The Most Extraordinary Affair of the Race for the Princess's Kiss



Castle Falkenstein

Content

Dramatis Personae	**3**
What Has Gone Before	**5**
Chapter I: The Grand Ball at Niederspitz	**7**
Chapter II: The Salon of Wits	**9**
Chapter III: The Grand Race of Niederspitz	**14**
Chapter IV: The Coup	**17**
Chapter V: A Nightly Rescue	**21**
Epilogue and Aftermath	**24**
Appendix I: Background material	**26**
Appendix II: Dramatic Characters	**29**
Appendix III: Tables	**35**
Appendix IV: Handouts	**38**

The Most Extraordinary Affair of the Race for the Princess's Kiss

The Creators of this Fine Document are...

Written by *Mårten Forsmark*

Illustrations & Layout Rendered by *Mårten Forsmark and Matilda Forsmark*

Humbly Our Solicitor's Particulars:
This scenario is an unofficial, non-commercial fan creation. It is distributed completely free of charge for personal enjoyment.

Castle Falkenstein is © Mike Pondsmith and R. Talsorian Games, Inc. This publication is purely fanmade and is not affiliated with, sponsored by, or endorsed by R. Talsorian Games.

All incidents, situations, and persons portrayed within are fictional, and resemblances, without satiric intent, are purely coincidental.

Dramatis Personae

Princess Adelheid of Niederspitz
Niederspitz; perceptive princess and focus of the contest; Charisma (Great), Perception (Great), Social Graces (Great), Education (Good), Fisticuffs (Poor)

Friherrinnan Agnes Silfverblad
Swedish; sharp-witted noblewoman and social strategist; Social Graces (Exceptional), Charisma (Great), Connections (Great), Perception (Good), Physique (Poor)

Professor Alarik Ström
Swedish; brilliant but absent-minded scientist and inventor; Education (Exceptional), Tinkering (Great), Perception (Good), Exchequer (Good), Social Graces (Poor)

Herr Anders Norrby
Swedish; practical outdoorsman and loyal retainer; Perception (Great), Athletics (Good), Stealth (Good), Courage (Good), Social Graces (Poor)

Baron Lord Archibald Fitzroy
British; eccentric aristocrat and vehicle inventor; Tinkering (Great), Education (Good), Performance (Good), Exchequer (Good), Fisticuffs (Poor)

Captain Arthur Pembroke
British; steady officer and explorer; Courage (Great), Athletics (Good), Perception (Good), Fencing (Good), Exchequer (Poor)

Lady Beatrice Ashcroft
British; brilliant inventor and natural philosopher; Education (Exceptional), Tinkering (Great), Perception (Good), Charisma (Good), Fencing (Poor)

Fräulein Elsa Krause
Niederspitz; Princess Adelheid's loyal lady's maid; Social Graces (Great), Perception (Good), Education (Good), Performance (Good), Stealth (Good), Fisticuffs (Poor).

Feldwebel Emil Rauch
Prussian; loyal soldier with a grim outlook; Fisticuffs (Great), Courage (Great), Marksmanship (Good), Physique (Good), Social Graces (Poor)

Fräulein Gerda Weiss
Prussian; machinist and experimental pilot; Tinkering (Great), Perception (Good), Courage (Good), Athletics (Good), Social Graces (Poor)

Prince Gustaf of Sweden
Swedish; eager young prince (16) determined to prove himself; Athletics (Great), Charisma (Good), Courage (Good), Performance (Good), Exchequer (Poor)

Fräulein Ilsa Drachenberg
Prussian; silent spy and deadly sharpshooter; Marksmanship (Exceptional), Stealth (Great), Perception (Great), Courage (Good), Social Graces (Poor)

Doktor Klaus Reiter *Prussian; military engineer with a mechanical arm; Tinkering (Exceptional), Education (Great), Physique (Good), Perception (Good), Social Graces (Poor)*

King Leopold III of Niederspitz
Niederspitz; aging monarch seeking stability through diplomacy; Charisma (Great), Social Graces (Great), Connections (Great), Perception (Good), Athletics (Poor)

Prince Maximilian of Niederspitz
Niederspitz; ambitious royal plotting to seize power; Charisma (Great), Connections (Great), Perception (Great), Social Graces (Good), Courage (Poor)

Hauptmann Otto von Eisenkranz
Prussian; cold and strategic officer; Fencing (Great), Perception (Great), Courage (Good), Charisma (Good), Performance (Poor)

Sir Reginald Hawthorne
British; flamboyant gentleman adventurer; Charisma (Exceptional), Performance (Great), Fencing (Good), Courage (Good), Tinkering (Poor)

Count Viktor von Luzau-Rischenheim
Ruritanian; dangerous romantic who idolizes Count Rupert and seeks to emulate his charm and ruthlessness; Charisma (Exceptional), Fencing (Great), Stealth (Great), Perception (Good), Courage (Poor)

Kapten Vilhelm af Uggla
Swedish; disciplined officer and protector of the prince; Fencing (Great), Courage (Great), Athletics (Good), Perception (Good), Performance (Poor)

Hauptmann Walter Kohler
Air Pirate; daring and calculating freebooter; Helmsmanship (Great), Fencing (Great), Charisma (Good), Perception (Good), Exchequer (Poor)

Rittmeister Wilfried Graf von Waldstein-Kürth
Austro-Hungarian officer looking for a wife; Education (Great), Exchequer (Great), Connections (Good), Perception (Good), Comeliness (Poor)

What Has Gone Before

The small Alpine kingdom of Niederspitz has long balanced precariously between the ambitions of Europe's greater powers. Nestled among high mountains and narrow valleys, the realm possesses little in the way of armies or industry, yet its strategic passes and ancient alliances have given it an importance far beyond its modest size. For generations the rulers of Niederspitz have preserved their independence through diplomacy, careful marriages, and the cultivation of goodwill among their powerful neighbors.

King Leopold III, the current monarch, continues this tradition. A thoughtful and idealistic ruler, he believes that the future of his kingdom lies not in military strength but in friendship and cooperation with the nations around him. To that end he has announced an unusual diplomatic undertaking: a grand international competition to be held at the royal castle.

Delegations from several nations, including Bayern and Prussia, have been invited to send representatives to compete in a series of challenges of skill, ingenuity, and character. The victor will earn not only prestige and influence, but also the favor of the royal court and the possibility of a marriage alliance with the king's daughter, Princess Adelheid.

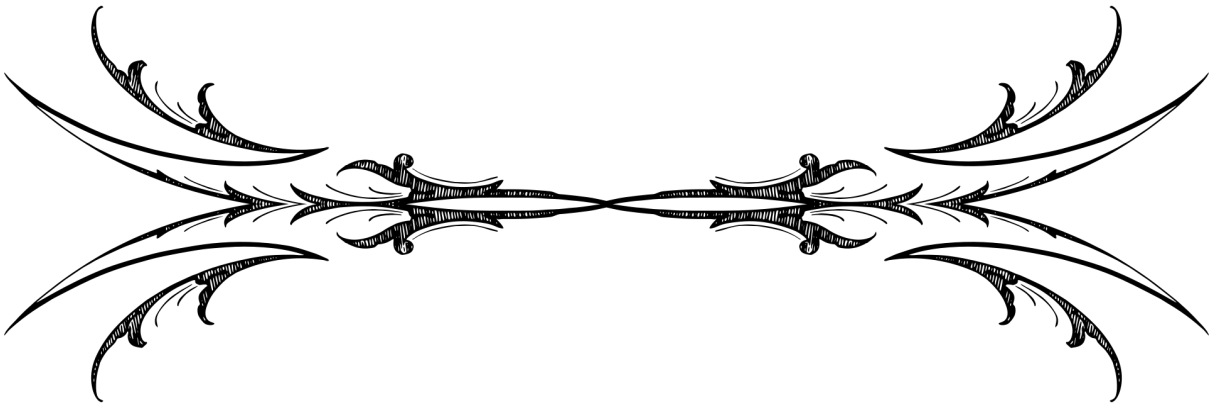
Publicly, the contest is meant to celebrate innovation, courage, and the spirit of cooperation among the nations of New Europa. Nobles, inventors, adventurers, and eccentrics have gathered from across the continent to participate or simply to witness the spectacle. For many it is an opportunity for glory. For others it is a chance to advance political interests, form alliances, or settle old rivalries beneath a veneer of courtly civility. Yet beneath the pageantry and diplomacy lurks a darker purpose.

