

since no one would suspect them to be travelling under his flag. Moreover, journeying upriver would be quicker than by road and it would give the clearly exhausted PCs a chance to rest.

If the PCs agree, they can reach Altdorf before 12 midnight. Should the PCs decide to continue with their plan, they are unlikely to return to Altdorf before 2:00 AM on the morning of 11 Sommerzeit. In the second scenario, the PCs will be very tired given the long day they had rescuing the Emperor from the Imperial Palace and bringing him to his army. Their fatigue will affect them in the following manner: **WS-10, BS-10, T-1, I-5, Dex-5, Ld-5, Int-5, WP-5, and Fel-5.**

PCs intent on rescuing their companions may try to retrace their path in the hopes of sneaking back into the Imperial Palace. The PCs will find the postern gate and outlet to the Reik are now guarded by a detail of four garrison guards. The outlet to the Little Reik is still opened, but a Sewer Jack patrol of six have been given the undesirable duty of guarding the place where the city's sewer empties into the underground culvert. The PCs can either fight their way through (and chance an alarm bringing more guards) or they can turn back and try another way. The darkness would provide the PCs with enough cover to watch the city walls for a time and find a place to scale that is relatively unguarded.

If the PCs travel by boat, the guards who appear when the boat arrives at the river gate ignore them. The guards permit the boat to enter the city and dock once the messenger tells them of his mission. Two guards remain behind to check the boat for smuggled goods (and find none), while the other two escort the messenger to the Palace. The guards do nothing more than glance at and ignore the PCs.

No matter how they arrived at the streets of Altdorf, the PCs can easily make it back to the place where they first entered the sewers, assuming they can manage to avoid being found in violation of the curfew by Watch

patrols. Since the PCs did not return this way, the authorities do not know about this entrance (unless the PCs somehow left their map behind; in which case, there will be a guard detail below waiting for them).

Should the PCs have had the misfortune of being seen entering the aquifer through any of the secret doors earlier, then these doors will have been boarded up and the Palace reservoir guarded by a detail bored with their duties. Careless PCs may find themselves stumbling upon this patrol and having to fight their way to freedom: an unlikely outcome. Should the PCs have exercised caution earlier, the large room will be empty and the way clear to reach the dungeons.

The PCs will still have to exercise caution, however, as the corridor leading to the dungeons below through the Lord High Jailer's offices also ascends to the kitchens in the opposite direction. The PCs need to exercise care to avoid being discovered. As the servants above may be sleeping, the PCs must move as quietly as possible so as not to wake them. Turning towards the left from the aquifer, the corridor curves gently to the right and continues without interruption for 30 feet. It ends at a locked, oak door (**CR 5%**).

Although the Lord High Jailer is not in attendance at the ungodly hour the PCs arrive, Axel Quidde, night jailer, is using the office to catch up on some sleep. The prison guard detail is maintaining their vigil at the main entrance to the Emperor's prison since no one expects a rescue effort to come through the little-used and little-known rear. If any PC puts an ear to the door, allow them a **Listen** test for normal sounds (+10 for *Acute Hearing*) to hear Axel snoring away. The Jailer is deeply asleep and his noise



covers any lock-picking activity. Should the PCs try to break the door down, the noise will wake Axel who scrambles out of the Lord High Jailer's padded chair. Axel demands that the servant disturbing his contemplations identify himself. The PCs may play along with this opening in order to get Axel to open the door. GMs might wish to have the PC make a **Fel** test (+10 for *Acting*, +10 if the PC talking is female, +10 for *Seduction*) with additional modifiers for roleplay to succeed.

The PCs can quickly overpower Axel and will need to secure him somehow. Though he may promise to be good, Axel will try to escape at the earliest (and safest) opportunity to sound an alarm. One option is to fashion a leash around the jailer's neck, tie his hands up, and gag him

so he can take the PCs to the cells where their fellows are kept with little chance to do something he will regret. Axel is passively uncooperative initially ("Ah cannot remember any prisoner here matchin' dat description"), but several good slaps to the head or threats of bodily harm will cure him of that affliction.

Anyone handling Axel has a 10% chance of picking up some of his fleas. Infestation could periodically lessen a character's **WS** and **I** by -5 at the GM's choosing for D6 rounds.

Axel will be unable to take the PCs to von Walfen or other high-class prisoners. These individuals are kept in more posh accommodations elsewhere in the dungeon.

#### Axel Quiddle, Jailer

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	41	28	4	5	9	28	1	30	27	28	29	38	24

**Skills:** Immunity to Disease, Immunity to Poison (Manbane, Beastbane, Spider Venom), Palm Object

**Equipment:** Club, Ring of Keys, Bottle of cheap wine, and Fleas.

#### Imprisoned!

Those PCs captured in the attempt to rescue (or kidnap, from their captors' perspective) the Emperor will not have an easy time of it. They are handled very roughly and all their possessions stripped from them. With only their shirts and any underwear they may have been wearing as their apparel, the captured PCs are tossed into separate, dark cells. The temperature is quite cool, and the PCs soon find themselves shivering. For convenience sake, the PCs could be tossed into adjacent cells so they can communicate in the gloom.

Time passes, though without reference the PCs do not know how much time. At some point, four rough guards appear with the purpose to escort one of the prisoners to an appointment with the Imperial torturer. The guards are more likely to select those PCs who would be considered as easier to break: rogues, scholarly types, townsfolk, and wizards. Warriors and

Dwarfs would likely be passed by as they are perceived to be tougher targets to soften up for interrogation.

If the GM is so inclined, they could put the PC through the paces of the torture (stretched on the rack, clamp squeezing the head, or knots on a rope putting pressure on their eyes as it is tightened). Otherwise, it might be simpler to inform the PCs that everything was a blur to the pain they were feeling. The end result is the tortured PCs would have their **W** reduced to 1 or 2, coupled with a temporary reduction of their **T** by 1 and **Cl** and **WP** by 10. The wounds can be regained at the normal rate while the other three attributes can be recovered with a full day of rest in a place other than the prison cell. The GM can decide (using **WP** tests if need be) whether the PCs resisted answering the torturer's questions or blurt out all they know. Crafty (and tough) PCs might attempt to pass off half-truths and lies to minimize their discomfort.

After their session with the torturer, the exhausted PCs are (literally) tossed back into their cells with no illumination, no food, and filthy water from which to drink. Without an ability to see, the PCs are unable to discern the source of the creaking, shuffling sounds they hear. GMs should play up this aspect of the PCs' confinement.

Eventually arriving at their companions' cells, the PCs will be unable to find the imprisoned PCs' clothing or equipment as these possessions have long since been divided up by the guards who captured them and those defending the dungeons. Though Axel may try fumbling his keys in hopes the night guards will appear (unlikely as they are sleeping off the cheap wine one of them procured before coming on duty), the jailer finds the right keys in due time.

Once the comrades are free, the PCs would be wise to render Axel unconscious and toss him into one of the cells. They could then retrace their steps to get free of the Imperial dungeons. The problem for the PCs then becomes where to go with some of their number so under-dressed. Staying in the sewers is one solution, but they may be eventually caught, especially if the authorities become aware of their escape.

A more intelligent decision is to make their way past the pre-dawn Watch patrols to get to the Temple of Mórr. Priestess Inga von Rabespeicher was not yet been arrested, though she feels such is inevitable. Should the PCs arrive at the Temple, the Initiate on duty quickly awakens the Priestess and informs her of the PCs' arrival and their present condition. Priestess Inga has the Initiate fetch some Mórrian robes as she meets with them. In addition to asking the PCs about their recent activities, she informs them as to the arrests of von Walfen and the Chancellor. As dawn approaches, she tells the PCs to go to the Chapel in Morrwies at first light and hide them until she can safely summon them. She instructs the PCs to leave Altdorf and flee to Nuln if they don't hear from her by the end of the day.

In the event all the PCs were caught and imprisoned, having failed to rescue the Emperor, all is not lost. Unfortunately, the PCs will have to undergo another day of torture which could (at the GM discretion) result in some minor injuries such as dislocated fingers, broken toes, cracked teeth and unsightly bruises.

Luckily, Count Siegfried von Walfen is a very thorough man. Knowing his arrest was eminent and uncertain the PCs would undertake, much less succeed, in the task appointed, the Count had a member of the Graukappen leave Altdorf in disguise with an urgent message for Reikmarshall Helborg. In an encrypted message, the Count laid out the recent events and the Emperor's predicament, as well as anything the PCs had previously reported to Priestess Inga. The message reached the Reikmarshall in the early afternoon of 10 Sommerzeit.

### **Triumphant Return**

Emperor Karl-Franz sleeps well at Castle Walfen after a hectic day of flight from his imprisonment in the Imperial Palace. His room is well guarded and no one other than the Reikmarshall and the Emperor's new Champion are allowed to visit Karl-Franz.

The next morning, Reikmarshall Helborg assembled the knights of the Reiksgard and High Helms to form an honour guard to escort the Emperor back to Altdorf to regain his throne. If the PCs are there, they are given a prominent position among the honour guard. The Reikmarshall plans to make a big show of the strength in returning the Emperor to Altdorf. Helborg gives command of the Reikland army to Reikskapitän Baldur Klasen so that he, himself, can lead the escort on the road to Altdorf. The route the Reikmarshall chose was the one through Hartsklein, essentially following the escape route planned for the PCs.

The entourage of sixty armed men takes approximately five hours to arrive at the West Gate. A herald blows on his horn to announce the arrival of the Emperor. The guards at the gates do not challenge the entourage and open the gates to allow them entrance. As the honour guard leads the Emperor to the Imperial Palace, rumours of the

His Imperial Majesty's appearance quickly spreads across the city. Crowds quickly gather along the route, cheering a healthier-looking Emperor and his victorious Reikmarshall. PCs hiding in the city will hear the rumours, but they may not make it in time to see the Emperor enter the Palace with his escort.

The unfolding of events takes a different turn if the PCs failed to rescue the Emperor. With Count von Walfen's missive in hand, Reikmarshall Helborg takes a substantial number of his overall army and moves in a two-prong path to Altdorf. Reikskapitän Baldur Klasen was ordered to oversee the erection of defensive earthworks to protect the cannons, harquebusiers and crossbow troops. These forces, along with pikemen, Expatriate Dwarf infantry and light cavalry, are placed to repulse any possible Middenland attack.

Elite food soldiers, particularly the Reiksgards, are travelling by river under the command of Ludwig Schwarzhelm. Included among the troops are sappers who will breach and advance through the sewer outlet to the Reik. Reikmarshall Helborg leads the heavy cavalry – including the Knights of the Fiery Heart and High Helms – on the road to the West Gate of Altdorf. The Reikmarshall expects to gain entrance to the city, but is ready to fight his way in, if need be.

Whether the Emperor escaped his captivity or not, Crown Prince Wolfgang understood his dilemma. To oppose the on-coming forces could have a tragic consequence for Wolfgang's future as Elector and Grand Prince of the Reikland. He would likely be considered a traitor and Wolfgang was very familiar with the fate of traitors. In addition, the Crown Prince knew from Captain Erwin von Mühlerberg that the forces left to keep order in Altdorf were hardly capable of standing against even this small portion of the Reikland army. The Crown Prince also swept aside the recommendation of retreat advocated by the nervous Secretary Martin Fechner as it would give the impression Wolfgang had other motives for assuming the throne in place of his ailing uncle.

Helborg deploys some of his troops around the Imperial Palace and then leads the rest inside, along with the rescued Emperor. If the PCs are with the Reikmarshall, they are allowed to accompany the Emperor and his champion inside. The Crown Prince welcomes the Emperor back to his Palace, but the greeting looks very formal, even unemotional. The Emperor thanks his heir for his efforts on behalf of the Empire, but announces he is fit to return to his throne. The moment is hardly noteworthy.

If the PCs are watching the Crown Prince's aides, they notice a striking woman (the shapely, raven-haired, green-eyed Greta Cranach) near a rather plain-looking bureaucrat whom Wolfgang introduced to the Emperor as his secretary, Martin Fechner. Female PCs will notice a look from the woman that can be easily seen as contained rage. Male PCs can only spot the woman's peculiar look on a successful **Observe** test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*, +10 if PC is an Elf), but they will not know the meaning behind her expression.

Count Siegfried von Walfen is released from his cell immediately, although Chancellor Heinz remains confined. Any PCs who were imprisoned are released in the mid-afternoon, worse for the wear.

No matter their situation (part of the Emperor's escort, hiding in the city, or recently released from the dungeons) the PCs are summoned to meet Count von Walfen in one of the Palace's chambers. He thanks them for their effort on behalf of the Emperor, the Empire, and himself. The Count then tells the PCs their task is not yet done. They have proven themselves to be resourceful, cunning, strong of will, and rather unconventional. He has little doubt that they will soon be asked to risk their lives to help the Emperor overcome the war raging to the east. Until then, the Count tells the PCs they should rest at the Imperial, as lodging has been arranged at the establishment for the PCs at the Emperor's expense.

