

Noblesse Oblige

A
Warhammer
Fantasy Roleplay
Scenario of Investigation
& Intrigue



“I ask again: are those blessed with noble birth not also burdened with obligations? And is not chief among these obligations the duty to provide succor to those less fortunate?”
Jakob Creutzfeldt

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TABLE of CONTENTS

Introduction page 1
In Media Res page 1
Pressed Into Service page 3
A Few Questions page 5

All Good Things page 15
Experience Awards page 17
Fold-over Cards page 18
Player Handouts page 22

GM Information page 23
Acknowledgments page 24

:: INTRODUCTION ::

Noblesse Oblige is a non-linear, investigative adventure for four to six Player Characters of any experience level. It is set in southern Hochland, but with little effort can take place on any major road in the Empire.

Background

The roadway that connects Hergig and Talabheim also acts as the border between the land-holdings of two lesser noble families, the Creutzfeldts and the Durrenbachs, who have been bitter rivals for generations. The recent Storm of Chaos and the absence of Elector Count Aldebrand Ludenhof from his seat of power in Hergig has emboldened both families. Indeed, outright war between them would have occurred but for the Count's unexpected return from Talabheim; he has now explicitly forbidden any "private wars" until the current crisis has passed. To resolve the strife in the southern portion of his lands (as well as send a message of strength and leadership), Count Ludenhof has dispatched a Sigmarite Priest as a neutral third party to broker what he hopes will be a lasting peace between the two families.

Reluctantly following the Count's orders, each family has sent a group of representatives to attempt reconciliation, or at least keep up appearances while placating the Count. The Creutzfeldt representatives are 1) eldest son and heir Jakob Creutzfeldt, who has recently discovered that he is a mutant, 2) youngest son Friderich Creutzfeldt, who blames the Durrenbachs for the death of his first love, 3) mercenary captain and longtime friend of the family Arent Stretstorp, who believes in reconciliation but does not trust the Durrenbachs, and 4) Friderich's "consort," Grethe Rozenow, a trained assassin who is present in case things go awry and an opportunity

to kill a prominent Durrenbach presents itself. Representing the Durrenbachs are 1) Brigita Durrenbach, daughter and heir, and suspected member of the cult of Slaanesh, 2) Ruprecht Durrenbach, eldest son (and whose only obstacle to inheriting the Durrenbach fortune is Brigita), 3) Darathee Durrenbach, widowed priestess of Shallya, and 4) Everd Setzingen, mercenary captain, who hopes the talks will fail so that his income will rise. Each of these people have their own reasons for wanting the peace negotiations to fail; indeed the families would already have waged war had the Elector Count not intervened.

The PCs happen upon the rear of this caravan and soon find themselves fighting for their lives against what appears to be a random attack by a band of mutants.

Later, however, it becomes obvious that the attack served to provide a diversion for the murder of the Elector Count's representative, the Priest of Sigmar. It should be clear to everyone that the best -- perhaps the *only* -- hope of finding the killer is an immediate investigation. Since no surviving member of either party can be trusted, and the

nearest Roadwardens are hours away, this burden is foisted upon the PCs by an inexperienced Initiate who wishes to avoid trouble with the nobility. Together the PCs must sort through various noble intrigues and false leads to discover the reason behind the murder, and finally unmask the true culprit. The investigation is fraught with much risk and offers little reward, for whomever is responsible for the priest's death will likely murder again to avoid being discovered; and while the PCs may gain an ally if they clear one family, they will certainly gain the undying enmity of the family deemed responsible. The PCs must keep their wits about them, for as they will soon discover, very few things in *Noblesse Oblige* are as they appear.

"I wish you to understand, first and foremost, that I answer your questions, low-born, not out of any moral obligation, nor fear of reprisal, nor sorrow for our dear departed priest. On the contrary, I answer them because I am blameless, and my family is blameless, and you will report that to the Count."

Brigita Durrenbach

:: EPISODE ONE: IN MEDIA RES ::

The adventure proper begins as the PCs are traveling along the Hergig-Talabheim roadway. Above the ambient forest noises, a light breeze carries soft sounds of music, muted lulls of speech, and the intermittent creaking of multiple wheels from ahead, just past the curve in the

road. As the PCs advance, a caravan of three coaches comes into view, replete with brightly colored flags bearing heraldry of nobility: a stylized "C" embedded within a shield and diamond flies from the final coach (nearest to the PCs), the middle coach bears a flag with a

quartered-shield surrounding a "D," and two flags fly from the first (one red-and-green with a Horn and Bow -- the easily-recognized symbol of the Elector Count of Hochland -- and the other bears a twin-tailed comet). It should be obvious to the PCs that they are witnessing a procession of *Important People*.

At the rear of the caravan is a group of stragglers, soldiers, and hangers-on: two tall troubadours with long, straight blonde hair and lutes, a beautiful brunette woman (Grethe Rozenow) who laughs as

she exchanges stories with the troubadours, and two bored soldiers. The troubadours, milling about lazily at the rear of the caravan, are the first to catch sight of the PCs. One of them smiles gregariously and waves the PCs forward, yelling "Come! Walk with us!" He introduces himself as Mathias Neltzen, troubadour extraordinaire for the Creutzfeldt noble family. He explains that he and his brother Gunnar were brought along to entertain the entourage during their journey to negotiate peace terms with a rival noble family, the Durrenbachs. His voice drops to a conspiratorial whisper as he explains that the two families have caused so much trouble that Elector Count Ludenhof himself ordered the negotiations, and to be sure there was no more trouble, he sent his personal representative (at this he leans over and motions toward the first coach), Erasmus Heger, Priest of Sigmar. Gunnar attempts to hush him -- "It's none of their business *what* we're doing. They're lucky we're sharing the road in the first place!"

-- but Mathias will not be silenced: "I've been walking for two straight days now and between songs *you* are the only company I've had. Before these kind folks

happened by I'd begun to long for the rack."

He turns again to the PCs and says, "So, tell us of your travels. And don't leave out the gossip, it's my stock and trade." If the PCs seem reluctant, Mathias will offer a deal. "Rumor for rumor. I'll start: I heard tell recently that Jakob Creutzfeldt, heir and scion of the Creutzfeldt clan, is being forced to marry Darathee Durrenbach, former widow and current Priestess of Shallya, as part of the peace accord. Oh, if only I'd have been a fly on the wall when Jakob found that out. He's an even-tempered man on most days, but we all have our limits, don't we? Your turn." He will continue to run through every rumor in *Appendix C* until either he or the PCs have no more rumors to tell. Then he will happily exchange small talk with the PCs for a time.

Alms for the Poor

After a brief period of conversation, Mathias is interrupted by a loud clanging noise emanating from the forest to the east. A quick glance reveals five mutants dressed in tatters who stand at the edge of the forest, screaming and clanging rusty weapons against their shields (if needed, the mutants' characteristics can also

be found in *Appendix C*). Four of them have crossbows aimed at the caravan. The tallest among them, a six foot five inch mutant with horns and animalistic legs, steps forward and bellows in a deep and guttural tone: "We are poor and have been cast out by society. We only take what we are unable to earn by honest labor. Drop your weapons, drop your gold, and keep out of our way."

The two soldiers who are apparently functioning as the caravan's rear guard exchange confused glances,

then draw their weapons, crouch into defensive stances,

"Come, travelers! Walk with us awhile and barter your tales of faraway places for shelter and companionship."

Mathias Neltzen, Troubadour

and await the mutants' next move. The woman gathers her dress and quickly scurries to the other side of the coach. Both troubadours stand transfixed, immobilized by fear. In the distance, the forward guard is in the process of turning their mounts, but will not arrive for at least three rounds.

The PCs are free to act now; if they charge the mutants, they can engage them this round, but they'll face four crossbow bolts before they can cross the gap. If magic is used in any obvious fashion, two of the mutants must pass an Average WP Test or flee on the spot from fright. The rest of the mutants will stand their ground as long as possible, but will flee if any of their number is critically wounded. If the PCs follow the soldiers' lead and wait, the mutants will continue to clang their weapons

as loudly as possible. If by the second round no one has dropped any gold, one of the mutants will fire its crossbow into the cargo compartment of the third coach -- a warning shot. The leader will repeat his orders, and

threaten that people will be harmed if they do not comply. When the forward guard arrives at the rear of the caravan (Arent and Everd will argue over who coordinates the response), the mutants will stage a fighting retreat, firing their crossbows as they slowly fade into the forest. If one of the mutants is left behind, he should die before he is questioned -- it will make the rest of the scenario go more smoothly.

What's Really Going on Here?

If the mutant's speech above sounds strangely scripted, it was: in reality, these mutants are friends of Jakob Creutzfeldt, who has set up a secret sanctuary for them in a secluded portion of the Creutzfeldt hunting grounds. They are under orders to make a scene and get noticed, but not to harm anyone -- Jakob desires to broach the subject of the plight of mutants with the Elector Count's representative, but does not wish to arouse suspicion or the attention of Witch Hunters by appearing to sympathize with mutants. He hopes that an attempted robbery by indigent mutants will help him frame this conversation. When the caravan arrives at their destination, Jakob

plans to say that the mutant attack has been the center of all his thoughts since it occurred, and he believes he has struck upon a unique solution to the mutant dilemma: perhaps if mutants were housed, fed, and taken care of in a place where they could be supervised by a responsible party, they would be less of a threat to travelers and, indeed, the Empire itself. Jakob is pragmatic enough to know that the reception to this idea will likely be cool, but it is important to him that the seed be planted.

A Death in the Caravan

In the aftermath of the attack, the two mercenary captains will question those at the rear of the caravan: "Was anyone hurt? What did the mutants say? What did they want? Did anyone recognize any of them? What kind of weapons did they have? Did they have any distinguishing features?" and so on. Everd appears to worry more about how authoritative he looks to his troops, but Arent seems to actually care about the people of the caravan. After a time, members of the nobility of both families will emerge from their respective coaches and drift to the rear of the caravan to discover what happened.

This is an excellent time for the GM to play up

the tensions between the two families. Mathias will give any nearby PC running commentary on the events that follow, introducing the major players with a sort of glee at the havoc they cause. At some point, Brigita Durrenbach will attempt to order Arent Stretstorpe to give her an account of his actions during the attack. Friderich Creutzfeldt will take immediate offense to this and shout at her that Arent is a Creutzfeldt hireling and does not answer to any Durrenbach. As Jakob attempts to restrain his younger brother, Ruprecht Durrenbach responds that if the situation had come to battle, their soldiers were under orders to protect only Durrenbach people and equipment -- and if the look of the Creutzfeldt soldiery was any indication of their skills, Friderich would be better off turning his coach around and heading back to his father for protection. Friderich wrestles away from Jakob's grip and draws his sword, offering to show Ruprecht firsthand the skill of Creutzfeldt swordplay. Ruprecht draws his sword and moves toward Friderich, but is halted by a scream from the first coach. Heads turn toward a Sigmarite Initiate who is running toward them.

"He's dead!" he shouts in a panic. "Herr Heger is dead!"

:: EPISODE TWO: PRESSED INTO SERVICE ::

The caravan is plunged into an immediate frenzy by this revelation. A surge of people rush to the first coach, where three initiates are carefully withdrawing the lifeless body of Erasmus Heger from inside and placing it on the road. The Priestess of Shallya, Darathee Durrenbach, rushes to his side and places a hand at his neck to check for a pulse and a small mirror above his mouth to check for breathing. After nearly a minute passes without any fog on the mirror, she shakes her head sadly. "He is dead."

Jakob pushes his way to the front of the crowd and asks, "How did this happen?" But Darathee shakes her head: "I don't know. We would need a Priest of Morr to determine that. But he was not a young man."

A hush falls over the crowd for a brief time, but then accusations begin. Ruprecht wants to know who was in the coach during the time of death, Friderich wants the location of every Durrenbach and every Durrenbach hireling, Everd shouts that the forward guard was under Arent's responsibility and should never have left the first coach -- and then the shouting grows so loud that individual accusations can no longer be heard above the din.

