to prevent any person from attacking anyone else, as well as removing other possible dangers (you seem to be able to sense the future when someone in the house is likely to be injured in an accident). Also you can detect poisons in food or on objects and can take actions to remove this to prevent anyone from being harmed.

It is your responsibility to select the Guardian candidates and gives a list of names to the Head of House. The Head of House chooses the most appropriate from that list. The Guardian holds their position for as long as the Head of House is alive.

You have a special interest in the survival of the Head of House and as a spirit, can reach anywhere in the house instantaneously. You take a greater interest in the Family during tumultuous events like the recent death, especially since this is an internal matter and Duna, the Head of House, died in suspicious circumstances.



Beniamen Cantacuzino (ne. Lior)

(Beniamen means "Sun of the South")

You come from a wealthy merchant family; Isoba Cantacuzino helped get a marriage contract between you and your wife, Adanna Cantacuzino. When you came into the Family you brought with you contacts and trade opportunities, and in return your family was given political power through the name of Cantacuzino. Marriage into a family as famous and politically important as the Cantacuzinos means that you would be expected to take your wife's family name, so you did.

Your Family has strong trading connections with the Ostend Company and until recently the United East India Company; this has long served your family and provided the wealth you now enjoy. For many years your Family has dabbled in alchemy, and although that makes people nervous it has also enabled your family to trade in more expensive items. While some family members do take an interest in the dangerous studies of alchemy and science, your focus is on the intricate matters of poisons and rare items. As well as the legitimate trading connections your family handles more precious and expensive items, and this income has done your family well in past years as well as enabling you to follow, in a limited way, the darker side of Wallachian politics.

Your marriage brought great prestige and political sway to the Lior family, but not great happiness between you and Adanna as she seems, at best, ambivalent towards you. Nonetheless, you are a gentleman, and want to make her happy. Currently, this seems to involve going to the wake of Duna Cantacuzino and getting some information for her. Although Adanna and you have been somewhat isolated from the Cantacuzino family of late, she seems convinced that the sudden death of her father was not natural, and is quite determined to find out what is going on.

As an outsider to the Family, you have no vote and little interest in the current politics swamping the family. However your wife's future happiness might depend on the outcome of what happens in this gathering you should help and support her however you can. Also, although you have met a number of the members of this family, you have had very little contact with them. It might be to your advantage to form some connections within the family, you never know when you might need to ask someone for a favour...

What You Want

Improve your connections within the family. The Cantacuzino Family is one of the oldest families in Wallachia and they have a lot of political power and useful contacts. You should try to make some friends as you never know when they will be able to provide you some assistance.

Your Family has long had strong trading connections and you feel that the Cantacuzino family could make better use of this. Specifically you have connections with the Ostend Company, a very powerful trading company within East Europe and until recently a strong international trader (but ill fortunes of late ensures this company retains only their East European trade connections). You also used to have strong connections to the United East India Company; although this company has now folded due to financial difficulties, there are a number of powerful people from here you still call friends. You feel that the Cantacuzino family could make use of some of these connections to improve their financial situation; which has become quite dire of late.

Support your wife and make her happy. Although Adanna and you are not very close you are still married and you intend to do what you can to make her happy.

The Other Family Members

Duna Cantacuzino: He was your father-in-law, and a decent man. His passing has upset your wife, but it was also rather suspicious.

Iulia Cantacuzino (nee. Mourosis): Your grandmother-in-law, she rules the clan with an iron fist. You greatly respect her – and want to stay out of her way.

Amadi Cantacuzino: The Cantacuzino historian, you find yourself warming to him quickly. Despite this, he is quite forgettable.

Adanna Cantacuzino: Your wife. You're courteous to her, and want her to be happy, but if she doesn't ask for information you won't offer it to her.

Chanoch Cantacuzino (ne. Abijah): A Jewish scholar, like you he married into the Cantacuzinos but it was a marriage of love. You are sure Adanna is jealous of him for the relationship he and his wife enjoy.

Kizzy Cantacuzino: Chanoch's wife and your cousin by marriage, she is very free and sweet, and seems quite close to your wife. She is rumoured to take after her mother a great deal.

Danut Cantacuzino: Every family – even your own – has one. He snapped after the death of his wife and child, and now firmly believes in vampires and other children's stories. A lunatic you should be wary of.

Gamyuka Cantacuzino: Your uncle-in-law, he is in the running for Head of the House. He is a rational, military man, but also an intellectual. As you have no vote you have no interest in his politics, but he might be interesting to talk to and will become very powerful if he gets his way.

Jofranka Cantacuzino (nee. Kalderas): Gamyuka's wife and a gypsy. She's a social butterfly and a gossip – you wouldn't trust her to open an envelope.

Isoba Cantacuzino: Isoba is a cold and calculating person, although he is pleasant enough in social situations. He was the one who arranged your marriage to Adanna to the mutual benefit of both families; but you are not sure if you can trust him. Isoba ordered a few rare materials from your Family but you have no idea why. He knows enough about your Family interests to be an effective ally or enemy.

Jelani Cantacuzino: Your brother-in-law. Your wife loves him dearly, but you're both aware that his falling in love with the girl was a horrendous breach of etiquette.

Wadim Cantacuzino: You have never met Wadim, but you know him by reputation. A merchant, he wants the Cantacuzino Family to finance for a risky trading venture. You think it might work, and maybe help restore some of the money to the family coffers, but would be disastrous if it went wrong. You would urge caution in this regard.

Serghei Popescu: The butler. Chilly and professional, he was greatly loyal to Duna in life. He seems quite suspicious.

Ahina Popescu: The housekeeper. She half-raised your wife, and so is very close to all of Duna's children. As the housekeeper, she might know things.

Things You Know

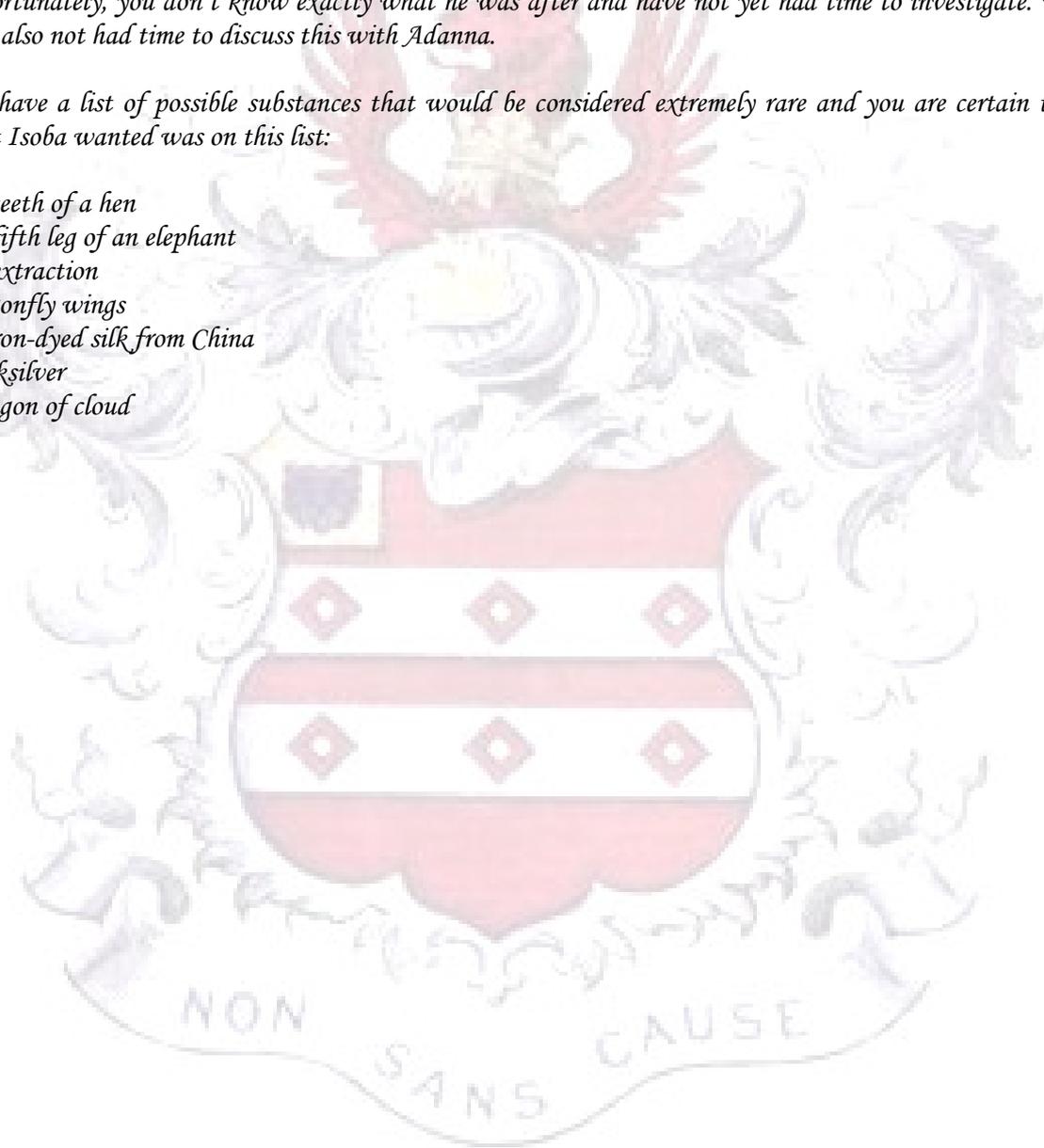
Other members of the Cantacuzino Family will know none or only some of the following information.

Unusual Purchase By Isoba Cantacuzino

Before you came here, one of your relatives in the Lior Family told you that Isoba Cantacuzino had requested some rare and expensive items. You thought that the Cantacuzinos were almost broke, so why? Unfortunately, you don't know exactly what he was after and have not yet had time to investigate. You have also not had time to discuss this with Adanna.

You have a list of possible substances that would be considered extremely rare and you are certain that what Isoba wanted was on this list:

- The teeth of a hen*
- The fifth leg of an elephant*
- Bee extraction*
- Dragonfly wings*
- Saffron-dyed silk from China*
- Quicksilver*
- A flagon of cloud*



Phanoch Cantacuzino (ne. Abijah)

(Phanoch means "Dedicated")

You are a well-respected Jewish scholar, or you were. You're still respected for your learning and command of theology, but as for everything else, you're in disgrace. The only thing you've done wrong: marry a non-Jewish woman.

