

To Dame Brionna of Stanway, Chief military adviser to the Archduke Alastair of Canberry  
From Clarence Strawberry, Director of military intelligence  
Re: Informational/Request for Assistance: Mountains of the Thirty Mages

While I was hesitant to contact you given his Grace's present activity, I nevertheless felt it important that you and he be kept informed of the goings on near the Mountains of the Thirty Mages.

Let me assure you and His Grace that the situation seems to be contained, but there are hundreds, possibly more, people not in our custody, and given the nature of the situation, we need guidance at least.

As directed, we (the military in the South) set up warnings around the border of the mountains warning the Southernns away from the territories claimed by the magi, in addition to the more grisly totems that they left for the same purpose. A very lightly staffed picket line (resources are strained) was established with patrols.

Unfortunately, a caravan of refugees, driven out by one of the remaining bands of independent slavers who sometimes raid into the new territories from the Skaven Lands (Warband Skaven), ignored the signage - or possibly could not read the signs, given how few nobles remain among the outlying communities - and crossed over the border as they fled.

A detachment that was patrolling the border area tried to intercept them and failed to reach them in time, but the band of Skaven pursuing them followed them across the border. The Corporal in charge of the detachment reports that the hills boiled with both odd hybrid creatures and mechanical ones as the inhabitants rushed to defend their territory. The slaughter of the Skaven was rapid and complete, within a very few minutes all that remained of them were some heads being mounted by flying automatons on poles. The Southernns however were not slaughtered, unless they fought. So, from what could be seen a few of the more impetuous ones died at once and the rest were... captured?

The Corporal, Corporal Aldemar Smithson, dispatched two of his men to report to the picket commander for that stretch of the border and himself advanced to the edge of the totems. He then pled with the defenders? To release the several hundred humans that they had capturing, swearing that they would not trespass again. The creatures did not seem to understand him, but did stop moving the humans away from the border. By the time Captain Eudon Holeman reached the area, the creatures had also summoned a commander, described as being a partially human but mostly mechanical hybrid that flies.

The hybrid and the Captain have been talking for over a day. It is all very polite I am told. The Captain on our side of the line, the hybrid, who asserts his? name to be Mallorus on the other. They have been taking turns having refreshments served every few hours for both of them. The

humans have been fed and given drink as well, several times, and given tents (very old tents, but solid) and blankets and even bath water.

But... they have not been released. The most difficult thing is however that the Captain is not sure whether or not the Hybrid understands his words, in any of the three languages that he speaks (Common Tradespeech, Dwarven, and a smattering of Skaven - as spoken by their Magi in Clan Skyre - the only Skaven along with their chattel who deal on a normal trade footing with us) and what the Hybrid says, those who have listened to the conversation assert, sounds like it should be Tradespeech - but yet, it isn't and it is proving incomprehensible. It is like he is speaking gibberish.

This appears to be a standoff for now. We recommend strongly against any effort to regain the prisoners by force, we believe the attempt would be highly counterproductive, but we also do not wish to leave them in such... hands. The Colonel in overall charge of maintaining the picket line is not the most imaginative man - but it is he that has actually sent most of this information to me, asking for help in finding some means to at least communicate. The advantage seems to be that the others are patient and willing to negotiate, the disadvantage is that we can't seem to figure out what they are negotiating for, or how they expect us to respond.

The amount of intelligence that we have on the Mounts is scant. I am hopeful that the body has more, but while I have a contact there, he is reticent absent a directive from the Mouth. I am sure that his Grace knows, and you as well as his closest adviser, who the Mouth is - anything that can speed up some resolution would be profoundly appreciated.

Highly classified -- Eyes ONLY - Archducal Council

Evidence also suggests that while heads were mounted on poles, many parts of Skaven bodies not particularly damaged were rapidly inserted in some sorts of caskets and hurried away. We do not know why, but suspect given some of the hybrids that it is to use them for additional hybrids, we will have to wait to see if such hybrids with Skaven parts appear.