Unknown to the king, his younger brother, Prince Maximilian, has quietly set a conspiracy in motion. Charismatic, calculating, and long resentful of his brother's crown, Maximilian believes the kingdom requires a stronger hand. In his view Leopold’s idealism leaves Niederspitz vulnerable to manipulation by foreign powers. The upcoming competition, drawing ambitious representatives from rival nations, provides the perfect stage upon which to demonstrate that weakness.

Through a network of loyal agents, compromised officials, and discreetly placed provocateurs, Maximilian intends to sabotage the contest from within. Accidents, rivalries, and suspicious incidents will be carefully arranged to sow confusion and distrust among the visiting delegations. Should the competition collapse into scandal, or worse, confidence in King Leopold’s judgment may falter among the nobility and the court. In the resulting crisis, Maximilian plans to present himself as the only man capable of restoring order and protecting the realm.

Thus, while banners are hung and dignitaries arrive amid music and celebration, unseen hands prepare to turn a festival of diplomacy into the spark of a political upheaval. And into this delicate web of ambition, intrigue, and international rivalry step the competitors themselves, unaware that the contest they have come to win may determine far more than reputation or romance.

For the fate of Niederspitz may soon depend not only on courage and ingenuity, but on who can uncover the truth behind the shadows gathering within the castle walls.



Timeline for the Scenario

Time	Event & Narrative Context	Scenario Phase
Day 1 - 21:00	The Grand Ball Begins	Chapter 1 Starts
Day 2 - 02:00	Ball Concludes and theft of Bavarian machine is detected	Chapter 2 Starts
Day 2 - 09:00	Royal Breakfast	Interlude
Day 2 - 10:00	The Salon of Wits	Chapter 2 Continues
Day 2 - 13:00	Formal Luncheon	Interlude
Day 2 - 16:00	Afternoon Tea	Interlude
Day 2 - 16:15	The Great Alpine Race	Chapter 3 Starts
Day 2 - 19:15	Prince Maximillian's Coup starts	Chapter 4 Starts
Day 2 - 20:00	Intended Victory Dinner (Abandoned)	Interlude
???	Rescue at the Mountain Lodge	Chapter 5 Starts
Day 3 - 06:45	Dawn. If the king has not learned of the princess' rescue he will abdicate from the throne.	Interlude

Chapter I: The Grand Ball at Niederspitz

In which the Dramatic Characters are introduced to the royal court, encounter their rivals, and discover that a hidden enemy is working to sabotage the entire event.

Summary for the Host

The adventure opens under the glittering chandeliers of the Royal Castle of Niederspitz. The Bavarian team must project absolute aristocratic perfection, navigate personal complications, and introduce themselves to courtly rivals. During the waltz, three precise incidents of sabotage will occur. The chapter ends with the shocking discovery that the Bavarian racing machine has been stolen, forcing a frantic midnight rebuild.

The Setting

Most of this chapter unfolds within the Royal Castle of Niederspitz, primarily in its magnificent Great Hall. Here, the grand opening ball is held, and every distinguished guest is formally announced upon arrival and dance cards handed out to the ladies. This provides an excellent opportunity for the Dramatic Characters to become acquainted with the other Dramatis Personae, most notably the royal family, the competing national delegations, and their chief rivals, the Prussian team.

The Great Hall glows beneath the light of a thousand candles. Strauss waltzes drift through the air as elegantly dressed nobles glide across the polished marble floor. Crystal glasses chime in countless toasts while hushed conversations weave together diplomacy, intrigue, and whispered conspiracies among the elite of New Europa. Every smile may conceal an agenda, every dance may be the opening move in a far greater game.

> *"The Great Hall of Castle Niederspitz is a breathtaking display of alpine opulence. A thousand wax candles drift in massive wrought-iron chandeliers above, casting a warm glow over the finest silk, polished dress uniforms, and glittering jewels of New Europa's elite. The soaring strains of a Viennese waltz echo from the orchestra balcony, but beneath the music lies a low, sharp hum of whispered diplomacy. Tonight, reputation is a weapon, and the grand contest has already begun not on a racetrack, but on the polished ballroom floor."*

Involving the Dramatic Characters

After the introductions has been made and the ball is underway, hook the players to the story by introducing their specific complications:

Graf Heinrich: Friherrinnan Agnes Silfverblad (the Swedish social strategist) smoothly corners him in a position where he is socially obligated to invite her to dance. During the dance she subtly drops hints that she knows about his crushing financial debts and suggests that it would be "mutually beneficial" if Sweden would emerge victorious in this Grand Race.

Klara Edelstein: Is approached by an old man who says that he used to train with a young wizard that looked exactly like her years ago. He is very interested in her family tree. He is most obnoxious and she needs to find a way to shut him up.

Johann Adler (Disguised as Johanna Albers): Across the crowded ballroom, he catches the brief, intense, and longing gaze of Princess Adelheid on the royal dais. If Johann lingers or approaches too closely, he risks exposing his true identity to the eagle-eyed court. Give other Dramatic Characters a chance to spot this with their Perception.

Charlotte von Winter: A sharp-eyed Austro-Hungarian officer, Rittmeister Wilfried Graf von Waldstein-Kürth, approaches her with a knowing smirk, whispering a toast that heavily implies he recognizes her true identity from her past escapades in Vienna.

Bramble: Left to his own devices near the buffet or engineering displays, he finds himself highly annoyed by the condescending attitude of the Prussian tech delegation.

The Incidents

During the ball draw five cards (redrawing any duplicates) to select five events from The Ball Incident Table in the Appendix. Prince Maximilian has covertly arranged these mishaps to embarrass King Leopold and undermine his authority in front of the foreign delegations. Dramatic characters who step in can mitigate the fallout, protecting King Leopold's political standing and bolstering foreign support for his crown by the climax. While investigating these events will reveal clear clues of deliberate sabotage, such as tampered valves or evidence of poison, Leopold operates exclusively through bribed proxies, leaving no direct evidence or paper trail that connects the prince to the plot.

Going Off The Rails

What if the players confront Prince Maximilian immediately? Maximilian is a master politician with Charisma (Great). He will smoothly laugh off any direct accusations as "unfortunate Bavarian exhaustion" and use the confrontation to make the player look unstable in front of King Leopold.

The Act Ends

The grand trumpets sound as King Leopold announces tomorrow's starting trial: The Salon of Wits. Before the dramatic characters have a chance to consider its next move, a breathless palace servant approaches them, visibly shaken. There has been a break-in at the stables. The massive Bavarian shipping crate has been forced open and it is completely empty, save for a few mocking pieces of scrap metal. Their experimental racing machine is gone. With approximately fourteen hours remaining before the race begins, the Bavarian team must decide what to do. If they are to compete tomorrow, they may need to build a functional replacement using nothing but Bramble's personal notebook, whatever materials they can acquire, and a great deal of raw ingenuity.

Chapter II: The Salon of Wits

In which a battle of intellects reveals a ruthless Prussian gambit, while a desperate race against time takes place in the grease and steam of the castle workshops.

Summary for the Host

Day two presents the Bavarian delegation with a dual crisis: the official intellectual and social trial (The Salon of Wits) begins in the Great Hall, while their stolen racing machine must somehow be replaced before evening. The players are faced with a tactical dilemma and must choose how to divide their forces, or if they will focus entirely on one front, to save Bavaria's honor and build a functional vehicle from scratch.

The Setting

The Salon of Wits (The Reception Hall): High vaulted ceilings, velvet-draped tables, and an audience of critical European nobles judging every word. The air is thick with expensive perfume and tense, whispered diplomacy.

"The Great Reception Hall has been transformed into an intellectual arena. Before a dais of silent, judging royals, the competitors sit at long velvet tables. This is the Salon of Wits, a high-pressure gauntlet of riddles, verbal fencing, and strict etiquette designed to test the mental caliber of New Europa's elite. For Bavaria, the stakes are doubled; you must defend your nation's honor with words, while knowing your actual means of racing tomorrow lies in ruins."