But Kizzy is a delight. She is young and passionate and she adores you. You adore her right back. She waltzed into your life after a lecture you gave and you haven't been the same since. You didn't court her so much as she courted you. It took all your courage to approach her father to ask for her hand and you were utterly amazed when he said yes, go ask her. You haven't stopped counting your blessings since.

The rest of her family weren't so happy. Her mother accepts your marriage, because you make Kizzy happy - isn't that alone a wonder? Her grandmother is less than impressed. You would like to win Iulia over, as she is the oldest woman in the family and the matriarch, but you fear that might not happen unless you renounce your faith, and even more than you cannot give up Kizzy, you cannot stop serving Yahweh.

You've published a little more, given a few more lectures, but since your marriage, much of your mind has been given over to loving your wife and learning to live with her, since you come from such disparate backgrounds. Sometimes you think you're a too old and serious man for Kizzy, who is light and laughter and love, but then she will look at you and you will fall in love all over again and find something that will delight her.

Duna Cantacuzino didn't accept your marriage, precisely, but he didn't object to it either. He died recently, while you were visiting, and now you get to see how your adopted family (since your own has disowned you) will deal with this situation, especially since the death was sudden. You want the Family to accept you, since yours doesn't. They are your Family now, your people in place of those who were your people. You will honour them and defend them as much as necessary.

You used to be involved in helping some of your fellow Jews escape from Russia. The new agreement will make their position even more precarious. Maybe you can use your new Family and influence to help your people there. There are routes set up already, but the demand is greater than the supply. One of the cousins who is involved in trade might be a good person to talk to.

What You Want

Talk to people and see if there is anything you can do to help the Family. You understand from some things Kizzy has said that the Family is not in the best position right now and your marriage probably made it worse.

Find out more about the Family history. The Cantacuzinos are your Family now and you would like to know more about them. Iulia, your grandmother-in-law, might be a good place to start.

Get support in kicking Russia out of Wallachia, or at least in reducing their presence here. Russia does not like Jews and you would rather your mother's people be safe. Talking to both Jelani and Gamyuka would probably be a good plan. Perhaps the family cousins who are merchants trading in Russia would be prepared to smuggle some Jews out; it can't hurt to ask.

The Other Family Members

Duna Cantacuzino: Your uncle by marriage, you only met once or twice before his untimely death. He appeared to be a good leader.

Iulia Cantacuzino (nee. Mourosis): Your grandmother-in-law, you would like to gain her respect and acceptance as she is the oldest living member of the family.

Amadi Cantacuzino: One of the cousins; you've never met him.

Beniamen Cantacuzino (ne. Lior): Adanna's merchant husband. He has studied a variety of interesting things.

Adanna Cantacuzino: Kizzy's cousin, and one who married for the good of the family. She was an attendant at your wedding.

Kizzy Cantacuzino: Your wife, delight and good fortune.

Danut Cantacuzino: One of the cousins; you've never met him. He went mad after his family died. Kizzy thinks his story is very romantic.

Gamyuka Cantacuzino: Your father-in-law; he accepts you because Kizzy wants you. You hope to win him over properly one day.

Jofranka Cantacuzino (nee. Kalderas): Your mother-in-law; she agreed to your marriage because you make Kizzy happy.

Isoba Cantacuzino: Your uncle or cousin by marriage; he seems to be a sensible and clever man. You don't know him well.

Jelani Cantacuzino: Kizzy's cousin and the Heir of Duna; he seems to be a likable and determined young man.

Wadim Cantacuzino: One of the cousins; you've never met him. A merchant of some reputation.

Serghei Popescu: Ahina's brother and the house Butler. He was a distant and unapproachable figure in Kizzy's childhood.

Ahina Popescu: The Housekeeper, who holds the keys. She was an influential and much-loved figure in Kizzy's childhood and you want to gain the respect of this woman who is important to your wife.

Danut Cantacuzino

(Danut means "Judge")

It wasn't that long ago that your wife, Constanta died in childbirth, taking with her your only son, Ioan. They fell victim to a curse aimed at you; and you have bemoaned and grieved their loss. Your wife and child were innocent and cruelly taken from you into the next world. But you will get your revenge on the perpetrator of this heinous crime...

It was a dark and stormy night, and you were rushing to see the birth of your first baby. A beggar stepped in your way, and as you brushed passed him he fell over into the mud. You turned and apologized to him but being in a rush you did not stop. The look in his eyes should have alerted you to something being wrong, but you did not have the experience you now have in these matters. He yelled a curse at you which you could barely hear over the wind and rain, but it was enough for the hand of fate. Soon your wife and child were dead, and the beggar was nowhere to be found.

You know now that he must have been only one thing: A Vampire. One of the unholy living dead, and they have powers that extend beyond devastating curses. Since then, you have been obsessed with finding and killing the Vampire, if not just for your sake but to prevent him harming other innocents. You have devoted your whole life to the search of the vampiric, the evil, the demonic and the dark, but you have still not yet found the one that killed your wife and child. You didn't get a good look at him, but you know that you'll recognize him when you find him.

You were travelling north into Wallachia on your way to Transylvania where you hear tell of vile and unspeakable horrors scurrying across the dark landscape. The day was dank and overcast; you were travelling to the capital Bucharest, when a man you vaguely recognized passed. Curious, you asked his name. He was Wadim, a merchant and cousin of yours whom you remember from years past. He told you of the Cantacuzino bereavement and you were sympathetic. After learning some facts, such as the unnatural suddenness of his death, you knew something was not right. Further investigation of the situation at the Family home has convinced you that the Vampire is here, at this wake! You just know it!

Of course, the Vampire couldn't move openly and so boldly without assistance. He had to have help, and you think you know who...

His name is Serghei Popescu, a distant illegitimate cousin of the Cantacuzinos; his family has proudly served for generations. You just know that it was Serghei, the butler, who killed him Duna Cantacuzino. But who orchestrated the affair? Serghei wasn't alone and did not act on his own impulse. There was someone else here, pulling the strings directly or possibly just manipulating the poor butler into murderous and criminal acts. A Vampire always works in the shadows but his hand can be illuminated by the truth. You must, and will, find out who is the unholy blight on this Family...

What You Want

Find the vampire.

Expose the vampire, and convince the rest of the family to help you destroy the abomination.

Kill the vampire.

The Other Family Members

Duna Cantacuzino: *The old Head of the House. He was a good, decent man, but he didn't seem to agree with you much.*

Iulia Cantacuzino (nee. Mourosis): *The matriarch of the family. More than a little intimidating, you really, really don't want to get on her bad side. Unfortunately, you might be there already...*

Amadi Cantacuzino: *The distant cousin. He knows a lot of family history (almost too much) and you have never seen him eat or drink (very suspicious). While perfectly lovely, you forget about him once he's gone...*

Beniamen Cantacuzino (ne. Lior): *Another cousin, and related only by marriage. His family supposedly knows a lot about poisons and alchemy... hmmm.*

Adanna Cantacuzino: *Beniamen's wife, she seems highly sceptical of you. Loves her brother Jelani dearly.*

Chanoch Cantacuzino (ne. Abijah): *The Jewish theologian. Chanoch is rather new to the Family and you have never met him. While he may be a Jew, and may not believe you, he may nonetheless have some interesting and helpful insights...*

Kizzy Cantacuzino: *Chanoch's wife. She finds your tale very 'romantic'. Romantic indeed!*

Gamyuka Cantacuzino: *A candidate for the new Head of the House and Duna's brother. He's very rational and intellectual but does not seem to listen to you much.*

Jofranka Cantacuzino (nee. Kalderas): *Gamyuka's wife; she is a gypsy and rumoured to know magic. A witch! In the family! How could they have let it happen!*

Isoba Cantacuzino: *Another cousin, he helped to arrange most of the marriages in the family. Knows a lot about Duna's demise, more than he says.*

Jelani Cantacuzino: *The other Head of the House candidate and Duna's son, he is a passionate, decent man. Not much else to say – you're not very interested in Family politics after all.*

Wadim Cantacuzino: *Yet another cousin. He seems to think you might be useful to him. Huh! - as if you could bother yourself with trivial merchant stuff now!*

Serghei Popescu: *The butler did it!*

Ahina Popescu: *The butler's sister!*

Gamyuka Cantacuzino

(Gamyuka means "Second In Command")

You'd never expected to be in this position. Life so far has gone according to the plan laid out for all second sons. You went to a military academy and you served your time, mostly border posts under the Ottomans (since Wallachia doesn't have a standing army). You married the girl your parents picked out for you, had a child (a much-loved daughter), and eventually retired from military life to spend your time travelling between Craiova and Bucharest, depending on the time of year and what social gaieties your wife was involved in.

All this has been turned on its head. Your older brother, Duna, has died and as a son of the mainline (if a generation back) and someone who has both been assisting Duna and had some training in running things, you are a logical candidate for the position of Head of the House.

Your wife, Jofranka, would dearly like you to become the new Head of the House and your life is much better when she is happy. Jofranka (never Jo, never Frankie) would like the new social position and would enjoy the fact that you would mostly be required to stay in Bucharest. Craiova is nice, but it is scarcely the whirl of gaiety of the capital city. Generally, you are happy if you have access to a well-stocked library and the library here is certainly a good one.

Your desire to be Head of the House might be vague, but there is more to it than just a wish to please your wife. Jofranka and cousin Isoba have spent the past couple of years working on a contract marriage for your nephew Jelani and Narcisa, a daughter of the Bălenus', the old enemy of the Cantacuzino's. But Jelani has a liaison with a particularly unsuitable girl and he wishes to marry her. To decline the marriage at this stage will wreck havoc on the family fortunes and take away any chance of ceasing hostilities. The Bălenus would not forgive such an insult. And with their connection to the ruling family of the Ghicas, it is vital that you not offend them.

If Jelani becomes Head of House, who knows what he'll do.

Further to all that, you are concerned about the manner of Duna's death. Sudden and non-violent, certainly, but your brother was a healthy man and his body puts you mind of the time when you were both children and he was stung by a bee. But you've never seen a bee around him since, at least, not in Bucharest, so it can't possibly be that. And there's supposed to be a mystical family protector (details of this are very scarce) who would stop an assassination.