At this point the GM should grant each of the PCs a Perception Check. The PC with the lowest roll will spot a small red mark on the right side of the neck of the corpse. The crowd is arguing so heatedly that no one will

notice if the PC moves in to look. Upon closer inspection, it is clear that not only is there a red mark on his neck, but that mark encloses a tiny puncture wound. This death was obviously no accident -- Erasmus Heger, Priest of Sigmar and Personal Representative of the Elector Count of Hochland, has been murdered.

Now the PC must decide what to do with this information. The most obvious course of action is to go immediately public and announce what s/he knows; this will cause a second hush to fall over the crowd as multiple members of each noble family press forward to verify. Brigita will be the first to question the PC: "Who are you? You are not part of my entourage, are you with the Creutzfeldts? How long have you been here? Where were you when the mutants attacked?" and so on. Jakob will state that he has not seen any of the PCs before, but

Mathias will vouch for the PCs, stating that they happened along shortly before the mutant attack and remained at the rear of the caravan the entire time. If the PCs engaged in any heroics during the attack, he will re-enact them in all their glory. Jakob will then point out that the attack was aimed at the Creutzfeldt coach, and so if there is anyone who had motive for that, it would be the Durrenbachs.

If the PC decides to remain silent, the accusations will continue until Mathias glances at the corpse,

"Why, you don't suppose I had anything to do with it, do you dear? I am not interested in any priest or silly peace talks. I just want my Friderich to be happy."

Grethe Rozenow, Creutzfeldt Consort

cocks an eyebrow, and moves in for a closer inspection. He will hush the crowd by revealing this information himself, and the scene above will play itself out with the following change: Brigita will initially question Mathias, then her gaze will fall upon the unfamiliar PCs and she will pounce on them as possible suspects.

Grethe Rozenow will interrupt the interrogation of the PCs and suggest that perhaps one of the mutants was responsible. However, Everd and Arent will both agree that none of the mutants ever got within blowdart range of the first coach. Therefore, whoever killed Erasmus must have been within the company of the caravan itself.

After a few more questions and many suspicious glares, one of the initiates steps forward. "I am Erasmus's personal assistant, Reymer Kremptze. The responsibility falls upon me to make a report of this ... incident ... to the Count. I will be conducting a full and immediate investigation," he says, glancing about. "I require assistance, but to be frank I don't know who to trust."

GM NOTE

This next part of the adventure is crucial to the players' continued suspension of disbelief. To make it plausible that unknown PCs who just wandered up to the caravan moments before would be asked to participate in an investigation involving two noble families and the death of a highly respected priest, three things need to be made clear:

- 1) Reymer Kremptze, the initiate responsible for making the report to the Count, is inexperienced and wishes to avoid any missteps with nobility (in truth, he is reluctant to carry out the investigation at all but realizes that it cannot be avoided. He hopes to make the appearance of investigating thoroughly but does not actually desire any results; he believes that the PCs have been hand-delivered by Sigmar himself for precisely this purpose). Certainly, if any of the members of either noble family are upset with the investigation, Reymer will refer them straight to the PCs.*
- 2) The rivalry between the families is so great that the political advantage gained by pinning the blame for this death on the other family far outweighs the affront to their egos caused by being investigated by mere peasants.*
- 3) The investigation cannot be delayed until more qualified people arrive. Reymer will state that the best chance of catching the killer is to investigate the scene and interrogate the people while events are still fresh, but the real reason is that he wishes to dispense with the investigation as quickly as possible and proceed on his way before night falls.*

It is the Gamemaster's duty to play up the tensions between the families, to display Reymer's investigatory inexperience and reliance on the PCs, and to impress upon the players the need for immediacy. The more skillfully these three ideas are portrayed by the GM, the more plausible and enjoyable the scenario becomes.

At this point he stops abruptly, his gaze fixing on the PCs. "You! Did I hear correctly that you are not party to either family? You owe allegiance to neither the Creutzfeldts nor the Durrenbachs?" When the PCs an-

swer in the negative, he clasps his hands together. "Sigmar be praised, for he has sent me the answer before I even asked the question! You will be my eyes and ears during this investigation." He turns back to the crowd. "Neither coach nor horse shall move until the investigation is complete. Creutzfeldts and Durrenbachs, you shall extend your cooperation to these men (and women) as representatives of the Elector Count of Hochland. Any interference shall be duly noted in my report to the Count himself."

If the PCs refuse to help, Reymer informs them that his "request" for assistance has the same legal standing as an order from the Count. If they still refuse, he will threaten to arrest them (using soldiers from one noble family or the other) until the culprit has been discovered, and that without their aid, he might well be duped into thinking that *they* are responsible for the priest's death, and he would hate to have to report *that* to the Count. This should signal to the PCs two things: not only is the initiate serious about involving them in the investigation, but he is more politically astute than he first appears. It should also give them pause as to *why* he is so desperate to involve them. The truth can be found in the GM Note to the left.

Brigita Durrenbach is stunned by this turn of events. "Certainly not!" she spouts. "As a member of one of the most distinguished noble families in Hochland, I will not stoop to be questioned by those of lower birth. The Count may send a noble to investigate. I will not cooperate with this farce."

Jakob listens dutifully to her tirade, then gives a slight smile. "Herr Kremptze, for our part, the Count will have the full cooperation of the Creutzfeldts in this investigation. I am confident that not only will you find our family innocent of any wrongdoing in Herr Heger's unfortunate and untimely demise ..." He pauses and turns his gaze to Brigita. "But I am certain that you will discover the true culprit as well."

Ruprecht frowns and whispers into Brigita's ear. After a moment's consideration, she sighs heavily and says, "You will of course forgive my earlier outburst. My grief at the death of the Count's representative temporarily overwhelmed me. Of course you will have the full cooperation of the Durrenbach house during your investigation. If there is anything you need from any of us, please let me know and I shall see to it personally."

When everyone is in agreement, Reymer will send some of the initiates to begin searching the three coaches for any pertinent evidence. He explains that he will take responsibility for interviewing the servants of both families. He asks the PCs to interview each of the following: Jakob Creutzfeldt, Friderich Creutzfeldt, Grethe Rozenow, Brigita Durrenbach, Ruprecht Durrenbach, Darathee Durrenbach, and the two mercenary captains, Arent Stretstorpe and Everd Setzingen. He instructs them to pay special attention to their whereabouts during the mutant attack (since it occurred at approximately the same time as the death of the priest) as well as any possible motives they may have for wanting the peace accords to fail. They are allowed to question only; searches of person or property are forbidden without Reymer's express approval. When the PCs finish, they are to report back to him and relay their findings.

:: EPISODE THREE: A FEW QUESTIONS ::

At this point the PCs are free to interview any of the eight mentioned above, in any order. Each of them is listed in *Appendix A*, along with a brief summary of three types of information they possess: 1) information that is openly available to anyone who asks and is freely volunteered, 2) information that is only available as a response to direct questioning, and 3) information that is secret and must be discovered through other sources (unlike the first two types, secret information is always true). Each of the characters listed will claim that they were inside their respective coaches except for Arent, Everd, Grethe, and Darathee. More detailed information on each of the main characters can be found below:

Jakob Creutzfeldt, Noble Lord

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
39	31	32	46	47	53	37	48
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	18	3	4	4	0	0	2

Description: Current leader of the Creutzfeldt noble family. Possessed of hard, aquiline features softened by a compassionate gaze, he is clean-shaven except for large sideburns that extend past the angle of the jaw. His hair has begun to gray at the edges. He is dressed in a light-grey garment of fine material; the left breast is imprinted with the Creutzfeldt family mark.

History: Ever since his father suffered a debilitating attack of the palsy six years ago, Jakob has been the de facto leader of the Creutzfeldt family. At 39 years of age, he is a competent, confident, and compassionate man, but this was not always the case. Up until nine years ago, he was much like his younger brother Friderich: flighty, arrogant, and irresponsible. But his life changed course when, while hunting, he encountered a mound of meteoric warpstone and made the mistake of briefly handling it -- within a few weeks, he noticed a small patch of scales appear near his left shoulder. Despite his attempts to cut, shave, and even burn the lesions off, the scales always reappeared. He gradually came to terms with the fact that he had become a mutant, and this realization transformed him. He began contemplating the plight of mutants in the Empire and decided that, given his resources and position within the province, he had been chosen by Fate to help them -- a decision that seemed confirmed when his father's health waned suddenly, and Jakob was thrust into the role of family leader.

Two years ago, he created a secret sanctuary for mutants in a secluded area of the Creutzfeldt hunting grounds, which he keeps off-limits to family and staff. Word spread and soon it blossomed into a small commu-

nity of mutants, who seemed to thrive within an environment of caring and support, and indeed acted far less aggressively than those who had been forced into the wilds to survive on their own. Concluding that his experiment was a success, he then cast about for a way to legitimize it, but that required some form of Provincial support, which Jakob was loathe to risk. About this time, he met Darathee Durrenbach, Priestess of Shallya, at a fund-raising dinner for the local Shallyan ministry for the ill and poor. Pleasantly surprised that a lady from a rival family shared much of his views on the responsibility of nobility to care for those less fortunate, he began secretly courting her. Eventually, he took her into his confidence and revealed the nature of his secret project to her. She was instantly taken with the idea of providing food, shelter, and care to those whom society had cast out. When the order from the Count was issued, Jakob told her of his plans to inform the Sigmarite Priest of their work. Darathee, however, expressed her disapproval, believing that although going public with their work sometime in the future was indeed necessary, at this time society was simply not ready. She warned him that Witch Hunters and worse would be summoned, and that if he even broached the subject with any Provincial Official, he would surely burn at the stake. Jakob then told her of his plans to have some of his mutants stage a robbery, providing a ready excuse to bring up the plight of mutants in conversation without arousing suspicion. Sensing defeat, Darathee acquiesced.

As Jakob was making preparations for the journey to neutral ground for peace negotiations, his father (Jakob Creutzfeldt der alt) approached him in a rare fit of lucidity and ordered him to bring along an assassin for the purpose of slaying a Durrenbach should the

"Stretstorpe said what about me? Why, if there were some way to profit from his death, I'd kill him where he stands."

Everd Setzingen, Durrenbach Mercenary Captain

opportunity arise. Jakob refused at first, then submitted with the caveat that she would remain disguised until such time as Jakob personally gave the order to kill. This he does not intend to do.

Whereabouts During Attack:

- Inside the Creutzfeldt coach (True, can be verified by Friderich)

Voluntary Information:

- He does not know who killed Erasmus (True, but he suspects Darathee is involved, since she was the only one other than himself who had advance knowledge of the mutant attacks)
- He could not begin to guess who killed Erasmus (False, as above; although when it is revealed to him that Erasmus was killed by an assassin's dart, he begins to suspect his father, who ordered the assassin be present over Jakob's objections)

- None of the Creutzfeldts were involved (True, but though he appears confident in this assertion, he does not know this for certain)
- He suspects Ruprecht is involved (False) because of his blind ambition (True, Ruprecht is very ambitious) and Everd because he would do anything for money (Also true, but neither were involved in the priest's death)
- He does not know anything about the mutant attacks (False, he orchestrated the entire affair)
- He wishes the peace talks to succeed (True, he wishes to see an end to the animosity between the two families)

Response Information:

- He is in love with Darathee Durrenbach (True)

Secret Information:

- Suspects Darathee is involved in the murder
- Grethe Rozenow is an assassin
- He engineered the mutant attacks
- He is a mutant himself

Search of his person reveals:

- Pistol engraved with mark of Creutzfeldt family in hilt
- Family broach (in reality a silent whistle)
- Mutant scales on his left shoulder (requires forcible removal of his vest and shirt to verify)

Friderich Creutzfeldt, Noble

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
45	22	29	32	36	29	30	25
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	12	2	3	4	0	0	1

Description: Deeply affected by his hatred for the Durrenbach family, his features already bear the marks of his ill will. He wears a constant sneer that belies his otherwise youthful good looks. He is a rake and a cad, and enjoys the freedom from responsibility that nobility brings. Blonde and clean-shaven, his hair is loose, long, and unkempt. He is always dressed garishly in the latest fad fashion.