The Midnight Stable-Forge: A makeshift, grease-stained annex tucked away in the back of the royal stables, smelling sharply of wet straw, horse manure, and burning coal. Flickering gas lanterns cut through the haze, casting long shadows over heavy farrier tools, scattered horseshoes, and the skeletal frames of half-dismantled steam carriages.

"Tucked away at the back of the bustling royal stables, this hastily converted workspace is a chaotic blend of horse stalls and heavy mechanics. The air is thick with the scent of hot oil, soot, and restless livestock, while the cold alpine wind whistles through the wooden rafters. If a replacement machine is to be built from scratch before dawn, you will have to work miracles amidst the straw, discarded carriage parts, and glowing forge fire."

Involving the Dramatic Characters

The situation allows the players total freedom in how they distribute their team, but every character can shine regardless of which location they choose to attend:

Graf Heinrich in the Salon*:* The Test of Unyielding Composure: He is selected to be part of a heated political argument. He knows that he needs to stand his ground calmly and respectfully and use his courage when King Leopolds's judge intentionally provokes him.

Graf Heinrich in the Stable-Forge: He spots a foreign team's mechanic holding a rare steam valve that is vital for the Bavarian machine. He must somehow use his charm or some other ability to procure it.

Charlotte von Winter in the Salon: The Cultural Tribute: Performing a piece of music, poetry, or rhetoric that honors the heritage of Niederspitz and captivates the entire court.

Charlotte von Winter in the Stable-Forge: The team is in dire need of a flux capacitor which is very hard to procure. She will need to use her connections and call in a lot of favors in order to have one delivered via airship to Niederspitz before tomorrow.

Bramble in the Salon: The characters are presented with a cryptographical puzzle that needs to be deciphered. There are clues that relate to the history of Niederspitz making a rigid education paramount.

Bramble in the Stable-Forge: A magnificent opportunity to take charge of the heavy machinery, using his engineering notes to orchestrate a frantic, midnight masterclass in steam-tech construction.

Johann Adler (Disguised as Johanna Albers) i*n the Salon:* Detecting the Smallest of Details: Reading the room to identify which foreign delegates are planted servants and do not belong there.

Johann Adler (Disguised as Johanna Albers) i*n the Stable-Forge:* His burning devotion provides a perfect chance to push through physical exhaustion, hauling heavy iron boiler plates to ensure the team has a vehicle to race.

Klara Edelstein in the Salon: Unmasking Sorcerous Influence: There is a contest to be the first team to spot the hidden pixie that is hiding with a subtle glamour.

Klara Edelstein in the Stable-Forge: There is a Prussian spy trying to sabotage the rebuilding of the Bavarian machine unless someone can spot him on time and stop him.

The Steam-Racing Mechanic

Forging the vehicle in the workshop requires a lot of tinkering. While constructing their replacement vehicle in the workshop, the players must distribute exactly 8 points across three core attributes (maximum score of 5 in any single attribute). These attributes directly alter the difficulty of the hazards encountered during the upcoming race in Chapter III.

- **Speed (SP):** The raw velocity and power of the steam boiler. Affects rolls made to outrun threats or leap across gaps.
- **Handling (HD):** The steering precision and maneuverability on narrow roads. Affects rolls made to navigate blind corners, scree, or narrow tunnels.
- **Durability (DR):** The structural integrity of the chassis. Functions as the vehicle's health pool and can modify mid-race repair checks.

Ability Modifiers

In Castle Falkenstein, every two point (rounding up) in an attribute raises the character's effective Ability rank by one for that specific feat during the race (e.g. if a character has Good [GD] Motoring and is driving a vehicle with Handling 3, any Handling-based check is made as if their skill rank were Exceptional).

Rival Vehicle Benchmarks (For GM Reference):

- **The Prussian Armored Caterpillar:** Speed 2, Handling 1, Durability 5.
- **The Swedish Tandem Steam-Bike:** Speed 2, Handling 5, Durability 1.
- **The British Land-Boat:** Speed 3, Handling 2, Durability 3.

The Prussian Gambit

If characters participate in the Salon of Wits, they will be able to gain a clue to the Prussian plan. The Prussian team (**Hauptmann Otto** and **Doktor Klaus**) are intentionally sandbagging, giving clumsy answers to finish last in the Salon of Wits. They want the rear starting position because their experimental caterpillar tractor has a fixed, forward-firing steam-cannon; starting last ensures all rivals are directly in their line of fire. The dramatic characters should be given a chance to detect their sandbagging and an opportunity to investigate.

Going off the Rails

What if the players try to search for the stolen machine? If the players completely bypass the Salon and the Workshop to actively try and track their stolen racing machine, allow them to use their skills to hunt for it through the castle grounds and surrounding alpine slopes. Allows them to spot heavy tire tracks and a discarded, grease-stained Bavarian

wrench leading away from the stables toward the lower mountain trails. The trail ends at a jagged, foggy cliffside. Down in the ravine lies the original Bavarian machine, deliberately pushed over the edge, thoroughly smashed, and completely beyond repair. While the vehicle is a total loss, some successful tinkering allows the characters to salvage intact components (such as specialized pneumatic pressure valves or master-crafted piston rings). Salvaging these parts grants a permanent bonus for the construction of the replacement machine.

Clues

The Prussian Plot: Players investigating the Prussians' strange performance can discover their scheme in multiple ways. A Social Graces check reveals Otto's etiquette blunders are too robotic to be real; an Education check reveals Klaus's riddle answers are mathematically sabotaged; a Perception check lets a character overhear a hushed order in Prussian military dialect: *"Maintain rear position for the schusswinkel."*

The Cliffside Clue: If the players salvage parts from the wrecked machine at the bottom of the cliff, they will discover a scrap of dark green cloth caught on the shattered steering column, matching the heavy winter cloaks worn exclusively by Niederspitz elite guard, further linking the theft to an internal coup.

Last is Good?: If the players completely ignore the Salon to focus entirely on the workshop or the cliffside search, they automatically finish last on the starting grid. This inadvertently foils the Prussian plan by forcing the Prussians to start ahead of the Bavarians, completely disrupting their tactical firing lane for the upcoming race.

The Act Ends

The chime of the royal clock signals the start of the formal luncheon as the Salon of Wits draws to a close, sealing King Leopold’s preliminary judgments. As the foreign delegations retire to the dining hall to toast their political maneuvers, the Bavarian team faces a harsh reality: race marshals are already positioning the starting grid for the afternoon display. With barely three hours remaining until Afternoon Tea and the subsequent roar of engines in the alpine valley, the clock is ticking down. Whatever the team has accomplished piecing together through the night is about to face the ultimate test on the mountain passes.

Chapter III: The Grand Race of Niederspitz

In which the newly forged Bavarian machine roars to life against altered navigation markers and the devastating mechanical fury of the Prussian armored caterpillar.

Summary for the Host

The starting flags drop, and the Grand Race through the treacherous alpine passes begins. The Bavarian team faces a double threat: the physical racecourse has been sabotaged by Prince Maximilian's agents, and the Prussian delegation unleashes their forward-firing steam-cannon from behind. The characters must decide among themselves who drives, who navigates, and who handles repairs or defense as they fight their way toward the finish line.

The Setting

The Starting Grid: A festive but tense courtyard filled with the roar of experimental engines, thick plumes of steam and waving flags.

The Alpine Passes: A terrifyingly beautiful gauntlet of narrow, gravel-strewn roads, blind hairpin turns, and sheer cliff drops overlooking jagged chasms.

> ***Read-Aloud Text:*** *"The crisp mountain air is instantly shattered by the deafening roar of New Europa's finest experimental engines. Steam hisses violently from polished brass valves, and the smell of burning coal and high-octane fuel fills the courtyard. As the iron starting gate drops, you must take your positions. The vehicles surge forward, instantly kicking up a cloud of gravel as they head straight toward the dizzying heights of the alpine passes."*

Involving the Dramatic Characters

This scene is a frantic team effort. The players have absolute freedom to decide who takes which role inside the vehicle.