What You Want

You have served your Family for as long as you've been alive. You would hate to see that legacy not continue to the next generation and fear what Jelani would do if he became the Head of the House. Ensure that the legacy of the House continues safely.

Find out who killed your brother. You'd worked with him for years, he seemed happy and healthy. His death is very suspicious.

Make your wife happy. Jofranka has ways of dealing with people and she doesn't get what she wants, you know about it. Like this silly succession thing...

The Other Family Members

Duna Cantacuzino: Your older brother. You adored him as a child and respected him as an adult, working as his second in command. Now he is dead and you are one of the most logical people to fill his shoes.

Iulia Cantacuzino (nee. Mourosis): Your mother, the matriarch. She has adopted the Cantacuzinos and the Family traditions for her own and is fiercely protective of them. She is very proper and correct.

Amadi Cantacuzino: One of the many Cantacuzino cousins. A frequent visitor to the House in Bucharest, you've seen him around a bit. You're not really sure where he fits into the family, but he is eminently trustworthy.

Beniamen Cantacuzino (ne. Lior): Adanna's husband. His family is known for making money and dabbling in strange and interesting things. He does not seem particularly interested in the Family but is otherwise nice enough.

Adanna Cantacuzino: Your niece, Duna's oldest child and daughter. She married for the good of the Family and you respect that.

Chanoch Cantacuzino (ne. Abijah): Kizzy's husband. She married for love. If he breaks her heart, you'll show him exactly how much you haven't forgotten from your time in the army.

Kizzy Cantacuzino: Your daughter and the apple of your eye. She takes after her mother with her enjoyment of life. You didn't take too much persuading when Chanoch asked for her hand and she wanted him, since he makes her happy.

Danut Cantacuzino: Well, every House has to have a madman somewhere and this cousin is yours. His mind snapped after the death of his wife and child. Worth keeping an eye on in case he turns violent.

Jofranka Cantacuzino (nee. Kalderas): Your wife and someone you wish to please. It was an arranged marriage, but you have done well together. She enjoys the social scene far more than you do. Her family heritage is such that she sometimes dabbles in the mystical, but since it entertains her...

Isoba Cantacuzino: Your cousin, who has always spent a lot of time in Bucharest. A clever man, you often agree with his opinions on what is best for the Family. You appreciate your frequent and challenging chess matches when you are in the same place.

Jelani Cantacuzino: Your nephew, Duna's son and heir. A passionate boy who was doted on by his father and Duna's habit of spoiling his children has shown itself with this recent fuss about a girl. However, you are unsure he would be the best person to lead House Cantacuzino into the future.

Wadim Cantacuzino: One of the many Cantacuzino cousins. He has a risky venture that he wants the Family to support. Wadim requires a lot of money (about £20000), and although the Family could provide this much money it would use almost all of the Family funds. Duna was all for it, but you're not so sure. If this failed it would leave the Cantacuzino Family virtually penniless.

Serghei Popescu: One of the illegitimate family cousins. He is the House Butler and has been a loyal servant for years. He is very good at his job.

Ahina Popescu: Serghei's sister; she is the Housekeeper for the House in Bucharest. She is very good at her job and very unobtrusive.

Things You Know

Other members of the Cantacuzino Family will know none or only some of the following information.

Guardian Of The Cantacuzino Family

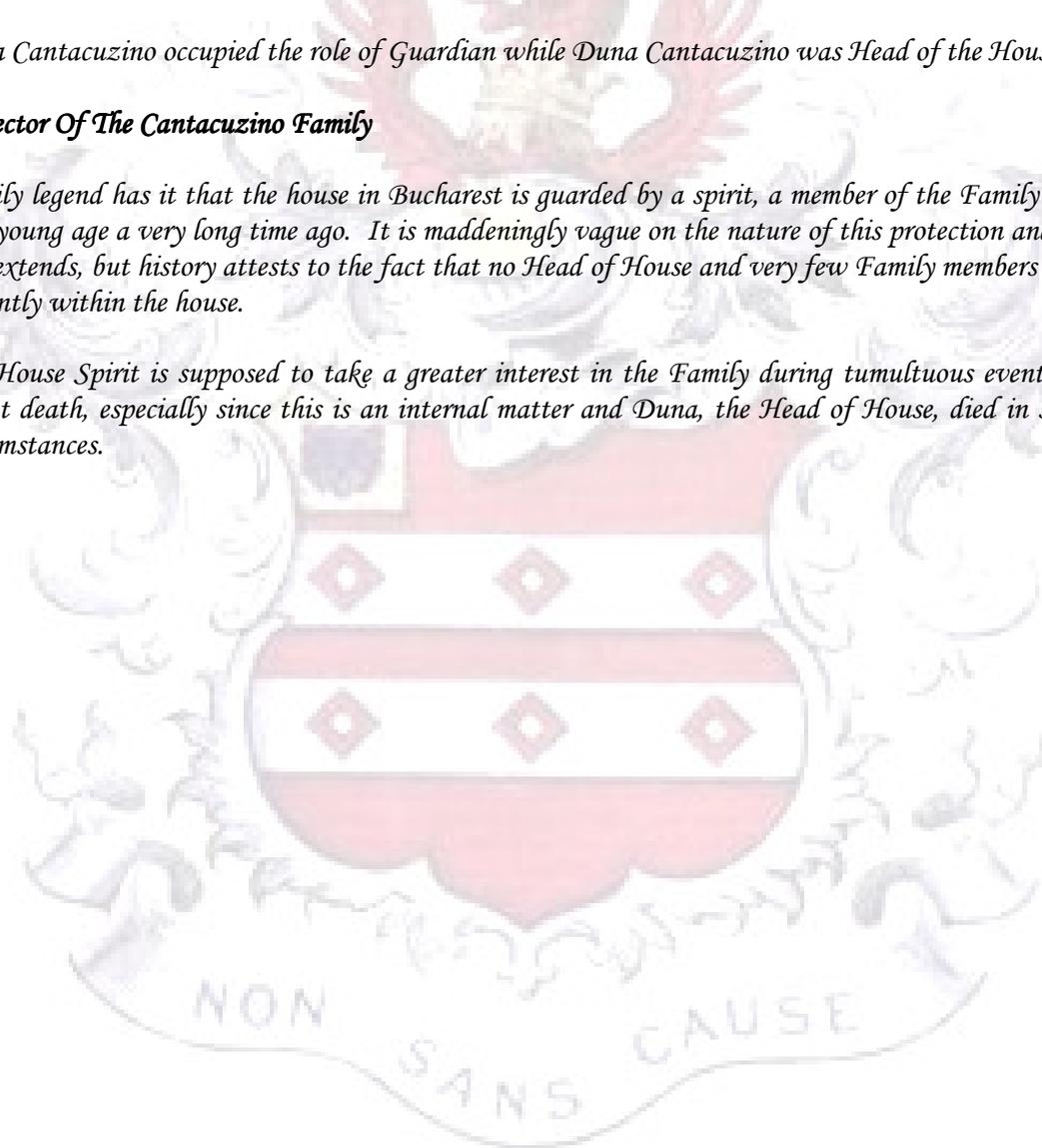
The Guardian is the secret protector of the Family; working best in the shadows and from behind the scenes. A thankless but necessary task, the Guardian works very closely with the Head of the House and watches the Family's blind side. The Guardian is expected to be politically savvy, maintain a large number of contacts and be well-informed - especially on issues that directly affect House Cantacuzino. This information is then passed to the Head of the House to assist him in his duties for the Cantacuzino Family.

Isoba Cantacuzino occupied the role of Guardian while Duna Cantacuzino was Head of the House.

Protector Of The Cantacuzino Family

Family legend has it that the house in Bucharest is guarded by a spirit, a member of the Family who died at a young age a very long time ago. It is maddeningly vague on the nature of this protection and how far this extends, but history attests to the fact that no Head of House and very few Family members have died violently within the house.

The House Spirit is supposed to take a greater interest in the Family during tumultuous events like the recent death, especially since this is an internal matter and Duna, the Head of House, died in suspicious circumstances.



Isoba Cantacuzino

(Isoba means "To Walk Slowly And Stealthily")

It feels like you have always been in the service of House Cantacuzino; even as a little boy you were trained in the values and traditions of the family. Initially this was to ensure you would be an ideal candidate should the current Head of the House pass on and the duties fall to you; later you were trained for the role you eventually took as the Guardian of the Cantacuzino Family. The role of Guardian is critical and difficult to fulfill, and by its nature you get no direct credit for your work. But in this task the betterment of the Family, in all its endeavors, is reward enough.

After years of hard work by yourself and Jofranka, and much wheeling and dealing, you managed to secure an arranged marriage with your most deadly ancient rivals: the Băleanu Family. This deal would have put to bed the useless and resource intensive feud between your Houses and secured a more positive future. And Duna was going to let his son Jelani throw all of this away for some other girl. It is irrelevant how much Jelani loves her – it is the Family that must come first. This was not the first time Duna had shown preference for his sons (and daughter) over the good of the Family, but to throw away something this important to pander to them is unthinkable. And that is not the only worry you have been wrestling with. Money is in short supply and you have been pleading with Duna to concentrate on the traditional incomes which have sustained the Family for generations, but he insisted on providing financing to other family members who often engage in very risky ventures. And so, despite appearances to the contrary, the wealth has been lost over time and now the Family is in a lot of trouble.

So you did the only reasonable thing under the circumstances – got rid of Duna to see someone more rational and thoughtful replaces him. You realize this will also force you into retirement, but again the family must come first and there was no other choice. The plan was simple. You know that Duna is highly allergic to bee poison; a small amount in his drink would quickly lead to death and be virtually untraceable. You obtained this from the Lior family, a merchant family who dabble in the rare and wondrous, trading on your connections a little to obtain a better price. The only problem was the House Spirit who always protects the Head of the House – you needed a way to get him out of action for a short amount of time. Jofranka provided the solution in the form of a Gypsy charm that blocks the influences of spirits. You were unable to test this beforehand without raising suspicions and so had to trust this would work as expected. It did work well enough, and you were able to give Duna the poison (put into his bottle of wine) and leave unnoticed. To minimize suspicion you returned to the scene at the same time as the first visitor (who happened to be Amadi) only after Duna had died of a sudden pain. Of course you could not remove Duna's bottle of wine without this being suspicious, but you have since discarded the Gypsy charm so no one else can use it as evidence against you. You have plenty of excuses and although some might be suspicious none will be able to blame you.

