

SLADOSTI

The Dining Club

A Delta Green Group of Interest by mellonbread

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THE FOUNDERS

The story of the restaurant Sladosti begins with a trio of strangers, in the ruins of the Soviet Empire.

GALINA DENISOVA

A basement restaurant in the bad part of town, where the smell of hot cooking fat was strong enough to overpower the stink of diesel and unfiltered cigarettes. “Restaurant” is too strong a word. It was a basement with a kitchen that occasionally got strange packages from strange men, and disgorged strange meals. Courtesy of the mad gourmand who bit into a squirming thing in a nameless valley outside Daşoguz twenty years ago, where the poisoned salt seeped off the rocks into the air like snowflakes in reverse.

Bit into it, and liked what she tasted.

GALINA DENISOVA - Cold Iron Chef

STR 15, CON 15, DEX 11, INT 11, POW 12, CHA 6

HP 15, WP 11, SAN 29, Addiction: Delicious Unnatural Creatures, Bulimia, Adapted to Violence

SKILLS: Alertness 50%, Athletics 60%, Art (Cooking 60%), Criminology 60%, Drive 50%, Firearms 40%, Foreign Languages (English 40%, Russian 60%), Heavy Machinery 50%, Melee Weapons 60%, Occult 60%, Ride 50%, Science (Biology 40%, Chemistry 40%), Survival 50%, Unarmed Combat 50%, Unnatural 13%

ATTACKS: Meat Cleaver (60%, D8+1, 3 AP)

Carving Knife (D6+1, 3 AP)

Galina is built like a Soviet tank destroyer: a powerful, wide body and a neck so thick she can barely turn her head. She’s covered in scars from accidents with hot food, hot metal, hot water, sharp objects, and creatures which objected (violently, but unsuccessfully) to becoming her dinner. She is careful to remove her clothes when she purges, and to brush her teeth and wash up afterward. But in her darker moments she still smells faintly of stomach acid.

Galina is jovial, rude, friendly, often drunk, and incredibly vulgar. She is well versed in *mat*, the lewd, rhyming slang of Russian soldiers and criminals. She loves to share her cooking with other people, and her only regret is that the ingredients she needs are too rare to do this often. It is unwise to refuse her dinner invitation, although given what’s on the menu it may also be unwise to accept.

YADNE RASKOLNIKOV

Yadne Raskolnikov wanted to be a physicist, but the Soviet Union’s universities didn’t admit Jews, so he became a businessman. A good businessman. A businessman who now owns several association football clubs, a couple palatial homes in upmarket London neighborhoods, and about one percent of Central Asia’s energy production. Just one problem: Yadne got bored. Ostentatious displays of wealth were gauche. Charity was great, but largely self managing once you put the right people in charge. Drugs and sex were short lived.

Someone told him about a restaurant he should try that might give him a new perspective on things.

Yadne was ready to be surprised by Galina’s disgusting basement kitchen, but he was totally unprepared for what she served him. He’d never eaten anything like it, and he *had to* have more. There was just one problem: she couldn’t make more. Not without more rare “ingredients” that were impossible to find and expensive to acquire. Something he was well placed to help with.

YADNE RASKOLNIKOV - Oligarch and Epicure

STR 11, CON 11, DEX 9, INT 13, POW 12, CHA 13

HP 11, WP 12, SAN 51

SKILLS: Accounting 50%, Bureaucracy 50%, Computer Science 50%, Criminology 60%, Disguise 40%, Foreign Languages (Arabic 20%, English 50%, Hebrew 40%, Yiddish 50%), HUMINT 80%, Law 50%, Occult 30%, Persuade 60%, Science (Geology) 40%

Yadne is slightly pudgy but not unfit. He is smartly dressed, but not ostentatiously so. He is not an observant Jew, abandoning *kashrut* the moment he first tasted Galina's cooking. He puts on the kippah when he (infrequently) goes to Temple, visits his family, or attends an event for one of the Jewish civil society organizations he patronizes. He speaks Russian with a Yiddish accent and English with a Russian accent, but is capable of effacing both if he wishes to blend in.