The Driver's Seat: A perfect opportunity for any character to test their Motoring ability to execute death-defying maneuvers and dodge incoming obstacles.

The Navigator's Position: An excellent opportunity for a character with high Perception to spot road hazards before it is too late.

The Deck: A magnificent opportunity for characters to make desperate, mid-race repairs, deploy counter-measures, or to repel physical threats.

The Great Race

The race is divided into two phases: navigating the environment and surviving the Prussian Treachery. Because the Prussians engineered a rear starting position, their armored caterpillar stalks the pack from behind, using their forward-firing steam-cannon to blast rivals off the road.

Durability: Every time the vehicle takes damage (hit by the cannon, skids into a ditch, crashes), its **Durability decreases**. If Durability reaches **0**, the vehicle breaks down completely. The characters must then either forfeit the race immediately or spend considerable time on-site making an emergency repair (requires a successful **Exceptional Tinkering** check, which takes so long that they are almost guaranteed to finish dead last).

To simulate the chaotic nature of the race, draw from a standard deck of cards at five distinct intervals during the chase to see what obstacle the characters encounter: **See Appendix with tables.**

Going off the Rails

If the dramatic characters' steam-machine breaks down during the race, or they need to abort the race for some other reason, they are not eliminated from the story. The team can still limp, haul, or walk their way back toward the castle gates to reach the finish line.Whether towing their wreckage, commandeering a battered farm wagon, or arriving on foot covered in grease and soot, the dramatic characters still arrive back at Castle Niederspitz. Arriving later just means there is no cheering crowd, no checkered flags, and no triumphant royal welcome waiting for them. Prince Maximilian's forces have already secured a firm foothold. By the time the team reaches the courtyard, the castle is already locked down, armed rebel guards have surrounded the perimeter, King Leopold III is already detained in his study, and Princess Adelheid has already been smuggled away toward the mountain lodge. Skip the initial confusion of the finish line and transition immediately into Chapter IV with the characters needing to slip past an established occupation force instead.

Clues

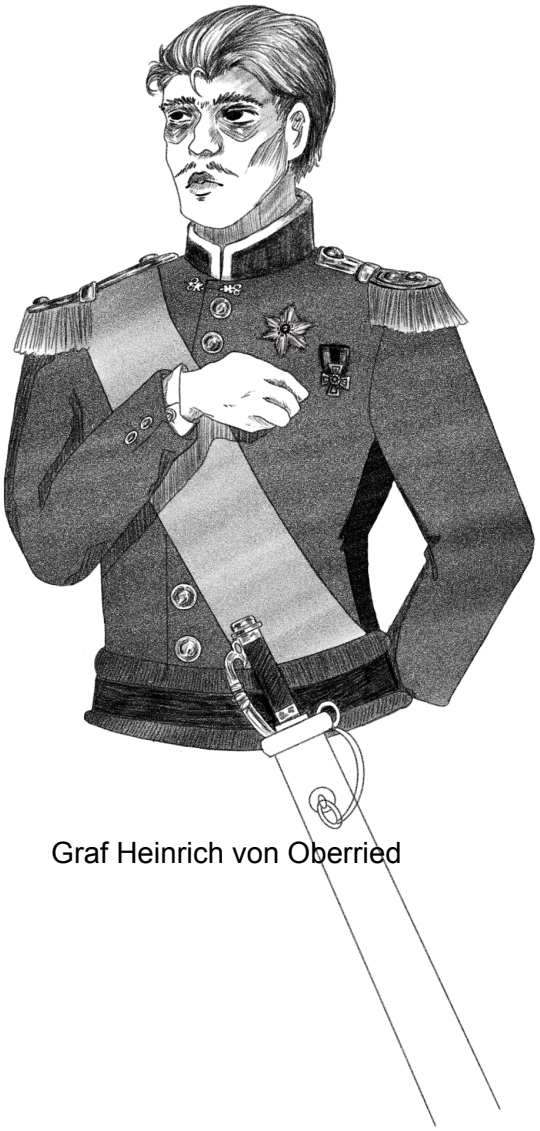
The Nudge: If the players manage to defeat one of Maximilian's traps or ambushers, they should find clues to who the villain is, perhaps a discarded military map of the racecourse. The map is stamped with the seal of the Niederspitz Ministry of War and signed directly by Prince Maximilian, explicitly marking the areas where "accidents" are scheduled to happen.

The Act Ends

The finish line finally comes into view through the mountain fog. The royal banners of Castle Niederspitz flap in the wind, and a massive cheering crowd is gathered at the grand gates to welcome the racers. There is a grand celebration, especially if the dramatic characters are the winners of the race. The perceptive characters will notice the absence of the royal family and the roar of the crowd suddenly turns into screams of terror. Flags are torn down, armed guards flood the courtyard, and the sporting event instantly collapses into a violent political coup.



Fräulein Klara Edelstein



Graf Heinrich von Oberried

Chapter IV: The Coup

In which the grand race ends in chaos, a treacherous royal conspiracy is unmasked, and our heroes must unite to rescue the abducted princess from the clutches of sky pirates and a ruthless Ruritanian rogue.

Summary for the Host

The Grand Race concludes, but the celebrations are cut short as Prince Maximilian's rebel household guards launch a sudden coup, trapping the court. Prince Maximilian has already orchestrated the kidnapping of his niece, Princess Adelheid, using his conspirators to hold her hostage. He threatens to harm her if his brother, King Leopold III, does not immediately abdicate the throne. The Bavarian team must slip through the chaos of the occupied courtyard, gather intelligence and prepare to track the conspirators into the mountains.

The Setting

The Ruined Courtyard: The Courtyard has plunged from a roaring, festive celebration into terror as heavy-booted rebel guards flood the stone square. Vibrant royal banners are ripped into the dirt and heavy iron gates slam shut, locking the foreign delegations inside an oppressive, smoke-choked military zone.

> ***Read-Aloud Text:*** *"The cheers of the crowd turn to shrieks of terror in an instant. Before you can even grasp what is happening, the royal banners of Niederspitz are torn down, replaced by the dark iron-and-green standards of Prince Maximilian. Armed rebel guards flood the courtyard, bayonets gleaming through the heavy steam, as a chilling voice rings out over the tumult: 'For the safety of the realm, King Leopold is relieved of command!' In the swirling confusion, you catch sight of terrified aristocrats fleeing the soldiers, while the sound of gunfire echoes from the palace gates."*

The King's Private Sanctuary: Inside the fortress, the King's Sanctum has become a suffocating chamber of political crisis thick with the scent of old parchment and raw tension. King Leopold III is held captive under armed guard while Prince Maximilian forces his aging brother toward a humiliating abdication under the threat of harm to Princess Adelheid.

Involving the Dramatic Characters

The sudden political upheaval forces the dramatic characters to adapt instantly. The players have a balanced set of choices to leverage their unique talents in the face of treason:

Johann Adler (disguised as Johanna Albers): Amidst the screaming crowd, Elsa, the Princess's loyal lady's maid who secretly knows Johann's true male identity, frantically corners him. She tearfully reveals that Prince Maximilian is behind the kidnapping of Princess Adelheid, and that he is threatening to harm her if King Leopold III does not abdicate. Elsa begs Johann to intervene, stating that the princess is in dire peril and desperately needs his help. This provides a perfect, high-stakes opportunity to cast aside caution, rally the team, and mount an immediate rescue mission.

Graf Heinrich: Amidst the initial chaos, Friherrinnan Agnes Silfverblad corners him, offering a complete cancellation of his crushing debts if he agrees to help smuggle young Prince Gustaf safely out of the dangerous political situation. If Heinrich succeeds in protecting the Swedish prince, he will earn the deep, tangible gratitude of the Swedish team, opening the door for valuable future aid. This presents a high-stakes crossroads between personal salvation and his loyalty to the Bavarian delegation.

Klara Edelstein: Amidst the unfolding chaos of the coup, give Klara a chance to observe the desperate plight of Johann and Princess Adelheid and understand that her ancient, lingering curse can be lifted if she actively aids two true lovers in uniting against insurmountable odds. Facing a crucial turning point, Klara must choose between fleeing the danger for her own safety or stepping into the fray to protect the young lovers, using her unique gifts to ensure their union and finally shatter her own long-standing burden.