Should the PCs inquire about the Chancellor, Count von Walfen tells them that their effort helped uncover evidence of the Chancellor's schemes as well as his affiliations. He will add

that it may be some time before the Chancellor will see the light of day. Herr Heinz apparently has many questions to answer before he can receive his well-earned end. With that, the Count informs the PCs he has some work to do and excuses himself. The PCs should take this as a sign that they are dismissed.

### **Sidebar: Of Mice and Men**

As discussed in the introduction, and important aim of this adventure is to bridge the setting of WFRP version 1 with that of version 2. Thus, we rely on Count von Walfen and other good men to save the day, in case the PCs fail to fulfil the role we have given them; e.g., exposing the illegal activities of Chancellor Heinz, and successfully assisting the Emperor in his escape from the palace. However, if you as GM are willing to allow marked deviations from the official setting, interesting situations can arise if, say, Johann Heinz is not exposed. Alternatively, we can only imagine the look of the players' faces, if their PCs utterly mess up the rescue mission and watch Karl-Franz die in their arms! At the end of the day, if you as GM want to punish PCs for making bad calls along the way, you will have to incorporate such plot developments on your own.

### **Resting at the Imperial**

The innkeeper, Amschel Lenard, greets the PCs when they enter the Imperial. "Your rooms are just as you have left them, only cleaned up a bit," Amschel tells them smiling. "Here is your key, and there are some things left for you within."

If the PCs have lost equipment along the way, especially if they were taken prisoner, they will find replacements (except magical components, the PCs will have to replace these on their own) within their rooms. Should the PCs have all their possessions, there will be a fresh set of travelling clothes for them, such as boots, cloaks, etc.

In the event the PCs are nursing injuries from their imprisonment, they soon hear a knock at their door. A young, plain looking woman in

white introduces herself as Sister Eva from the nearby Hospice Priory of Shallya [location 29]. She was instructed to provide her healing skills for any PC requiring such assistance. If asked about the elderly Eva Herzberg, Sister Eva looks at the PCs quizzically. She answers there is no other Shallyan sister with that name in Altdorf. This may puzzle the PCs, but Sister Eva continues to administer healing to the injured.

### **Purple Rain in Altdorf**

The PCs may conclude that Purple Hand operations in Altdorf have been disrupted with the incarceration of the Chancellor and the imprisonment/death of Brother Dieter. In this, they are wrong. Two senior Purple Hand leaders will try to fill in the void created by recent developments: Brother Karl and Captain Erwin von Mühlerberg.

### **Into the Void**

During the events of the preceding ten days, Brother Karl has been infiltrating the Altdorf chapter of the Purple Hand in order to learn the weaknesses of their leaders. In doing so, he has come to learn more about the PCs – whose activities have especially caught his eyes if they were also involved with crushing his plans in Middenheim – and the one who resembles Kastor Lieberung.

With his own schemes coming close to realisation, Karl has taken the precaution of arranging for the PCs to be followed should they return to Altdorf after 10 Sommerzeit. Karl is content to have the PCs watched for the moment and does not intend to provoke them into moving against him. At least, not until he is ready.

In contrast, Captain Erwin von Mühlerberg comes to learn of the Purple Hand plot late. He had no idea the erstwhile Chancellor was the leader of the Altdorf cell until the Emperor inadvertently mentioned it to the Crown Prince, from whom von Mühlerberg learnt it. Late one night, von Mühlerberg steals into Heinz' cell and, after exchanging secret greeting signs and code words, learns all he can of the Purple Hand's activities from the captive. Moreover, the Crown Prince's

aide de camp will learn of the PCs' disruptive activities. Captain von Mühlerberg then silences Johann Heinz by quickly slamming his head against the wall of the cell and then breaking his neck. He quietly leaves while formulating a plan to bring the entire Altdorf chapter under his leadership.

Sister Eva takes her leave of the PCs once she has applied her healing skills (and spells if need be) to all the injured. As the time is late in the day, if not the evening, gallant PCs might decide to escort Sister Eva back to the Hospice Priory of Shallya. In doing so, the escorting PCs are spotted by a Purple Hand cultist on their way to the hospice. The cultist does not follow, but rather heads in the opposite direction from where the PCs came until he can establish a new position along their return route. The cultist only goes as far as he can reasonably expect the PCs to have travelled. On the PCs return trip, the cultist will leave his hiding place and shadow the PCs at a safe distance. The cultist has no intention of being discovered until he learns where the PCs are staying. If spotted, he slips away in another direction.

Until they are summoned, the PCs may decide to connect with those they served since their arrival in Altdorf. Movement by the PCs or the prying eyes of cult informants will eventually lead the Purple Hand to find and trail them. Thus, whether the PCs escort Sister Eva home or not, it is only a matter of time before their lodgings are discovered. The PCs may try meeting with Count von Walfen, but they will be unsuccessful since the Count has considerable unfinished business to which he attends.

Priestess Inga is another matter and she agrees to meet with the PCs. The Mórrian Priestess is more than eager to hear the PCs describe their mission from when they last left her company. If the PCs ask about the Chancellor's fate, the Priestess explains the method of interrogation often used by Imperial torturers, unless any of

the PCs suffered at their hands. She will tell them that once the former Chancellor has confessed all he knows, he will likely face a traitor's death. Given he is not of noble stock, his fate will likely be drawing and quartering. Should the PCs inquire if the Chancellor's arrest means the end of the Purple Hand, Priestess Inga replies that she thinks it unlikely unless Count von Walfen's men can get Johann Heinz to provide names.

It is also likely the PCs will remain safely at the Imperial until they are summoned. The PCs don't realise it, but they will not be called upon for a number of days. The Emperor and his advisors need to receive some intelligence in order to understand the situation in the north and east before determining their next course of action.

The PCs should feel uneasy, even though the Emperor has been restored and the Chancellor arrested. There has been no trace or rumour regarding Brother Karl and they could hardly think the Purple Hand has been destroyed. In fact, even if the PCs do not venture out, the Purple Hand will eventually track them down to the Imperial and set up surveillance. Should the PCs try to confront them directly, the cultists will slip away rather than risk capture.

If the PCs are itching to take out the Purple Hand in some fashion, they are going to have to be creative and tenacious.

### **Passing Time in Altdorf**

The following table marks the events that will take place in Altdorf and the surrounding areas during the first week that Emperor Karl-Franz I is restored to his position as Elector and Grand Prince of the Reikland. The events in *italics* represent those affairs which are occurring elsewhere. GMs should note that news of these outside endeavours take some time to reach Altdorf. In addition, the days will become hotter as a heat wave hits the city. From 14 to 18 Sommerzeit, daylight temperatures in Altdorf reach 37 degrees Celsius (nearly 100 degrees Fahrenheit) and the predawn hours only get as low as 22 Celsius (72 Fahrenheit).

Day	Events
11 Sommerzeit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crown Prince Wolfgang Holswig-Abenauer vacates position of Elector as Emperor Karl-Franz I is restored to his throne.</li> <li>• Count Siegfried von Walfen released from his imprisonment and assumes role of acting Chancellor.</li> <li>• <i>The Nordland army reaches Ferlangen and lays siege. Meanwhile, Baron Nikse leads an invasion of the Laurëlorn Forest in an attempt to reclaim his birthright.</i></li> </ul>
12 Sommerzeit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reikmarshall Helborg returns to the established line of defence.</li> <li>• <i>Anti-war rioting breaks out in Carroburg.</i></li> <li>• <i>Count von Raukov, Hauptmarschall Hertwig, and Feldmarschall Leitdorf execute a daring attack that successfully routs the Talabecland army and ends the Battle of Wolfenburg.</i></li> </ul>
13 Sommerzeit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attack by Grand Duke von Bildhofen's forces at Hochloff repulsed by Reikskapitän Klasen after several hours of bloody fighting.</li> <li>• <i>Grand Prince Hals von Tasseninck leads another part of the Ostland army northward to fight the Nordland invasion</i></li> </ul>
14 Sommerzeit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Former Chancellor Johann Heinz found dead in his cell in the Palace dungeons.</li> <li>• Baron Heinrich Todbringer secretly arrives in Altdorf for consultations with Count Siegfried von Walfen.</li> <li>• <i>In Middenheim, Ar-Ulric is knifed during a ceremony at the temple. He is severely injured but still alive. Helmut Todbringer blames Sigmarite fanatics and forcefully argues for war on the Sigmarites instead of against Ulrican allies and demands the impeachment of von Genscher.</i></li> </ul>
15 Sommerzeit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Troops from southern Reikland arrive to bolster Reikmarshall Helborg's army.</li> <li>• <i>Pressure from his staunchly Ulrican vassals force Grand Duchess Elise Krieglitz-Untermensch to interceded on behalf of Talabecland. The Grand Duchess pays for mercenary bands in the city to reinforce the armies of Talabecland to the north and south.</i></li> </ul>
16 Sommerzeit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flotilla carrying Nuln expeditionary force arrives at Altdorf with Countess Emmanuelle von Liebewitz on the lead ship. She disembarks with an escort of tall, young men and makes her way to the Imperial Palace to meet with the Emperor.</li> <li>• General von Stülpnagel then leads the Nuln force downriver to join Reikmarshall Helborg at Walfen.</li> <li>• <i>Talabeclander forces under the command of Count Helmut Feuerbach blunt the Stirland and Wissenland offence along the Old Forest Road south of the Färlic Hills.</i></li> <li>• <i>Rumours that Ar-Ulric's wounds have gangrene or some other infection is all over Middenheim.</i></li> </ul>
17 Sommerzeit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Threatened by internal dissent in Carroburg and the growing Reiklander army, Grand Duke von Bildhofen withdraws across the Reik and sends emissaries to the advancing Middenheim army to sue for a truce.</i></li> </ul>
18 Sommerzeit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ar-Ulric perishes from his wounds. Helmut Todbringer flees Middenheim before he is arrested for murder.</i></li> </ul>



### First Strike

In time the PCs find themselves being watched by someone, which should be a tip-off that they still have some unfinished business. It is almost a matter of getting to the enemy before they can get to the PCs. The PCs have two basic approaches to gather information: (1) capture a cultist or two and interrogate them or (2) gather information from less savoury elements of society.

Capturing a cultist requires a little forethought from the PCs, especially since the cultists are likely to be in teams of two or three so they can handle situations where some PCs journey elsewhere while others stay behind. The PCs could plan to take different, crossing routes from one end of Altdorf to another with the goal of getting one of their own following a cultist on the trail of another PC. The PC in the rear then could come upon the cultist from behind and take him captive. The difficult part is that the ensnaring of the cultist must take place in a location where the target cannot escape or cry for help. Furthermore, cultists are naturally wary of capture by authorities so they bolt at the first sign of trouble.

After the captive is taken, the PCs will need to take him to a location where the cultist can be safely interrogated. The PCs should realise the Imperial would not be suited for this type of operation. With the Emperor back on the throne, the gates of the city are again opened for traffic into and out of the city. Should the PCs be able to get past the guards at the gate, they can drag their captive to the surrounding forests where it would be easy to find a place to “question” the prisoner. Given the location where the PCs lodge, the South Gate would be best. If anything, there is considerably less traffic here than at the other gates. Only locals living to the south of Altdorf and between the Reik and Little Reik use this gate.

Dragging information from the cultists requires some work. Almost all are unwilling to talk until the PCs begin to apply some harsh physical treatment to the obstinate cultists. The PCs have to be careful since the cultists are trained to misdirect (lie) if their initial ploy of

denial fails. GMs will have to decide on an individual basis how long the interrogation needs to take place before the cultists have had enough.

If the captive breaks, the PCs learn that the cultists sent to watch them have little information to pass along. When a cultist is relieved by one of his fellows or leaves his post after midnight, he walks to the Necropolis [location 66] and leaves a piece of paper marked with an ‘X’ in a hole at the back of the headstone with the leering gargoyle at the far eastern edge indicating there was nothing to report. If the PCs have undertaken something of interest, the paper would be left blank and the cultist would proceed to the Drunken Bastard at the Street of a Hundred Taverns. He would wait at the table closest to the door for a contact to enter. The contact would stop by the table, scratch the bridge of his nose indicating he was a courier, and drop a note indicating where the meeting was to take place. The note would be a sketch of a tavern sign where the meeting is to be held. The cultist would wait ten minutes and then go to the meeting to report what he has learned.

Once the cultist has revealed all he knows, the PCs have little choice but to kill him. Allowing the cultist to go with a promise to disappear will only bring the PCs further grief.

The PCs may opt to do nothing more other than to take out the cultists one by one. The Purple Hand changes tactics after the seventh cultist goes missing. They will break off surveillance of the PCs’ lodgings and set up watch posts near the bridges crossing the Reik and Talabec into the East End districts. If the PCs cross into the area, then several cultists will follow them.

It is also conceivable the PCs may attempt to pass themselves off as members of the Purple Hand and attempt to follow the contact procedure detailed above. This approach works up to the point at arriving at the second tavern for the meeting. The next level in the Purple Hand expects the arriving cultist to show the secret greeting by dipping his head and touching the purple article of clothing or accessory he’s wearing. If the secret signs are not given, the contact knows the situation has been compromised.