Yadne got where he is by understanding what people want. This means the Handler is justified in "metagaming" a bit, altering his personality and mannerisms based on what the players are most likely to respond positively to. This includes bribes that the Agents will find genuinely useful, once he figures out what they're after. He only turns to his underworld contacts if the Agents can't be reasoned with.

MYKOLA RURIK

Cpl Mykola's first brush with the other side came in the hills outside Grozny, hunting for Chechen insurgents. Russian siege mortars had collapsed part of a hillside, exposing a cave system. The glittering grave goods the squad found in that ancient tomb could have bought them an early retirement - or at least a few weeks of drunken revelry. Then the sergeant chipped one of the stone frescoes on the wall.

Only Mykola survived to spend his ill gotten gains.

He drifted after the war. Told his story in a bar to the wrong people. Ended up dragooned into GRU SV8, the Russian Federation's Unnatural counterintelligence outfit. Then loaned by SV8 to the Propavsheye.

MYKOLA RURIK - Special Operator Turned Propavsheye Procurer

STR 13, CON 11, DEX 12, INT 12, POW 11, CHA 10

HP 12, WP 11, SAN 43, Claustrophobia, Adapted to Violence

SKILLS: Alertness 60%, Athletics 60%, Criminology 50%, Demolitions 40%, Disguise 50%, Firearms 60%, Foreign Language: English 40%, Heavy Weapons 50%, Melee Weapons 50%, Military Science (Land) 60%, Navigate 50%, Pharmacy 40%, Stealth 50%, Survival 50%, Swim 50%, Unarmed Combat 60%, Unnatural 4%

ARMOR: 3 points of concealed Kevlar vest, or 6 points tactical body armor and helmet if there's trouble

ATTACKS: Hudson H9 (60%, D10)

Garotte (50%, D6, ignores armor and pins target)

Combat Knife (50%, D6+1, 3 AP)

Kalash w/ Holo Sight (80%, D12 or 10% lethality, 3 AP)

SPECIAL TRAINING: Scuba (Swim), Parachute (DEX), Locksmith (DEX)

Mykola is compact but powerfully built. His eyesight is quite poor without his glasses. He speaks quietly and his voice is raspy from smoking. He is trying to quit because the phlegm in his lungs makes aerobic exercise increasingly difficult. He tries to keep at least one foot away from walls at all times, and dislikes confined spaces for this reason. He first hated his assignment to procure "meat" for the billionaire's restaurant, but has come to enjoy it as a form of revenge on Unnatural creatures.

SLADOSTI

Yadne Raskolnikov is a wealthy and well connected oligarch, with ties in Russia's criminal, intelligence, and political circles. He absolutely loves Galina's food. He loves it so much, he wants her to become his personal chef, and to take her gastronomic genius from a filthy basement to a five star restaurant all her own. Just one problem - procurement of the rare ingredients she needs to make it happen.

Mykola Rurik is a gangster with the Propavsheye, a post-Soviet mafia outfit which specializes in the acquisition of unusual biological specimens. When the brothers hear that a billionaire would pay top dollar for strange creatures, they make Mykola the "single point of contact" with the oligarch.

With the supply chain and skilled labor under control, Yadne handles the business side of the equation. He curates the membership list, arranges invitations and the complex web of favors and vast bribes that accompany them. Arranges the security and secrecy of the venue, staff and guests.

THE RESTAURANT

Sladosti is located in a handsome and expensive structure in a desirable area of the city's downtown. There are no signs or facades, and aside from a listing on the building's directory there is no outward facing indication that it is there. An expert in **Accounting** who pushed through local property records could identify it as the property of Yadne Raskolnikov. Anyone less skilled would find it owned by an innocuous London real estate firm.