History: Friderich in some ways had a life story opposite his brother Jakob. He was a good-hearted man until his fiancée, daughter of one of the most important noble families in all of Hochland, met with a terrible accident and died while on a hunting trip with the Durrenbachs. This life-changing event transformed him into what he is today: a bitter, angry, irresponsible young man who cares solely for himself. Not only does Friderich blame the Durrenbachs for the death of his lover (they were cleared of any wrongdoing in an official inquiry), he is incapable of saying anything positive about them under any circumstance. He did engage in a brief affair with Brigita Durrenbach one year ago -- he planned to make her to fall in love with him, then break her heart -- but the relationship ended prematurely when Brigita found him in her bed with one of her chambermaids. During the two months they carried on, however, Ruprecht (hoping that

"Certainly I am in favor of seeing the peace accords succeed ... I just wish they could take place free from outside interference."

Ruprecht Durrenbach

Friderich would go to the authorities) implanted the idea in Friderich's mind that Brigita was involved in a cult. But Friderich prefers not to act on this information; rather he holds it in secret until it can be used to his personal advantage.

Friderich has no interest in the investigation, and refuses to answer questions until he is beaten at a game of cards. This can be simulated by 3 successive Gamble Tests, with the victor winning at least 2 out of 3. Friderich gains a +15% by cheating (if caught by a Challenging Perception Test, he will answer questions).

Whereabouts During Attack:

- Inside the Creutzfeldt coach (True, can be verified by Jakob)

Voluntary Information:

- He does not know who killed Erasmus (True, and he couldn't care less)
- He does not know anything about the mutant attacks (True, and again does not care)
- He could not care less about the peace talks (False, he wishes them to fail and the feud continue)
- He will not answer questions unless beaten at cards (True, his pat response to any question is "I don't trust people who don't play cards")

Response Information:

- He holds the Durrenbachs personally responsible for the death of his first love (True)
- He had a brief fling with Brigita Durrenbach, but only to break her heart (True)
- Brigita is a member of a chaos cult (False)
- He has seen a surprising amount of mutants on the Creutzfeldt hunting grounds (True)

Secret Information:

- None

Search of his person reveals:

- Spare aces for cheating at cards

Grethe Rozenow, Assassin

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
58	49	38	43	44	48	41	44
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	19	3	4	4	0	0	0

Description: Her stated title is "consort," and she dresses accordingly, but she is a trained assassin brought along in case an opportunity to slay a Durrenbach arises. She is a brunette with shoulder-length curly hair; her features are innocent and unassuming, and she usually wears a slight ironic smile wherever she goes.

History: Even at age 28, Grethe has a long history as a disciplined killer-for-hire. Her unassuming good looks have disarmed even the most careful of her victims. Four years ago, she was offered a large sum of money to travel with a band of mercenaries (among whose number was Everd Setzingen, the current Durrenbach mercenary captain) to slay an opposing general. Although this was not her usual method of operation and the plan was a bit public for her tastes, the money was too good to pass up. She cut her

hair short and dyed it blonde in an effort to disguise her features, and avoided long discussions with her comrades. She did succeed in her objective, but not before leaving an impression upon Setzingen. Her toolkit, which is hidden in a secret compartment beneath her seat, contains a vial of liquid sedative as well as darts and a blowgun. Unbeknownst to Grethe, Darathee Durrenbach stole these tools shortly after they were packed, used them to murder Erasmus, and then replaced them in the ensuing commotion.

During their stay at the inn last night, Grethe accidentally walked in on Jakob while he was changing clothes, and saw the green scales on his left shoulder. She gasped and immediately walked out of the room.

Whereabouts During Attack:

- Listening to the troubadours at the rear of the caravan (True, but she did disappear at the outset of the attack)

Voluntary Information:

- She does not know who killed Erasmus (True, but she is aware that whoever killed Erasmus used her tools)
- She does not know anything about the mutant attacks (True)
- She does not care about the peace talks (True, she is only present to fulfill her contractual agreements)
- She is only present to support Friderich (False, in fact she despises Friderich)

Response Information:

- If her identity as an assassin is revealed, she will state that she was paid to kill a Durrenbach, not a priest, and does not work for free (True)
- She brought no lethal poisons with her, only poisons that induce slumber (True, her preferred weapon is the dagger -- where she can be sure no mistakes are made)
- Jakob is a mutant

Secret Information:

- She is an assassin

Search of her person reveals:

- A slender, sharp, distinctive dagger ("for protection," she says, but it appears to have a curious curved design, the purpose of which is unknown to the players); her assassin's toolkit is hidden in a secret compartment in the Creutzfeldt coach

Arent Stretstorpe, Captain

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
59	41	44	42	49	32	43	55
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	20	4	4	4	0	0	1

Description: He is a hired soldier, but has been a friend of the family for five years, and currently trains young Creutzfeldts for battle. His hair is completely gray, his features battle-hardened. Never jovial, always on the lookout for an unseen ambush. He wears a close-cropped goatee with no mustache. His face bears a few small, random scars from previous close calls in battle. He wears slightly-dented plate mail.

History: Arent rose rapidly through the ranks of the Provincial military, promoted often for his amazing tactical mind, sharp grasp of the battlefield, and remarkable coolness under fire. Seven years ago, his promising career came to a sudden end after a series of unfortunate

missteps. A recent affair with a prominent noblewoman plagued his conscience, and on the advice of a good friend, he confessed his sins to respected Priest of Sigmar Erasmus Heger, who was present in the camp. Unfortunately, Erasmus was caught up in some gambling debts and used this information to attempt to blackmail Arent. Arent took offense at this and a fight broke out, which was brief -- other soldiers (one of whom was Everd Setzingen) pulled Arent from Erasmus before he was able to choke the priest to death. This incident ended Arent's military career and forced him to seek employment as a mercenary. Two years later, he was hired by Jakob Creutzfeldt, and since then he has become a trusted friend of the family, and will act as Jakob's adviser during the negotiation process.

Unfortunately, Erasmus recently fell into gambling debts again, and sent a letter to Arent threatening to reveal his affair to the noblewoman's husband unless he paid Erasmus 500 gold crowns. Ruprecht Durrenbach intercepted the blackmail letter, and offered to pay off Erasmus if Arent would feed Jakob bad advice during the peace accords. Arent, fearing a repeat of the fiasco that ended his military career, has reluctantly agreed to give in to the demands of both gentlemen.

He is aware that Darathee Durrenbach lost her former husband at the peak of health under suspicious circumstances. He is also aware that she was cleared by an official inquiry, but suspects that the Durrenbachs bribed the officials responsible for rendering the verdict.

Two days before leaving, while checking on his horse in the Creutzfeldt stables, Arent overheard a strange conversation Jakob had with a shadowy figure. Jakob told the person to instruct his men that they were to be loud and boisterous, but they were not to injure anyone, even if attacked themselves. He handed the figure a slip of paper, which contained the "speech you are to give at the outset of the robbery; note the precise wording and do not deviate from it," as well as a "contingency plan" if things went awry. He then shook the figure's hand, glanced about, and left the stables. Arent never got a good look at the shadowy figure, but did note that he wore a cloak (to hide his animal legs) and a rather large hat (to hide his horns).

Whereabouts During Attack:

- At the front of the caravan, surveying the area for any danger (True)

Voluntary Information:

- He does not know who killed Erasmus (True, but he suspects nearly everyone)
- He wishes the peace talks to succeed (True, he would like to see peace between the families before he dies)
- He suspects Darathee because her former husband died under suspicious circumstances (True, but he can not even guess at a possible motive for killing the priest)
- He suspects Everd because he will do anything for money (True, but he will point out that if Everd is the culprit, someone else must be pulling his strings)
- He knows nothing of the mutant attacks (False)

Response Information:

- He cannot vouch for Everd's whereabouts during the mutant attack because Everd ordered him to the other side of the coach to guard against a second attack that never materialized (True, but will admit that this was a prudent precaution to take)

- He does not trust the verdict given in the inquiry that cleared Darathee (True)
- He argued with Erasmus over “battle tactics” during a campaign seven years ago (False, see above)
- He denies killing Erasmus (True), but does not deny wanting to kill Erasmus (True)
- If he were responsible for killing Erasmus, he would not have used a cowardly poison-tipped blowdart (True)
- Jakob masterminded the mutant attacks (True, but will only reveal this if terminated by Jakob)

Secret Information:

- He had an affair with a noblewoman eight years ago
- He confessed the affair to Erasmus
- Erasmus attempted to blackmail him at the time, but failed
- Erasmus has recently attempted to blackmail him again
- Ruprecht has offered to pay off the blackmail demands in exchange for Arent feeding Jakob poor advice

Search of his person reveals:

- The blackmail letter from Erasmus

Brigita Durrenbach, Noble

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
29	32	27	31	33	39	38	49
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	13	2	3	4	0	0	1

Description: Stunningly beautiful and acutely aware of that fact, she is the heir to the Durrenbach family title. She has long, luxurious blonde hair, most noticeable in the large braids on each side of her head. Cool and calculating, her eyes sparkle brightly beneath the small tiara she wears.

History: Brigita Durrenbach was named heir to the Durrenbach family holdings just eighteen months ago, after a bitter struggle over succession with her older brother Ruprecht. Though Brigita is younger than Ruprecht, Lenhart Durrenbach (father and current head of the family) believes that she is far better equipped to lead the Durrenbachs back to a place of prominence within the Province. Ruprecht protested, but to no avail. Bitter and resentful over this turn of events, Ruprecht has taken to spreading rumors about Brigita in the hopes of changing his father’s mind, but thus far his machinations have had no effect. As the first test of his chosen heir, Lenhart has sent Brigita as his representative in the peace negotiations ordered by Count Ludenhof.

Brigita once desired an end to the strife with the Creutzfeldts so that she could focus on improving the lot of her own family, but her brief and ill-advised relationship with Friderich put an end to that. Now she will not yield a single point at the peace accords unless she first receives heavy concessions from the Creutzfeldts.

Brigita is shrewd and decisive, which is likely the reason she emerged victorious in her succession battle over the more contemplative and reserved Ruprecht. When Darathee’s husband passed away and it became clear that poison was involved (a beloved family dog died while still licking the remains of Ruprecht’s fallen soup bowl), Brigita moved quickly to hush up the details, bribing the inquiry officials into reaching their final verdict: “not enough evidence to support moving to trial.”

This action saved the Durrenbach family from unwanted Provincial scrutiny, and garnered Darathee’s support during the trouble over succession.

Against her better judgment, six months after she was named heir to the Durrenbach house, she attempted to reconcile the feud with the Creutzfeldts by entering into a relationship with Friderich. She considers this her biggest mistake, but harbors no particularly bad feelings toward him -- she simply blames herself for exhibiting exceedingly poor judgment.

Ruprecht strongly believes he is more qualified to lead his family to victory over the Creutzfeldts. He has recently taken to spreading the rumor that Brigita is involved in some sort of illicit cult, hoping that by discrediting her, he will elevate himself. This rumor, of course, has no merit, but he has slipped a small, forged letter in Brigita’s pocket that speaks of her impending initiation into a Slaaneshi cult.

Whereabouts During Attack:

- Inside the Durrenbach coach (True, can be verified by Ruprecht)

Voluntary Information:

- She does not know who killed Erasmus (True)
- She knows nothing of the mutant attacks (True)
- She desires the peace talks to succeed (True, but only if the Durrenbachs win heavy concessions)
- Friderich harbors a great hatred for the Durrenbachs, and would like to see them ruined (True)
- Friderich even went so far as to attempt to seduce her (True), in an obvious attempt to destroy her reputation (False)

Response Information:

- She is not a member of a cult (True)
- Darathee’s husband died suddenly (True)
- No one regretted his death because he was abusive (True), but that does not mean Darathee killed him (False)
- An investigation cleared Darathee of all charges (True)

Secret Information:

- Officials carrying out the inquiry into the death of Darathee’s husband were bribed heavily

Search of her person reveals:

- A forged letter informing her of a secret meeting with a Slaaneshi cult for initiation (planted by Ruprecht)

Ruprecht Durrenbach, Noble

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
32	31	29	34	39	42	31	36
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	14	2	3	4	0	0	3

Description: Young but without any of the enthusiasm that normally accompanies youth, he constantly broods over the future of his family and worries that the Creutzfeldts will emerge victorious and impoverish the Durrenbachs. He strongly believes that he is more suited than Brigita to lead their family, and casts about for ways to discredit her. He has dull blonde hair that appears as if he has gone a little too long without a cut. He wears a goatee with closely cropped mustache, and appears intense in his portraits, as if he is concentrating acutely on

something that somehow eludes him. He is dressed in understated yet obviously expensive attire.