Charlotte von Winter: Amidst the chaos of the occupied courtyard, Rittmeister Wilfried Graf von Waldstein-Kürth, who recognized her past in Vienna offers a purely practical marriage to make her his noble trophy wife. However, he demands she flee immediately for safety and refuses to let her stay and save the princess. If she stays to help, the offer is forfeited, forcing Charlotte to choose between her lifelong aristocratic dream and her personal honor.

Bramble: He realizes he must invent something truly masterful, rapidly transforming scrap into a specialized alpine transport to conquer the roadless, freezing mountain dark in order to reach the isolated mountain lodge in time to save the princess before the king is compelled to abdicate. If he succeeds under this immense pressure, he will irrevocably prove his genius, secure his true dwarven master-name, and earn the title of Meister once and for all.

Understanding the Coup

The primary objective of this chapter is for the players to realise who is the villain, escape the occupied courtyard, gather intelligence, and locate where Princess Adelheid has been taken and devise a plan on how to get there.



Bramble



Baronin Charlotte von Winter

The King's Reluctance

If the characters manage to bypass the guards to speak directly with King Leopold III during the courtyard chaos, they will find him paralyzed by grief and fear. The King is entirely unwilling to be rescued or to resist his brother's forces as long as his beloved daughter remains in danger. He insists that any attempt to save him now will only seal Adelheid's doom, prompting the characters to redirect their efforts toward tracking the kidnappers. He will give them until dawn the following day before he will be forced to abdicate.

Confronting Prince Maximilian of Niederspitz

If the characters try to openly oppose or confront Prince Maximilian and his coup, they will quickly discover that they alone cannot defeat his overwhelming forces, and the king refuses to order his loyal guards to intervene until the princess is safely rescued. While the prince wishes to avoid harming foreign dignitaries and creating an international incident, he has no qualms about neutralizing the threat they pose by having them contained. He will order his men to lock the dramatic characters in a royal guest room under heavy guard until the coup is safely concluded. Should the players choose to surrender to avoid bloodshed or find themselves captured, they remain trapped unless they engineer their own escape. If they can't escape on their own, a sympathetic guard loyal to the king, joined by the princess's dedicated lady's maid, will eventually intervene to break them out and urge them to go save the princess.

Clues

The Culprit: If the players search the area where the Princess was taken, they discover a dropped Ruritanian cufflink bearing the coat of arms of Count Viktor von Luzau-Rischenheim.

The Getaway: A trembling stablehand hiding near the paddock reports seeing armed men escorting a hooded woman toward a tethered air vessel while shouting orders. The air vessel headed north toward the jagged peaks of the upper alpine range

The Henchman: The dramatic characters hear rumors of a strange injured foreigner in the infirmary. It is an injured air ship crewman that had to be left behind. If pressured he breaks down and confesses that the operation was orchestrated by that flamboyant Ruritanian noble with the aid of the air pirate crew. If promised safe passage out of the country after he has healed up he will even tell them that the airship was headed for the mountain lodge.

The Destination: A topographic survey map of the northern peaks, dropped from the middle of the courtyard, features a heavily circled ink mark over the remote alpine hunting lodge.

Chapter V: A Nightly Rescue

In which our heroes brave the freezing alpine wilderness, infiltrate the isolated mountain lodge, and settle accounts with Count Viktor von Luzau-Rischenheim and his air pirate confederates in a high-stakes rescue for Princess Adelheid.

Summary for the Host

The final chapter takes the dramatic characters to the unforgiving, mist-shrouded peaks of Niederspitz. Having deduced that Princess Adelheid was abducted by Count Viktor von Luzau-Rischenheim alongside contracted air pirates, the team must utilize an engineered alpine transport or brave the vertical ascent on foot to reach the remote hunting lodge. Upon arrival, they face a heavily guarded stronghold perched on a high-altitude precipice. The session culminates in a cinematic confrontation featuring stealth infiltration, swift blades, barking pistols, and hopefully the dramatic rescue of the princess just before the dawn deadline that brings King Leopold's abdication.

The Setting

The Alpine Forest at Night: A pitch-black, bone-chilling labyrinth of ancient pine trees, steep snowdrifts, and vertical ravines where howling winds threaten to sweep careless travelers into the abyss.

The Mountain Lodge: An isolated, timber-and-stone hunting retreat perched precariously on a high rocky ledge. Warm amber light glows through frosted windows, while armed air-pirate sentries patrol the exterior wooden verandas, keeping watch beneath the hulking silhouette of a tethered airship.

> ***Read-Aloud Text:*** *"The wind howls through the jagged peaks of the upper alpine range, driving a freezing sleet across the sheer cliff faces. Before you loom the isolated mountain lodge, its timber frame glowing faintly against the dark expanse of snow and pine. Tethered to a mooring spar on the rocky precipice above, a massive airship strains against its ropes with a creaking sound. Inside those frost-covered walls Princess Adelheid must be held captive, and time is rapidly running out."*

The Ascent

Before the dramatic characters can reach the lodge, they must navigate the treacherous, roadless mountain terrain during night.

The Mechanical Ascent: If they somehow have acquired a specialized alpine transport, the players must make a Motoring check to navigate hidden crevasses and blinding snow squalls. A failure results in damage to the vehicle and requires either frantic mid-blizzard repairs or continuing on foot.

The Foot Pursuit: Characters traversing the cliffs on foot must rely on Athletics and sheer endurance to avoid freezing hazards, hidden ice sheets, and disorientation in the dark. Using proper climbing equipment, portable light sources or casting the suitable can ease this challenge significantly.

Infiltrating the Lodge

Arriving at the perimeter of the hunting lodge, the characters find the primary entrance guarded by vigilant air pirates. Stealth, wit, or decisive force will be required to breach the stronghold:

The Trophy Room: Princess Adelheid is kept under guard in the grand trophy room on the upper floor, where Count Viktor von Luzau-Rischenheim waits, utterly convinced of his romantic triumph and romanticizing his role as a Ruritanian master villain.

The Airship Mooring: The tethered airship provides a potential escape route or a tactical vantage point for characters clever enough to scale the upper rigging.

The Climax

Once inside, the confrontation explodes into action. Count Viktor von Luzau-Rischenheim steps forward with theatrical flair, drawing his dueling sabre to challenge any dramatic character who dares oppose him to a gentleman's duel, all while air-pirate mercenaries scramble to defend the halls under the fierce direction of Hauptmann Walter Kohler.

Duel of Honor: Count Viktor fights with Exceptional Fencing skill, frequently pausing mid-thrust to deliver arrogant, dramatic declarations worthy of his idol, Count Rupert. Overcoming him demands a seamless mix of brilliant blade-work and biting repartee.

Securing the Princess: While the duel unfolds, the rest of the team must neutralize Hauptmann Walter Kohler and his remaining sky pirates, secure the exits, and break Princess Adelheid out of her quarters.

Going Off the Rails: The Count's Escape

If Count Viktor von Luzau-Rischenheim manages to best one of the dramatic characters in their gentleman's duel, or if the heroes focus entirely on securing Princess Adelheid amidst the chaos, the Ruritanian rogue seizes a golden opportunity to make a dramatic exit while Hauptmann Walter Kohler's air pirates provide unintentional cover. Capitalizing on his victory or the ensuing confusion, Count Viktor fights a brief, mocking rear-guard action and makes a rapid dash toward the mooring spar. He scrambles aboard the tethered air vessel and cuts the ropes, leaving the dramatic characters as the airship's engines roar to life. Though Princess Adelheid is safely rescued and the capital's coup is thwarted, the Count vanishes into the stormy alpine clouds with a theatrical farewell, vowing future vengeance and leaving a dangerous loose end for the characters.



Fräulein Johanna Albers

Epilogue and Aftermath

With Count Viktor defeated, the air pirates scattered or captured, and Princess Adelheid safely rescued, the heroes can commandeer the airship or travel back down the mountain pass. Hopefully, they arrive back at Castle Niederspitz before the first pale light of dawn breaks over the alpine spires, meeting the critical 06:45 deadline. Their triumphant return halts King Leopold's coerced abdication, shatters Prince Maximilian's coup, and restores peace to the realm. The conspirators are exposed, the Crown is saved, and the dramatic characters secure their legendary status across New Europa.