Inside, Sladosti has resisted modernist dining trends that make today's restaurants obnoxiously noisy. The kitchen is enclosed from the eating area. The floors are covered in luxurious carpets, the tables with cloth. The ceilings are low enough to avoid an echo (although they make Mykola uncomfortable). On the wall of the dining area is an Orientalist painting of a harem scene, a Franz Eisenhut original. In it, a concubine lounges naked on a divan. She has six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot. She drools a little as she stares with piercing green eyes at the pudgy odalisque tending her.

Reachable from the dining area through a short hall is the lounge. The lounge is for drinking, smoking, and conducting business away from the rest of the group. Food is only served here on special, private occasions. It looks like an ordinary smoking lounge with carpets and a bar counter. Visitors with **SIGINT** or **Craft: Electronics** notice the lounge is equipped with countersurveillance equipment - the walls and doors are impervious to thermal imaging, terahertz rays, etc and the room is soundproofed and equipped with white noise generators. This is where Yadne and the Propavsheye conduct business.

The kitchen has every contrivance known to culinary science, as well as chemical and biological science. Pizza ovens, fume hoods, sous vide cookers, centrifuges - making otherworldly meat into tasty treats requires a full range of tools and technology. They got Galina a flamethrower because she wouldn't stop asking, but stopped short of giving her a cyclotron.

A loading dock in the back of the restaurant leads to the basement abattoir. It's got fish tanks, holding pens, jail cells, padded rooms, and other methods of containing beasties until they can be dispatched and butchered. Every specimen is different and special precautions are often taken, such as coating the walls with certain materials, nullifying electrical charges, removing all metal objects from the room and butchering with ceramic blades, or scrawling specific symbols on the floor. Several rooms down here have been sealed due to contamination which could not be cleaned up.

While the abattoir has a meat locker and other storage, best practices are to slay a beast right before butchering, cooking and serving it, for maximum freshness. The cuts are taken up by dumbwaiter or freight elevator to the kitchen for preparation.

The wine cellar holds wine. Some of it is even good.

THE STAFF

Besides Galina the head chef, and Yadne the owner, the restaurant is served by a small handful of well trained, well paid restaurant staff.

- **Slobodan Babuszkiewicz** is the manager. He is enthusiastic, friendly, and a great boss - right up until he feels that a subordinate has betrayed him.
- **Shahnoza Belov** is retired afgantsy, now Galina's sous chef. He is awed by her talent and always feels like he's struggling to keep up.
- **Krymchak Rubenstein** is a disgraced former shochet. He works in the restaurant's basement as beast wrangler and butcher - on the occasions when Galina doesn't do the deed herself.
- **Mia Hristova** is head of the wait staff. Slobodan plucked her out of a shipment of brothel slaves and offered her the restaurant gig - a favored tactic to ensure loyalty. She has not disappointed.

THE GUESTS

Yadne attends every gathering at Sladosti - he's invested too much not to make the most out of every meal. He invites the other members of the dining club on the basis of whose favor he needs to buy.

A typical dinner party might host...

- **Koba Nevsky**, a Bishop of the Orthodox Church in America. Grants his post-Soviet mafia contacts an air of respectability, and helps them launder money. Loud voice, big eater.
- **Indira Bhattacharya**, CFO of Frontier Bio-Logic. Projects power and confidence out of proportion to her diminutive size. Reliable source of biological samples for Sladosti's kitchen.
- **Senator James Horiuchi**, sits on a few committees Yadne is very interested in. Calls anyone younger than himself "boy" or "girl" without regard for their actual age or status.
- **Alexa Hirschman**, newly famous painter. Invited by Yadne for status reasons, in exchange for a commissioned work. Awkward, unused to fine dining or luxury.

THE SUPPLY CHAIN

The Propavsheye keep their eye on biotech firms, criminal networks, and a few handsomely paid informers in US intelligence and law enforcement. These contacts either submit tips to the mob's procurement specialists, or turn over beasts they've killed/captured themselves. Buying a monster from a third party is easier than catching it in the wild, but sometimes it's not an option.

The Propavsheye transport prospective meals by van or truck. Air and rail are unacceptable, they give third parties an opportunity to handle and inspect the cargo. If they make an overseas purchase, the mobsters bring the package in through a "friendly" port, where they have arrangements with the dockworkers to ensure secrecy.