History: Ruprecht's solitary nature hurt him considerably in his bid for succession to the Durrenbach holdings, but unlike Brigita, he does not consider the battle over. He is actively engaged in a campaign of character assassination, intimating through all available channels that Brigita is a member of an illegal cult, and as such, her claim to the Durrenbach holdings is fraudulent and must be revoked. He was furious at Brigita for even contemplating a relationship with the Creutzfeldts, but nevertheless used Friderich as a sounding board for his claims of Brigita's cultish tendencies.

When the order from the Count came down to negotiate with the Creutzfeldts, Ruprecht seized upon it as an opportunity to publicly humiliate her. To that end, he has forged a note from a Slaaneshi chaos cult inviting Brigita to her initiation ceremony, and slipped it into her dress pocket during the coach ride. He is waiting for an opportune moment to reveal it to everyone during the negotiations, but the circumstances of the priest's demise may move his hand much sooner.

Ruprecht, for his part, does not wish to see the peace accords succeed in any way, shape, or form. Though he will not admit it openly, he sees the talks as unwelcome, outside interference, and resents the Count for stepping in the middle of what should have remained a private matter. He is hard-pressed to maintain a veneer of civility on this subject, and if questioned, his overt distaste for the entire proceedings may become quite evident.

Ruprecht is aware of Erasmus's blackmail attempt on Arent; one of his scouts intercepted the letter. He then contacted Arent and offered him the following deal: he would pay the blackmail money to Erasmus in exchange for Arent feeding Jakob bad advice during the negotiations. Arent has reluctantly agreed.

Ruprecht also knows that Darathee poisoned her husband, but will dutifully recite the party line on the subject: "A formal inquiry by a Priest of Morr found the death was due to natural causes.

Darathee joined the Shallyan Priesthood because of grief due to her loss" (this is the response that *every* Durrenbach will give). He is actually quite fond of Darathee, and will vigorously defend her against any accusations.

Whereabouts During Attack:

- Inside the Durrenbach coach (True, can be verified by Brigita)

Voluntary Information:

- He does not know who killed Erasmus (True)
- He hopes the peace talks succeed (False) but does not think they will (True)
- To his credit, Friderich broke off his relationship with Brigita (False, she ended it) because he discovered she was involved in a cult (False)

Response Information:

- Darathee had nothing to do with her husband's death (False)

- He bears no ill will against the Creutzfeldts (False), and looks forward to the day when the two families can get along together (False)

Secret Information:

- Is paying off Arent's blackmail debt to Erasmus

Search of his person reveals:

- Small envelope containing several rough drafts of the letter he forged implicating Brigita in a cult

Darathee Durrenbach, Shallyan Priestess

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
41	44	38	47	33	43	49	44
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	16	3	4	4	1	0	1

Description: She has very long brunette hair braided tight at each side in an attempt to decrease her icy good looks. In all of her portraits, there is a distant sadness, as if she is longing for something she can never have. She is dressed in hooded plain white robes, beneath which is an off-white cloth garment that terminates at the neck in a small collar imprinted with the mark of Shallya.

History: Darathee Durrenbach is a paradox, a unique mixture of lofty idealism and grounded pragmatism that each seem to wax and wane for no discernible reason. At the moment, pragmatism seems to be winning out. She strongly believes that Jakob is pursuing a course that will not only lead to his destruction, but the destruction of all of their work as well. She shares his idealism with regards to the current plight of mutants in the Empire, but does not share his optimism that others will find their ideas appealing. She has struggled to convince Jakob to wait to reveal their work until their sanctuary can be held up as an irrefutable example of what caring and comfort can do for those whom society has cast aside, but in the current political climate she is certain that society will not receive their efforts kindly.

Jakob, however, believes it is his destiny to help the least of society, and he cannot stand idly by while that society continues its program of aggression against those who find themselves burdened with mutations through no fault of their own. Darathee does not agree with his argu-

ment that sometimes, one must forcibly drag the horse forward instead of holding a carrot and hoping it will follow. For that purpose, Jakob plans to stage a robbery perpetrated by mutants, which would allow him to discuss the plight of mutants with Erasmus, without fear of being labeled a mutant sympathizer.

Jakob also confided in her, by way of warning, that his father, who loathes the Durrenbachs, demanded an assassin be present during the negotiations, in case "an opportunity" arose. In exchange for his promise that the assassin would harm no one, Darathee even helped Jakob design the false compartment inside the coach where his assassin could store the tools of her trade. Unable to persuade her lover by force of reason, Darathee felt she had only one recourse left: she had to kill the priest before Jakob's planned conversation ever took place. At dusk on the first day, when everyone else was

"Hmm? Questions, you say? Very well, the ante is ten gold crowns. Beat my hand, and I'll answer your questions. Lose, and be on your way."

Friderich Creutzfeldt

inside an inn eating dinner, she excused herself and slipped outside, removing the tools and placing them in the false compartment of her own coach after dipping one of the darts in a vial of lethal poison she had brought along. She then buried the vial before returning to the inn. Using the mutant attack on the second day as a diversion, she crept up to the priest's coach and blew the poison dart into his neck. When she approached to confirm his death, she placed a hand at his neck, ostensibly to check for a pulse, and withdrew the poison dart, dropping it to her feet and covering it with dirt when she was certain that no one was looking.

She did indeed poison her former husband six years ago, because he beat her. She first made a plea for assistance to Ruprecht, who told her it was her duty as a wife and a Durrenbach to remain silent on the matter and not sully the family name by bringing up the abuse in public. To this day Ruprecht is haunted by the advice he gave to his younger sister, and feels personally responsible for Darathee having to resort to poison to resolve the situation. The matter was quickly hushed up by Brigita, who paid a number of sizable bribes to officials involved in the inquiry. Darathee then had her given name legally restored, and pledged to devote her life to healing others.

Whereabouts During Attack:

- Attending to a small, ill child at the far side of the caravan next to the Durrenbach coach (False)

Voluntary Information:

- She does not know who killed Erasmus (False, she planned it and carried it out)
- She knows nothing about the mutant attacks (False, Jakob confided his plan to her, which she used as a diversion to cover the murder of Erasmus)
- She wishes the peace talks to succeed (True)

Response Information:

- She is in love with Jakob Creutzfeldt (True)
- She was planning to announce her engagement to Jakob at the peace accords (True)
- Her husband beat her (True), but she did not kill him (False)
- Her husband did indeed die suddenly (True)
- An investigation cleared her of wrongdoing (True; but officials were bribed to render a false verdict)

Secret Information:

- Jakob masterminded the mutant attacks
- Grethe Rozenow is an assassin
- She poisoned her husband, who was abusive
- Killed Erasmus to spare Jakob and continue their work

Search of her person reveals:

- Herbs for healing

"Shallya preserve us from times such as these."

Darathee Durrenbach

Description: Everd is a mercenary hired by the Durrenbachs for additional protection during the negotiations. His fearsome visage bears a large scar that cuts through his upper lip on the right, pulling his otherwise easy smile into a perpetual sneer. He used to try to hide this

with a thick mustache, but found it too valuable as a means of intimidation and now is always found

clean-shaven. Dismayed by his rapidly graying hair, he shaved it off and sports only brown stubble on the top of his head. The only hair left on his face is a pair of bushy eyebrows that serves to darken his already grim features. He keeps his chain mail brightly polished.

History: Though he was lauded as a promising student of warfare, Everd lacked the requisite discipline and patience to see his military career reach its full potential. After serving the minimum amount of time required by Provincial Edict, he left the military to do freelance work as a mercenary.

While still under military service seven years ago, he came to the aid of one Erasmus Heger, who was in the midst of being choked to death by Arent Stretstorpe. Though he is unaware to this day what the argument was about, he vividly remembers the event and still wonders from time to time why Stretstorpe was not at least imprisoned for his crime (as it turns out, Erasmus decided that imprisonment would be counter-productive, as it would prevent Arent from earning an income -- a necessary precursor should Erasmus ever find the need to attempt blackmail again). Much to Everd's frustration, Arent consistently refuses to elaborate.

Six years ago, Everd's final assignment in the Provincial military was to ensure that the investigation into the death of Darathee's husband was not tampered with. He accepted a large bribe from Brigita to keep quiet about her interference, and has remained true to his word. That is, until someone offers a larger bribe ...

Four years ago, Everd was employed as a mercenary soldier in a diversionary operation. His job was to draw the main contingent of enemy soldiers away from their general, leaving him open for a close-range attack by an assassin. Everd met the assassin briefly to coordinate strategies, and was quite taken with her, but she spurned his clumsy advances. When he first catches a glimpse of Grethe Rozenow, he has a moment of vague recognition. Although he cannot quite put a finger on why she appears familiar, he is indignant at the suggestion that he has hired her as a consort in the past. The discovery of Grethe's distinctive dagger will jog his memory, making him certain that Grethe is the same assassin he worked with those four years ago.

Whereabouts During Attack:

- In the middle of the caravan at its far side, surveying for danger (True)

Voluntary Information:

- He does not know who killed Erasmus (True)
- He does not want the peace talks to succeed (True, he is hoping for continued employment that will not be possible if the families put aside their differences)
- He knows Grethe Rozenow from somewhere in his past, but not in her capacity as a consort (True, though he cannot place where)

Everd Setzingen, Veteran

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
49	44	42	45	45	29	44	32
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	17	4	4	4	0	0	0

- He worked with Arent on a mercenary campaign for the Electoral Count seven years ago (True)
- During this campaign, Arent and Erasmus had an argument that came to blows (True, though he does not know the nature of the argument)
- Arent would have killed the priest then, if he had not been pulled off of him by other soldiers (True)
- Arent's altercation with the priest ended his military career (True)

Response Information:

- He did not accept money to kill Erasmus (True)
- Grethe's unique dagger is designed specifically for slitting throats (True)
- Grethe Rozenow is an assassin (True, but will recall this only after presented with Grethe's dagger)
- Darathee's investigation was rigged by bribery (True, but will only reveal this information if paid 100 gold crowns; this can be reduced by 10 crowns for every degree of success gained on a Challenging Haggle Test)

Secret Information:

- None

Search of his person reveals:

- A large amount of knives, daggers, and other small but sharp weapons (any PC searching him must roll a Challenging Agility Test; 1 Wound is incurred for each degree of failure as the PC cuts himself on one or more weapons during the search). Obviously, if the PCs have any question as to what Grethe's dagger is designed for, Everd is the man to ask.

Investigative Events

The following events should take place at some time during the interviews, to provide further information as well as to break up the monotony of the question-answer-question routine. Ideally, they should be used only after their "trigger information" has been uncovered by the PCs. Most events cause a significant amount of suspicion to fall upon one or two characters, or at least provide ample grist for further questioning. Certainly another round of interviews should follow each event, and additional information should come to light as the major characters respond to new facts dredged up from the event itself. Also listed below are detailed results of character searches, some of which are key to the progress of the scenario.

A CHEST FULL OF KARLS

A PC (choose the one who has been least active in the interview process) sees Ruprecht cast a few wary glances before opening a large trunk attached to the rear of his coach. Sighing in relief, he carefully closes and locks the trunk. The angle of view prevents the PC from discerning the trunk's contents. Should the PCs decide to investigate the trunk, Ruprecht will initially refuse to open it, stating it contains his own personal belongings and has nothing to do with the investigation. If no PC steps forward, Friderich will wonder aloud whether it actually contains the murder weapon. Reymer appears unsure of himself

and looks to the PCs for advice: "Rummaging through the private property of a nobleman is serious business. I'm not a Roadwarden. What if I order it forced open and it turns out to be a gift for the Count? What if we damage some valuable item in the process of opening it? My neck is on the line here." He hems and haws a bit before coming to a conclusion. "I need a good idea of what is in that chest before I order it open. Try to find out what is inside, but for Sigmar's sake, do it *discreetly*."