Should the PCs succeed in extracting this information from a captive and perform it flawlessly to the contact, they will be invited by hand motion to sit. The contact nods his head without speaking as a sign the arriving cultist should report what he's seen. When the report is finished, the contact stands and tells the reporting cultist to "stay here." The contact then leaves to contact his superiors without saying another word. This is another test to determine if the process has been breached.

In the event the PCs attempt to follow, the contact takes off running in an attempt to shake the PCs off. Should the contact realise capture is inevitable, he will shout out "*Njawrr'thakh 'Lzimbarr Tzeentch*" and then ingest the contents of the vial he pulls from a pocket. The contents are a lethal dose of Nightshade.

There is a chance the PCs will come up with a creative way to capture a contact after a couple attempts at doing so. If this occurs, the PCs are likely to follow the interrogation techniques described above. Only by persistent and

prolonged application of physical abuse (the contacts are a hardier bunch than the run-of-the-mill cultists), can the PCs break them. Should the PCs succeed, they will learn that a charismatic leader has emerged to challenge the recently silenced leadership of the cult. The contact does not know the man's name, but can describe him as being around 40 years of age, of medium height and built with brown wavy hair and a Middenheim accent. **[GM Note:** given their paranoia, members of the Purple Hand rarely know the names of other members outside their own small cell.]

If the interrogation takes place after 14 Sommerzeit and before 17 Sommerzeit, the contact will also know there are rumours of a meeting taking place in the next few days. The exact date and location is unknown. If the interrogation takes place on 17 Sommerzeit, the contact knows the meeting will take place in an abandoned tenement near the centre of the Drecksack Slums [location B] after sunset. The location was selected since it is widely known that no Watch patrol walks the streets of this district or those of the Sindelfingen [location A] after sunset.

### Purple Hand Cultist

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	35	20	3	3	7	40	1	35	30	30	25	30	20

**Skills:** Concealment-Urban, Disguise, Dodge Blow, Follow Trail, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Secret Language-Guilder (Purple Hand Cult), Shadowing, Silent Move Urban

**Equipment:** Hand Weapon (Sword or Club), Leather Jack (0/1AP Body), 1 Incendiary (carried for anarchist), Clothing with some purple colour, and Purse (3 GCs, 10 shillings, 22 pennies)

### Standard Purple Hand Cultist Contact

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	35	20	3	4	7	40	1	35	32	33	31	33	25

**Skills:** Concealment-Urban, Disguise, Dodge Blow, Follow Trail, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Secret Language-Guilder (Purple Hand Cult), Shadowing, Silent Move Urban

**Equipment:** Hand Weapon (Sword or Club), Leather Jack (0/1AP Body), Clothing with some purple colour, Vial with double dosage of Nightshade, and Purse (3 GCs, 10 shillings, 22 pennies)

### Seeking Information

If the PCs have been successful in gaining information from the unsavoury elements earlier, they may try the same approach again. This is made more difficult as the mere presence of the Purple Hand is generally of little importance to the crime lords and gang leaders. As the dates get closer to the meeting

of 18 Sommerzeit, more information becomes known amongst the criminal elements. The process the PCs have to go through to gain the following information is the same one described in the earlier section **It Takes a Thief**. The GM should portion out this information as the situation and timing warrants:

Location	Gang Affiliation	Contact's Appearance	Information gathered*
Griffon's Pothole, Beasts of Myrmidia, Wayfarer's Rest	Francesco Sarducci	Swarthy type (Estalian or Tilean)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A new gang must be forming in one of the East End slums.</li> <li>Unlike the Kislevite gang there, many of the new thieves are Altdorfers.</li> <li>Something is disrupting this gang since members seem to be edgy about something.</li> <li>Rumours have it that the members of the gang will gather together to watch their bosses fight it out for control of the gang.</li> </ul>
Drunken Bastard, Knights' Hovel, the Gladiator, Cowardly Tilean	Dieter Schneider	Reiklander	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders of an East End gang are occupied in a power struggle.</li> <li>Unlike other Altdorf gangs, this one has made to no attempt to contact other gangs in the area.</li> <li>The Purples (a nickname given to the gang as each member has some article of clothing in that colour) regularly across the Reik to the western districts for some unknown purpose.</li> <li>A gathering of Purples is rumoured to be taking place in one of the squares in the Slums soon.</li> </ul>
Holy Hammer of Sigmar	Independent (supported by Vesper Klasst)	Wild-eye, drug-crazed individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>So long as the new gang forming in the slums don't cross the real power in the East End, there will be no warfare between gangs.</li> <li>Ivan Putin's Kislevite gang has had no contact with the new gang.</li> <li>The "Do Nothing" gang is an odd bunch. They haven't tried to encroach on the turf of any of the established criminal groups.</li> <li>Keep out of the Drecksack, the "Do Nothings" are gathering for some purpose in the next day or two.</li> </ul>
Boatman's Inn	Fish	River rat with Mohawk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A new gang in the East End, eh? So long as they don't hook up with the Hooks, we won't pay them any mind.</li> </ul>
Unke's Spelunke	Hooks	River rat with boathook on belt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anyone wearing purple must be a friend of the Fish, mark my words.</li> </ul>

### The Return of Doktor Fassbinder

Although the PCs think him dead, Doktor Quintus Fassbinder is very much alive and actively learning what he can about the Purple Hand. Whether the PCs have also been aggressively pursuing the Purple Hand or not, the good Doktor has the following delivered to them in the early morning of 15 Sommerzeit:

\*\*\*\*\*Handout #14\*\*\*\*\*

*Don't be fooled by the continued incarceration of the Chancellor. The Purple Hand has not been destroyed by his arrest. Already one individual, maybe two, seek to unite several large cells under his leadership. Meet me at the Hangman's Inn on Three Toll Bridge at noon.*

QF

If the PCs ask the innkeeper who delivered the note, Amschel Lenard describes the grey-haired man as being in his mid-50s and thinly-built. The man was dressed well, in a rather careless manner. He reminded Amschel of a scatter-brained doktor from the University. The PCs should not need much help to recognise the description of being that of Doktor Fassbinder.

Should the PCs depart to meet the good Doktor at the appointed time, they will have to cross Altdorf as the city bakes under a stifling heat. Metal objects will become hot to the touch and the PCs must take precautions with such objects.

Not surprisingly, markets have closed early as the heat wilts fruits and vegetables and spoils fish caught from the Reik. Many shops close their doors in order to escape the heat of the day since so few customers are willing to venture forth (this lasts for about the three hours). Even the brothels have stopped doing business during the day – which was rather slow for them anyway. The only businesses doing well are Altdorf's taverns.

Unfortunately, malicious rumours have begun to circulate about the soon-to-be scant supply of ale should the heat wave continue.

The Hangman's Tavern [location 11] is one of the establishments on Three Toll Bridge [location e], which connects Temple Street (Tempelstrasse) to Luitpoldstrasse and the Street of a Hundred Taverns. The tavern gets its name from the old practice of hanging river pirates and smugglers from the bridge. Many from the legal establishment in Altdorf frequent the Hangman's.

The Three Toll Bridge is among the safest since the City Watch heavily patrols it as well as the Emperor Karl-Franz Bridge to the north. There are also a number of shops which line the sides of Three Toll Bridge.

When the PCs arrive at the tavern, they are tired, hot, and sweaty. What's worse is a fair number of customers are likewise uncomfortable and short-tempered. The PCs will have to proceed with care because there are few things worse than foul-tempered lawyers with too much time on their hands. The common room is quite sizeable and uncommonly bright. Large windows look out towards the North River Gate and over the River Reik. Should one look out towards the left, one could see the gallows used to hang the pirates and smugglers. On the right is a bar behind which the tall, rather imposing barkeep plies his trade.

Kurt Mengs is a former Imperial executioner and torturer who decided – with little argument from his superiors – it was time for him to do something entirely different. So, he retired and used his savings to purchase this establishment from its former owner (who was ironically hung outside this tavern after being found guilty of embezzling funds when he worked at the Imperial treasury). Should the PCs ask about a thin, old man in his fifties, Kurt points to the stairs leading upwards (on the PCs' left) and instructs the PCs to go to the first room on the left at the top.

In the event the PCs want to order some ale to wash down their thirst, Kurt has the standard, watered down variety for only 1 shilling a pint (up from the usual 9 pence). He also has his own Reik Bitter for 6 shillings a pint (up from 2) and Altdorf

Gold lager for 5 shillings (up from 1). Both specialties are fairly good, but getting in shorter supply. Kurt is contemplating raising the price of these two by an additional 2 shillings each and the standard fare by another 3 pence a pint. Many of the patrons have grumbled about the prices, but not loud enough for Kurt to hear.

Following Kurt's instructions, the PCs reach the slightly ajar door. All is quiet and the PCs might suspect a trap. Should they charge into the room, a surprised Doktor Fassbinder quickly turns from the window overlooking the Reik and towards the PCs saying, "Oh my. That was a rather exaggerated entrance, don't you think? I just left the door ajar to help your way here." He then motions them to sit at the table while asking the last to enter to "please close the door behind you." On top of the table is a decanter of red wine and enough glasses for each of the PCs and Fassbinder.

The PCs are likely to start by asking Herr Doktor about the corpse in his office and the effort to fake his death. Fassbinder explains what happened (described above in Another Murder or Two) and comments that faking his death had given him some freedom of actions. The risk, of course, is any opponent may come to realise Fassbinder faked his own death.

With that out of the way, Fassbinder informs the PCs of what he has uncovered in the last few days:

- *The recent reversals in the Chancellor's fortunes have not caused any irreparable harm to the Purple Hand.*
- *A middle-aged Middenheimer man is seeking to unite the Purple Hand under his banner.*
- *A meeting is being planned for either the night of 17 or 18 Sommerzeit somewhere in the Slums.*
- *The leaders of the various cells are expected to be at the meeting.*
- *There is also rumour that someone close to the Crown Prince is also a member of the Purple Hand.*
- *The Purple Hand is very aware of the PCs and some of their recent activities.*

When he finishes, Fassbinder tells the PCs that he has done all he can to gather information on the Purple Hand's recent activities. He hopes they will follow through and crush them. If asked, Fassbinder does not have much more information to share with the PCs. He certainly hasn't heard about the murder of the Chancellor in the cells. The Imperial Palace has put a lid on this development.

Should the PCs comment about what reward they should expect by putting their lives on the line, Fassbinder looks at them startled. The Doktor has put his own life at risk with the hope he could help put someone with honour and valour – such as the PCs – in a position to rid the Empire of a canker within its heart. Fassbinder will be genuinely upset if the PCs have been looking for some monetary reward for their efforts (and he certainly doesn't have any money to offer these mercenaries).

With nothing else to offer, Fassbinder says his final good-byes to the PCs. He is taking a boat to Ubersreik since he is certain it is only a matter of time before the Purple Hand uncovers his charade and come after him. He wishes the PCs blessings from all the gods in order to protect them from whatever plans the enemies of the Empire have in store for them. Finally, Fassbinder asks the PCs to stay for a time while he quietly departs.

### **A Time to Kill**

With the information provided by the late Chancellor fresh in his mind, Captain Erwin von Mühlerberg has come to the conclusion the PCs are the single most dangerous obstacle to the success of the Purple Hand and his effort to become its new leader. To this end, von Mühlerberg moves quickly to secure the services of a sociopath assassin, Eugen Klopstock.

In the dark recesses of Altdorf's criminal world, Eugen has a reputation of a killer who prefers to kill his quarry up close. If he is hired to take out several targets, Eugen tries to isolate them in order to increase his chances for a kill. Should the quarry not co-operate to this extent, Eugen is not averse to tossing a bomb into a room to scatter the quarry or wound them enough so he can succeed at his task. Though mentally unbalanced, Eugen

is not stupid. He knows a fight with several individuals at once does not represent good odds. The assassin prefers to withdraw from a fight with the aim of returning to finish the task at a time and place of his choosing.

When the PCs return to their lodgings at the Imperial, they find the door is still locked (if the PCs have not locked their door, Amschel has undertaken that precaution for them). The PCs enter after unlocking the door and find a note placed where they could not miss it. It reads:

\*\*\*\*\*Handout #15\*\*\*\*\*

*The former Chancellor was found murdered in his cell this morning. Be on your guard. Whoever killed him might have learned about your activities.*

The PCs may not know what to make of the warning. Should they ask Amschel if he allowed someone else the key, the innkeeper becomes offended by the suggestion. “Certainly not,” he thunders. “This establishment provides itself on looking after our customers. I can assure you no one asked for, much less obtained, a key to your rooms.”

While the PCs may not know who sent the warning, it could not arrive soon enough.