USING SLADOSTI

A Fish and Wildlife Service investigation finds a shipment of “exotic animals” with unusual biology. Delta Green must take over the investigation and determine where the creatures are being sent: an exclusive restaurant with ties to the Ukrainian mob, where well connected epicures sample out-of-this-world delicacies at exorbitant prices.

Or come at it from the other direction. A handful of socialites, criminals and politicians all come down with the same suite of symptoms - rare disease, mutations, or even mysterious powers, all which no known earthly cause. The only connection is the restaurant they shared a meal at - a dish the chef had never served before and expected never to serve again.

In spy fiction, post-Soviet restaurants are a classic meeting place. The Propavsheye have ties to GRU SV8, Russia’s Unnatural counterintelligence agency. Sladosti could serve as a hook into a larger Delta Green investigation into SV8 activity on American soil. Or, a base of operations for SV8 players to get a foothold in the States.

Galina has a wealth of biological knowledge about Unnatural creatures, attained by cutting them open, exposing them to different environmental conditions, and mixing them with different substances. This makes her an intelligence source for Agents with questions about a monster they’re hunting. She’ll have to be bribed with a payment of rare “ingredients”, or otherwise convinced to share her secrets.

There are only so many Unnatural creatures in the wild. Overharvesting of ancient tombs, hidden dens and alien artifacts leaves Sladosti with a shortage of ingredients. Fortunately, there are a panoply of rituals which can bring more of these creatures into the world. The Propavsheye procurers bring a steady flow of alien livestock in through portals to other worlds and realities, filling Sladosti’s larders. Just watch out for when the beasts get sick of being collected, and collect a few of the mobsters themselves.

The Procurers find a creature which grows back its body parts. They can cut slices from its bulk, sever limbs, or otherwise remove pieces for consumption with no lasting damage. This renewable resource allows Galina to experiment more and take her culinary arts to new heights, but also threatens to “cheapen” the dining experience by reducing the rarity of each meal. SV8 wants the beast transferred to the Motherland for biotech research, entranced by its powers of regeneration.

Unnatural creatures are smart, often smarter than human beings. And they talk to each other. Hunting them for food isn’t going to win Sladosti any friends among Those From Outside, or their human devotees. Sladosti and the Propavsheye come under coordinated assault from a coven of cultists, who believe that meat is deicide.

Galina jumps on the Youtube bandwagon. She records, edits and publishes videos of herself cooking and eating Unnatural creatures. It’s a viral hit, exciting the imagination and spawning imitators. And spreading dangerous knowledge of the Occult in the process. And just wait until she publishes her cookbook...

GALINA'S NOTEBOOK

In Turkmen, partially translated into Russian and English. Study time minutes (to read), years (to master). Art (Cooking) +5%, Science (Chemistry +2%, Biology +3%). SAN loss 1

Description: This notebook is a raw record of Galina's culinary experiments. It chronicles her failed attempts at turning otherworldly beings into tasty treats, and her ultimate successes. With the right reagents, the reader could recreate these gastronomic achievements.

Byakhee - open brain and remove hune, crush & boil w/ onion gravy to make pate, spread on favorite cracker. Still working on body which is rubbery and rancid - fermenting maybe?

Dark Young - "meat" best pickled w/ chili, garlic and ginger. Serve w/ oysters & fried egg on bed of jasmine or jade rice.

Dimensional Shambler - thin, lots and lots of skin. Fry like buttermilk fried chicken & serve on waffle. Bones make broth - good for matzo or Thai noodle soup.

Elder Thing - foul smell, incredibly tough. Brine, then marinate/slow cook in mixture of root beer, pineapple, vinegar and rum for 72 days. Glaze w/ favorite bbq sauce and serve on soft roll w/ sides of pickled onions, pickled cucumbers, potato salad, macaroni and baked beans.

Feaster From the Stars - nourish w/ fresh blood until mostly visible, then sever tentacle and prepare as takoyaki inside ball of dough. Alternatively braise w/ curry leaf and coconut oil as boava.