Now you must see the right replacement take the position of Head of the House and your legacy will be assured...

What You Want

Don't get caught! You murdered the old Head of the House, your cousin Duna, after all. If anyone is asking suspicious questions don't hesitate to point them down the wrong path – as long as everyone is pointing fingers at everyone else the truth will never come out.

To secure the future of House Cantacuzino the next Head of the House needs to be intelligent, wise and must put the needs of the Family before all other things. For this reason you will support Gamyuka with your vote; do what you can to see him fill this role.

One of the Family cousins, Wadim, is trying to get financing for a very risky trading venture and requires about £20000. The Cantacuzino Family has enough problems with money at the moment and cannot afford such an extravagance; providing this much to Wadim would virtually clear out the Family coffers. You believe it would be foolish to give Wadim money for this, so try to prevent the Family from making this mistake.

Since your role as the Cantacuzino Family Guardian has now ended with the death of Duna, your presence in the Family home is no longer required. You would like to retire to the country estate to live out your remaining years in peace. You should let the others know of your intentions.

The Other Family Members

Duna Cantacuzino: He was a good leader and an excellent friend, but he always put his children before the good of House Cantacuzino. Constantly did you try to council him to correct this misguided thinking, but in the end you had to act. You grieve for the loss but his sacrifice was necessary.

Iulia Cantacuzino (nee. Mourosis): The matriarch of the Cantacuzino Family has great wisdom; she also has been around long enough to acquire a lot of knowledge about the Family. You find her very interesting, if some time a little difficult to talk to.

Amadi Cantacuzino: You have seen Amadi around the house a lot but have never really talked to him. He is definitely a Cantacuzino but you are unable to locate him on the Family Tree. You really need to get the records corrected in this matter.

Beniamen Cantacuzino (ne. Lior): A merchant by trade, he has very good connections and contacts. Through this he seems very well informed on a great number of things. His family is rumored to be involved in the black arts and alchemy, but you have never found proof of this. A fine man but you are very unsure of his loyalties.

Adanna Cantacuzino: She supports her brother a lot of the time, but also seems to have some understanding that the Family must come first. She is not particularly interesting to you.

Chanoch Cantacuzino (ne. Abijah): The husband of Kizzy is a scholar in the Jewish community. He married Kizzy after they fell in love and he seems quite devoted to the Cantacuzino Family. Quite harmless.

Kizzy Cantacuzino: The daughter of Jofranka in blood and spirit. She seems quite young but is learning from her mother very quickly. She is nice to be around and you quite like her.

Danut Cantacuzino: You are fairly certain Danut's mind was lost when his wife died in childbirth, and he has never fully recovered from this. You have heard much about his obsession tracking down imaginary creatures and it is madness. You have inquired about having him detained in an asylum, but this will require force (since he is unwilling) and could bring shame to the Family. You will not do this unless absolutely necessary.

Gamyuka Cantacuzino: The brother of Duna is the ideal candidate to replace him. His years in military service have given him excellent discipline and leadership skills, and for some time now he has been assisting Duna in his duties. You have spent much time recently getting to know Gamyuka over regular games of chess. Gamyuka is an excellent speaker and a rational man, he will do what is best (and what is required) for the Cantacuzino Family.

Jofranka Cantacuzino (nee. Kalderas): The wife of Gamyuka is friendly and nice in public, but she also has some political skills. She assisted you in arranging the marriage between Jelani and Narcisa. You know about her family ties with the Gypsy clans; as long as it does not divide her loyalties you are quite happy letting her continue these traditions. Recently you found this to be a very wise move – through Jofranka you were able to procure a charm to ward off spirits. It is unlikely that she know the use this invaluable charm was put towards, but keep an eye on her just in case.

Jelani Cantacuzino: He will grow up to be an excellent leader and asset to the Cantacuzino House, but at the moment he is too emotional and does not think things through. He needs to be taught the correct manner of a Cantacuzino.

Wadim Cantacuzino: A merchant by trade, he currently has an agreement with a large trading company (Muscovy Company) and needs to secure a large sum of money to set things up. This looks to be quite risky, and although it may bring great wealth if it succeeds the Family can ill afford another financial failure. A nice enough man, he just does not realize he is stretching too far and will fail.

Serghei Popescu: The Head Butler Serghei was also a very close friend of Duna and he is taking the death quite hard. Serghei, and his sister, are actually related to the Cantacuzino Family through an illegitimate line but have never made this information public knowledge. Because of this they are treated with respect by most Family members. A quiet and formal person, he seems nice enough. Servants can be useful sources of information, but otherwise your time is better spent in other company.

Ahina Popescu: The sister to Serghei and Head Housekeeper, Ahina practically raised Duna's children while he was looking after House affairs. She seems pleasant enough.

Things You Know

Other members of the Cantacuzino Family will know none or only some of the following information.

Guardian Of The Cantacuzino Family

The Guardian is the secret protector of the Family; working best in the shadows and from behind the scenes. A thankless but necessary task, the Guardian works very closely with the Head of the House and watches the Family's blind side. The Guardian is expected to be politically savvy, maintain a large number of contacts and be well-informed - especially on issues that directly affect House Cantacuzino. This information is then passed to the Head of the House to assist him in his duties for the Cantacuzino Family.

The House Spirit chooses the Guardian based both on the candidate's ability to work with the new Head of the House and their ability to protect the Family from outside threats. As such, a new Guardian is chosen for each new Head of the House.

You occupied the role of Guardian while Duna Cantacuzino was Head of the House.

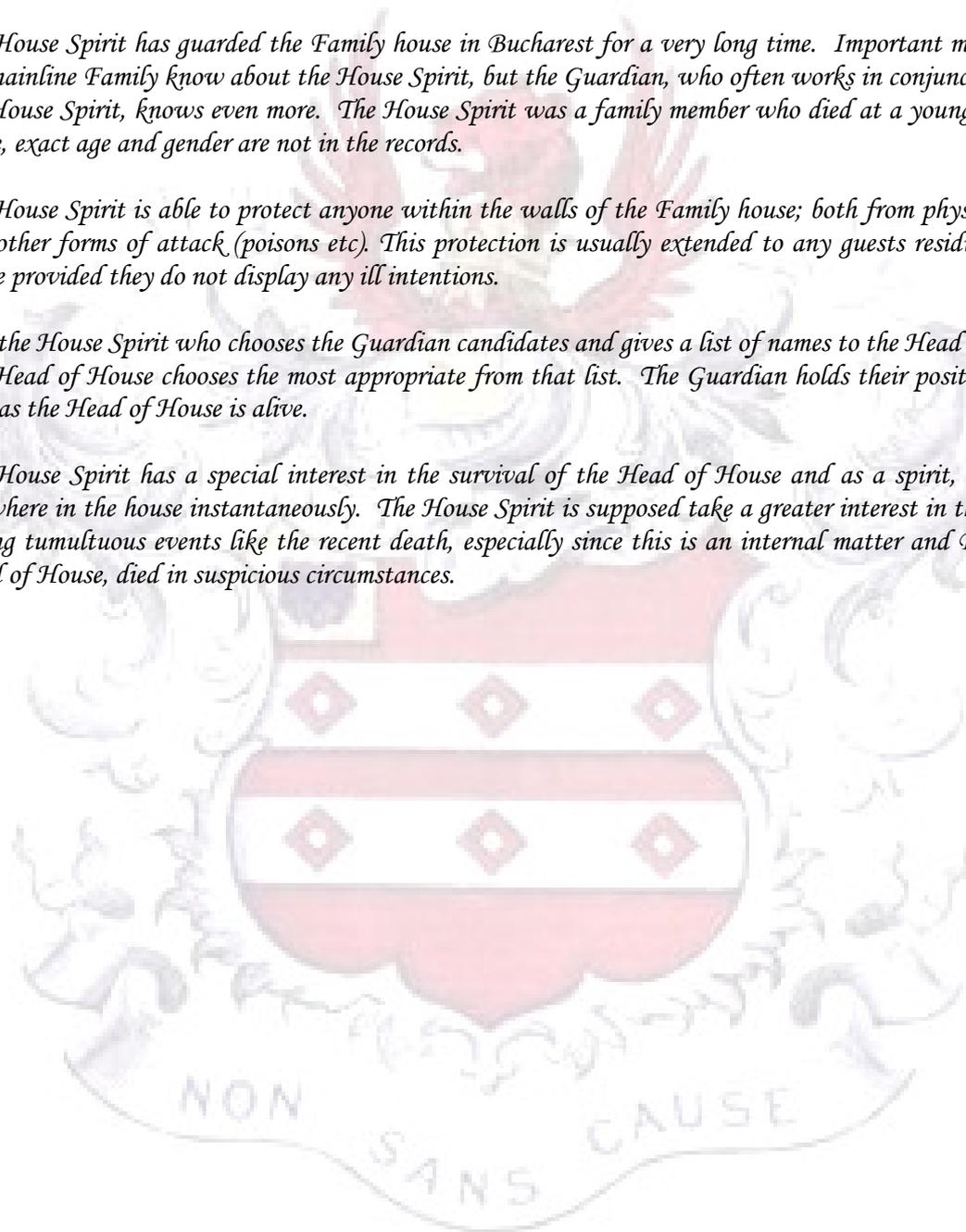
Protector Of The Cantacuzino Family

The House Spirit has guarded the Family house in Bucharest for a very long time. Important members of the mainline Family know about the House Spirit, but the Guardian, who often works in conjunction with the House Spirit, knows even more. The House Spirit was a family member who died at a young age. Its name, exact age and gender are not in the records.

The House Spirit is able to protect anyone within the walls of the Family house; both from physical harm and other forms of attack (poisons etc). This protection is usually extended to any guests residing in the house provided they do not display any ill intentions.

It is the House Spirit who chooses the Guardian candidates and gives a list of names to the Head of House. The Head of House chooses the most appropriate from that list. The Guardian holds their position for as long as the Head of House is alive.