The PCs may try whatever idea they like to discover the contents of the trunk. The most successful will involve a diversion of some kind -- telling Ruprecht that Reymer doesn't wish the chest opened and then interrogating him far from the chest will probably be the most successful. The Durrenbach soldiers have been told to guard the coach and especially that chest, but the guards are far more easily persuaded than Ruprecht ("Out of the way! Official Provincial business!" or "Are you interfering with the investigation of the death of Count Ludenhof's personal representative?" should suffice), provided Ruprecht is out of the picture. If they wait, a diversion will even provide itself (see *Because Honor Demands It*), should they choose to take advantage of it.

If the PCs succeed in determining that the chest is a) extremely heavy and b) full of coins, Reymer will ask Brigita if she brought a large sum of money. When she answers in the negative, he will order the trunk open and Ruprecht, having no other choice, will comply. Instead of the murder weapon, it contains 500 gold crowns. A gasp filters through the crowd. If no PC says anything, Jakob will ask how much it costs to hire someone to murder a high-ranking priest. Backed into a corner, Ruprecht will be forced to tell the truth: he brought the money to meet Erasmus's blackmail demands in exchange for Arent's "cooperation" during the peace talks. Arent will reluctantly admit the truth of his claims and reveal the entire story, including his affair with the noblewoman (though he refuses to name her) and the confession to Erasmus that sparked the two blackmail attempts (he will even produce Erasmus's letter if it has not already been discovered). He looks crestfallen as he apologizes to Jakob, but Jakob simply shakes his head and says, "You are no longer under Creutzfeldt employment."

For his part, Arent will deny involvement in Erasmus's murder, saying, "If I had killed Erasmus, he'd have died bleeding from a gaping gut wound, not some tiny prick in his neck."

If, at any time after his termination, Arent is questioned about Jakob, he will reveal the details of the conversation he overheard in the stables (see Arent's history on page 7). He will only reveal this information if he is terminated.

Trigger: Before this event occurs, the PCs must have discovered two facts: 1) that Everd will do anything for money and 2) that Ruprecht will do anything to make the peace talks fail.

THE INITIATE ACCOUNT

At some time during their investigations, the PCs should want to know the details of Erasmus's death, and the best

"I can't help you very much, I'm afraid. All I know is that our family wants these proceedings to continue. Your search may sooner yield fruit if you begin with the Durrenbachs."

Jakob Creutzfeldt

way to find out is to ask those who were in the coach with him: his four initiates. For his part, Reymer exited the coach when he first heard commotion, at the outset of the mutant attack. The three remaining initiates stayed within the coach. Erasmus sat closest to the window at the near side of the coach (that is, the side nearest to the mutants), and peered out to discover the cause of the commotion. He withdrew back into the coach and began relaying what he saw to the initiates, and then simply slumped over, mid-sentence. None of the initiates saw anyone in particular at the window, but recall "many people rushing by."

Trigger: No specific trigger; this event occurs only if the PCs interview the initiates regarding the death of Erasmus.

BLACK WIDOW

Everd is aware that Darathee poisoned her husband and the ensuing investigation was tampered with. If the PCs ask him if he knows anything about these events, he will respond, "Perhaps." No amount of cajoling, threatening, or even torture will get him to reveal his secret; he only responds to gold crowns. In his mind, if the PCs out-bid Brigita (who gave him a bribe of 50 crowns six years ago), they are entitled to the information. If they ask him how much he requires to talk, he will reply, "100 gold crowns," but he can be bargained down to a minimum of 70 crowns by skillful negotiations (role-play this out) and/or a successful Challenging Haggle Test (10 gold crowns less for each degree of success). If the group does not have the minimum amount, Everd will accept an equivalent trade in weaponry; a more dangerous route would be to attempt to steal the money from Ruprecht's chest (see *A Chest Full of Karls*).

Darathee and every other Durrenbach will deny Everd's claims (with the same rehearsed response: "A formal inquiry by a Priest of Morr found the death was due to natural causes. Darathee joined the Shallyan Priesthood because of grief due to her loss"), and if it becomes clear that Everd is the source of these claims (ie the PCs point him out), Brigita will fire him on the spot, and threaten that he will never find work in the Province again. Everd takes all this in stride: a) he doubts he will have any difficulty finding mercenary work, in or out of the Province, and b) his immediate future is well-in-hand, thanks to the bribe from the PCs. Indeed, if fired by the Durrenbachs, he will act as enforcer for Reymer Kremptze -- at least until the investigation is completed.

Trigger: This event can occur any time after the PCs have discovered the rumors surrounding Darathee's husband's demise and ask Everd about them, but before *Of Pillows and Poisons*.

BECAUSE HONOR DEMANDS IT

While the PCs are interrogating others, they hear loud shouts from the far end of the caravan. When they reach the scene, they witness Ruprecht and Friderich engaged in a brawl, wrestling around in the dusty road and exchanging blows with their fists. If the PCs intervene immediately, the fight will end as each man takes umbrage at the peasant hands restraining them. Ruprecht threatens

to lodge a formal complaint with the Count and have the PC who restrained him brought up on charges. Friderich returns to his card table, props his feet up, and resumes his hand. The incident ends.

If the PCs do nothing, Jakob arrives two rounds later and fires his pistol in the air. Ruprecht gets up, wipes the blood from his mouth, and growls, "This isn't over, pup. No one insults the honor of a Lady Durrenbach." As he turns on his heel to walk back to his coach, grant the PCs a Challenging Perception Test to notice a small envelope tucking out of the side pocket of his jacket -- visible only for a moment before Ruprecht straightens the jacket and it falls back inside. As should be expected, going to Reymer is useless. The PCs must devise a way to separate Ruprecht from his jacket long enough to discover the contents of the envelope.

Inside the envelope can be found four rough drafts of the letter Ruprecht forged to implicate Brigita in a cult, with multiple revisions and corrections marked on each. Upon finishing the letter shortly before departing, Ruprecht shoved all of the rough drafts in his jacket pocket, intending to dispose of them as soon as privacy permitted. Unfortunately, he forgot all about them as his

mind attended to other matters during the long coach ride.

When faced with the letters, Ruprecht will admit that he forged them in an attempt to discredit Brigita. If

"You want permission to do what? Certainly not! I will not inflame an already tense situation simply because you have a 'hunch'."

Reymer Kremptze

the letter has not been found on her person yet, she will withdraw it from her pocket at this time. Furious, she slaps Ruprecht in the face and threatens to "take this up with father." Ruprecht glares with loathing at the PCs. If Brigita is asked by any of the PCs what Ruprecht's fate is likely to be, she will tell them how grateful she is for their assistance, and that Ruprecht will likely be stripped of his title, disowned, and exiled from their lands. He may even be turned over to authorities to answer how he learned the name of a Chaos God. During the rest of the adventure, each of the PCs should be told that when they glance at Ruprecht, he is already staring coldly at them. It should be clear that this incident has made them an enemy for life.

Trigger: Ideally, this event should occur after *Handout #2* has been found on Brigita's person, implicating her as a cultist and providing her with motivation to kill a priest of Sigmar.

A MUTANT AMONG US

Grethe is aware that Jakob is a mutant. She does not particularly care about this, because he seems both reasonable and kind, and his money spends as well as anyone else's. She will not reveal this information unless one of two things occur: 1) Jakob terminates her services without pay, or 2) she believes that she is going to prison for the murder of Erasmus and only by revealing Jakob as a mutant will she will gain her freedom. The former is unlikely to occur, but if her identity is revealed and her toolkit is found, the latter is a real possibility. If the PCs tell her she is going to prison unless she can give them information to exonerate her, she will break down and reveal that Jakob has scales on his left shoulder -- he is a

mutant and likely was involved in the mutant attacks on the caravan. Jakob will deny this but will refuse to remove his shirt -- if it appears that he is about to be restrained or his identity as a mutant revealed, he will blow his whistle: move directly to *Return of the Mutants* in Episode Four. The key difference between this event and discovering Jakob's scales on a search (see below) is that here, Jakob's soldiers are not close enough to prevent the PCs from attempting to remove Jakob's shirt by force.

Trigger: This event only occurs if 1) Grethe's toolkit is found in *Of Pillows and Poisons*, AND 2) Grethe is told by the PCs she will go to prison if she does not speak up.

WEALTHY SERVANT, MISSING CHILD

When Darathee is questioned regarding her whereabouts during the attack, she responds that she was at the far side of the caravan, next to the Durrenbach coach, attending to a child who had taken ill. When asked for a name, she says she does not know. When asked for a description, she says, "a young child of five or six, dusty brown hair, freckle-faced. His mother was concerned because a fever had taken him, and he was wracked by a barking cough." She states she does not know the name of the mother, either -- she does not typically pay attention to such details, she prefers simply to heal. She will say that her whereabouts can be verified by one of her servants, named Clara.

All this is well and good, unless the PCs attempt to investigate her claims -- no child of that description can be found anywhere in the caravan. Clara is easy enough to find, and she does indeed verify the information, but PCs who make a Challenging Perception Test will hear the jingle of 10 gold crowns in her apron pocket. Clara will not betray her employer by admitting that Darathee bribed her, but she is completely unable to explain why a lowly servant has half the yearly income of a noble in her pocket, either.

Trigger: Darathee's claimed whereabouts during the mutant attack; however, like *Black Widow* or *The Initiate Account*, nothing is actually "triggered" unless the PCs investigate the claim themselves.

MISFIT ARMY

Brigita reveals that she has been tracking the ingress and egress of a large amount of mutants through Creutzfeldt territory. She suspects that Jakob is raising a private army of mutants to wage war upon the Durrenbachs, and is able to produce pages and pages of eyewitness accounts of mutant activity on Creutzfeldt grounds (mostly from spies in her employ, but a few are from random travelers), including one account that Jakob himself carried an ailing mutant out from the forest and onto his property. If asked, both Grethe and Arent will deny seeing any mutants on Creutzfeldt grounds, but Friderich (perhaps distracted by his card game) will report that during his latest hunt, his company not only saw but killed three mutants who were trespassing on their property. At the time, he assumed the incident was due to the recent mobilization of mutant populations caused by the Storm of Chaos, but the Durrenbachs will deny ever seeing any mutants on their property, which is adjacent to the Creutzfeldts.

Jakob, of course, denies any involvement with mutants and accuses Brigita of creating scurrilous rumors to discredit his family in advance of the peace accords. However, this information can be verified by interview-

ing a few of the Creutzfeldt servants (or holding a discussion with Reymer, who has already interviewed the servants): each of them will report that indeed there have been many mutant sightings on Creutzfeldt grounds over the past two years; Jakob has even had to increase the pay of the groundskeepers because of it. None of them will air their suspicions without first being paid, but a few gold crowns will open their mouths: given Jakob's obsession with helping those less fortunate than himself, at least one speculates that he is operating some type of shelter or sanctuary for mutants on Creutzfeldt grounds.

Trigger: This event will only occur if Brigita feels threatened, such as if the forged letter in *Handout #2* is found on her person. Otherwise, she prefers to present this information directly to Count Ludenhof.

OF PILLOWS AND POISONS

This event involves the discovery of Grethe's assassin toolkit, and can be handled in one of two ways, depending on how well the PCs seem to be doing. First, if the scenario is progressing along rapidly (and certainly if Grethe's identity as an assassin has already been revealed), it is better to have the PCs find the box themselves: when the PCs are standing in a group interrogating a member of the Creutzfeldt contingent, have them each roll percentile dice. The PC with the low roll notices one of the initiates (who is apparently hard of hearing) checking the Creutzfeldt coach by knocking on the wood of the floor and paneling beneath the seat. The sound of each knock is distinctly different, but the initiate continues as if nothing were amiss. He finishes his search and reports to Reymer that he found nothing untoward in the Creutzfeldt coach. The PCs have two choices: inform Reymer that the initiate likely missed an obvious false compartment, or search the coach on their own. If they learned anything from previous events, they will avoid Reymer and devise some way of searching the coach by themselves. If they do approach Reymer, he will be dismissive: "Please, trust us to do our jobs, as I trust you to do yours." It then falls to the PCs to devise a way to search the Creutzfeldt coach without the knowledge of either Reymer or the Creutzfeldts. One wrinkle is that both Jakob and Grethe seem to take an intense interest in anyone lingering by their coach, and so both of them will have to be dealt with before anyone can thoroughly search it. Only after the PCs find the box will Reymer be interested.