With physical evidence of Prince Maximilian's conspiracy secured, the characters return to Castle Niederspitz as heroes. The coup is dismantled, Prince Maximilian is stripped of his title, and King Leopold III's crown is triumphantly secured.

The Host should present the following resolutions to conclude the characters' narratives:

Johann Adler's Reward: Having revealed his true identity to save the Princess, Johann is recognized by King Leopold for unmatched bravery. He is awarded a hereditary knighthood of Niederspitz, taking a massive, historic step toward proving himself worthy of Princess Adelheid's hand in marriage.

Bramble's Renown: For his miraculous, midnight construction of the race-winning steam-engine, Bramble is awarded the Grand Cross of alpine engineering. The legendary feat earns him the widespread renown required to finally claim his true, honorable dwarven master-name.

Graf Heinrich's Honor: By saving the princess Heinrich protects the honor of his homeland. Though his financial debts might remain a lingering shadow for future campaigns, he returns to Munich with an unblemished reputation and the personal gratitude of King Ludwig II.

Charlotte von Winter's Standing: Her crucial role in the rescue earns her the personal gratitude of the royal family. She secures her standing as a genuine heroine of the court, granting her an official pardon for past Vienna indiscretions and a clean slate among New Europa's high society.

Klara Edelstein's Redemption: By selflessly risking her life to aid Johann and Adelheid, Klara's spiritual burden is lifted. The dark occult curse that has long plagued her sensitivity is finally broken, replaced by a profound, peaceful clarity.

Going Off the Rails: Failing the Dawn Deadline

If the characters are delayed on the mountain pass and fail to reach Castle Niederspitz before the 06:45 dawn deadline, the political landscape shifts dramatically. King Leopold, believing his daughter's life is forfeit and facing relentless psychological pressure, formally signs the instruments of abdication. Prince Maximilian seizes the throne in a bloodless administrative victory, and royal heralds immediately announce the new regime.

However, when the heroes arrive shortly afterward with Princess Adelheid safe and sound, Prince Maximilian's ambitions are fully satisfied by possessing the crown, and he wishes to avoid a bloody civil war or international scandal. Rather than imprisoning his family, the newly crowned King Maximilian offers a pragmatic compromise: he permits Leopold and Princess Adelheid to leave the country unharmed, provided they go into immediate exile. The dramatic characters are permitted to accompany them, escorting the deposed king and the princess safely across the border to Bavaria, turning a failed deadline into a bittersweet escape and setting the stage for future campaigns.

Appendix I: Background material

The Kingdom of Niederspitz



Population: About 45,000 ● **Government:** Monarchy ● **Alliances:** None ● **Enemies:** None ● **Position:** A highly strategic mountain nation perched at the literal gateway of New Europa

The Kingdom of Niederspitz, one of Europe's most critical alpine nations, is a land of sheer cliff faces, roaring meltwater torrents, and immense political importance. Known as the Garrison of the Alps, Niederspitz is characterized by its balance in all things, tradition and progress, rural isolation and courtly sophistication, defensive security and open diplomacy.

The Kingdom of Niederspitz has an estimated population of approximately 45,000, with the vast majority living in fortified valley towns. Niederspitz-Stadt, the nation's largest city with around 12,000 residents, serves as Niederspitz's industrial and diplomatic epicenter, resting right beneath the shadow of the royal castle.

Under King Leopold III's reign, Niederspitz has gained a reputation for its brilliant international diplomacy, with the capital emerging as a neutral hub for treaties and negotiations. One of the most prominent figures in this political balancing act is Chancellor von Richter, whose grand railway networks and masterly pass control have solidified Niederspitz as a small but strategic power. However, the nation faces growing uncertainty due to its inescapable need to find a permanent ally.

King Leopold III is known to favor traditional, peaceful diplomacy, a policy that has successfully kept the kingdom safe for years. Though determined to maintain neutrality, the king is under pressure from those who believe the state must secure a definitive alliance. Speculation about his younger brother, Prince Maximilian, potentially seizing political control is growing, creating tension within the royal court. Prince Maximilian, known for his aggressive militaristic outlook, contrasts sharply with Leopold's diplomatic policies, causing unease among the king's advisors and the broader political sphere.

Princess Adelheid, King Leopold III's daughter and a brilliant diplomat in her own right, has reached the age of marriage. Working from her private salons in Castle Niederspitz, Adelheid continues to court suitors from various nations, knowing her hand is the key to her country's future. Her upcoming union inspires both hope and anxiety, as the sovereign she marries will undoubtedly determine which foreign empire Niederspitz aligns with.

The political deadlock between King Leopold's peaceful diplomacy and Prince Maximilian's military faction has created an atmosphere of uncertainty both at court and among the people. Whispers suggest that some in the court are already preparing for Maximilian's rise, while others cling to the hope of a peaceful marriage treaty under King Leopold. At the same time, there is a sense that Niederspitz stands on a precipice between stability and a violent revolution, its future shaped by Princess Adelheid's choice and the fate of its royal family.

The Kingdom of Sweden



Population: About 4.3 million ● **Government:** Monarchy ● **Alliances:** Britain, Prussia ● **Enemies:** Russia ● **Position:** A nation in the north that tries to be balanced in everything

The Kingdom of Sweden, one of Europe's northernmost nations, is a land of vast forests, rich iron ore deposits, and constant technological innovation. Known as the *Land of Lagom*, Sweden is characterized by its balance in all things, tradition and progress, rural and urban life, simplicity and sophistication.

The Kingdom of Sweden has an estimated population of approximately 4.3 million, with the majority living in rural areas. Stockholm, the nation's largest city with around 150,000 residents, serves as Sweden's industrial and cultural epicenter.

Under King Karl XV's reign, Sweden has gained a reputation for its scientific advancements, with Stockholm emerging as a hub for experimentation and development. One of the most prominent figures in this transformation is Alfred Nobel, whose invention of dynamite has solidified Sweden as a technological power. However, the nation faces growing uncertainty due to the king's declining health.

King Karl XV is rumored to suffer from intestinal tuberculosis, a painful and chronic illness that has severely weakened him over the past year. Though determined to rule, the king is often confined to his bed, unable to fulfill his royal duties. Speculation about his younger brother, Prince Oscar, potentially taking the throne is growing, creating tension within the royal court. Prince Oscar, known for his conservative outlook, contrasts sharply with Karl XV's more liberal policies, causing unease among the king's advisors and the broader political sphere.

On the international stage, Sweden maintains strong ties with Great Britain and Prussia, sharing mutual interests in technological innovation and trade. However, relations with Russia remain tense due to historical conflicts and concerns over Russian expansionism.

Alfred Nobel, a brilliant chemist and inventor, has revolutionized industry with his invention of dynamite. Working from his laboratory in Stockholm, Nobel continues to explore groundbreaking projects, including an enigmatic energy technology that some believe could rival steam power. His work inspires both admiration and concern, as dynamite's destructive potential has already sparked debates about its use.

The king's intestinal tuberculosis and Prince Oscar's potential succession have created an atmosphere of uncertainty both at court and among the people. Whispers suggest that some in the court are already preparing for Oscar's reign, while others cling to the hope of a miraculous recovery for Karl XV. At the same time, there is a sense that Sweden stands on a precipice between tradition and modernity, its future shaped by Alfred Nobel's inventions and the fate of its royal family.

Appendix II: Dramatic Characters

Graf Heinrich von Oberried

You are Graf Heinrich von Oberried, a Bavarian nobleman, officer, and gentleman, raised in a world of honor, duty, and tradition. You wear a uniform as naturally as a tailored coat, and you move with equal confidence on the field of battle and in the ballroom. People are drawn to your charm and steady composure, and few doubt your courage when danger appears.