The House Spirit has a special interest in the survival of the Head of House and as a spirit, can reach anywhere in the house instantaneously. The House Spirit is supposed take a greater interest in the Family during tumultuous events like the recent death, especially since this is an internal matter and Duna, the Head of House, died in suspicious circumstances.



Julia Cantacuzino (nee. Mourosis)

(Julia means "Fouth")

Although you only joined the family by marriage, all those many years ago, you have given body, mind and soul to all the generations that have succeeded you. Your son Duna was a kind and gentle man, but strong and forceful when he had to be. But it seems that his kindness was not appreciated by all.

You are far too advanced in years and experience to believe for one second that this was a natural death; one look at your son confirmed your fears. Only a handful would have known about his extreme allergy to bee poison, but a small quantity ingested produced the outcome that eventuated. Also: you know that the Head of the House has always had excellent (and mysterious) protection. Whoever killed Duna thus must have known and overcome this to achieve their aims. You don't even know who it was but you plan to find out.

Jelani and Gamyuka were arguing with Duna; Jelani has plans to marry someone other than his arranged fiancée. Gamyuka believes the good of the family outweighs any personal feelings in this matter, and you agree with him. Years of experience has taught you that tradition and custom exist for a reason and cannot lightly be tossed aside. Jelani is a good boy and will be a good man. He just needs training and experience, and you've picked up enough over the years to aid him. There's just one small problem – Jelani has fallen in love with a completely unsuitable hussy! He even wants to marry her! This is completely unacceptable. He might be the heir, but by God he will do his duty to the Family. Despite how much you love your grandson, you are going to have to convince him the error of his ways. After all, you went through the same thing and have managed to make the best of the situation - something else you will have to teach your grandson.

For that matter your grand-daughters both have now married and have left the Family house - you have much to teach them about being a good Cantacuzino wife and mother as well. For years you have guided and taught them about what is required in this matter; and some of these lessons have been heard while others have not. Adanna married for the good of the Family as is expected but Kizzy married for love an unsuitable man, and so she seems to be most in need of some solid advice (and possibly the scolding that her parents have not given her). It looks like the Family have much need for your wisdom over the coming months and years.

What You Want

Find out who killed your son. Make them pay for their mistake.

Support your grandson, Jelani, as the next Head of the House. He is young and thus lacks experience, but youth has its own advantages. You will be around to temper his natural passions and ensure the Cantacuzino house comes first. In the long run the stronger bloodline provided by Jelani will ensure the survival of the Family.

That being said you still have to convince your grandson to stop this folly with his professed love. He needs to understand that the Family comes first, and his arranged marriage with Narcisa of House Băleanu will end a long running and wasteful feud between the houses. To throw all that away would be disgraceful and cause the family many problems for the future.

The Other Family Members

Duna Cantacuzino: Your son was the greatest leader of the Cantacuzinos you have known (even better, you will grudgingly admit, than your husband). He will be missed in the coming years and the Cantacuzinos are diminished by his absence.

Amadi Cantacuzino: Although definitely family, you almost never see Amadi. A very quiet and shy man, he seems nice enough.

Beniamen Cantacuzino (ne. Lior): A merchant by trade, Beniamen joined the family through an arranged marriage with your granddaughter Adanna. He seems nice enough for an outsider; but you have heard a number of rumors about his family and are quite suspicious of him.

Adanna Cantacuzino: Your granddaughter takes after her father quite a bit. Now married and out of the Family home you are worried about the people that are now influencing her.

Chanoch Cantacuzino (ne. Abijah): A scholar in the Jewish community, Chanoch is a very quiet man and seems very sensible. He was chosen by Kizzy as they fell in love, but you do not approve of this relationship or Chanoch as a person. Kizzy could, and should, have chosen better.

Kizzy Cantacuzino: Your favourite of all of your grandchildren, Kizzy is always smiling and laughing. She does seem to take after her mother a lot but you have yet to see any ambition from her – other than to make herself and others happy.

Danut Cantacuzino: A very strange man, Danut is obsessed by some creature that he believes killed his wife. You don't like him and think it might be best to avoid him where possible.

Gamyuka Cantacuzino: Although similar to his brother in many respects, Gamyuka has a quiet, unemotional nature. As your second son he spent some years in military service, from this experience he gained a disciplined mind. Since then he has been assisting Duna; this experience would be invaluable to Jelani once Duna's son takes over this role. He has a kind spirit and uses his tongue to get what he wants. But you see too much ambition in him, and his wife seems to support him a little too much.

Jofranka Cantacuzino (nee. Kalderas): You see right through Jofranka's friendly demeanor and can tell she is an intelligent and cunning woman. She has her own plans and, although you don't know exactly what they are, she will allow nothing and no one to get in her way.

Isoba Cantacuzino: As Guardian of the Cantacuzino House for many years, Isoba was privy to much information and was able to keep up to date on anything (or anyone) he wanted. With the death of Duna he will almost certainly have to retire from his role, but the knowledge he has acquired (and his contacts) will stay with him. You have always been careful what you say around him. He is a useful source of information, although be wary – he can be quite ruthless when doing what he believes is best for the Family.

Jelani Cantacuzino: Although ruled by his heart too much, you know Jelani is devoted to the Family and does not wish to cause harm by his choices. Time will mould him into a more rounded leader; until then he will need your guidance.

Wadim Cantacuzino: A young trader, Wadim has the exuberance of youth. You suspect he may be overreaching himself in his endeavors, but commerce was never your strong suit and so you will leave this

for the others to decide. He seems to respect his elders and listens to what you have to say, but he is not quite Cantacuzino enough for your liking.

Serghei Popescu: Although of an illegitimate line of the family Serghei has done his position proud and served the family with honor and dignity. Along with his sister, he believes strongly in the traditions of the Cantacuzino Family and can be counted on to maintain the formality of the evening.

Ahina Popescu: After the death of your daughter-in-law Stefania, Ahina took it upon herself to raise your grandchildren. You disagreed with how close she became to them, but could not fault the love and guidance she gave that would have otherwise been missing.

Things You Know

Other members of the Cantacuzino Family will know none or only some of the following information.

Guardian Of The Cantacuzino Family

The Guardian is the secret protector of the Family; working best in the shadows and from behind the scenes. A thankless but necessary task, the Guardian works very closely with the Head of the House and watches the Family's blind side. The Guardian is expected to be politically savvy, maintain a large number of contacts and be well-informed - especially on issues that directly affect House Cantacuzino. This information is then passed to the Head of the House to assist him in his duties for the Cantacuzino Family.

Isoba Cantacuzino occupied the role of Guardian while Duna Cantacuzino was Head of the House.

Protector Of The Cantacuzino Family

Family legend has it that the house in Bucharest is guarded by a spirit, a member of the Family who died at a young age a very long time ago. It is maddeningly vague on the nature of this protection and how far this extends, but history attests to the fact that no Head of House and very few Family members have died violently within the house.

The House Spirit is supposed to take a greater interest in the Family during tumultuous events like the recent death, especially since this is an internal matter and Duna, the Head of House, died in suspicious circumstances.

Jelani Cantacuzino

(Jelani means "Mighty")

You are the eldest son of Duna and Stefania Cantacuzino. As such, you are first in line to become Head of the House... or so it should be. Alas, your Uncle Gamyuka possesses similar rights to the position and seems intent on trying to take what should be rightfully yours. You are seventeen years old, and Gamyuka has always been a figure of great respect to you throughout your youth. Nonetheless, he is getting on in his years, and you feel that someone younger, someone more inspired and energetic should be leading this great Family into the future. As Duna's heir it is your right and your duty to take up the mantle as of Head of the House.

However, that is not the only reason for your desire to be Head of the House. Not long ago, you met and fell in love with a young woman, Viorica Peterscu. You met at a party; you hadn't intended to go until your father suggested that you not go. And you met her. She is your age, pretty and wonderful, with curly black hair and laughing blue eyes - and you could spend the rest of your life watching her breathe and not feel cheated. You fell in love with her the moment you met, and later, as she got to know you, she fell in love with you too. She is joy and song and every moment without her is grey and dreary. It was love at first sight, and you know that the two of you are meant to be. You must marry her!

Of course, it's not that simple. Your father's cousin, Isoba Cantacuzino, was working on forging an alliance with Narcisa Bălenu, daughter of your family's greatest rival. With the marriage between you two, the Cantacuzinos and Bălenus will be joined and better able to withstand the coming tides. You love your Family and are devoted to them; however, your feelings for Viorica are just as strong and you wish they would accept her. But in a twisted way it makes sense: there is your love and respect for your Family grown from birth, and then there is your love and passion for Viorica which could only be so great for someone whom you are destined to be with forever. But to which do you bow to: a love based almost solely on your destiny as the future leader of the Cantacuzinos or your love for Viorica, one that overwhelmed you from the moment you knew she existed?

Your beloved father Duna, on hearing of your devotion to Viorica, talked to Isoba and tried to convince him to shift the marriage to your younger brother, Emilian Cantacuzino. You are certain that your Father was going to give everyone what they wanted by allowing you to marry Victoria and ask Emilian to seal the alliance between the two Houses. Your father is dead; and you know that it could not possibly be a natural death... a co-incidence that is just too great. Both Isoba and Gamyuka are set against this course of action, and if Gamyuka becomes Head of the House, you will be forced to marry the Bălenu heir!

Your name means 'mighty', and you are the greatest duellist the family has produced: Only you can accomplish the tasks ahead!

What You Want

Become the new Head of the House. Not only are you the best candidate to take the Cantacuzino Family into the future, you must prevent Gamyuka from forcing you to wed according to the arrangement. Gamyuka is very intelligent and thoughtful man, but this family have become stagnant and set in the old ways and is beginning to suffer financially. Some new blood is required to energize things and reclaim old glory. You will spark the resurgence of House Cantacuzino and make them a name to be respected and feared again.

Find out who killed your father. Duna was a strong and healthy man and his death was too sudden to be natural. You don't know which treasonous person has the impudence to kill your father, but you intend to find out who it was and make them pay for their error.

Convince the other family members to let you marry Viorica. If you become the next Head of the House, of course you can marry whomever you want, but it would be best if you can offend as few people as possible by getting them on your side. Also, if you can get the family to agree that you should be allowed to choose whomever you want they might be more inclined to vote for you.