Near midnight of a very warm night on 15 Sommerzeit, Eugen has found a perch near the Imperial where he can watch the PCs through the window of their room. PCs with the Sixth Sense skill can feel they are being watched from outside, but not from where. Any PC who tries to close the shutters becomes a target for the assassin’s crossbow. The tip of the bolt is not poisoned at this stage since Eugen wants to get a look at how the PCs react to crisis. Eugen does not expect to get lucky with his first shot. Should the PCs retreat, but leave the window opened, Eugen will take one more shot at the same individual. If no such shot presents itself, Eugen retreats at this time.

In the event the PCs have shuttered the window before the assassin arrives, Eugen tries another

tactic. He assumes the PCs will have set a watch, so the assassin approaches from a blind side. He will then scale the wall of the inn and slowly make his way towards the PCs’ room. If the PCs are on the top floor, Eugen quietly makes his way on the rooftop. Should the PCs lodge on any other floor, then Eugen works his way to the room above – even taking the time to slay anyone residing there. Once he gets into position, Eugen secures a bomb with a forty seconds (4 round) fuse to just above the PCs’ window. It takes Eugen about thirty seconds (3 rounds) to place the bomb and light the fuse. Once lit, Eugen moves towards the other side of the building and climbs down to the street.

Any PC awake when Eugen comes towards their room may attempt a **Listen** test for soft noises (+10 for *Acute Hearing*) to hear the soft footsteps above. A second **Listen** test for soft noises (+10 for *Acute Hearing*) can be attempted in order to take notice of Eugen setting the bomb up and lighting the fuse. A third and final **Listen** test for soft noises (+10 for *Acute Hearing*) can be tried to hear Eugen retreat from the bomb as well as the hissing sound of the fuse burning down. Eugen will then scamper to a place where he can observe the exploding bomb as well as its effect on the PCs.

The resulting blast covers an area with a radius of 8 yards. The walls (**T6**) and ceiling (**T7**) offer the PCs some protection from the blast and are unhurt (other than the ringing in their ears, **Listen** tests have a modifier of –20 for the next 2D6+4 turns). In contrast, those within three feet of the windows receive D3 **S3** hits from the shattered shutters.

As the PCs recover from the blast, D3 Watch patrols converge at the scene and arrive within 2D6+2 rounds. If he can, Eugen will try to pick off a badly wounded PC with his crossbow. Otherwise, he shoots at the most vulnerable target before retreating into the shadows. If he can, Eugen will silently move to another vantage point to watch what happens next.

If the PCs wait around, the Watch accost them looking for answers to their many questions. A large crowd of on-lookers, many in their nightshirts, gather to learn what is transpiring. Many whisper that the bombing is clearly the work of Ulricans. Meanwhile, the lodgers at the



Imperial are filing out of the inn with their possessions. No matter what they have to pay, they plan to find accommodations elsewhere. Several are wounded by the blast while others look dazed. Amschel is beside himself, shocked at his misfortune. As he looks at the damage, the innkeeper realises the explosion was near the PCs' room. His anger growing, Amschel curtly tells the PCs he can no longer allow them to stay.

The Watch offers the PCs a stay at the Barracks so long as they cooperate. This is not a long-term solution, but it will give the PCs a safe place to consider what this event portends.

Should a PC with *Night Vision* spot Eugen moving in the shadows by successfully passing an **Observe** test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*, +10 for *Sixth Sense*), the PCs can give chase in an attempt to engage the assassin. If they do so in front of the Watch, they will be commanded to halt and return for questioning. With so much to do, the Watch will not move against the PCs should they choose to ignore the Watch's command and race after some unseen assailant

Recognising the PCs intent to confront him, Eugen takes off in a seemingly haphazard path

through the narrow alley and streets of the Oberhausen and Süderich districts. He will ascend to the rooftops in order to separate the PCs in pursuit. Should one or two climb after Eugen using *Scale Sheer Surface*, the assassin leads them across the rooftops to a point where their fellows on the ground cannot assist them. Eugen then turns on the pursuers and tries to kill them in accordance to his contract. If the fight goes against him, Eugen will run again.

Eugen's goal is to eventually lead the PCs across the Reik and to the Reikerbahn district, his home turf. The number of dark alleys and narrow streets in the district will allow him to travel rooftop to rooftop, putting distance between himself and those on the ground. His familiarity would also allow him to double back on his pursuers so he can set up ambushes to weed out his opponents.

Eugen will continue this game until the first light of dawn, unless he kills the PCs or they him. When light shows in the East, heralding sunrise, Eugen slips away back to his lodging near the Altdorf Sanatorium [location 65]. If allowed to withdraw, Eugen will sleep until late afternoon and then start to hunt the PCs a few hours before dusk. Eugen only attacks at night when he can take advantage of the shadows.

#### **Eugen Klopstock, Assassin for Hire**

Eugen is a psychopath and member of the Kháinite Cult of the Red Death. He is a firm believer in looking into the eyes of those he murders before mutilating the victim's corpse, including cutting out its eyes. Eugen will continue after his intended victim if he is unsuccessful at killing the target. If there is more than one target, Eugen will take them out one by one. Alternatively, he might get them at one go with a bomb.

<b>M</b>	<b>WS</b>	<b>BS</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Dex</b>	<b>Ld</b>	<b>Int</b>	<b>Cl</b>	<b>WP</b>	<b>Fel</b>
4	67	64	4	5	13	64	4	63	49	55	56	54	45

**Skills:** Acrobatics, Concealment-Rural, Concealment-Urban, Disguise, Follow Trail, Marksmanship (Crossbow), Night Vision, Prepare Poison, Scale Sheer Surface, Shadowing, Silent Move Rural, Silent Move Urban, Sixth Sense, Specialist Weapon-Bomb, Specialist Weapon- Fist, Specialist Weapon- Incendiary, Specialist Weapon- Parrying, Specialist Weapon- Throwing Knife, Strike Mighty Blow

**Equipment:** Sword, Mail Shirt (1AP body) under black tunic, Crossbow (R 32/64/300, ES4, 1 rd to load, 1 rd to fire) with ammunition, 4 Throwing Knives (R 4/8/20, ES C), Garrote, 4 Bombs (R 2/6/10, ES 6), 4 Incendiaries (R 2/6/10, ES Fire), Grappling Hook and 10 yards of rope, Five Dosages of Poisonous Paste (Adder Root, **WFRP**, page 82)

## Had Enough

No matter how the PCs spent the night of 15 Sommerzeit, they should return to the Imperial to pick through the destruction to find anything they might have lost before noon. The day is scorching hot, so it's unlikely Amschel will get any help repairing his inn until late in the afternoon and morning. It is unlikely he will greet the PCs.

Theobald Haushofer is standing in the shade nearby, avoiding the rays of the hot sun for as long as he can. He was been instructed to wait for the PCs to return and escort them to the Harbourmaster (Hafenmeisterei) [location 50] in the Docks district. Theobald leads the PCs across Three Toll Bridge to their destination. The River Patrol Barracks are located on the first floor, which provides some security for the Lord Harbourmaster. The office of Minister Count Siegfried von Walfen, the head of the Imperial River Patrol (covering the rivers within the Reikland), is located on the east side facing the confluence of the Rivers Reik and Talabec.

Upon reaching von Walfen's office, Theobald knocks three times before opening the door and showing the PCs in. The elderly gentleman then closes the door and departs. Count von Walfen closes the ledger he had been reviewing when the PCs entered and motions them to be seated. There are three chairs and a sofa in the office. The Count sits behind his desk. A map of the Reikland hangs from the wall at the back of von Walfen.

While he periodically scans the scene outside his window, Count von Walfen politely greets the PCs, commenting on the beastly heat wave. After the courtesies have been dispensed, the Count asks the PCs about their activities since they last met. In turn, the Count answers most of the questions the PCs raise in the most general of terms. Von Walfen will tell them the Emperor's health is improving and His Imperial Majesty will soon turn his attention to the war.

PCs who pass an **Observe**–10 test note the Count surreptitiously nods his head on his last glance out the window.

"Now the person observing our conversation from the outside has been removed, allow me to cut to the chase," Count von Walfen comments. He tells the PCs:

- *The Chancellor was murdered in his cell sometime during the night of 13 Sommerzeit.*
- *The manner of his death indicates someone wanted him silent before he could reveal more information to the Imperial interrogators.*
- *The Chancellor did confess to being a member of the Purple Hand, a revelation made obvious by the tattoo he had on his torso.*
- *The Chancellor did confess to his role in the scheme to poison the Emperor.*
- *Up to his death, the Chancellor refused to name any co-conspirators.*
- *The Chancellor claimed to not have known of anyone masquerading as the Sigmarite priest named "Brother Karl." [GM Note: if the PCs did not communicate this to Priestess Inga, Count von Walfen got this information from those that tortured Gustav Fokker].*
- *The Chancellor's murderer is likely to either be a member of the Imperial Court or someone in the Crown Prince's entourage.*
- *Last night's bombing at the Imperial was the work of an assassin, most likely hired by the person who killed the Chancellor.*
- *There are rumours of a gathering for the night of 18 Sommerzeit somewhere in the East End districts. The Count wants the PCs there to observe, and disrupt, whatever activities are being undertaken.*
- *If possible, Count von Walfen wants the PCs to arrest the ringleaders using the authority granted by their charter to the Temple of Mórr. This has been cleared with Priestess Inga.*
- *The Count will have other men there, but none are as "skilled" in what may be required as the PCs.*
- *The Count will not bring in any other groups – such as Knights, Garrison, or Watch – for fear enemies of the Empire might sense the ambush and scatter.*



Once Count von Walfen has laid this out to the PCs, he will answer whatever questions they have. He cannot elaborate much more on the information above, nor is he certain who the spy is within the Imperial Palace. Von Walfen has his suspicions, but he does not feel he is in a position to reveal these names at this time.

On the matter of the assassin, Count von Walfen asks the PCs to explain the attempt on their lives in detail. He is eager to learn of the killer's method of operation as the information could help identify the assassin. If need be, the Count reveals many of the assassins operating in Altdorf have certain methods they employ in dispatching their targets. His organisation is acquainted with most of these people and, when the need arises, employs certain individuals for specific tasks. Given the information the PCs can impart, Count von Walfen is certain his organisation can put a name to the assassin. He tells the PCs to meet him in front of the Royal Conservatory [location 25] in Oberhausen two hours before dusk.

Before the PCs depart, Count von Walfen tells them the Emperor has another task for the PCs. The details are still being debated, so nothing is final as yet. The Count expects there will be something breaking by 20 Sommerzeit.

The PCs have some time to kill before meeting Count von Walfen later in the day. As they walk the streets of Altdorf, they can see tempers are running short in the heat. They can see the commotion of people arguing and a few fights, especially along the Docks. There are no stevedores working as few ships are making port during this part of the day.

At some point in their travels, any PC with *Sixth Sense* realises the group is being followed again. About 20 yards behind them and off to a side, two men from the poor class are trailing the PCs. Should the PCs make any motion towards them, the two break off and retreat down another street or back in the opposite direction. The two cultists have no intention of getting caught and questioned. They were simply told to follow the PCs for a few hours and then return to the Boatman's Inn to report what they saw.

Should the PCs seek out Priestess Inga, they will find her preparing to leave Altdorf. If asked why, the Priestess informs the PCs she has received word of possible acts of Necromancy in the eastern Stirland. Given the Emperor is safe and Count von Walfen has returned to his role in the Council of State, it is time for Priestess Inga to perform her duty as the Indagatrix Grandis of the High and Chivalric Order of Deserved Rest. Priestess Inga profusely thanks the PCs for all they have done for the Empire. She tells the PCs she hopes that their paths cross again in the future and wishes them well.

At the appointed time, the PCs should make their way to the Royal Conservatory. When they get there, they will see Count von Walfen surrounded by several bodyguards. As the PCs approach, one of these men cut them off. He informs them in a loud voice that the Count is a busy man and they should make an appointment if they have business with him. In a quiet voice, the man adds, "The man you want is Eugen Klopstock, an assassin who lives near the Altdorf Sanatorium. If you don't find him first, he will keep after you until you are all dead." Finally, the man adds loudly, "So off with you then."

In addition to now knowing the assassin's name, the PCs know where they can find the killer and that he will come after them if they do nothing more. The PCs can either set their own ambush or take the fight to the assassin. No matter what the PCs do, Eugen will find them in about an hour or two later.

Eugen is a cagey hunter. The PCs will have to be very crafty to catch him in any ambush since Eugen is very good at detecting any such trap. The encounter will most likely be a repeat of the running battle of the previous night. If he can, Eugen wants to finish what he started the night before. The PCs also need to finish this confrontation so they can get on with their lives.

### **Altdorf Burning**

Should the PCs investigate the East End districts on the night of 17 Sommerzeit, they will find nothing other than the typical day-to-day squalor of the area. There is, of course, the problem with Eugen Klopstock if he has not yet been killed by the PCs.