Yet beneath your noble exterior lies a heavy burden. A series of unfortunate investments has left you deeply in debt, and the security of your family's name is no longer what it once was. This expedition to Niederspitz is therefore more than an adventure, it is a chance to restore your reputation and secure your future. Matters have grown more complicated after a discreet Swedish emissary suggested that your financial troubles might quietly disappear should Sweden happen to emerge victorious from the competition.

You believe in honor, loyalty, and the principle that a gentleman keeps his word. Still, you are no fool; the courts of Europe are filled with intrigue, and a man must sometimes play the game as skillfully as he wields his sword.

Within the team you are the natural leader, the one others look to when decisions must be made. Whether facing rivals on the contest grounds, in the salons of the court, or at dawn with pistols or blades, you intend to conduct yourself as an Oberried always has: with head held high, courage in your heart, and the honor of Bavaria always in mind.

Personality: Charismatic, Calculating and Adventurous
Social Goal: You aim to restore your reputation and secure your financial future.
Professional Goal: You intend to lead the team to victory in the race.
Romantic Goal: You seek a love that is genuine and untainted by politics or duty.

Abilities:
Charisma ♥ (Good, +6),
Courage ♥ (Good, +6),
Exchequer ♠ (Poor, +2),
Fencing ♣ (Great, +8),
Marksmanship ♣ (Good, +6),
Social Graces ♠ (Good, +6)

Notable Possessions: Dueling sabre (Harm Rank C), .455 Webley Mark 1 (Range 40/150, Load 6, Harm Rank D), Officer's uniform, Signet ring, Debt notes, Swedish emissary letter

Fräulein Klara Edelstein

You are Fräulein Klara Edelstein. Long ago you angered a powerful sorceress. Through pride, carelessness, or cruel honesty, you ruined her love and she answered with a curse. Since that day you have not aged, and you cannot find love for yourself until you have truly helped another person find their own.

Years have passed. Friends have grown older while you remain the same. Admirers drift away for reasons neither they nor you can explain. To understand your fate you have studied magic wherever you could find it: old grimoires, wandering mages, and whispered lore, yet the curse still binds you.

You are intelligent, perceptive, and difficult to deceive. Your sharp tongue and cool composure keep most people at a distance, and many mistake your cynicism for cruelty. In truth, long years of solitude have simply taught you caution.

Within the Bavarian team you serve as an adviser, observer, and discreet problem-solver, the one who notices the details others miss and quietly steers events when necessary. However, since arriving in Niederspitz, you have noticed a series of ominous details that give you a strong gut feeling that a deeper conspiracy is taking shape behind the scenes. Niederspitz, with its contests, romances, and courtly intrigues, may be exactly the sort of place where hearts become entangled. Whether you admit it or not, you have begun to wonder if this journey might finally offer a chance to break the curse.

Personality: Cynical, Perceptive and Reserved
Social Goal: You strive to maintain your cover and influence within elite circles.
Professional Goal: You seek to uncover the hidden conspiracy behind the race.
Romantic Goal: You must help another find true love to break your curse.

Abilities:
Comeliness ♥ (Poor, +2),
Connections ♠ (Good, +6),
Courage ♥ (Good, +6),
Education ♦ (Great, +6),
Perception ♦ (Great, +8),
Sorcery ♦ (Good, +6),
Stealth ♣ (Good, +6),
Tinkering ♦ (Poor, +2)

Noteable Possessions: Arcane notebook, Silver locket, Timeless gowns, Various bottles with poisons

Bramble

You are Bramble, a dwarf with no surname, not yet at least. Among your people, a dwarf is not born with a family name. Such things must be earned, usually through a great work of craft or invention. Until that day comes, you remain simply Bramble.

You are an inventor and engineer, a restless tinkerer who has spent years building, repairing, and improving all manner of machines, steam engines, clockwork mechanisms, experimental vehicles, and anything else with gears inside it.

Steam valves, gears, pistons, and clever mechanisms are your true language. Truth be told, you are far more comfortable in a soot-stained workshop than in a glittering ballroom, and the subtleties of courtly etiquette have never interested you much.

In the Bavarian team you serve as the chief engineer and mechanic, responsible for designing, maintaining, and improving the remarkable racing vehicle. The vehicle you have built for this grand race may well be the masterpiece that wins you the master-name you seek. If your machine performs the world may soon know you as Meister Bramble with a surname.

Yet there is more at stake. You secretly serve Bavarian intelligence, and you have been given a quiet but uncompromising mission: Prussia must not win this race, whatever it takes.

Personality: Practical, Proud and Blunt
Social Goal: You seek to earn a true dwarven master-name and never again be overlooked.
Professional Goal: To prove your machine is superior to all others, especially the Prussian.
Romantic Goal: You hope to find someone who sees the beauty in your craft.

Dwarfish Nature: Dwarfs are resistant to magick and cannot be harmed by fire. In addition, they are masters of metal. Treat Tinkering two ranks higher when working with metal.

Abilities:
Courage ♥ (Good, +6),
Education ♦ (Good, +6),
Exchequer ♠ (Great, +8),
Marksmanship ♣ (Good, +6),
Perception ♦ (Good, +6),
Physician ♦ (Poor, +2),
Sorcery ♦ (Poor, +2),
Tinkering ♦ (Good, +6) *

Notable Possessions: Compact Steam-Powered Hand Warmer, Selection of Useful Tools, .32 Beaumont-Adams Pocket Revolver (Range: 25/80, Load 5, Harm Rank C), Design notebook, Small explosive device

Baronin Charlotte von Winter

You are Baronin Charlotte von Winter. At least, that is the name you currently use. In truth you are a woman of many names and many pasts, an accomplished impostor, thief, and survivor who has spent years moving through the salons and courts of Europe under borrowed titles and carefully crafted identities. With charm, wit, and flawless manners you have convinced princes, diplomats, and financiers that you belong among them, and by the time anyone begins to doubt it, you are usually long gone.

You possess a sharp mind, a quicker tongue, and an instinctive understanding of people's weaknesses. A smile here, a well-timed compliment there, and doors that should remain closed somehow open. The only thing you need to worry about is your weakness for handsome men in uniforms, military ones in particular, they have a tendency to make your otherwise excellent judgment momentarily less reliable.

In truth, you have begun to tire of this life of deception. Years of careful work have left you with a discreet fortune, enough to retire comfortably if only you could secure the final piece: a respectable noble husband.

Your talents in diplomacy and social maneuvering have earned you an invitation to join the Bavarian team in Niederspitz, where you now play the role of refined aristocrat and political intermediary. And perhaps, if fortune is kind, somewhere among the uniforms, titles, and intrigues of the court you may finally find a future worthy of the woman you have always pretended to be.

Personality: Charming, Opportunistic and Good-Hearted
Social Goal: You aim to reinvent yourself as a legitimate aristocrat.
Professional Goal: You use your diplomatic talents to advance the team's position.
Romantic Goal: You seek a suitable noble husband (preferrably one in uniform).

Abilities:
Charisma ♥ (Good, +6),
Connections ♠ (Good, +6),
Fencing ♣ (Good, +6),
Performance ♥ (Great, +8),
Physician ♦ (Good, +6),
Exchequer ♠ (Good, +6),
Stealth ♣ (Poor, +2)

Notable Possessions: Fine wardrobe, Forged documents, Concealed fan-blade (Harm Rank B), Purse of wealth, Letters from admirers

Fräulein Johanna Albers

You are Fräulein Johanna Albers, or at least, that is the name the world now knows.

Once you were Johann Adler, a humble servant in the household of Princess Adelheid. Against all reason and expectation, you and the princess fell deeply in love across the rigid boundaries of class. When the affair was discovered, you were cast out of the kingdom in disgrace. Now you have returned.

To avoid recognition and scandal, you have assumed the identity of Johanna Albers, presenting yourself as a woman so that those who once knew Johann Adler might never suspect who you truly are.

Within the Bavarian team you serve as the vehicle's daring driver and adventurer, guiding the experimental machine across treacherous roads, mountain passes, and whatever other dangers the race may present.

Only Princess Adelheid knows the truth of who you are. She knows you have returned, and she has allowed it. You intend to prove that the love you once shared was no foolish dream. If you can win glory and honor in this race, perhaps the world will see that you are more than the servant you once were. And perhaps, at last, you may prove yourself worthy of her love.