The Other Family Members

Duna Cantacuzino: Your beloved father. He favoured you over your siblings, and had promised to marry Narcisa to Emilian, your little brother. You know he had a severe allergy to bees and was reminded of this after looking upon his poisoned body.

Iulia Cantacuzino (nee. Mourosis): Your grandmother. You love and respect her, but she doesn't agree with you about Viorica and Narcisa.

Amadi Cantacuzino: A family cousin. He knows a great deal of family history, and is a lovely, lovely man.

Beniamen Cantacuzino (ne. Lior): Your brother-in-law. You're not sure how much you like him – it was an arranged marriage, and your sister doesn't seem very happy with the choice.

Adanna Cantacuzino: Your older sister. You love and trust her, and you support one another wholeheartedly.

Chanoch Cantacuzino (ne. Abijah): A cousin and Jewish scholar, he married into the family. The marriage was for love, and so you understand his feelings and wish him the best.

Kizzy Cantacuzino: A first cousin and almost-sister, she married Chanoch for love. You admire and respect her for this, and know how she must feel about Chanoch.

Danut Cantacuzino: Your mad cousin, he seems to think a vampire killed your father. Admittedly, the death was unexpected and unfortunate, but vampires?

Gamyuka Cantacuzino: Your uncle and the other Head of the House candidate. He's rational and intellectual, and doesn't seem to understand the necessity of love.

Jofranka Cantacuzino (nee. Kalderas): Gamyuka's wife, she is a gypsy, social butterfly and supposed witch. She's okay but you are not sure if you can trust her. She seems a little too nice.

Isoba Cantacuzino: Your second cousin. He was the one who wanted to marry you off to Narcisa and had a lot of arguments with your father before his death. He seems regretful, but you won't let him stop you marrying Viorica.

Wadim Cantacuzino: Yet another cousin, this time a merchant by trade. He wants funding for a business venture and seemed to have convinced Duna to assist him before your father died. Wadim requires a lot of money, and although the Family could pay him it would use most of the Family funds. And if it failed you would get very little back. You don't know much about money, but your sister supports it.

Serghei Popescu: The butler. He was very loyal to your family, but has become quite chilly to you recently. He may know something...

Ahina Popescu: The housekeeper. She's Serghei's sister, and she half raised you, Adanna and Emilian. You love her greatly, and she might know something about your father's death.

Things You Know

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Isoba Cantacuzino occupied the role of Guardian while Duna Cantacuzino was Head of the House.

Protector Of The Cantacuzino Family

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The House Spirit is supposed to take a greater interest in the Family during tumultuous events like the recent death, especially since this is an internal matter and Duna, the Head of House, died in suspicious circumstances.

Jofranka Cantacuzino (nee. Zalderas)

(Jofranka means "Free")

You have been a dutiful daughter and a dutiful wife for most of your life. But being dutiful and obedient hasn't negated your ability to be cheerful and enjoy life. Your parents married you to Gamyuka Cantacuzino, the second son of a powerful and old family, and you have tried to please him. You have one daughter, Kizzy, whom you delight in.

You are descended from gypsies, the Romany, through your mother. It's not a recent line of decent by any means, but there are some things that are handed down through the generations, mother to daughter, and just as your mother taught you, so you are teaching Kizzy. Little things, mostly: a few charms, some small spells, a healing potion or two and all the associated lore. But such things can smooth things over and ease entry into society for a girl of such heritage.

Your marriage was arranged by Isoba. Your family had money but not social status and the Cantacuzinos had social status but no money. And it's mostly worked out over the years. You like and respect Gamyuka; there is affection and courtesy between you (you never shorten his name, just as he never shortens yours) and the social whirl makes up for a lot. You thoroughly enjoy the dancing, gossip and conversations, as it's all fun and entertaining. And it's interesting what you can hear or organise from the centre of a social whirl. You move between Bucharest and Craiova, refusing to go so far as the estates outside of Craiova, preferring to remain in the city itself.

Isoba approached you again to suggest arranging a marriage between your nephew Jelani and a daughter of the mainline Bălenu family, the Cantacuzino's ancient enemy. The two of you worked very hard for a long time on the contract and you'll be damned before you let the seventeen-year old idiot ruin it for love's sake.

It was a surprise to you when Isoba later approached you and asked if you would make him a charm to keep spirits away. You didn't think he knew about your abilities or if he did, he was far too strait-laced to take advantage of them, just like your husband is. Shortly afterwards, your brother-in-law died suddenly and unexpectedly. You suspect it was a poison of some description.

Now it's your chance. Gamyuka's chance, rather. He is now the oldest male with appropriate qualifications, who is also mainline Family, or near enough that will make no difference. The line will revert back in the next generation, since you have no sons. Being Lady Cantacuzino will increase your social status and your influence. And Gamyuka deserves to be something other than second in command of the Family. Your own status aside, the Cantacuzino Family is in a rather precarious position at the moment and any misstep will cause more damage than you can really afford, especially one so foolish as throwing away a very good marriage contract for love, which Jelani is likely to do.

What You Want

Make sure your husband becomes the new Head of House. You cannot have Jelani ruining everything. Gamyuka already knows much about the job and he will be good for the Family, with his serious demeanour and intimate knowledge about obedience to the Family. He is a good man. He could be great.

Keep your involvement in the death of your brother-in-law a secret. Shortly after Isoba asked you for a charm to keep spirits away, if only for a short time, Duna died suddenly and non-violently. Given Isoba's perfectly understandable feelings about Jelani's marriage, you can't help but think the events are connected.

Make sure Jelani marries Narcisa instead of Viorica. You've worked very hard to organise this marriage contract and it'll be good for the Family, so you'll be damned if you let it – and the Family – be ruined now.

Convince Gamyuka to support Wadim's trading venture. It looks like it could make a decent profit for the Family and God knows you need it.

The Other Family Members

Duna Cantacuzino: Your brother-in-law and the head of the family who died in suspicious circumstances. He was considering putting an end to the marriage contract with the Bălenus, which you spent a long time arranging, so it's not altogether a bad thing.

Iulia Cantacuzino (nee. Mourosis): Your mother-in-law and someone who is in much the same position as you are, being someone who joined the family from outside. You would like to take her place as matriarch one day.

Amadi Cantacuzino: One of the many cousins whom you don't know very well.

Beniamen Cantacuzino (ne. Lior): Adanna's husband. His family dabbles in alchemy and other interesting things, otherwise he seems nice enough. He also is able to obtain unusual items, for a suitable fee, and could be a useful person to know.

Adanna Cantacuzino: Your niece who married for the good of the family, the daughter of Duna.

Chanoch Cantacuzino (ne. Abijah): A well-respected Jewish scholar whom your daughter fell madly in love with. So long as he makes her happy, you will accept him.

Kizzy Cantacuzino: Your daughter and your darling. She married beneath her state, but as of yet, Chanoch makes her happy. You have been teaching her some of your special abilities and skills.

Danut Cantacuzino: Another cousin, he went mad after his wife and child died. Now he thinks there are vampires everywhere.

Gamyuka Cantacuzino: Your husband and a good man. He's calm, collected and rational. Not only that, but he's been Duna's second in command for years. He'd be a far better choice to take over than Jelani.

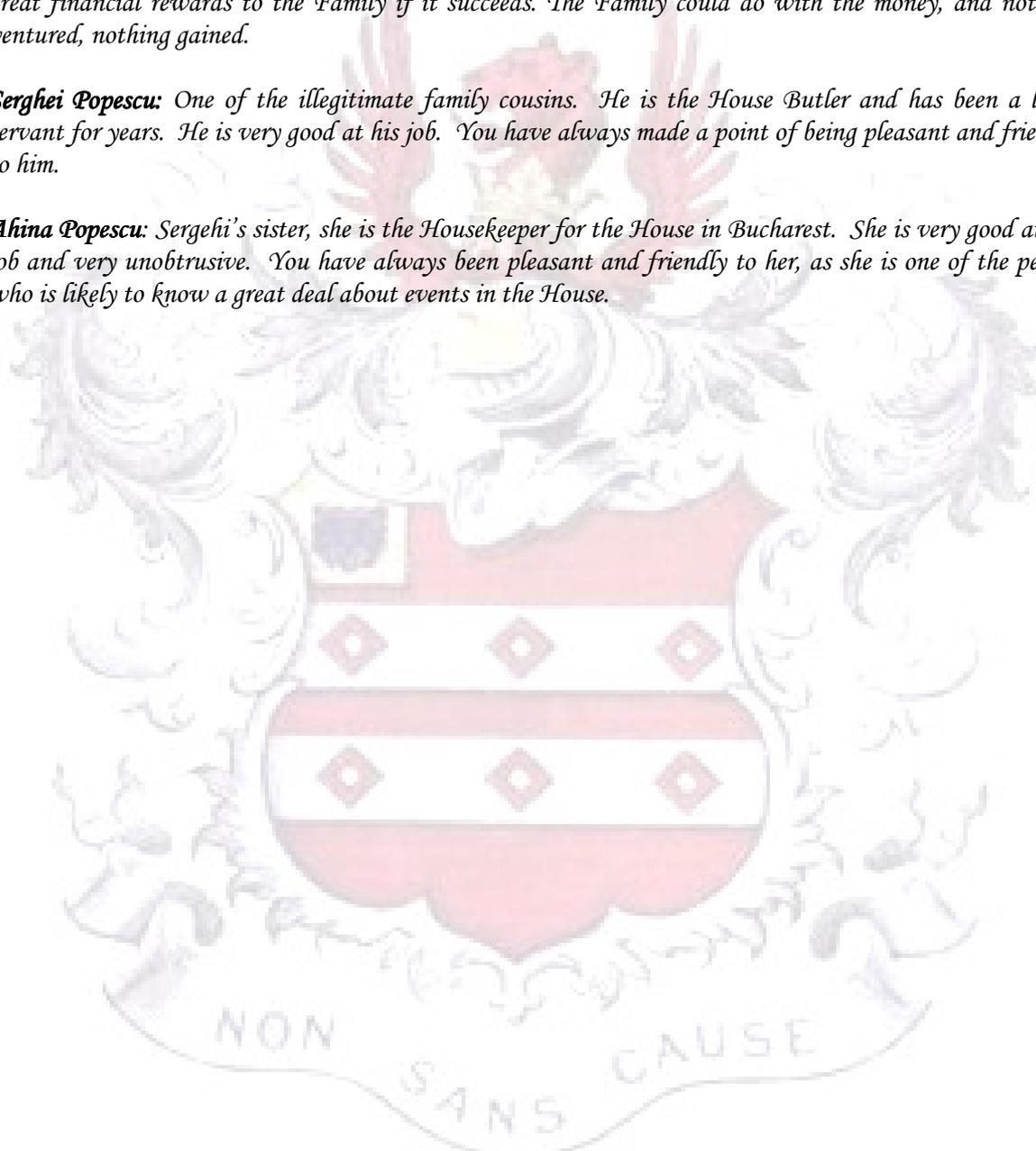
Isoba Cantacuzino: A cousin by marriage, he has always seemed to know a great deal about what was happening with the Family. He worked with you on the marriage contract and knows about your abilities.