The day of 18 Sommerzeit starts off ominously enough. Nearly a week of extremely hot weather has created a dangerous situation in Altdorf. Tempers are running very short, and the ale has begun to run out. By mid-afternoon, several brawls in taverns have grown into rioting across the Imperial capital. A number of people die in these riots, especially when the ill tempered Watch show up and attempt to quell the unrest by clubbing without restraint anyone involved. The authorities then call out the Garrison and a number of Knights to re-establish order. Once again, town criers proclaim a curfew from dusk-to-dawn has been imposed.

In fact, the curfew is only enforced in the districts north of the Talabec and west of the Reik. The Watch generally avoids the East End districts at night. If there is any “security” in these areas, it is what the various gangs provide. Should the PCs wait until after dusk to make their way to the East End districts, they will have to get past a Watch post established at the far end of the Sigmar and Mourners’ Bridges. A simple bribe of 1 GC per Watchman (there are four at each post) will be enough to secure passage to the rundown districts. The PCs can also gain free passage should they present their warrant from the Temple of Mórr. Furthermore, waiting until the Watch post is operating has the added benefit of freeing the PCs from the low-ranking Purple Hand cultists following them.

Searching the area to find the likely meeting place of the Purple Hand would take quite a while without some help. The taverns in the East End will easily name the Drecksack Slums as the least patrolled and most degenerated of the districts. The free use of bribes (no more than a couple of shillings lest the PCs want to be seen as targets for robbery) will reveal that strangers have been seen around the central platz of the district. The PCs can learn there are several large, empty buildings within which squatters live. These buildings are simple shells with holes in the walls and roof.

As the PCs enter the Slums, they may wish to exercise more caution. The low-ranking members of the Purple Hand have not been

summoned to the meeting. The contacts and leaders of the three Ordos (each bringing a small group of bodyguards) have been called to attend this unusual meeting in order to address the recent troubles which have fallen upon the cult. After his interview with Heinz, von Mühlerberg has made contact with other members of the Altdorf chapter, and has also decided to attend. All in all, roughly 60 people, have shown up. There are other eyes watching from a safe distance, notably those from the local Kislevite and Imperial gangs.

The GM might want to add some encounters as a means to convey the dangers of the Drecksack Slums. As the PCs continue on their way to the Purple Hand meeting, any with *Sixth Sense* can feel the eyes of the Slums denizens on them. Some larger groups of thugs (roughly 2D6+6 in number) might decide robbery is an acceptable risk if the PCs have any outward signs of wealth (good quality clothing, silk shirts or dresses, jewellery, etc.).

Beggars with fleas and lice might also try their luck begging the PCs for coins or drink. Should the PCs give out a copper or two, other beggars will give it a go. If the PCs foolishly give shillings or (worse yet) gold crowns, they will be instantly accosted by 4D6+4 beggars also looking for handouts. Among this group of beggars will be 1D3 thieves (pickpockets) using the commotion as cover to rob the PCs of their purses and other easily concealable valuables. In the event the PCs find themselves in the presence of groping beggars, there is a 10% chance that they will become infested with fleas, lice, or both.

Another possible encounter could be a situation where a young man decides he has the skill to take down one of the “high and mighty snobs” from the better parts of the city in a duel. The aggressor might be doing this to impress a local gang (or a woman he fancies) of his fighting prowess or simply because he imbibed in too much cheap wine and spirits (or is high from drugs). It could also be the young man suffers from some delusion, believes the PC to be someone who shamed him in some obscure fashion, and his “honour” now demands satisfaction.

Eventually, the PCs find the gathering is located in a run-down, hollowed-out tenement at the

southern end of the Dreckplatz. A number of the bodyguards have been placed in groups of three to keep guard on the approaches to the gathering. The guards will tug on their chin and point to their left palm with the little finger of the right hand as a signal for those approaching to give the proper countersign to pass. The proper response is for those approaching to rub their right ear with the open left palm and point to the location of their Purple Hand tattoo with their right middle finger. If still suspicious, the guards may require the approaching individual to show his tattoo. If the proper countersign is not given, the guards will try one more time before raising the alarm. The PCs will have to be quick to silence the guards. An alarm does not cause the cultists to scatter at first, but send a larger guard detail to handle the situation. The cult expects trouble from local gangs, not authorities bent on the cult's destruction. Once they get past the guards, the PCs should watch from the shadows and keep their faces hidden since they could well be recognised by any one of the people here.

Shortly after the PCs have positioned themselves, there is a commotion near the adjacent corner of the building. Captain Erwin von Mühlerberg and six of his men, all wearing purple armbands, make their entrance. Before the PCs could move in direction, a man stands up on a table at the far end and calls for order. If the GM has chosen so, any PC who was in Middenheim during the events in **Power Behind the Throne** will recognise the man as the erstwhile Law Lord, Karl-Heinz Wasmeier. Otherwise, the looks of Dr Karl Beier will now have settled in the PCs' minds.

With the audience's attention, Brother Karl tells them the Great Mutator has seen fit to have the highest-ranking member of the cult fall into the hands of the enemy. He continues to say this is the sign from the Changer of the Ways that new leadership is necessary to bring about the Time of Changes. The crowd is uneasy and many voices can be heard talking to one another. At this point, Captain von Mühlerberg raises his voice questioning why an outsider should be agitating for the leadership

of the Purple Hand. Brother Karl counters that, while the previous leaders plotted against the Imperial powers, they have failed to see their schemes reach fruition. In contrast, Brother Karl succeeded in striking a blow against the hated Church of Sigmar with the assassination of the Grand Theogonist.

Captain von Mühlerberg grins broadly. In a loud voice, von Mühlerberg states that turning Brother Karl in to the authorities would certainly cement his position with the Crown Prince, if not the Emperor, and best position him to achieve the Time of Changes rather than a Middenheimer who can only imitate a Sigmarite priest. Some of the cultists cheer the Reikland captain's reasoning while others jeer. For a moment, the two would-be leaders stare at one another. The tension rises during the stalemate. Then, Captain von Mühlerberg motions his men to arrest Brother Karl.

To make matters worse, while the PCs' attention has been drawn to the spectacle unfolding before them, a couple of the cultists nearby have noticed the PCs. One of these cultists shouts out, "Kastor Lieberung is here!" Should the PC resembling Kastor not be present, the PC will cry out that accomplices of Herr Lieberung are present.

The meeting erupts into chaos. Brother Karl yells above the noise of the surging crowd, "Let me show you all how Lord Tzeentch deals with spies and usurpers in his midst! Njawrr'thakh 'Lzimbar Tzeentch!" At that, eight Flamers appear and begin their attack, four against von Mühlerberg and his men and the rest against the PCs. A number of cultists also join the fight, which keeps the PCs from closing to engage Brother Karl.

One of the major complications in this fight is that the heat wave left Altdorf a tinderbox. With flames shooting all over, the building easily catches fire, as do some of the panicked on-lookers. Fighting against the Flamers and the more bloodthirsty cultists, the PCs fail to see some of those cultists aflame running out of the building in blind fear. In their fright, these cultists spread the fire to other dried, close-packed buildings. Soon, the entire Slums are in flames.

Although Brother Karl has disappeared in the confusion, Captain Erwin von Mühlerberg is another matter. Once the “Kastor Lieberung” is identified, von Mühlerberg is anxious to be rid of the PCs, seemingly unconcerned about the fire around him. He redirects his men and other nearby cultists to dispose of the “Sigmarite interlopers” who have interfered with the schemes of the Purple Hand for too long. The Captain stands back to assess the PCs’ fighting ability before he personally wades in. The PCs have a choice to flee from or fight within the burning building. The fight only lasts for 3 rounds before a large section of burning roof falls killing a number of the Purple Hand cultists fighting the PCs. The PCs should make **Listen** tests for normal noise (+10 for *Acute Hearing*) to hear the roof give way. Those who fail or do not get the test must make an **I** test to leap out of the way of the falling roof. A failed roll of 30 or less means that the PC takes one **S6** hit. Failure of 30 or more points results in 1D3 **S6** hits. This burning section of ceiling separates the PCs from Captain Erwin von Mühlerberg and what’s left of his men.

Cut off from the fighting, Captain Erwin von Mühlerberg uses the opportunity to escape the fire – and Altdorf – with as many of his men as he can. He realises it does not serve the Great Mutator’s will for him to stay and suffer a martyr’s death. Von Mühlerberg is certain the Changer of the Ways will grant him another opportunity to wreck his vengeance on the PCs.

In the heat of the fighting, any PC may make an **Observe** test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*) to notice other buildings outside are on fire. The PCs should realise that, if they do not make a move soon, they themselves might perish in the fire. Other PCs may make a **Listen** test for normal sounds (+10 for *Acute Hearing*) to hear the shouting of alarm. Flaming pieces of the roof and ash fall near the PCs. A quick look around reveals no sign of Brother Karl. The PCs have no way of knowing if he has fled or perished in the fire while struggling for supremacy of the Purple Hand.

As the PCs flee, it looks like the entire East End of Altdorf is on fire. The fire is spreading

rapidly and many people are ablaze and running for their lives -- an act that ensures the fire will spread and the victim will die from their burns. The PCs find themselves quickly surrounded by the fire and smoke. If possible, the PCs need to cover their nose and mouth with a wet cloth (there are a few wells along the way) in order to prevent smoke inhalation. The wet cloth will dry after about ten minutes and will need to be wet again. PCs without the damp cloth will have to take a **Toughness** test every turn (minute). Failure means the PC has breathed too much smoke that is represented by a reduction of the character’s **T** by 1 and **W** by 2 (no reduction due to **T** and armour). Once either characteristic reaches 0, the PC falls unconscious and will die if not helped to safety by their companions.

Other dangers for the fleeing PCs come in the form of flying embers and collapsing buildings. With the former, there is a cumulative 5% chance for every 10 minutes the PCs are within the raging inferno that their clothing will catch fire (it will take the PCs around 30-40 minutes to get clear of the fire). Falling buildings can be easily avoided if the PCs spot it by passing an **Observe**+20 test. If the PCs fail to notice the collapsing edifice, then they can jump out of the way on a successful **I** test. Should the PCs fail the augmented **Observe** test by more than 30, then they must take their **I** test with a –20 modifier. PCs failing their respective **I** test receive one **S3+D5** hit – if a natural 6 is rolled, there is a 25% chance of exceptional damage.

If Eugen Klopstock is still alive at this point, he tries to assassinate the PCs in their flight from the blaze. The assassin is oblivious to the fire, even if the PCs are not. Should the GM so choose, the position Eugen uses to fire on the PCs collapses when its supports are sufficiently weakened by the raging conflagration. Eugen could conveniently die in the fire or come back to haunt the PCs days later when he recovers from his injuries.

By the time the PCs reach the edge of the inferno, they will come across lines of people stretching from the river to a burning building passing buckets of water to throw onto an inferno while passing back empty ones to refill. The PCs are free to join these efforts or continue to move away to save themselves.

The fire runs its course throughout the night. Sometime in the hours before dawn, a cooling northwestern wind rises and arrests the spreading fire. By morning, small pockets of fire remain. The damage to the East End is extensive with a few spots, like the Morrwies district, escaping much damage. Thousands of people – many of whom are not counted in the city's official population figures – perished in the fire and many more thousands are made homeless.

The PCs should be exhausted from the flight as well as sleepless nights dealing with the assassin. To make matter worse, they have no place of lodging. The PCs have several options. They can: (1) stagger back to the Imperial and plead with Amschel to let them stay for the night (he will take pity on them); (2) they can seek and gain temporary refuge at the Temple of Mórr (the Priestess leaves the morning after the fire); or (3) they could break into Count von Walfen's unoccupied flat across the street from the Ulthuan Embassy.

**Brother Karl, Purple Hand leader (Magister Novitiae)**

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	45	42	4	5*	11	74*	1	53	58	69	56	57	38

**Skills:** Arcane Language-Magick, Cast Spells (Petty, Battle Magic 1-3), Charm, Daemon Lore, Evaluate, Herb Lore, Identify Magical Artefact, Identify Plants, Identify Undead, Law-Empire, Lightning Reflexes\*, Magic Sense, Magical Awareness, Meditation, Prepare Poison, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Ride, Rune Lore, Scroll Lore, Secret Language-Classical, Secret Language-Guilder (Purple Hand Cult), Sixth Sense, Theology, Very Resilient\*

**Magic Points:** 44

**Spells:** Petty: Curse, Gift of Tongues, Magic Alarm, Magic Flame, Magic Lock, Marsh Lights, Produce Small Animal, Reinforce Door, Remove Curse, Sounds, Zone of Cone, Zone of Silence

1st: Aura of Resistance, Cause Animosity, Fireball, Immunity from Poison, Steal Mind, Wind Blast

2nd: Cause Panic, Mystic Mist, Smash, Zone of Steadfastness

3rd: Animate Sword, Arrow Invulnerability, Magic Bridge

**Equipment:** Sword, Dagger (S-2, I+10, Parry-10), recently obtained Ring of Summon Daemonic Beasts (1 spell only), 3 vials of manbane, 2 vials of Nightshade, sling bag of magical components, and purse (28 GCs, 15 shillings, and 12 pennies).