However, if the adventure seems to be bogging down, or the PCs aren't moving forward with their questioning, simply have a breathless initiate race up to Reymer clutching a smallish rectangular wooden box in his hands. He reports that he found it in a hidden compartment in the Creutzfeldt coach and opens it.

Inside the box is a disassembled blowdart pipe that is carefully tied with a bright ribbon to a velvet pillow. Eleven darts are tied in a similar manner along the bottom of the pillow, with a twelfth ribbon remaining untied and dangling off the pillow's edge. At the top of the pillow can be found a single vial containing a dark liquid: anyone with herbal training (including those with "Prepared Poison" or "Academic Knowledge" in the appropriate area) will recognize it as Henbell (used for causing slumber and sometimes coma) on a Routine Skill Test. If no PC has the requisite skills or knowledge, the Durrenbach's personal herbalist Endris Petresson will

provide this information. The size of the dart matches the puncture wound at Erasmus's neck, confirming that this is indeed the murder weapon.

Upon seeing this discovered, Jakob will be forced to reveal that Grethe is an assassin, brought along under orders from his father in case the peace talks folded and an opportunity to slay a Durrenbach arose. Grethe will point out that the poison in the vial is a sedative only, not a poison, and will volunteer to demonstrate its effects on herself. She claims that poison darts are not her style; she prefers to leave nothing to chance.

Trigger: This event should transpire shortly after Grethe's identity as an assassin has been revealed by finding the dagger hidden on her person and showing it to Everd.

NPC SEARCHES

Searches are unique events; they require authorization from Reymer before the fact. Although Reymer will often forgive unauthorized searches that yield new or useful information (proving that it is better to ask forgiveness than permission), unauthorized searches that yield no useful information will be reported to the Count at best, and on particularly egregious offenses the errant PC will be arrested and held for trial himself. Reymer will refuse to allow any search until after the PCs have questioned each of the major characters at least once. After the first round of questioning, if asked for permission, he will authorize a search of non-noble NPCs only (Grethe, Arent, and Everd), to be followed by another round of questioning. If the second round of questioning yields no conclusive evidence, Reymer authorizes a search of everyone. Unless otherwise indicated, obtaining information from a search requires a successful Search Test of Average Difficulty. Major NPCs are listed below, in the order that they will likely be searched:

Arent Stretstorpe: A routine search of Arent will reveal the blackmail letter from Erasmus tucked inside his breastplate (see *Handout #1*). He will admit to the blackmail as well as the reason for it (but will never name the noblewoman), but denies killing Erasmus for the reasons given above in *A Chest Full of Karls*. He will not admit to Ruprecht's involvement unless forced by additional evidence.

Everd Setzingen: Searching Everd is a dangerous task. He has hidden about his body a large number of knives and daggers ("I'm a collector"), many of them unsheathed and very sharp. A thorough search requires a successful Challenging Agility Test -- if unsuccessful, the PC suffers 1 Wound for each degree of failure.

Grethe Rozenow: A routine search of Grethe will turn up a slender, curved dagger hidden on her left thigh. Unless one of the PCs is currently an assassin (or has been at one time), no one will recognize the purpose of this unique dagger. A search of Everd, however, turns up an inordinate amount of daggers and knives, and so he becomes the obvious man to ask. When Everd relays the information that the dagger is meant to slit throats, he suddenly recalls where he knew Grethe: though disguised at the time, she worked as an assassin during a mercenary campaign four years ago. Grethe will reluctantly admit the truth of his account, but denies murdering Erasmus for one simple reason: "I wasn't paid to do it."

Darathee Durrenbach: The only items found on Darathee's person are herbs for healing; by the time the PCs search her, she has already disposed of the vial of poison

and the dart she used to murder Erasmus.

Ruprecht Durrenbach: This has already been covered under *Because Honor Demands It*; see above. The envelope is better found in an event rather than on a routine search, so if that event has not occurred before the nobles are lined up to search, Friderich will bait Ruprecht into a brawl by insulting Brigita's bedroom skills. The event then proceeds as written. If, however, Brigita is searched before Ruprecht, the discovery of her letter will jog his memory as to the presence of his envelope, and he will hastily excuse himself to dispose of its contents before he is searched. Any literate PC who follows is granted a Challenging Perception Test to spot the contents of the envelope as he rips it up and dumps the resulting shreds into one of his bags.

Brigita Durrenbach: Even a superficial search of Brigita will reveal *Handout #2*, which implicates her as an initiate into a cult of Slaanesh. Suspicions of PCs may be aroused by the strange wording of the note (especially the reference to their "Sinful Order," which seems more of a judgment made by others than something that would be used by a member of the cult itself), but it will be taken very seriously by Reymer, as Chaos worship provides good motive for slaying a Priest of Sigmar. Brigita, of course, will disavow any knowledge of said letter, but in the absence of any contradictory information, she will be placed under arrest. In an attempt to draw attention away from her, she will immediately reveal the information about mutants on the Creutzfeldt grounds that she was keeping for the Count, which should lead directly into the events described in *Misfit Army* listed above.

Friderich Creutzfeldt: Even a thorough search turns up nothing but a few spare aces for cheating at cards, which (hopefully) the PCs have already discovered.

Jakob Creutzfeldt: Only his family pistol will be found upon a routine search of Jakob, though his left shoulder is covered in mutant scales. He typically wears a vest and heavy cloth shirt to prevent arousing suspicion should someone happen to place a hand on his shoulder, but grant any PC patting him down a Challenging Perception Test -- if successful, they are informed that they feel something "rough" around his left shoulder. Two or more degrees of success means the PC felt something definitely scaly. If asked, Jakob will respond that he was injured there some years ago and now protects it with a shoulder plate of scale armor -- he keeps it underneath his clothes to avoid appearing weak to his enemies. He refuses to remove his shirt to verify this information, stating that the request is ridiculous. Reymer refuses to authorize such a search, and any attempt to restrain Jakob or remove his shirt will be dealt with harshly by his soldiers, who are standing nearby. The broach at his left breast is in actuality a silent whistle, but this can only be found with a successful Very Hard Perception Test, and only if the broach is specifically removed and examined.

Other Considerations

The PCs may try to rely on Mathias Neltzen to verify the information they receive from their interviews, but though Mathias is a good source for gossip, he is a terrible source for reliable information. Mathias's obvious disregard for fact and preference for unsubstantiated rumor make him a less than ideal candidate for verifying questionable information, and given the fact that he showed an alarming lack of restraint at the beginning of

the adventure in discussing private matters with complete strangers, Mathias is not the person the PCs should be trusting with sensitive information in any case. If they persist in discussing these confidential matters with an obviously untrustworthy source, feel free to use Mathias to feed the PCs increasingly false information that ranges from merely scandalous to wildly ridiculous.

Try to maintain an air of tension at all times. Reymer engaged the assistance of the PCs specifically to avoid repercussions of any missteps with nobility; this means the PCs will experience those repercussions should they make any serious mistakes (such as insulting anyone, searching their belongings without prior authorization, or if they simply do not show enough respect during the interview process). Repercussions range from small fines to imprisonment, but if the characters misbehave, the most likely repercussion is that they have made enemies of powerful people with deep pockets and plentiful resources -- therefore, they shouldn't be surprised to find themselves followed by assassins or bounty hunters in the near future.

If the PCs become stuck, move immediately to one of the investigative events described above -- ideally, GMs should wait for the event's trigger to occur, but an

ideal game is a very rare thing. Don't allow the players to become frustrated; it is far better to move them through several events in a rapid-fire fashion than slog through the same nonproductive question-and-answer session over and over. Try not to appear heavy-handed in this approach, however. At the very least each event should feel as if it arose naturally through prior events instead of through GM fiat (even if GM fiat happens to be the case). Otherwise players begin to feel "railroaded:" that no matter what their characters do, events will proceed as pre-ordained by the GM. As a player, there are few things less satisfying than playing in a game where one's actions don't seem to make a difference in the gaming world. Avoid this at all costs. At the same time, the PCs should have to work to uncover key information: if, for example, the GM decides to have Everd approach the PCs and tell them he will exchange valuable knowledge concerning the investigation of Darathee's husband for coin, increase his asking price to 200 gold crowns, or make it such an unreasonable amount that they are forced to break into Ruprecht's chest to gain it. In short, try not to simply hand the PCs critical information (ie, items listed in the *Key Investigation Information* box below), make sure they earn it.

:: EPISODE FOUR: ALL GOOD THINGS ::

Eventually, the PCs will have to conclude their investigation and make a report to Reymer. At this point, the outcome of the scenario depends entirely on how many items the PCs have managed to uncover from the following list of critical information:

Key Investigation Items

1. *Jakob and Darathee are in love* (discovered by asking either Jakob or Darathee in response to the rumor given by Mathias; see page 2)
2. *Grethe's toolkit did not contain any poison* (detailed in *Of Pillows and Poisons*, page 13)
3. *The verdict rendered during the investigation of Darathee was tainted by bribes* (found, ironically enough, by bribing Everd in *Black Widow*, page 12)
4. *Darathee was not where she claimed to be during the mutant attacks* (detailed in *Wealthy Servant, Missing Child*, page 13)
5. *There is a mutant sanctuary in Creutzfeldt territory* (detailed in *Misfit Army*, page 13)
6. *Jakob masterminded the mutant attacks* (discovered by questioning Arent about Jakob, but only after Arent is fired; see *A Chest Full of Karls*, page 11)
7. *Jakob is a mutant* (detailed in *A Mutant Among Us*, page 12)

With this in mind, the scenario can be resolved in one of three possible ways:

1) *The PCs uncover 3 or fewer key pieces of information.* In this case, they have failed to find out enough information to pinpoint the assassin. Go to *Long Road Home* below.

2) *The PCs uncover at least 4 key pieces of information.* They have done well in their investigations and likely strongly suspect either Darathee or Jakob, or perhaps both. Go to *The Culprits Revealed!* below.

3) *The PCs discover Jakob is a mutant AND attempt to verify this by forcibly removing his shirt.* Go to *Return of the Mutants* below.

Long Road Home

In failing to uncover a majority of the key items of information during their investigations, the PCs do not have enough evidence to convince Reymer of anyone's guilt. After listening carefully to their entire report, Reymer asks the PCs who they think killed Erasmus. Regardless of their answer, Reymer waves his hand and sighs, saying, "I am sorry to have troubled you. Unfortunately, there is not enough hard evidence to warrant an arrest in this case, and I am not willing to bring this person before the Count on the strength of mere coincidence and speculation. I will make my report to the Count, and he will have to decide how best to proceed from there. You are, of course, free to go. For your service to Count Ludenhof during this difficult time, I can pay you the sum of 10 gold crowns each, and give you the undying gratitude of the Province of Hochland. Thank you and may Sigmar guard you on your journeys."

With this, the PCs are dismissed and the adven-

ture comes to a rather unsatisfying conclusion. Award experience points as appropriate to their actions.

The Culprits Revealed!

If the PCs do uncover a majority of the key items listed, they must seek out Reymer at his position in the front of the camp to give their report. There, beneath a small pavilion hastily constructed from items meant for the peace accords and surrounded by eight soldiers, Reymer converses with his fellow initiates around a wooden table. He listens to the PCs' report with increasing interest, and gradually becomes convinced that he must take action. He asks the PCs to name the person whom they think is directly responsible for the death of Erasmus Heger. He will send four soldiers to escort that person back to him.

News of this development spreads rapidly, and in short order everyone in camp is jockeying for position around the pavilion. Sixteen soldiers (eight from each family) take up positions in a semicircle around the pavilion's opening, acting as a cordon to hold back the rest of the populace.

The person whom the PCs named is brought to the center of the open circle, and placed under arrest. If it is someone other than Jakob or Darathee, Darathee's guilt gets the better of her as the handcuffs are placed on the accused. She rushes to the center of the circle and confesses her crime. At this point, Jakob blows the silent whistle (may be noticed by the PCs on a successful Challenging Perception Test) and enters the circle to calm Darathee down. Proceed to the events in *Return of the Mutants*.