Jelani Cantacuzino: Your hot-headed nephew who seems to be prepared to throw away everything you've worked towards with a marriage alliance with the Bălenus. You cannot let him do this; it's social and political suicide.

Wadim Cantacuzino: Another one of the cousins, he is involved in a risky trading venture that would net great financial rewards to the Family if it succeeds. The Family could do with the money, and nothing ventured, nothing gained.

Serghei Popescu: One of the illegitimate family cousins. He is the House Butler and has been a loyal servant for years. He is very good at his job. You have always made a point of being pleasant and friendly to him.

Ahina Popescu: Serghei's sister, she is the Housekeeper for the House in Bucharest. She is very good at her job and very unobtrusive. You have always been pleasant and friendly to her, as she is one of the people who is likely to know a great deal about events in the House.



Kizzy Cantacuzino

(Kizzy means "Cinnamon Tree")

You are generally light-hearted and gay, taking after your mother in personality as well as looks. But your mother is a more dutiful woman than you are, because she obediently married for convenience and you cajoled and pleaded with your parents so you could marry the man you loved. If you'd been a son, there would have been no chance of this at all, but as a daughter, and one with close cousins on the mainline family tree, you were permitted to marry Chanoch and you have thanked your lucky stars for it ever since.

Chanoch is a darling. He's sensible and wise and widely respected and you utterly adore him. You met at a lecture he was giving. You had gone with some of your friends as a lark, but you were astounded to find that the scholar was compelling and interesting. You sought him out, readily giving up more frivolous things to spend time with him. He thinks he's too serious for you and you think you're too flighty for him, so you guess you balance each other out.

At length, after much of your hinting, Chanoch plucked up enough courage to request your hand from your father. You knew it was coming, and you told Papa that you wanted him, more than any of the other dashing, more socially appropriate, young men who courted you. Papa agreed reluctantly and now you're deliriously happy.

Not that there aren't hardships. You're still learning to live together. But you love each other and that makes it all worthwhile. Chanoch is teaching you about Judaism. You don't think you'll convert, but it's something that's passionately important to your husband and so you're learning about it. The Jews aren't happy with your marriage; they think Chanoch should have married a good Jewish girl instead of an Orthodox girl but you're determined to prove their predictions of failure wrong. He wants to help them and you wonder if one of the cousins might be able to assist. There are some Jews in Russia who want to leave and can't without help. You hope they will accept whatever help he can give.

As a result, though, the two of you spend more time with your family than his. You want everyone to accept Chanoch on his own behalf, rather than because he's yours. Even Grandmamam. This is when you're glad that you're not mainline Family and can marry for something other than the good of the Family, because you don't think you could do without Chanoch now and poor Jelani, with a contract marriage and an unsuitable beloved.

Your mother thinks that your papa should be the new Head of the House because he's clever and has had lots of experience. You wonder how grieved she actually is by Uncle Duna's death; you know she can be quite calculating under the cheerful demeanour. It wouldn't surprise you if she had something to do with his death. But Jelani is supposed to be the heir and he can learn. Although he'd be Papa's heir as well, since you don't have any brothers; and so with Papa as the new Head of the House Jelani would have an apprenticeship period. You haven't decided how you're going to vote yet; you can see the logic both ways.

What You Want

Help Chanoch become more accepted by your Family. His don't accept either of you now and it's important to belong to a Family. Besides, your Family should recognise how wonderful he is.

Although she is not talking about it, you have a feeling that your mother was involved in recent tragic events. Find out if your mother was involved in the death of your Uncle, and if so, help protect her. You might not have reached spirits yet, but you think there is a mystical guardian of some sort protecting the Family and if Uncle Duna was murdered they must have gotten past this protection.

Decide who you're going to vote for. You can see the logic for both Papa and Jelani making a good Head of the House and yours could be the deciding vote. Papa would be good at it, but Jelani should get to marry the girl he loves.

The Other Family Members

Duna Cantacuzino: Your uncle who died recently in mysterious circumstances. It's pure chance you're here at the right time, really.

Iulia Cantacuzino (nee. Mourosis): Your grandmother, who had high hopes for you that you've dashed with your marriage. She's very strict and dedicated to the family, but you hope to bring her around one day.

Amadi Cantacuzino: You vaguely recall meeting him when you were little. You think he was nice. One of the many cousins.

Beniamen Cantacuzino (ne. Lior): The weird guy Adanna married. His family are all into alchemy and other such strange things.

Adanna Cantacuzino: Your older cousin who married for the good of the family, some strange guy from a good merchant family. She was an attendant at your wedding. You hope she's happy.

Chanoch Cantacuzino (ne. Abijah): Your husband and the delight of your life. You adore him and couldn't think of a better way to live than spending the rest of your life with him.

Danut Cantacuzino: His story is soooo romantic. After his wife and child died, he went mad and now he hunts for their murderers. You understand how he feels. You don't know what you'd do if Chanoch died.

Gamyuka Cantacuzino: Your papa. He reluctantly agreed to your marriage. You think he would make a good Head of the House instead of Jelani. He has that sort of feel to him, calm, serious and wise. And you have him wrapped around your finger...

Jofranka Cantacuzino (nee. Kalderas): Your mother. She's a social butterfly and had hopes that you would join her in that sphere. Despite that not happening, she's still teaching you about magic from her gypsy heritage, mother to daughter. You haven't gotten to spirits yet, but she says you're doing well.

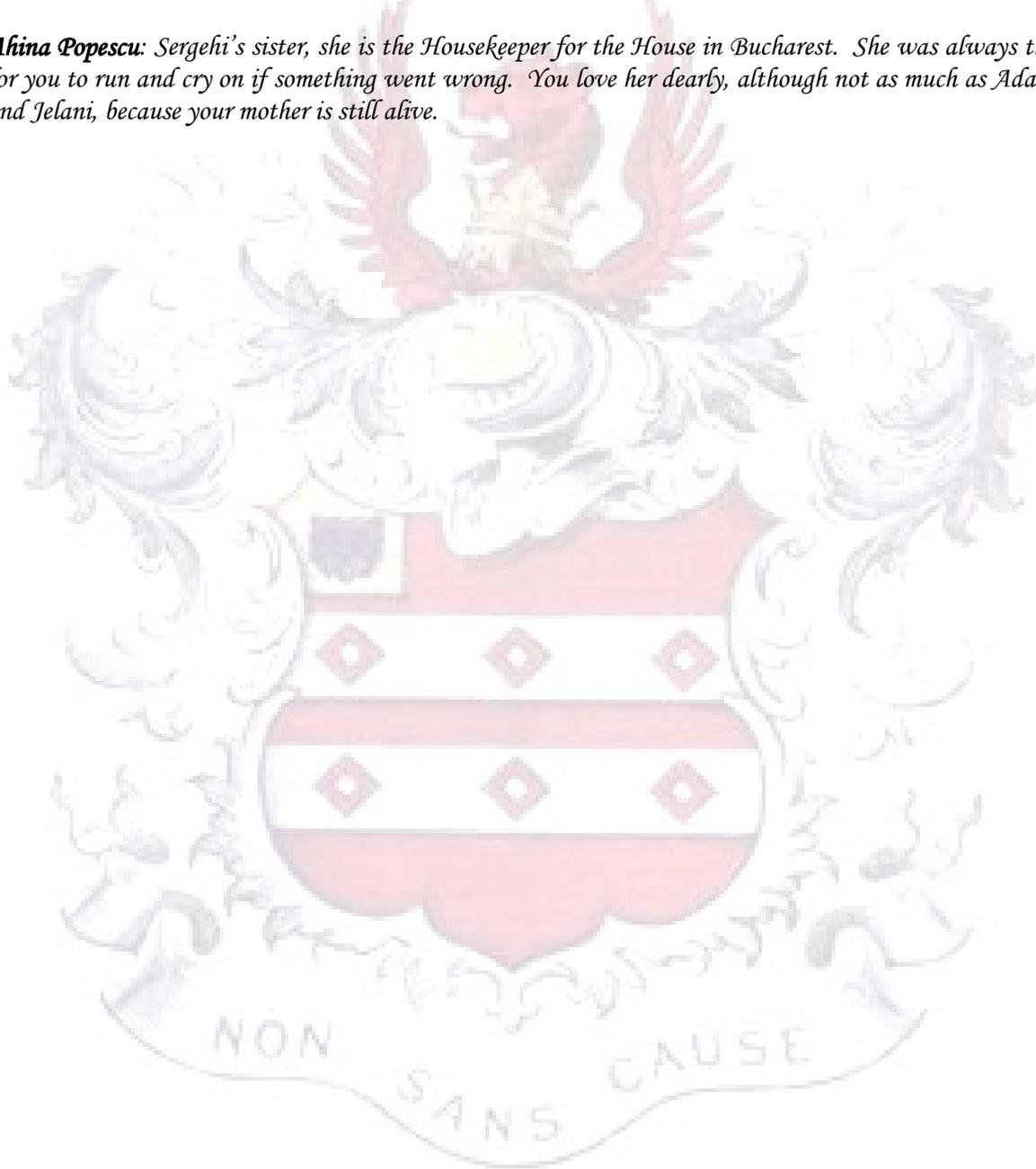
Jelani Cantacuzino: Your cousin, who only wants to marry the woman he loves. You can understand that, you did the same thing. Jelani's lots of fun and you want him to be happy.