Personality: Devoted, Vigilant, Self-sacrificing
Social Goal: You strive to earn recognition beyond your former station.
Professional Goal: You intend to prove your skill as a daring driver and adventurer.
Romantic Goal: You long to reunite openly with Princess Adelheid.

Abilities:
Athletics ♣ (Great, +8),
Courage ♥ (Great, +8),
Education ♦ (Poor, +2),
Exchequer ♠ (Poor, +2),
Fisticuffs ♣ (Good, +6),
Motoring ♣ (Good, +6),
Perception ♦ (Good, +6),
Physique ♣ (Good, +6)

Notable Possessions: Driving clothes, Token from the Princess (Locket with her miniature portrait), False papers, Knuckleduster (Harm Rank B)

Appendix III: Tables

The Ballroom Incident Table

Card	Incident	Challenge
A	The banners of the visiting delegations have been mixed up. Denmark's flag is raised instead of Sweden's.	**Education** to spot the mistake early and be able to stop it
2	Distinguished guests discover they are seated far below their rank, while minor nobles sit at the head table.	**Social Graces** to charmingly reorganize the seating on the fly
3	When an important delegation is announced, the orchestra plays the wrong national anthem using tampered sheet music.	**Perform** to grab an instrument and steer the melody back to the correct one
4	A mechanical champagne fountain suddenly overpressurizes, spraying sparkling wine across several prominent guests.	**Tinkering** to discover that it was sabotaged
5	The prizes for the upcoming race are grandly unveiled, only for the display cases to be found completely empty.	**Perception** to track down the hidden velvet bag nearby
6	The main course is served ice-cold because the steam-heated serving system was quietly sabotaged in the kitchens.	**Social Graces** to pass it off as an "exotic icy course."
7	A sabotage glamour causes ballroom illusions to turn absurd: floating pigs, dancing teapots, and nobles with donkey ears.	**Sorcery** to locate and break the concealed spell-focus hidden within the floral centerpieces.
8	The royal sommelier, paid off by Leopold, serves soured, cheap wine during King Leopold's opening toast.	**Education** to spot the swapped bottles before the royal toast is served.
9	A heavy portrait of King Leopold's ancestor crashes to the floor right behind the Bavarian team.	**Athletics** to catch the falling frame
10	A high-ranking gatekeeper under Maximillian's command covertly slipped a muscle-tremor elixir, dropping his rifle.	**Education** to identify the faint scent of belladonna on his breath and save his honor.
J	The main chandelier's primary gas valve is loosened from the basement, plunging the Great Hall into total darkness.	**Courage** to keep the aristocratic crowd from panicking.
Q	Two hired thugs disguised in Bavarian livery start a staged fistfight to portray King Leopold's allies as wild barbarians.	**Fencing** or **Fisticuffs** to quickly subdue the brawlers without creating a larger public scene.
K	A courtier loyal to Maximillian "accidentally" drops a gold watch into a foreign visitor's coat, loudly accusing them of theft.	**Charisma** to defuse the accusation calmly.
Joker	A subtle chemical agent sprayed on King Leopold's ceremonial sash causes the fabric to unravel and split during the opening dance.	**Stealth** to remove the ruined garment without drawing the hall's attention.

The Alpine Hazard Table

Card	Event / Hazard	Challenge & Consequences
A	Shifted Navigation Marker	A signpost has been tampered with. **Perception** + Handling to notice the trap in time. On a failure, the vehicle enters a crumbling pass (-1 to all driving checks for the next turn).
2	The Prussian Salvo	The Prussian steam-cannon thunders! The driver must pass a **Motoring** + Speed check to dodge. On a failure, the machine takes a direct hit: -2 Durability.
3	Scree & Loose Gravel	A sudden patch of unstable alpine scree. Requires a **Motoring** + Handling check to maintain control. On a failure, the vehicle spins out, loses ground, and all passengers must roll **Courage** to avoid Swooning.
4	Stuck in a Ditch!	The vehicle skids and gets wedged in a stone ditch. The machine stands still on the shoulder while rivals fly past. It requires a successful **Physique** check to lift it back onto the track. The scraping also inflicts -1 Durability.
5	Boiler Overheating	A pressure valve jams in the heat. A character must immediately roll **Tinkering** to vent the pressure. On a failure, a pipe bursts from the steam stress: -1 Durability and the driver is distracted (-1 to their next action).
6	Pirate Smoke-Canister Drop	A pirate airship (hired by Maximilian) drops sulfurous smoke canisters onto the track. Requires a **Perception** + Handling check to navigate blind, or the driver must brake hard and lose ground, -2 Speed on next action.
7	Crumbling Ledge	The road collapses beneath the tires! The driver must pass a **Motoring** + Speed check to gun the engine and leap across the gap. On a failure, the vehicle slams into the cliff edge on the other side: -1 Durability.
8	Fouled Burner	Poor-quality coal has clogged the burner. The engine produces only half power, pass a **Tinkering** to clean it. -2 Speed until fixed.
9	Sky-Pirate Debris Blockade	Maximilian's air pirates drop a heavy wooden cargo crate directly onto the pass ahead. The driver can steer clear with **Motoring** + Handling (failing damages the chassis: -2 Durability) or chooses to deliberately ram through it and damage the axle (-1 Durability).
10	Pirate Strafing Run	A sky-pirate ship hired by Maximilian swoops low, firing carbines from above. Passengers must use **Marksmanship** to suppress the two gunners. If not neutralized within one turn, they shoot vital components: -1 Durability.
J	Cheering Crowds	Villagers have crowded onto the road to celebrate the racers. A Charisma check to encouraging the crowd to clear a path can open a route. On a failure the vehicle will need to ram a fruit stall: -1 Durability
Q	Falling Boulders	A pirate ship hired by Maximilian fires its cannon at the cliff face above, triggering a rockfall! Every character must pass a **Perception** to duck or take Harm Rank A damage. Additionally, the driver must roll **Motoring** + Handling to swerve. If the driver fails, falling boulders smash the hood: -1 Durability.
K	Minor Injury	Flying gravel leaves a random crew member with a painful cut. A **Physician** check can bandage the wound and alleviate the pain while racing. On a failure the injured character suffers –2 on their next check due to pain and distraction.
Joker	Double Trouble	Draw two cards, these two events occur simultaneously.

Appendix IV: Handouts

NOTES

Kingdom of Niederspitz

PROGRAMME

The Grand Ball at Niederspitz Castle - 1876



Guest

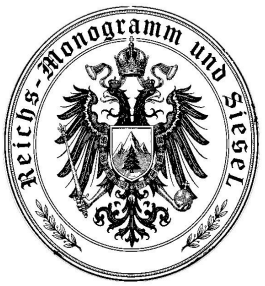
Under H.M. king Leopold III's patronage

NOTES

Kingdom of Niederspitz

PROGRAMME

The Grand Ball at Niederspitz Castle - 1876



Guest

Under H.M. king Leopold III's patronage

ORDER OF DANCES

ENGAGEMENTS

1. Grand March _____ _____
2. Quadrille _____ _____
3. Polka (Sallie Water's) _____ _____
4. Les Lanciers _____ _____
5. Waltz _____ _____

INTERMISSION

6. Quadrille _____ _____
7. Racquet (Waltz) _____ _____
8. German (Cotillion) _____ _____
9. Minuet Lanciers _____ _____
10. Waltz _____ _____

GRAND SOUPER

11. Quadrille _____ _____
12. Polka _____ _____
13. Les Lanciers _____ _____
14. Waltz _____ _____

ORDER OF DANCES

ENGAGEMENTS

1. Grand March _____ _____
2. Quadrille _____ _____
3. Polka (Sallie Water's) _____ _____
4. Les Lanciers _____ _____
5. Waltz _____ _____

INTERMISSION

6. Quadrille _____ _____
7. Racquet (Waltz) _____ _____
8. German (Cotillion) _____ _____
9. Minuet Lanciers _____ _____
10. Waltz _____ _____

GRAND SOUPER

11. Quadrille _____ _____
12. Polka _____ _____
13. Les Lanciers _____ _____
14. Waltz _____ _____