**Captain Erwin von Mühlerberg, Purple Hand leader**

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	65	62	6	5	13	53	3	41	76	44	65	44	51

**Skills:** Consume Alcohol, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Gamble, Heraldry, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Ride-Horse, Secret Language-Battle, Secret Language-Guilder (Purple Hand Cult), Specialist Weapon- Parrying, Specialist Weapon- Two-Handed, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Strike to Stun

**Equipment:** Sword, Dagger (S-2, I+10, Parry-10), Sleeved Mail Coat (1AP body/arms/legs), purple-coloured armband, and Purse (14 GCs, 20 shillings, 12 pennies).



### Standard Purple Hand Cultist

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	35	20	3	3	7	40	1	35	30	30	25	30	20

**Skills:** Concealment-Urban, Disguise, Dodge Blow, Follow Trail, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Secret Language-Guilder (Purple Hand Cult), Shadowing, Silent Move Urban

**Equipment:** Hand Weapon (Sword or Club), Leather Jack (0/1AP Body), Clothing with some purple colour, and Purse (3 GCs, 10 shillings, 22 pennies).

### Standard Purple Hand Cultist in von Mühlerberg's entourage (Soldier)

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	45	41	3	3	9	43	2	35	40	30	25	30	20

**Skills:** Disarm, Dodge Blow, Ride-Horse, Secret Language-Battle, Secret Language-Guilder (Purple Hand Cult), Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow

**Equipment:** Sword, Dagger (**S**-2, **I**+10, **Parry**-10), Mail Shirt (1AP body), purple-coloured armband, and Purse (5 GCs, 12 shillings, 10 pennies)

### Flamers, Beasts of Tzeentch

Flamers (K'Chanu'tsani'i) have the most basic minds. They blindly follow the will of their master, whether it is a Chaos Champion who summoned them, or a Lord of Change on the battlefield. If not under any control, they will wander aimlessly, letting off goutts of flame at whatever takes their fancy.

Like Horrors, Flamers are bizarre creatures fashioned from pure Chaos, and are only semi-solid, seeming almost transparent. They travel along the ground on a soft skirt of pinkish flesh like an inverted mushroom. By taking air into this fleshy skirt, and expelling it rapidly, the Flamer can move in a series of leaps and bounds. A Flamer has no head as such, but its eyes and gaping maw lies between its long, trunk-like arms. The arms end, not in hands, but in open orifices from which spit magical flames.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
9	35	45	5	4	11	40	2	0	90	0	90	90	0

**Psychological Traits:** Flamers are immune to all *psychological* effects, except those caused by any god, Greater Daemon, Daemonic Prince, or Lesser Daemons.

**Special Rules:** Flamers may leap up to 18 yards along the ground and up to 2 yards high. A Flamer has 2 attacks, either *bite* or *flame* attacks (can be used in combination). Flamers can either use their flame attacks in hand-to-hand combat or shoot them up to 12 yards in any direction. If the flame attack hits its target, the target suffers a **S8** hits in addition to flame damage (**WFRP**, page 80). In hand-to-hand fighting, roll to hit as normal, if successful the target sustains a **S8** hits as for shooting. Flamers are immune to fire-based attacks, even those of a magical nature. In addition, they cause *Fear* in all living creatures and are subject to *Instability*.

## Last Man Standing

The PCs will need several days of rest to regain their strength from their recent ordeal. Unfortunately, they won't get it.

Although a sixth of Altdorf has been consumed by fire, there is still work to be done. The destructive war in the east and north continues unabated. The only good news is that the Middenland army is rumoured to have retired across the Reik. In the face of misery, the PCs are called to duty again.

## A Call to Duty

Wherever the exhausted PCs have found to gain their rest, they will collapse into a deep sleep. The cool wind that blew into Altdorf has dropped the temperature drastically and ended the punishing heat wave. By late afternoon, the PCs begin to stir again. They also find they have a visitor: Simon Helmholtz.

"It took us some time to find you," Simon tells the PCs. "Your presence has been requested at the Middenheim House at 10 PM. The Altdorf residence of the Todbringer family can be found on Nordreik Strasse between the Emperor Karl-Franz and Three Toll Bridges on the University side of the Reik. Amschel Lenard has been paid handsomely for the damages to his establishment. He has been requested to provide a bath for each of you and have your garments cleaned to ensure that you are presentable tonight. Please take advantage of the situation. It is quite important." Once his message is delivered, Simon departs.

When the PCs are on the streets travelling to their destination, they are likely to look around to see if they are being followed. No matter how often they glance over their shoulders or peer into shadows, the PCs will not see anyone on their trail. It may be too much to hope the fire completely destroyed the Purple Hand, but it seems to have set back their operations.

The PCs arrive at the Middenheim House and note the walls enclosing the property are eight feet in height and made of stone. A Dwarf PC will notice the wall is skilfully and solidly built, as if Dwarf-made. The opened wrought iron

gate is also crafted with the same care. As the PCs begin to enter, two Knights Panther halt them and ask the PCs to identify themselves and state their business. Should the PCs show their Knights Panther medallion, their two brethren salute them and allow them to enter. Otherwise, the PCs need to honestly answer the questions put to them.

The guard at the door asks the PCs to hand over their weapons in order to be admitted. The PCs may balk at this assuming another ambush. The guard informs them they have Baron Heinrich Todbringer's guarantee of safety should they comply. If the PCs continue to hesitate, a tall man appears behind the guard and instructs him to let them pass. "We owe these people our gratitude," the man says with a smile. "I think we can trust them to keep their weapons sheathed so long as the meal is to their liking." The man faces the PCs, "I'm Baron Heinrich Todbringer and I am glad to meet your acquaintance. Please, come in. We have much to discuss."

The PCs share a delicious meal with the Baron before retiring to the parlour. Baron Heinrich is keen to learn about the PCs' activities since leaving Middenheim. He asks few questions, preferring to intently listen to the details. Should the PCs mention the presence of Captain Erwin von Mühlerberg or Karl-Heinz Wasmeier at the gathering of the Purple Hand cult, the Baron momentarily looks at the PCs in silence before replying that he will discuss this revelation with Count von Walfen in the morning. [GM Note: In the case Brother Karl is Dr Karl Beier, the Baron will ask in detail about his looks, then ponder for a second, before obviously realising the cultist's identity. If asked about it, he will say it suffices for the PCs to know that Brother Karl used to pose as an academic in Middenheim].

When the PCs have finished, Baron Heinrich smiles broadly and tells the PCs they have performed well. He also tells the PCs their service on behalf of the Empire is still indispensable. "The Graf is coming to Altdorf for a conference with the Emperor," Baron Heinrich tells the PCs. "You have proven to be stalwart and resourceful in the face of danger and uncertainty. I need you to ride north tomorrow morning on the Altdorf-Middenheim Road. Join up with the Graf and his



escort. With the recent situation between Altdorf and Middenland, I don't think the road is terribly safe." More to the point, I think it's time the Graf is reacquainted to the Knights Panther he sent to Kislev. You can even use the opportunity to see if you can find any signs that Herr Wasmeier [Beier] escaped to the North."

The Baron waits for the PCs to agree to the task. He takes silence as an agreement and will reproach the PCs if they should refuse his request. Once the matter has been settled, the Baron thanks the PCs and suggests they part company so the PCs can be fresh in the

morning. Before they depart, the Baron hands the PCs a sealed letter address to Grandmaster Hermann von Plauen. "Take this with you. It's a letter of introduction addressed to the Grandmaster of the Knights Panther. I would say it's time you met the head of your order."

### A Short Errand

The following table marks the events which will take place across the Empire while the PCs ride to meet, then escort, the Graf of Middenheim to Altdorf. As before, the events in *italics* represent those affairs are occurring elsewhere. GMs should note news of these outside endeavours take some time to reach wherever the PCs happen to be.

Day	Events
19 Sommerzeit	<i>Rioting in Talabheim over the lack of strong support for the Ulricans force the Grand Duchess to violently put down the insurrection.</i>
20 Sommerzeit	PCs depart from Altdorf in the morning and arrive at Frederheim by late afternoon. <i>Battle of Hermsdorf ends with a Stirland/Wissenland victory and forces Talabecland to retreat to established defences near Lieske.</i>
21 Sommerzeit	PCs pass the shrine at the Shining Rock and arrive at Kutenholz by the early evening. <i>Grand Prince Hals and his Ostland army reach Ferlangen and attempt to lift the siege, but fails miserably after a bloody engagement. Not only is the relief Ostland army defeated, but Grand Prince Hals is mortally wounded by a stray arrow.</i>
22 Sommerzeit	PCs arrive at the coaching inn of the Green Dragon.
23 Sommerzeit	PCs arrive at Bröckel where they join Graf Todbringer and his entourage. <i>New Orc raids force von Raukov to send some of his army with Hertwig's Ostermarkers to the eastern frontier.</i>
24 Sommerzeit	<i>Rioting erupts in Hergig in response to bread shortages. Attempts by garrison to suppress the unrest fails and parts of the city burns.</i>
25 Sommerzeit	PCs depart Bröckel in the Graf's entourage. The group arrives at the Green Dragon by late afternoon.
26 Sommerzeit	Graf Boris and the PCs arrive at Kutenholz after a day's travel. <i>New assault on Ferlangen's east wall is repulsed. The oldest son of Baron Nikse killed and the youngest fatally wounded.</i>
27 Sommerzeit	The Graf and his entourage arrive at the Shrine of the Shining Rock for a brief visit. The group continues on to Frederheim. <i>The coffin bearing the body of Grand Prince von Tasseninck reaches Wolfenburg. By proclamation, the Ostland nobility elects Count von Raukov to succeed the late ruler as Grand Prince.</i>
28 Sommerzeit	By late afternoon, the Graf of Middenheim arrives in Altdorf. <i>Reinforced by mercenaries from Talabheim, Count Feuerbach defeats allied Stirland/Wissenland army at Lieske.</i>

### Death in the Drak Wald

The morning of 20 Sommerzeit continues the cooling trend started in the dark morning hours following the Great Altdorf Fire. The PCs will find their horses saddled and ready to go when they arrive at Alder Stables. The saddlebags include a week's worth of dried provisions.

The trip to Frederheim is rather uneventful. The countryside is rather quiet, as if the nearby warfare has not reached this part of the Reikland. Dark clouds gather in the late afternoon, suggesting rain may plague travel the following day. The PCs are able to secure rooms at the Rowan Tree Inn without difficulty. There is little traffic between Altdorf and Middenheim these days. The rain only lasts the night, but it comes down heavy. The highway north turns from a dusty road to a muddy one. Other than the occasional puddle, the road remains passable. The PCs will not find any signs that "Brother" Karl passed this way.

Shortly after the PCs have crossed the Middenland-Reikland border, they come across the large white boulder on their left with the path leading to the Shrine of the Shining Rock. The carved symbols of Ulric (on the north face) and Sigmar (on the south face) are visible. PCs looking at the trail and road will notice a number of cloven hoof prints on the ground. PCs with the *Follow Trail* skill need to study the ground for a few minutes to determine there are twelve bipedal creatures moving from the northeast to the west. The group clustered at the crossroad before moving on. The PC studying the tracks needs to pass an **Int** test to estimate that these were made approximately five hours before the PCs arrival (around dawn).

The PCs might attempt to climb a tall tree to see if there is any smoke about a half-mile to the west. PCs with the *Scale Sheer Surface* skill can make it up a forty-foot tree with little trouble, but the PCs without the skill must pass a **Dex** test for every ten feet of tree climbed. Once in position, the PCs do not see any smoke. This is not necessarily a good sign.

Should the PCs investigate the situation, the forest grows eerily quiet the closer they near

the clearing where the shrine and adjacent residential building are located. The tracks lead straight to the Shrine of the Shining Rock. The creatures spread out about ten yards from the clearing and entered it in that fashion. PCs with the *Follow Trail* skill need to pass an **Int** test to determine that the distance between the hoof prints indicates the creatures were moving slowly, presumably sneaking up on the people residing at the shrine.

If the PCs call out, there is no response. PCs find no signs of a fight unless they open the door of the domicile. All of the prints of the assailants lead to this building and with another set tracking blood departing westward. The inside is awash with blood, bone, and gore. Streak marks show that bodies had been dragged before being (from all signs) carried away. Holy symbols for the Sigmar and Ulric cults are strewn about a decapitated and mutilated head, seemingly of a priest. Other than the signs of a struggle, the rest of the interior has been left untouched.

The PCs can easily follow the tracks into the forest. Several hundred yards within the cover of the trees, the PCs come to a small clearing where the remains of the eight men from the shrine, as well as three Beastmen, are found. Many of these bear bite marks, indicating the victors feasted on their victims as well as some companions. The absence of a campfire at the site indicates the Beastmen ate their victims raw.