If the PCs name Jakob, he is brought to the center of the circle, flanked by soldiers but not cuffed. Reymer stands and says, "Ladies and gentleman, this part of the investigation has come to a close. I will require a representative to return with me to assist in reporting the details of this incident to Count Ludenhof. I have chosen Jakob Creutzfeldt. The rest of you may return to your families and homes. The Province of Hochland thanks you for your assistance during this most difficult of times."

Curious glances are exchanged throughout the audience, but nobody moves. Jakob's countenance, however, darkens. "Are you placing me under arrest, Herr Kremptze?"

Reymer takes a step forward, out of the pavilion and into the open air, his voice barely above a whisper. "Only if you resist. Please, do not force my hand."

Jakob frowns and says, "You are making a tremendous mistake. I am guilty only of aiding those less fortunate than I."

At this point, Darathee will rush to his side. "He is speaking the truth. I killed Erasmus Heger."

A collective gasp reverberates through the crowd. Shocked, Jakob turns to Darathee. "You what?"

"You were going to talk to him about our work. He was a priest of Sigmar, Jakob! He would have had you burned at the stake. Everything we accomplished would have burned with you. I couldn't let that happen."

Jakob looks sadly at Darathee, then back at Reymer. "I am sorry, I did not mean for any of this to happen," he says, and then brings the broach to his lips and blows hard. Proceed to the events in *Return of the Mutants*.

If the PCs select Darathee, she will be accom-

panied to the center of the circle by a very concerned Jakob. Reymer stands and tells Darathee she will stand trial for the murder of Erasmus Heger.

Jakob steps forward. "This is ridiculous. Darathee is a Priestess of Shallya. She has dedicated her life to mercy and the healing of others. I demand to know why she has been treated in this fashion. I will lodge a formal complaint with the Count --"

But Darathee interrupts him and speaks, her voice soft. "Calm down, Jakob. I did kill him, and I'd do so again to protect our work. I told you it was too early to let others know. They simply can't understand what we are trying to accomplish. Someday, perhaps, but not now."

Jakob glances about the soldiers, seeming to count heads. "I won't let them take you," he says, and detaches the broach from his chest and blows hard into it. Proceed to the events in *Return of the Mutants*.

Return of the Mutants

After the silent whistle is blown, it is removed from Jakob's grasp by a Durrenbach soldier. Both Jakob and Darathee are placed in handcuffs and led into the pavilion. Reymer walks up to the PCs expresses his gratitude once more, assuring them that once the proper paperwork has been submitted and approved, they shall be rewarded handsomely for their efforts from the Count's treasury. He asks them how they possibly discovered all of that information, and at what point they first suspected the truth. While he is conversing with the PCs, allow them all a Routine Perception Test to notice three small bombs rolling into the periphery of camp: if successful, they may run for 1 1/2 rounds before the bomb explodes, and should make it to safety. If no one notices, they will hear a shout of "Bomb! Run! Run!" at the beginning of the next round. They will then witness three separate lit bombs rolling towards them, one of which slows to a stop at their feet. The PCs now have a mere 1/2 round before the fuse ignites the bomb.

Bomb damage can be resolved using the explosion rules in *Old World Armoury*, or one can use the quick and dirty method that follows: the bomb does 6+1d10 damage to anyone who fails to run before the bomb explodes. Feel free to ignore Toughness and Armor. Those who failed the Perception Check and ran only after they heard someone else scream take 6+1d10 damage modified by Armor and Toughness. Those who made the Perception Check and immediately ran do not suffer damage at all. At the GM's discretion, PCs may find objects such as chairs or tables (or soldiers) to hide behind. Reduce damage accordingly.

The multiple explosions will spark a mass panic, causing total chaos in the camp. Men, women, and children rush about in random directions, screaming and searching for cover. Each of the PCs must pass an Average WP Test to do anything at all in the first round after the explosions. If they succeed, and then state they are looking specifically for Jakob and Darathee, they must pass an Average Perception Test to see the two of them being led off the road toward the forest by three well-armed mutant soldiers (one of which has a crossbow) amidst the roiling pandemonium of the campground. After that first round, PCs may do as they please.

The actions of the Durrenbach and Creutzfeldt soldiery during the next few rounds depend on the status

of their captains, Arent and Everd. If both have been fired, neither group of soldiers will act in any coherent fashion, as they are not trained to take initiative but merely to follow the orders of their superiors (even if Arent or Everd attempted to lead them into the fray, none of the soldiers are particularly inclined to risk their lives on orders from a former captain). If either or both captains are still employed by their respective noble families, they will be able to rouse their soldiers into a fighting force within three rounds, despite the confusion surrounding them. Arent will mount his horse, then charge the mutants at the edge of the forest in an attempt to prevent what he believes is a kidnap attempt on the leader of the Creutzfeldt house. He will be shot down by no less than three separate crossbow bolts, and the attack will come to a premature halt as his soldiers pull him from the line of fire. For his part, Everd will take cover behind one of the coaches and survey the area. He will not act without orders from Brigita, who he cannot locate.

The PCs may or may not be inclined to enter the fray. A quick survey counts no less than twelve armed and armored mutants: nine at the edge of the forest (including their leader Georg), six of whom have crossbows, and the three aforementioned mutants who are leading Jakob and Darathee to safety. Georg is coordinating the mutant strategy according to the contingency plan given to him by Jakob. Having no faith in the intelligence of his mutant lieutenants, he has not shared the plan with any of them. If Georg is killed before Jakob reaches the edge of the forest, the soldiers must pass a Hard WP Test or panic and flee back to Creutzfeldt territory. Any mutants who succeed will wait for Jakob to arrive, then follow his directions as if he were Georg. The mutant leader is tough to kill, however, as he barks orders from a crouching position behind his line of mutant soldiers. Any attempts to hit him with a missile weapon suffer a -30% to the BS. Magic missiles can be resolved however the GM desires, but some of the damage should be absorbed by Georg's soldiers who are in the line of fire.

Both Darathee and Jakob are handcuffed, and it will take them 8 rounds of stumbling progress after the explosion to reach the safety of the edge of the forest and the rest of the mutant soldiers. From there, the mutants will run interference for the trio of Jakob, Darathee, and Georg, slowing any pursuers with crossbow bolts and, if necessary, hand-to-hand combat. Georg requires 6 rounds of uninterrupted running to disappear with Jakob and Darathee into the forest for good. He has stashed a pair of stallions a mile and a half up the road for their escape.

Jakob's purpose is to flee with Darathee and Georg (and as many mutant soldiers as possible) and get back to Creutzfeldt territory where he will oversee the transfer of his mutant sanctuary to a safer, more remote place, perhaps outside the Empire within the Border Princes. If caught before he reaches the edge of the forest, he will attempt to interfere with the pursuit of Darathee. After that, he will surrender and await trial. Darathee will do the same for Jakob if she is caught. Both will reluctantly leave the other behind, knowing that a rescue attempt is more likely if one of them makes good their escape.

Sifting Through the Ashes

Regardless of the outcome of the battle, the PCs should return to camp and help assist the injured, who lay scat-

tered about the caravan in various stages of duress. Reymer is dead, killed by shrapnel in the side and back. The other three initiates, who were located at the center of the explosions, are all either dead or mortally wounded and beyond the scope of medical or magical care. Only a few Creutzfeldt and Durrenbach soldiers survive, many seriously wounded.

Friderich can be found beneath the Creutzfeldt coach, playing cards. Grethe is missing, along with a horse. Brigita is shaken but unwounded, and can be found barking orders to servants, directing them to provide water and bandages to the wounded. Ruprecht is bleeding from a head wound, but will likely survive.

Unfortunately, the remaining members of both noble families place the blame for this entire event squarely on the shoulders of the PCs, and will not be kind if approached by any of them for any reason. It should quickly become clear that the PCs would do well to avoid this area in the near future. And with no surviving representatives to report to the Count, the PCs can forget about receiving any money from the Province for their assistance during the investigation. In Hochland at least, it is a truism that no good deed goes unpunished.

What the Future Holds

So ends *Noblesse Oblige*. If Jakob, Darathee, and Georg all escaped, the PCs may run into them again should they ever venture into the Border Princes. If Georg escapes and either of the other two survive, he will lead the remaining mutants on a rescue attempt, preferably before any sentences are handed down. If Georg escapes and neither of the other two survive, he will become disillusioned with the Empire in general and Hochland in particular, and begin recruiting other mutants with an eye toward assaulting Count Ludenhof's palace at Hergig.

If Darathee survives but Jakob is killed (either by the actions of the PCs or nearby soldiers), the loss of her one true love will set her down the road to Dark Magic. She will blame the PCs for his death, and attempt to become a powerful sorceress in order to exact a slow, painful revenge. She will use her mutant army as agents to gather items and information to aid her in this quest. The PCs will not realize it for months, perhaps even years, but they have made a powerful enemy.

If Jakob survives but Darathee is killed, he will dedicate all of his future work with mutants to her memory. Eventually, a new religion may arise throughout the Empire whose sole adherents are mutants, and whose object of worship is a human female who cares for them without regard to their appearance or status. It may even give rise to a unique breed of mutant Templars.

Experience Point Awards

<i>Each rumor gained from Mathias</i>	5 points
<i>Agreeing to help Reymer right away</i>	15 points
<i>Interacting properly with nobility</i>	15 points
<i>Each key piece of information uncovered</i>	20 points
<i>Unmasking Jakob as a mutant</i>	25 points
<i>Naming Darathee as the murderer</i>	25 points
<i>Killing or capturing Georg</i>	20 points
<i>Capturing Jakob</i>	25 points
<i>Capturing Darathee</i>	40 points
<i>Aiding the wounded after the battle</i>	15 points



Name: Jakob Creutzfeldt

Age: 39

Description: Current leader of the Creutzfeldt noble family, although his frail father is still alive.

Whereabouts During Attack:

- Inside the Creutzfeldt coach (T)

Voluntary Information:

- Does not know who killed Erasmus (T)
- Could not begin to guess who killed Erasmus (F)
- None of the Creutzfeldts were involved (T)
- Ruprecht is involved (F)
- Does not know anything about the mutant attacks (F)
- Wishes the peace talks to succeed (T)

Response Information:

- Is in love with Darathee Durrenbach (T)

Secret Information:

- Suspects Darathee is involved in the murder
- Suspects Grethe is involved in the murder
- Grethe Rozenow is an assassin
- He engineered the mutant attacks
- He is a running mutant sanctuary
- He is a mutant himself

Search Reveals:

- Pistol, broach/whistle, mutant scales

Favorite Saying: *"It is the nobility's duty to help those less fortunate than themselves."*

Relevant Quote: *"My suspicion would fall upon Ruprecht, in collusion with their mercenary. Ruprecht would see our family destroyed and our lands taken before he would allow the peace talks to continue."*



Name: Friderich Creutzfeldt

Age: 22

Description: He is a rake and a cad, and enjoys the freedom from responsibility that nobility brings.

Whereabouts During Attack:

- Inside the Creutzfeldt coach (T)

Voluntary Information:

- Does not know who killed Erasmus (T)
- Does not know anything about the mutant attacks (T)
- Does not care about the peace talks (F)
- Will not answer questions unless beaten at cards (T)

Response Information:

- Holds the Durrenbachs personally responsible for the death of his first love (T)
- Had a brief fling with Brigita Durrenbach (T)
- Brigita is a member of a chaos cult (F)
- Has seen a surprising amount of mutants on the Creutzfeldt hunting grounds (T)

Secret Information:

- None

Search Reveals:

- Spare aces for cheating at cards

Favorite Saying: *"Care for a game of cards? Don't take advantage of me now, it's a new hobby of mine."*

Relevant Quote: *"I don't know if this is important, and I'm not certain of it, but I've long suspected Brigita Durrenbach to be a member of an illicit cult, possibly chaotic in nature."*



Name: Grethe Rozenow

Age: 28

Description: Her stated title is “consort,” and she dresses accordingly, but she is a trained assassin brought along in case an opportunity to slay a Durrenbach arises.