Isoba Cantacuzino: *Your second-cousin once removed, you think. He's older than Papa and gets on well with Papa, but you've always found him kinda scary and stern.*

Wadim Cantacuzino: *One of the cousins who is interested in exciting ventures, like merchant shipping. You don't think you've met him.*

Serghei Popescu: *The butler at the house in Bucharest. He's connected to the family on the wrong side of the blanket. He was serious and unapproachable, but is still family.*

Ahina Popescu: *Serghei's sister, she is the Housekeeper for the House in Bucharest. She was always there for you to run and cry on if something went wrong. You love her dearly, although not as much as Adanna and Jelani, because your mother is still alive.*



Serghei Popescu

(Serghei means "Servant")

Born of noble blood but not of noble birth – such is your life. The noble blood came through Afolabi Cantacuzino, who is your grandfather, but you were denied your rightful place in the family because, your mother was the mistress of Afolabi, Roxana Popescu. Wanting your grandmother close to the family Afolabi sent your grandmother to the private family home in Craiova and here she was trained as a house servant. With the ascension of Marku Cantacuzino as Head of the House Roxana became Head Housekeeper; an equivalent position of Head Butler was filled by Fabian Popescu which then passed onto you. Although you are not of the official family line you, and your sister Ahina still carry the same blood. Because of this the Family has always been good to your predecessors and this arrangement continues to this day.

Denied the full place in the family, yet you are well looked after. You had a special relationship with Duna and cared for him greatly; you looked after each other with kindness and friendship. Of course in public you had a master-servant relationship as only fitting for your respective positions, but in private you were very close and treated each other as equals. Sometimes you even preferred your station in life, as it afforded you freedoms and luxuries denied to the family members by tradition and formality. You see that the ancient customs and tradition mean everything to House Cantacuzino, something that the fool Jelani does not seem to understand.

Jelani is young, ill tempered and a murderer. You know that Jelani was disagreeing with Duna over his arranged marriage, as he has his own floozy on the side; he simply refuses to set her aside for the good of the family. Over the last few weeks the discussions have become more and more heated, usually ending with Jelani storming out in anger. Just the other day you learnt, through the grapevine, that Jelani has managed to get his young woman pregnant of all things! And now Duna is dead – and you know who must be responsible. Now you must do everything in your power to unmask this traitor.

Of course you now hold the keys to the house and must see that the proceedings run smoothly. This does not mean that you must wait to uncover the truth; you will just have to work more subtly.

What You Want

Jelani has been arguing with Duna for some time, and you know all too well how angry he can get. You are sure that in a fit of rage he plotted the death of Duna. You are not sure how he did it and you must find out and reveal this to everyone else.

Since Jelani almost certainly killed his father it would be an insurmountable scandal if he became the new Head of the House. Do whatever you can to prevent this from occurring.

Above all you believe in the formality and tradition. As tradition dictates, until the new Head of the House is chosen you hold the Keys of the House. It is therefore your duty to ensure the House is run correctly. As a friend of the family it is also your responsibility to ensure the voting process for the new Head of the House is conducted in a fair and honest manner; and you will ensure this is done. Through the House Guards you have the power to enforce the peace and ensure everything is done as it should be, and so you will do so.

The Other Family Members

Duna Cantacuzino: He was a kind man and an excellent friend and you will miss him greatly. You will ensure his death was not meaningless.

Iulia Cantacuzino (nee. Mourosis): The matriarch of the Cantacuzino House is wise beyond her years. The younger generations don't see this and don't give her the attention and respect she deserves. She has much to teach them about the traditions and family values of House Cantacuzino.

Amadi Cantacuzino: You have seen him wandering around but never talked with Amadi.

Beniamen Cantacuzino (ne. Lior): A merchant with many connections, he has done well providing a steady income to the family in these times of difficulty. He seems nice enough, although you have heard rumors about his family being involved in enterprises of dubious nature.

Adanna Cantacuzino: The sister of Jelani, she supports her brother much of the time. It is possible he has confided in her and she might know something about what is going on.

Chanoch Cantacuzino (ne. Abijah): A scholar highly placed in the Jewish community, Chanoch seems quiet but very devoted to this adopted family.

Kizzy Cantacuzino: The daughter of Jofranka takes after her mother and seems very nice, if a little lacking in intellect.

Danut Cantacuzino: A cousin who is not seen often by the family; he seems to have a fixation on some strange ideas. Just make sure he does not cause any trouble.

Gamyuka Cantacuzino: An excellent communicator and ruled by rational thought – just the kind of man who should be leading the Cantacuzino Family. Since returning from military service he has been helping Duna in his duties, both of these experiences will be useful in replacing him as Head of the House.

Jofranka Cantacuzino (nee. Kalderas): The wife of Gamyuka, she always treats you like a friend and is lovely to be around. You like her a lot.

Isoba Cantacuzino: A quiet man but fiercely devoted to the Family. Isoba was very close to Lord Duna and spent much time talking to him in secret meetings. Although they disagreed often, he has spent his whole life working for the betterment of the Family and can be trusted. Isoba is also a very well informed person and knows much more about what is going on in the House than he is telling – if only you could get him to talk.

Jelani Cantacuzino: Ruled by his emotions, Jelani has been known to make interesting and risky chances. He was pushed too far by Duna, and made a very bad decision.

Wadim Cantacuzino: A merchant from out of town, he has visited the Family home on occasion. You have had little to do with him and do not know his character at all.

Ahina Popescu: Your sister is the Head Housekeeper and after the death of Duna's wife Stefania has practically raised the children. She is like minded with regards to formality and tradition.

Wadim Cantacuzino

(Wadim means "Knowing One")

You were born and grew up in the Wallachian town of Constanta. Your father Tafari was a merchant by trade; this meant you saw him for just a few weeks and then he would be gone for months (or sometimes years) at a time. Although you only saw him occasionally, he made the most of his brief time with you. It seems you've always wanted to follow in his footsteps, and as you came of the right age your father began passing his knowledge of the business, customs and contacts (especially strong with the Jewish communities) down to you. Over time he got you more involved in the business and eventually you joined him on the trips. In the end your father grew too old and frail and left the business to you.

And that's when you began to change things. No more of this small time wheeling and dealing with the local East European traders; you want to go to the big leagues where the money is. You reached out through your contacts and began negotiations with trading companies operating further afield, and although they worked differently than you were used to, after some time the deals and money began to come in. And now you have managed to secure a deal with Muscovy Company to trade goods between Wallachia, Russia and much of Eastern Europe on a scale you have never done before. It will provide rare and valuable goods to Wallachia, and generous profits for yourself and House Cantacuzino.

The problem is that you need a little bit of capital to buy a warehouse and some other resources to get this venture started. And this is why you have come to this family gathering. With a new Head of the House to be elected, the time is just right for you to secure what you require. Occasionally in the past the House has called upon your father for assistance, and during the tough times the Family has also provided some help to previous generations before you. Now you need their help, in return for a cut of the profits, and you must convince one of the Cantacuzinos to provide it. You have had dealings with only a few of the family members (although you have met a number of them before), but your reputation, and the vote accorded to you by the traditions of House Cantacuzino, should be enough to secure the funding you require.

What You Want

You have secured a deal with the traders Muscovy Company but require a significant investment to get this started (at least £40000). You have already approached your normal sources and they will provide half of the money – only after you have secured the other half from other sources. So you need to obtain about £20000 from somewhere else. Your last resort is to ask the Family to help you out. Use whatever means you can to secure this sum of money.

You have had some dealings with Danut in the past and he seems to have very good contacts. If you can convince him of the folly of his current crusade (to hunt down this supposed "undead" creature), he would be a very useful employee.

The Other Family Members

Duna Cantacuzino: You did have some dealings with Duna before his death, and he was very receptive to your plans. It is very likely he would have provided you with the money you require and it is unfortunate he died before the details for this were finalised. He seemed a kind and gentle man and kept his word when given. You grieve for the loss but the Family must look forwards.

Iulia Cantacuzino (nee. Mourosis): The matriarch of the Cantacuzino House may be burdened in years but she is very intelligent and offers wisdom when appropriate. You like her a lot, although she does not always seem very welcoming towards you.

Amadi Cantacuzino: You have never met this person.

Beniamen Cantacuzino (ne. Lior): You have never met Beniamen, but you know him by reputation. A fellow merchant you must watch carefully – he may attempt to persuade the others against your plan.

Adanna Cantacuzino: You have only met this daughter of Duna once, but she seemed nice enough.

Chanoch Cantacuzino (ne. Abijah): A theologian in Jewish circles; you have not had any dealings with Chanoch but he might be useful as a friend.

Kizzy Cantacuzino: You have met Kizzy but did not take much interest in her; she seems to take after her mother a great deal.

Danut Cantacuzino: You have heard the tragic tale of Danut's wife and child being murdered and feel for his loss. But he seems to have taken this very badly and now spends much of his time trying to track down her killer – supposedly a fantastical creature from beyond the grave. You consider him a friend and as such have a job available to him. Through his strange endeavors he has picked up a number of contacts and could be useful to you as an informant.

Gamyuka Cantacuzino: The brother of Duna is a quiet but very intelligent man; he has spent much of his early years serving in the military. He prides on rational thought and would be an extremely useful ally if persuaded to your point of view.

Jofranka Cantacuzino (nee. Kalderas): She is the wife of Gamyuka and a very pleasant person to be around. Although, you have heard through your sources that there is more to her than is obvious to the sight.

Isoba Cantacuzino: He was present at many of the meetings you had with Duna and you rarely managed to surprise him with information he had not already heard from other sources. A quiet man but fiercely devoted to the Family; he seemed very nervous about your proposal. He disagreed with Duna and believed this was too risky; although you are sure the Family could afford it, he still seemed unconvinced. He did not understand that to get rewards there must be some element of risk.

Jelani Cantacuzino: The son of Duna is ruled by his emotions far more than his intellect, but you see much of his father in him. He also has the bravery of youth and will be interested in taking risks for suitable rewards; something you require.

Serghei Popescu: The butler of the house, you have not conversed with him in any informal capacity, but he seems acceptable.

Ahina Popescu: The housekeeper, you have had nothing to do with her.