From this area, the hoof prints turn towards the north. PCs with the Sixth Sense skill will get the feeling hateful eyes are watching the group. The watching Beastmen make no move towards the PCs at this time. They have doubled back on their trail to rest after their meal and were starting to move when they heard the PCs. The Beastmen are waiting to see if the PCs follow their trail. Should the PCs turn and leave the area, Gurg will lead his warband northward to the village of Himbergen, approximately 12 miles northwest of Kutenholz. Along the way, he will pick up another 9 Beastmen, bringing his total strength (including himself) to 18. The plan is to pillage and burn the village while making off with enough captives to sacrifice to Tzeentch as well as fill their bellies.

If the PCs are determined to avenge those who died at the Shrine, they will push ahead. Once they are in the forest, the PCs hear a howl just before the Beastmen attack them from all sides. Due to Gurg's hatred of all who oppose him

(including the leaders of other Beastmen packs), there will be no retreat by the Beastmen. The children of Chaos will only break from combat if Gurg is killed

### Gurg, Beastman Leader

With the death of Anders Köhler, Gurg's warband has moved from the Drak Wald region south of the Schadensumpf to the Altdorf-Middenheim Road, with a higher population of potential prey.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	88	45	4	5	14	50	2	40	39	34	39	34	10

**Equipment:** Hand weapon

**Mutations:** Iron Skin (5AP all over), Manic Fighter (*Hates* any opponent within 24 yards), Weapon Master (**WS**+27\*)

### 8 Beastmen

Unless specified otherwise below, the beastmen all have goat's heads with a brownish coloured fur and the following profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	41	25	3	4	11	30	1	30	29	24	29	24	10

**Equipment:** Hand weapon, Mail Shirt (1AP body) on four beastmen from deceased templars.

#### Mutations:

Beastman #1: Beaked (A+1, *bite* attack)

Beastman #2: Face of a Flamer (A+2, bite attacks)

Beastman #3: Transparent Skin (cause fear)

Beastman #4: Hypnotic Gaze (opponent within 12 yards must pass a **WP** test to avoid eye contact. If failed, opponent rooted to spot and cannot move or perform any action).

Beastman #5: no mutation

Beastman #6: no mutation

Beastman #7: no mutation

Beastman #8: no mutation

### Escort Duty

Whether the PCs have dealt with Gurg or not, they will be able to reach Kutenholz without any further difficulty. They can stay at the Inn of the Sleeping Dryad; one of the Four Seasons-owned coaching inns along the Altdorf-Middenheim Road. The inn is rather crowded compared to the Rowan Tree Inn in Frederheim. If the PCs have

arrived injured from their battle with Gurg, there will be an herbalist in the inn who will assist wounded PCs for a small consideration. Should the PCs inquire about newly arrived visitors (other than themselves), they will learn a number of the men are members of a delegation from Carroburg who are travelling to Middenheim to petition for an audience with Graf Boris Todbringer.

Curiosity may win the day with some of the PCs. Those who may wish to learn more will need to find a way to gain the Carroburgers' confidence. One way is to buy the group of 8 merchants and their 6 guards a round of ale, which adds a +10 modifier to any **Fel** test for the gracious PC. If the ale is of high quality, such as the locally brewed Drak Wald Dark (1/2 per pint), then the modifier increases to +20%. Other appropriate modifiers (+10 for *Charm.* +10 for *Seduction* [female PCs only], +10 for *Wit*) also apply. Once the PCs are accepted as friendly folk, they may learn the following:

- *The influential merchants of Carroburg opposed the war with Reikland.*
- *The country nobility – who tend to be more anti-Sigmarite than the well-heeled citizens of Carroburg – too easily swayed the Grand Duke into a foolish course of action.*
- *The short war placed a lot of pressure on the trade upon which Carroburg so heavily depends.*
- *The Grand Duke showed himself to be an inept military leader.*
- *Even his noble vassals are turning against him.*
- *The delegation represents the mercantile interests of Carroburg*
- *The delegation plans to present political proposals to the Graf in order to settle the rather tenuous position that the House of von Bildhofen now finds itself.*

The members of the Carroburg delegation are not willing to provide any further information, no matter how many pints the PCs purchase for them. Of course, a female PC who successfully seduces a member of the delegation could learn the following:

- *The delegation is proposing that the powerful interests in Carroburg are willing to support any bid by the Graf to supplant the Grand Duke's position as Elector and ruler of Middenland.*
- *Such support would include financial considerations, such as loans.*

- *In exchange for this support, Carroburg is requesting that the Graf champion their cause of restoring the Freistadt status to Carroburg that was revoked shortly after Gunther von Bildhofen became Grand Duke in 2329 I.C.*

Since the PCs are heading north, they might propose the Carroburgers allow the PCs to join them on the road. Though the delegation reacts with hesitation, the mere mention of the roving Beastman warband compels the group to agree to the PCs' suggestion. The night passes on without incident.

The morning could bring a damning indictment of the PCs hesitation to take decisive action if the PCs passed on pursuing and fighting the Beastmen near the Shrine of the Shining Rock. The wounded and frightened survivors of the attack on Himbergen stagger into Kutenholz in the early morning with horrid tales of massacre. Guilt-ridden PCs might try to atone for their prior misdeeds by heading straight to the smoky ruins of the village, but they will get there too late to do anything more than burying what is left of the dead.

Travelling with the Carroburg merchants is a slow process. They travel in two coaches driven by their four guards. If they choose, the PCs could easily outpace the coaches. The road north is fairly void of travellers. The few who are on the road are moving south. If questioned, these people reply there are rumours of the Middenheim army heading towards Altdorf. None have seen the army, but they decided to move on to be safe.

The PCs arrive at the coaching inn of the Green Dragon by late afternoon. The PCs can easily gather from the innkeeper that the Middenheim army has been encamped near the town of Bröckel for the past few days. In addition, the PCs can learn another delegation of Middenlanders, nobles from the descriptions of expensive clothes and an arrogant manner, is a day ahead of them. This means the group is already at Bröckel, no doubt pleading their case to the Graf. Should this news reach the merchants, they will become anxious. Still, they plan to push ahead in the morning.

After another day of travel, the PCs find the Middenheim army encamped just south of Bröckel. Barricades have been erected around the

camp as protection from attack with only two points of entry. Sentries in the livery of Middenheim guard these entrances asking strangers seeking entrance to state their names and business – as well as turn over any weapons other than a hand weapon or dagger – before allowing them to pass through.

The PCs are likely to depart from the Carroburg merchants at this point since they have their own business with the Grandmaster of the Knights Panther. As they near the entrance, the sentries follow protocol and question the PCs. After collecting the weapons, the sentries direct the PCs to tie their horses at the hitching post on the right. They are told the horses cannot be ridden within the enclosure. The PCs are assured the horses will be cared for very well.

The camp is quite sizeable and a PC with the Estimate skill can guess the force is around 2,000 strong. Many of the soldiers look like mercenaries and irregulars, both wearing a blue armband to indicate their allegiance to the City of the White Wolf. A few look better equipped with a blue sash around their waist, marking them as more elite troops.

Once past the barricade, the Graf's pavilion can easily be seen in the centre of the camp. Two Knights Panther guard the opening and stop anyone seeking an audience. Even if the PCs show their Knights Panther medallion, the guards will not allow them to enter. The Knights suggest the PCs might want to take up any complaints they have to the Grandmaster and point in the direction where his tent can be found. If the merchants are with the PCs, they are told the Graf will summon them, if he chooses to meet with them at all.

There are also guards at Grandmaster Hermann von Plauen's tent. The PCs are stopped here as well and asked their names and business. The PCs should hand over the letter Baron Heinrich gave them if they hope to have an audience. One of the guards takes it in while the other remains at his post. After a few minutes, the first guard returns followed by an older man who bears the air of authority. Though in his early fifties, Grandmaster von Plauen is fighting fit and trim and a few inches over six feet tall.

"Welcome, Knights Panther. I understand from Baron Heinrich you have been in my outfit for over a year and a half. For my benefit, please identify yourself and the town of your birth." The Grandmaster pauses to allow the PCs to respond. When they have done so, von Plauen continues, "I can't say I appreciate the act, but I certainly understand its necessity. In any event, you are welcome to have dinner with the Graf, Middenmarschall von Genscher, and myself tonight. We very much want to hear about your activities since your return from Kislev. Baron Heinrich is, shall we say, rather secretive about those who are under his command. You will be summoned in two hours." The Grandmaster turns towards his guards, "Von Gutzkow. Von Schelling. See to our brethren's lodgings. They have been on the road all day and need some rest." The Grandmaster nods his head at the PCs before re-entering his tent.

The two Knights Panther escort the PCs to three vacant tents (each can hold up to 3 persons) at the edge of the encampment. If the PCs ask how the tents came to be unoccupied, the Knights Panthers comment the army often erects empty tents to store provisions as well as mislead any enemy reconnoitring the camp as to the true number of men at arms in camp. Should the PCs also ask for the equipment they were required to hand over to enter the camp, the Knights Panther inform the PCs the order will be given in due time. The Knights then return to their assigned posts.

About an hour after they have been escorted to their "lodging," von Schelling arrives to summon the PCs to dine with His Grace, Graf Boris Todbringer and his distinguished guests. Von Schelling personally feels the PCs are hardly a sterling example of what it takes to be a Knights Panther (bloody commoners!), but he keeps his tongue. He is following orders, after all.

The PCs are led to an open area near the Graf's pavilion where a table laden with delicacies (roasted boar, stuffed goose, cakes, fruits) has been arranged. The three powerful men in camp sit at one end of the table and halt their conversation when they spot the PCs. Von Schelling bows to the Graf and informs His Grace the Knights serving Baron Heinrich have arrived as he has ordered. The Knight then steps back, straightens up, and awaits his dismissal. Grandmaster von Plauen does so with a simple, "That is all, good sir Knight."





Graf Todbringer invites the PCs to sit down, orders the servants to pour wine for them and to begin serving the food. (Any PCs who met Graf Todbringer during the events of **Power Behind the Throne** will note the last two years have seen a remarkable improvement in the Graf's physical appearance.) After the servants have completed their task, the Graf dismisses them. Once they have departed, Graf Todbringer directs the PCs to give an account of their activities. The PCs may express concern about relaying secret information in the open. The Graf assures them their concern is misplaced. In the open, he can see anyone who is in a place they should not be. The Graf says a would-be spy would profit if the group retired into a tent or building where they could not see his approach. In any event, the Graf points out that sentries have been positioned to keep the curious away. He urges the PCs to relate their story.

The three men (Graf, Middenmarschall, and Grandmaster) ask probing questions when the Sons of Ulric, Purple Hand, and the captivity of the Emperor is mentioned. The Graf is particularly keen on any information about the Emperor's health. Any mention of Karl-Heinz Wasmeier sets the Graf's teeth on edge and he asks sharp questions about the fate of the former Law Lord of Middenheim.

At the end of the PCs' tale, Graf Boris stands and expresses his gratitude to the PCs for their effort and information. He tells the PCs they are to ride with him to Altdorf along with his

Knights Panther. He intends to meet with the Emperor, though Graf Boris will not be ready to leave until the second morning. The Graf plans to receive the Merchant delegation around noon the following day. Should the PCs ask about meeting or the one with the Middenland nobility, the Graf simply says there are some things he is not willing to discuss. With that, the Graf and his two commanders leave the PCs.

Though he could not get close enough to hear what was being said, an under-cover spy of the Sons of Ulric named Fritz Ziegler noted such a motley group as the PCs would gain an audience with the Graf within a couple hours after their arrival. In the morning when soldiers are allowed a few hours leave, Fritz makes his way into Bröckel proper and to the Bear in the Barrel. There he meets with another man, Kurt Hofer, another spy for the Sons of Ulric. Fritz provides Kurt with limited information of the PCs' meeting with the Graf and their physical descriptions. Kurt pays Fritz a couple of shillings and tells him to continue watching the PCs from a safe distance. He doesn't want the PCs to become suspicious.

With a day to kill, the PCs might also wish to visit Bröckel. There are two coaching inns in the small town: the Four Seasons' Bear in the Barrel and the independent Howling Wolf Inn. The merchants spend the night at the Bear in the Barrel while they await the Graf's pleasure. The Middenland nobles, who departed early on the day after the PCs arrival bearing a message to the Grand Duke from the Graf, stayed in the Howling Wolf. With the Middenheim army in town, the best ale in town has been drunk; nothing is left in either inn other than the cheap and common watered-down version.

The PCs can pick up the following rumours (not all are accurate) when in town:

- *The Grand Duke suffered a devastating defeat at the walls of Altdorf.*
- *Bands of Beastmen have emerged from the deepest, most haunted parts of the Drak Wald.*
- *The Middenheim army has slaughtered several Beastman warbands.*

- *The Grand Duke is losing the support of his nobles.*
- *The Graf is leading his army to defeat the Reikland army and defend the Ulrican faith.*
- *Raids against Sigmarite farms have decreased with the arrival of the Graf's army.*
- *Several raiders have been hung in the village of Sotturm*

If the PCs do not return to camp by sunset, von Gutzkow and von Schelling are sent to escort them back on the Grandmaster's orders. The Grandmaster wants everyone well rested for the journey to the Imperial capital.