Whereabouts During Attack:

- At the rear of the caravan (True, but disappeared shortly after the onset of the mutant attack)

Voluntary Information:

- Does not know who killed Erasmus (T)
- Does not know anything about the mutant attacks (T)
- Does not care about the peace talks (T)
- Is only present to support Friderich (F)

Response Information:

- If her identity as an assassin is revealed, she will state that she was hired only to kill a Durrenbach (T)
- She brought no lethal poisons with her (T)
- Jakob is a mutant (T)

Secret Information:

- She is an assassin

Search Reveals:

- Slender, sharp, distinctive dagger (“In my line of work, I must of course take steps to protect myself”), whose purpose can only be revealed by Everd, unless one of the PCs is or has been an assassin

Favorite Saying: “*Would you mind tying this up for me? This dress has a mind of its own at times.*”

Relevant Quote: “*I am just here to support Friderich in whatever he decides.*”



Name: Arent Stretstorpe

Age: 47

Description: He is a hired soldier, but has been a trusted friend of the family for five years.

Whereabouts During Attack:

- At the front of the caravan (True)

Voluntary Information:

- Does not know who killed Erasmus (T)
- Wishes the peace talks to succeed (T)
- Suspects Darathee because her former husband died under suspicious circumstances (T)
- Suspects Everd because he will do anything for money (T)
- Knows nothing of the mutant attacks (F)

Response Information:

- Cannot vouch for Everd’s whereabouts (T)
- The verdict in Darathee’s case may be unreliable (T)
- Argued with Erasmus over “battle tactics” during a campaign seven years ago (F)
- Jakob masterminded the mutant attacks (T)

Secret Information:

- Had an affair with a noblewoman eight years ago
- Confessed the affair to Erasmus
- Erasmus was blackmailing him, now and in the past
- Ruprecht offered to pay the blackmail demands

Search Reveals:

- Blackmail letter from Erasmus

Favorite Saying: “*Battles are won through strength of mind, not strength of arm.*”

Relevant Quote: “*The widow Darathee’s husband died suddenly at the peak of health. She was cleared, but I heard the inquiry was less than thorough.*”



Name: Brigita Durrenbach

Age: 26

Description: Stunningly beautiful and acutely aware of that fact. She wears a small tiara, mark of female Durrenbach leaders.

Whereabouts During Attack:

- Inside the Durrenbach coach (T)

Voluntary Information:

- Does not know who killed Erasmus (T)
- Knows nothing of the mutant attacks (T)
- Desires the peace talks to succeed (T)
- Friderich harbors a great hatred for the Durrenbachs (T), and would like to see them ruined (T)
- Friderich attempted to seduce her (T)

Response Information:

- She is not a member of a cult (T)
- Darathee's husband died suddenly (T)
- No one regretted his death because he was abusive (T), but that does not mean Darathee killed him (F)
- An investigation cleared Darathee of all charges (T)

Secret Information:

- Officials carrying out the inquiry into the death of Darathee's husband were bribed heavily, by Brigita

Search reveals:

- An initiation letter into a Slaaneshi (planted by Ruprecht)

Favorite Saying: "Greatness is a destiny that is not granted but taken."

Relevant Quote: "Friderich! That despicable man would stop at nothing to see our families remain at odds. Do you know he even tried to seduce me?"



Name: Ruprecht Durrenbach

Age: 29

Description: He constantly broods over the future of his family and worries that the Creutzfeldts will emerge victorious and impoverish the Durrenbachs. He believes he is more suited than Brigita to lead their family, and casts about for ways to discredit her.

Whereabouts During Attack:

- Inside the Durrenbach coach (T)

Voluntary Information:

- Does not know who killed Erasmus (T)
- Hopes the peace talks succeed (F) but does not think they will (T)
- Brigita is a member of a chaos cult (F)
- This can be confirmed by Friderich Creutzfeldt (T), who had a brief relationship with her (T), but broke it off because he discovered her cult involvement (F)

Response Information:

- Darathee is innocent in her husband's death (F)
- He bears no ill will against the Creutzfeldts (F)

Secret Information:

- He is paying off Arent's blackmail debt to Erasmus

Search reveals:

- Small envelopes containing rough drafts of Brigita's forged Slaaneshi initiation letter

Favorite Saying: "The Creutzfeldts have always been jealous of our family's accomplishments and stature within the Province."

Relevant Quote: "It is my sad duty to inform you that I share Friderich's suspicion that Brigita is involved in a cult of some type, though I am and always shall remain her loyal brother."



Name: Darathee Durrenbach

Title: Priestess of Shallya

Age: 32

Description: In all of her portraits, there is a distant sadness, as if she is constantly longing for something she can never have.

Whereabouts During Attack:

- At the far side of the caravan next to the Durrenbach coach, caring for an ill child (F)

Voluntary Information:

- Does not know who killed Erasmus (F)
- Knows nothing about the mutant attacks (F)
- Wishes the peace talks to succeed (T)

Response Information:

- Is in love with Jakob (T)
- Her husband beat her (T), but she would never resort to violence as a solution (F)
- Her husband did indeed die suddenly (T)
- An investigation cleared her of wrongdoing (technically True, but officials were bribed)

Secret Information:

- Jakob masterminded the mutant attacks
- Grethe Rozenow is an assassin
- She poisoned her husband, who was abusive
- She killed Erasmus to spare Jakob and continue their work

Search reveals:

- Herbs for healing

Favorite Saying: "Shallya's mercy does not discriminate; it is freely available to all."

Relevant Quote: "The workings of Morr are mysterious indeed. Poor, poor man."



Name: Everd Setzingen

Title: Durrenbach Mercenary Captain

Age: 39

Description: A mercenary hired by the Durrenbachs for additional protection during the negotiations.

Whereabouts During Attack:

- At the far side of the caravan, in the middle (True)

Voluntary Information:

- Does not know who killed Erasmus (T)
- Does not want the peace talks to succeed (T)
- He knows Grethe Rozenow from somewhere, but not in her capacity as a consort (T)
- Worked with Arent on a mercenary campaign for the Electoral Count seven years ago (T)
- During this campaign, Arent and Erasmus had an argument that came to blows (T)
- Arent's altercation with the priest ended his military career (T)

Response Information:

- Did not accept money to kill Erasmus (T)
- Worked with Grethe Rozenow on a mercenary campaign four years ago, but she looked very different
- Grethe's dagger is designed to slit throats (T)
- Grethe Rozenow is an assassin (T)
- Darathee's investigation was rigged by bribery (T)

Secret Information:

- None

Search reveals:

- A large amount of sharp objects (see page 11)

Favorite Saying: "I can do that, but it will cost you."

Relevant Quote: "That consort's face is familiar but I can't place why. And no, I don't pay for that."

Handout #1

My dearest Agent,

It is my wish that this missive finds you in good health and gainful employ. Regarding the matter we discussed, I believe a sum of no less than five hundred gold crowns shall suffice to bring about a resolution satisfactory to both our interests. Once this amount has come into my possession, I will consider the matter closed and you shall not hear from me again on the subject.

My deepest gratitude for your cooperation,
Erasmus Hegez

Handout #2

Brigita,

Ever since you were accepted into our Sinful Order, we have eagerly awaited your passage from Ignorance to Chaos by way of the Ritual of Initiation. That Time has now arrived. Please meet with your Superior at the Appointed Place when Morrskit's next waxen full.

Praise be to Slaanesh!

~ Bestiary ~

NPCs other than the eight major characters that may play a role in this scenario are detailed below:

Mutant Leader, Georg

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
45	56	42	44	32	38	37	33
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	22	4	4	5	0	0	1

Description: Assigned by Jakob to lead the staged robbery on the caravan, Georg is cagey and has a good grasp of basic battle tactics. Several years ago, he was a simple farmer who was drafted from his village by Sigmarite Templars in pursuit of renegade chaos cultists. He obtained his mutations after being exposed to Dark Magic in the ensuing battle.

Mutations: Animalistic Legs, Horns (SB-1 if used as weapon)

Equipment: Shield, Two-handed Axe

Mutant Soldiers

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
39	37	39	34	35	25	28	22
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	15	3	3	4	0	0	0

Description: Unlike Georg, these soldiers have been mutants from birth and were abandoned to the forest shortly thereafter. At the beginning of the scenario, two of them have an instinctive fear of magic and must pass a Routine Willpower Test if magic is used in any obvious fashion. However, this is not the case at the end of the scenario, during which they are equipped with chain mail, shields, crossbows, and axes.

Mutations (one per mutant): Randomly generate from table on page 229 in the Core Rulebook

Equipment: Rusty shield, crossbow, 8 bolts each

Creutzfeldt/Durrenbach Soldiers

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
41	33	35	33	37	29	31	28
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	16	3	3	4	0	0	1

Description: Soldiers from either noble family; both are well-disciplined and usually act cohesively. There are ten soldiers from each family, for a total of twenty.

Equipment: Chain mail, shield, sword. Five soldiers from each family are equipped with crossbows and have 12 bolts each.

~ Rumors ~

- 1) *Jakob Creutzfeldt is being forced to marry Darathee Durrenbach as part of the peace accord* (False; but Jakob and Darathee do love each other and plan to announce their engagement at the peace accord)
- 2) *Brigita Durrenbach is a witch* (False)
- 3) *Old man Durrenbach was poisoned by Ruprecht in order to gain control of the family* (False), but his father suspected as much (False) and chose Brigita to succeed him (True, but only because he believed Brigita was better equipped to lead the family)
- 4) *Arent Stretstorpe and Everd Setzinger fought together in mercenary campaigns in the past* (True), and hate each other (False, but it is true that Arent does not respect Everd)
- 5) *Old man Creutzfeldt has not been in his right mind for several years* (True), which is why he isn't attending the peace talks (True)
- 6) *Ruprecht Durrenbach resents his sister because she was chosen to lead their family instead of him* (True)
- 7) *Darathee Durrenbach became a Priestess of Shallya because she was grief-stricken over the untimely death of her young husband* (False)
- 8) *Friderich Creutzfeldt dabbles in dark magic and has been known to sacrifice animals on Hexenstag* (False)
- 9) *Grethe Rozenow can tell your fortune for a small fee* (False)
- 10) *In the middle of the peace talks, the Count is going to sweep down with his army and destroy both families once and for all* (False)

~ Key Investigation Items ~

1. *Jakob and Darathee are in love* (discovered by asking either Jakob or Darathee in response to the rumor given by Mathias; see page 2)
2. *Grethe's toolkit did not contain any poison* (detailed in *Of Pillows and Poisons*, page 13)
3. *The verdict rendered during the investigation of Darathee was tainted by bribes* (found, ironically enough, by bribing Everd in *Black Widow*, page 12)
4. *Darathee was not where she claimed to be during the mutant attacks* (detailed in *Wealthy Servant, Missing Child*, page 13)
5. *There is a mutant sanctuary in Creutzfeldt territory* (detailed in *Misfit Army*, page 13)
6. *Jakob masterminded the mutant attacks* (discovered by questioning Arent about Jakob, but only after Arent is fired; see *A Chest Full of Karls*, page 11)
7. *Jakob is a mutant* (detailed in *A Mutant Among Us*, page 12)

~ ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ~

I would like to thank TJ Adamowicz for providing the artwork for this scenario. His website can be found at the aptly-named www.tjadamowicz.com. Huge thanks also go to Alfredo Lopez, Jr., who did an amazing job of coloring TJ's pencils for the cover shot, and on short notice to boot -- check out www.lopezstudios.com for his work. I'd like to thank Jim Sharkey for the idea of GM Cards (www.wfrp.de/treasury/en/treasury11.html), upon which the fold-overs for this scenario are based. They are a great way to make the players instantly aware of to whom they are speaking, and become necessary when the number of NPCs to keep track of is large, as is the case in *Noblesse Oblige*. Also, many thanks to my play-testing group, which consists of my wife Camilyn and a cabal of Allreds: Troy, Sean, and Leighton. Finally, thanks to Games Workshop and Black Industries; I enjoyed playing in your sandbox.

Noblesse Oblige was created using Pages v1.0.2 on an Apple Powerbook. The fonts in Handouts #1 and #2 are "Yankee Ghosts" and "Whitechapel" respectively; both are the work of Nate Piekos and can be purchased at www.blambot.com. Any comments, questions, or criticisms regarding this scenario should be sent to camnchar@gmail.com.

~ GAMEMASTER NOTES ~