Greys - bland like white meat or tofu. Spice in soup like miso or smth korean, maybe toss some scallions in there. juice isn't worth the squeeze on this one

Insects From Shaggai - pry forehead cladding open & remove five of six brain lobes leaving rearmost chamber. Salt, roast and eat like sunflower seed spitting out pieces of shell. Dressing optional but I prefer ranch or something else unpretentious

Migo - fix w/ milk bath to negate appportation effect. Prepare claws as lobster and season liberally w/ old bay and pink sea salt for indescribable purple/loud flavor. Slice wings into 3 to 6 inch pieces & bake/kettle cook into chips, serve w/ sour cream and balsamic vinegar alongside fresh raspberries. Nodules from "head" substitute for truffles, w/ metallic taste

Serpent Men - decapitate, skin, remove entrails. Cut meat into strips and soak in egg whites. cover in breadcrumbs. Cook and serve as veal/chicken parm on bread or w/ pasta. Alternatively make jerky?

Shoggoth - reduced to crumbly powder on death. Flavor difficult to describe, possible interaction w/tastebud outside of flavor profile - damage to tissue similar to capsaicin. I put it on everything I eat now & I'm running out

Star Spawn - take iodine and elevate BAC to minimum .08 before preparing/eating. steaks produce sensations./microseizures when grilled rare in garlic, tawny port and olive oil. Serve surf and turf w seafood b/c you'll need it

Wendigo - cook sous vide as lamb shank to avoid destruction of meat by fire. Ignore intrusive thoughts during consumption.

EATING UNNATURAL CREATURES

The “realistic” consequence of eating Unnatural creatures is a grisly death, by poisoning, disease, or mutation. But if every present you give the Agents contains a pit viper, the players will stop opening them. And what fun is that?

If we accept that Galina really does know how to prepare mythos monsters for (relatively) safe consumption, like a skilled chef dissecting a poisonous puffer fish, the next question is: what happens when the Agents try one of her recipes?

The simplest answer is for Agents eating a monster to lose SAN and gain Unnatural - the meal offers some insight into the creature’s biology, its role in the cosmos, its powers and weaknesses. Tasting it may offer a chance to learn spells - either ones known by the creature, or rough cognates to its abilities that humans can imitate. These too must be paid for in SAN.

The more interesting, but more content-intensive approach, is to think of what mutations or special properties eating a creature might give an Agent. Whatever it is, there should be a cost to doing it, beyond SAN damage. Some creatures are easy to pick powers and consequences for, others take some thought.

- Munching on the delicate “truffles” of a Migo’s bioluminescent head-parts seeds the diner with tiny spores that, over time, construct new sense organs. The patient gradually “hears” a greater and greater range of the EM spectrum, picking up radio waves and cosmic rays. The downside is that you can’t turn it off - not without a painful course of antifungal and radiation therapy to purge the foreign bodies from your body. And you’ll miss the music you used to hear, whether you like it or not.
- Sipping a chilled soup distilled from a Hunting Horror grants resistance to radiation, pressure, cold, vacuum, and other hazardous environments. The diner can move on the surface of Saturn, the depths of the ocean, or in open space with equal ease. The only problem is that visible light now burns you like fire. Complete blood replacement and a fecal transplant might purge you of the effects, if you can get all that done in complete darkness.
- The Great Mother bestows changes on her children, though not always the changes they want. Eating a Dark Young - preferably after softening it up a bit - moves D4 points from a random stat to another random stat. This transformation cannot be reversed, but you’re always welcome to take another bite and try your luck again.
- Eating an analeptic squeezed from a Ghoul’s brain grants the diner the ability to briefly imitate its mephitic memories ability, devouring brains to gain the memories stored inside. The short term risk of SAN damage from secondhand traumatic memories is one thing, but repeat consumption of human brains has other, long term consequences. One day, you discover you don’t need the Ghoul juice anymore - you can do it on your own. There’s no coming back from this one.