

# THE ODANI TRAVELLERS



The future may not be read with impunity. The threads of destiny for a person are wrapped through the days of their lives, known only to the omniscient beings known to their followers as the Fates. The secrets of the Fates are hidden from the eyes of mere mortals and only those with the gift of Mythos may begin to lift that veil. For the Odani people, the power of such foresight is passed down through the female line. From Mother to Daughter, the ability to see 'that what will be' has allowed the Travellers to remain healthy, wealthy, and wise. The Odani camp moves from the

outskirts of neighbouring towns across the Union, never staying more than a few days at any location. On arrival, the extended families of the Odani set up their stalls with attractions and shows to entice locals to part with a few dollars in the name of entertainment. The highlight of the Odani Traveller's arrival is the dazzling performances beneath their canvas tent. Colourful, exotic, and always greeting visitors with a toothy smile, the demeanour of the Odani is designed to beguile the public. The Odani are welcomed by most folk, their entertainments a

welcome distraction for a generation still recovering from their terrible civil war.

The Odani have no interest in the mundane affairs of the world, preferring to focus on maintaining their way of life for as long as possible in this Dystopian Age of industry and imperialism. However, they are all too aware of the Shadow War being fought at the fringes of civilisation. Their knowledge of the Fates combined with skilful misdirection is one of the Odani's strengths which, they hope, will enable them to survive the ruin of humanity.

One of the most respected families within the Odani are the Calderas. The patriarch, Max Calderas, commands loyalty and respect from his children as well as the other families in their community. Known simply as 'Pop' by his closest kin, Max has the appearance of a veteran strongman, now gone to seed. His fierce appearance is undercut by his disarmingly charming demeanour, making him the ideal frontman for their show. His charm quickly evaporates should his family be threatened or the Fates demand action.

The blessings of the Fates are plentiful on Max's wife Talia, able to command spirits and see into the future. A teller of fortunes to the public, while everyone leaves amazed by what they've seen, these powers are assumed to be an elaborate trick. In reality, Talia commands spirits at the behest of the Fates, with many such as the imp-like Taka and Pali in thrall to her as servants and diminutive Grimaldi clowns.

The ghoulish looking Amran entertains the crowds as a puppeteer of unparalleled skill. His toys seem to take a life of their very own, though the smiling audience have no inkling how true that really is. For Amran an aetheric apparition that delights in compelling and controlling those who catch his notice. His puppets are miraculous

creations of wood and paint, but their eyes seem too life-like, staring out almost pleading with the audience. The effect is disturbing for those that notice it. And if you notice it, Amran notices you...

The Calderas children are as varied as the Fates, with monstrous Caleb and bewitching Nyssa two extremes of the family traits that have made them so powerful in the Odani. While Nyssa is beautiful and greatly gifted like her mother, Caleb is a formidable mountain of muscle with a mind like a young child. Stefan, the eldest and most like Max, has been marked as the future leader of the Odani. An intimidating opponent, Stefan is aware of how to exploit his enemies' assumptions. Often, the strongman plays his expected part, only for it to be a distraction from his youngest sister Vida to resolve matters more subtly from behind with a knife in the enemy's ribs.

A necessary evil, it is often the case that one or two of the encountered townfolk will go missing during the entertainments or even shortly after the wagons of the Odani have left. Usually, such disappearances go unreported and unremarked. The Union is expanding quickly and suffering from growing pains, the vulnerable often falling between the cracks. Those that vanish have often had a difficult life up to that point. The gift of the Odani means that the fate of their victims are already known by the travellers from the moment they meet them. Some of the disappeared would inadvertently or directly contribute to some great calamity in the Odani's future. Others are simply fated to nourish one of the spirits that are bound in service to the Odani. Destiny is a fickle creature and for each life taken and each doom averted, a new ill omen seems to materialise cursing the Odani to redouble their efforts in the face of this oncoming storm. If there is one thing the Odani are learning over the generations, it is that you cannot cheat the Fates.