### **Return to Altdorf**

The trip to Altdorf proceeds in a slow, steady pace. The Grandmaster, fifteen Knights Panther, their sergeants and servants accompany the Graf and PCs. As expected, the 50+ heavily armed and armoured party journey without incident. The sound and sight of the entourage keep smaller bandit bands and Beastman warbands far away from the road.

The only deviation from the routine comes when the group reaches the path to the Shrine of the Shining Rock. The Graf insists the group should stop to pay homage to the site holy to the cults of both Sigmar and Ulric. The PCs might be a bit nervous since the times they have been at the Shrine have not been pleasant. The birds in the area are silent, which the PCs might believe presage an attack by Beastmen and/or Mutants. The fact of the matter is that the presence of the Graf and his entourage which has caused the silence.

When the group arrives, the Graf calls for all to bow their heads in prayer. If the PCs did not come this way days ago, then the Graf calls out for the priests and templars guarding the sight. He then commands Grandmaster von Plauen to have his men explore the complex so they can determine if anything is amiss.

The Shrine complex has not been attended to since the slaughter of the priests and templars. If the PCs have not attempted to clean up the

blood and gore, the wildlife of the forest has done its bit in the intervening six days. The bits of gore are no longer present, but the floor and walls within the nearby building remains bloodstained and smelling of death. The Shrine itself remains inviolate as if its aura kept away the defilers.

The fury of the situation can easily be seen in the Graf's face. PCs close enough to the Graf can make a Listen test for soft sounds (+10 for *Acute Hearing*, +10 for *Lip Reading*) to hear Todbringer mutter, "This is an outrage. Von Bildhofen should have done more to protect this holy place. There is no excuse for his negligence." The Graf then storms away calling for the Grandmaster to attend him. The two talk in private for about fifteen minutes. Should the PCs watch the body language of the two men, they will easily see the discussion is quite spirited. A few minutes later, Grandmaster von Plauen orders the Knights to make ready to leave.

The rest of the journey is rather uneventful. When the Knights Panther approach the long queue awaiting entry into Altdorf, the standard bearer cries forth for the crowd to make way for the arrival of Graf Boris Todbringer of Middenheim and his Knights Panther. The crowd obliges immediately since the only other option is to get trampled by the huge mounts. Even the guardsmen at the gate seem awed by the presence of the Knights Panther and yells for those on the other side of the North Gate to clear off. Trumpets are sounded from the top of the gate signalling that a guest of special standing has arrived in the Imperial capital.

The Knights continue on horseback into the city proper, slowing down so as to get past the crowds unfamiliar with the sight of the Knightly Order from Middenheim. The PCs should be discouraged from leaving at this point since to do so would be in violation of protocol (instantly understood by anyone with the *Etiquette* skill). Soon, a Watch patrol appears to help clear the crowd of on-lookers away from the entourage. Any PC who passes a **Listen** test (+10 for *Acute Hearing*, +10 for *Lip Reading*) can hear the occasional anti-Ulrican slur, but the majority of Altdorfers have the sense to show some measure of respect and awe.



The Knights dismount at the Imperial Palace where the Imperial Guard is arrayed in honour of their visitors. The Emperor, Grand Countess Emmanuelle von Liebewitz, Crown Prince Wolfgang, Count Siegfried von Walfen, and Baron Heinrich Todbringer are there to greet the Graf of Middenheim among great (last minute) fanfare. Reikmarshall Helborg is at hand to meet with the Grandmaster of the Knights Panther while their seconds discuss accommodations.

When the PCs begin to feel as if they are to be ignored, Count von Walfen appears near them. "Do not worry, your services to the Empire are almost at an end. We have one more duty we ask of you. But first, you are released to return to the Imperial to rest while you can. The next task requires you to make a special journey. We will summon you when it is time." The Count then turns and heads towards the Imperial Palace.

If the PCs have any unfinished business to attend to in Altdorf, this would be their opportunity to do so. Should the PCs stop by the Temple of Mórr, they will learn Priestess Inga had departed for Stirland over a week ago.

### **On the Talabec**

The PCs are summoned to the Middenheim House on the night of 29 Sommerzeit to meet with Count von Walfen and Baron Todbringer. They are treated to dinner as before, but the two noblemen make small talk by asking the PCs about their travails before coming into the service of the Graf. Once dinner is finished, the group retires to the drawing room.

"Allow me to cut to the chase, if you please," Baron Heinrich opens. "This last task we ask of you is quite dangerous and requires a long journey. We need you to carry an important message from the Emperor to both the Grand Prince Hals von Tasseninck of Ostland and Grand Duke Gustav von Krieglitz of Talabecland. Both Electors are being summoned to meet with the Emperor, Graf Boris, and Grand Countess Emmanuelle at a hunting lodge about 5 miles northeast of the town of Schoppendorf in Middenland on 25

Vorgeheim. You will be taking two sealed letters from the Emperor and deliver one to each.

"What makes this undertaking particularly difficult is we have no idea what the current state of war is in the east. You will have to use all your skills and discretion to navigate the difficult situation. You will have an Imperial warrant with the Emperor's seal to see you through some of the more complex situations, but do not forget there are those who will seek to stop you at all costs."

Count von Walfen adds, "The first leg of the journey will be by my personal sailing boat, Windrunner, to Talagraad. He will leave you across the river from the port of Talabheim to save you time. The Windrunner is captained by Alban Halder and leaves tomorrow before dawn from the berth in front of my offices in the Docks. He will be expecting you."

Baron Heinrich continues, "From there you will journey to 'The Nimble Frog' in the village of Langwiese. It is a coaching inn owned by Hochland Crossing Coaches, where you can obtain horses with this letter of credit I am handing you. It's marked with my seal and if the innkeeper, Willi Aufstand, gives you problems, remind him I know of his dirty little secret. Travel on horseback would be best beyond this point. We're not certain what the state of the war will be when you arrive in the area, keep an ear open so you know where to go."

Count von Walfen then hands the PCs three other letters, two of which are sealed and each addressed to the two Electors. The warrant and letter of credit carry seals, but are not sealed. The Count also hands the PCs a pouch with a number of Gold Crowns equal to 20 per PC for expenses. "May the gods of the Empire grant you the strength and wisdom to successfully complete this mission. We look forward to seeing you at the hunting lodge for the truce."

The next morning, the PCs find the Windrunner at the location provided to them by the Count. Should the PCs arrive later than dawn, Captain Halder will not be particularly impressed with them. He is a man who lets his displeasure be known.

The Captain tells the PCs they can stow their possessions in the hold below, where they will share quarters with his crew. The Captain will not relinquish his cabin to anyone, except to a PC whose starting career was Noble.



Under no circumstance will anyone be allowed to use the Count's private cabin.

The ship (M4, T5, W50) is approximately 60 feet long and 15 feet wide and is faster than ships used by river tradesmen. Most of the provisions (rations, ale, first aid, and healing herbs) for the trip have been stored in the hold. There are six hammocks in the hold where those not working on the boat or on watch can rest. The boat has a single mast.

If the PCs ask about the conditions on the Talabec, Captain Halder tells them:

- *Since the Windrunner is a fast ship, the PCs will arrive in Talagraad around 8 Vorgeheim*
- *The Talabec's current will not be as strong as it was in the Spring.*
- *Since the war, river traffic has been reduced between Altdorf and Talabheim and – as he understands – virtually non-existent eastward to the border with Kislev.*
- *Trade has been reduced even further as demand has outstripped supply.*
- *The war has already caused food shortages in parts of the Empire, particularly along the Ostland and Talabecland border areas.*
- *Pirate activity has been on the increase along the Talabec, made worse by the lack of potential victims.*
- *The lack of traffic has been hard on the riverside inns and taverns.*

- *Banditry has become a problem in Hochland and Talabecland since the soldiery has been concentrated against Ostland.*

Given the increase in the danger, Captain Halder tells the PCs that he is counting on them to be alert for trouble and assist with the nightly watch, as well as the defence of the boat. He appreciates that they are on an important mission, but his men (two sons and an old friend) are not warriors like the PCs. The Captain has little doubt that the PCs will be needed to protect the Count von Walfen's ship.

As the PCs travel further east, they will hear news and rumours about the war in the east as well as information being relayed from Altdorf. The latter will be distorted somewhat as the PCs are travelling through lands where the cult of Sigmar is not highly regarded and its actions and motives suspect. From Altdorf to Ahlenhof, the PCs will hear the following:

- *Sigmarite fanatics looking for an "enemy within" burned half of Altdorf over a week ago.*
- *The Emperor is said to be recovering after a mysterious illness.*
- *Some believe that the death of the Grand Theogonist weakened the glamour he cast upon the ill-fortuned Emperor.*
- *Actually, the Emperor got better after he learned that his imbecilic nephew tried to usurp his rule.*
- *Graf Todbringer is leading his army to Altdorf to set things right.*
- *Grand Duke von Bildhofen's defeat came at the hands of Reikland spies as much as his cowardly nobles.*
- *Ostlanders broke the Siege of Wolfenburg with help from Averlanders and Ostermarkers.*
- *Grand Duke von Kreiglitz' army remains near Wolfenburg in order to try to take the city again.*
- *Grand Duchess Elise Untermensch-Krieglitz is supporting her cousin Gustav with loans and soldiers.*
- *Hochlanders are sure to reap the benefit of helping the Talabeclanders.*

- *Farms in the east are suffering as rampaging soldiers looking for food destroy their crops.*
- *There will be famine this winter if the war continues any longer.*
- *An Ostland force is heading north. There are rumours of a Nordland invasion.*
- *Harvest is coming soon. There better be a truce soon or all will go to waste and prices rise.*

Between Ahlenhof and Talagraad, the gossip about Altdorf remains the same as above, with other enhancements and distortions -- especially on the Talabeclander side of the river. Moreover, the reports from the east are more current:

- *No one is sure what is going on in southern Talabecland. There are rumours of fighting with an allied Stirland and Wissenland force, but nothing definitive.*
- *Having taught Count von Raukov a lesson, Grand Duke von Krieglitz is moving his forces away from Wolfenburg.*

- *I've heard that the Ostlanders beat the Grand Duke's men.*
- *The only thing keeping the Ostlanders from winning is that they need to deal with the Nordlanders on the other side of the Middle Mountains.*
- *Banditry is on the rise. I've heard that some farmsteads have been pillaged south of the Talabec.*
- *Ar-Ulric has died from the attack by fanatical Sigmarites. Why will happen to us?*
- *What's worse is that I heard Ulricans murdered Ar-Ulric for his soft stance on Sigmarite outrages against Middenlanders.*
- *Rumour has it that the old Grand Prince Tasseninck was killed at the siege of Ferlangen. I guess the path is clear for Raukov to become the new Elector.*

As the PCs get even closer to the Ostland-Talabecland front, they will be able to obtain quite a number of contradictory stories. Some of these will lead to brawls in the common room of taverns.

#### **Alban Halder**, Captain of the Windrunner

Captain Halder has been in Count von Walfen's service for the last 10 years, serving him loyally. He is a no-nonsense man who knows the ins and outs of the Rivers Reik and Talabec like the back of his hands.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	64	51	4	4	13	53	3	61	66	55	64	55	62

**Skills:** Boatbuilding, Fish, Orientation, River Lore, Row, Sailing, Speak Additional Language (Kislevite), Specialist Weapon-Fencing, Storytelling, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Swim

**Equipment:** Sword, Dagger (S-2, I+10, Parry-10), Sleeved Mail Coat (1AP body/arms/legs), Leather Jack (0/1AP body), Rapier (S-1, I+20), Telescope, and Pouch (12 GCs, 10

#### **Gabriel Halder, Kurt Halder, and Reiner Baum**, Boatmen

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	42	41	3	3	8	43	1	31	32	33	42	34	31

**Skills:** Boat Building, Fish, Orientation, River Lore, Row, [Reiner only] Sailing

**Equipment:** Leather Jack (0/1AP body), Sword, Bow (R24/48/250, ES3) and ammunition, and Pouch (6 GCs, 20 shillings)

## Consequences of War

The following table marks the events that will take place across the Empire while the PCs perform one last important task for Emperor and country. As before the events in *italics*

represent those affairs that are occurring elsewhere. GMs should note that news of these outside endeavours take some time to reach wherever the PCs happen to be.

Day	Events
29 Sommerzeit	PCs are summoned to the Middenheim House.
30 Sommerzeit	PCs depart Altdorf for the Ostland/Talabecland frontier. <i>Chancellor Maximillian Dachs of Ostermark is killed in an ambush near the village of Taalfähre by Orcs under the command of Azhag the Slaughterer.</i>
31 Sommerzeit	The boat with the PCs drop anchor in a cove for the night. <i>Grand Duke Gunther von Bildhofen arrives in Altdorf to begin negotiation of a truce with the Emperor and Graf Todbringer. Countess von Liebewitz joins the discussions.</i>
32 Sommerzeit	PCs arrive at the village of Werder in the early afternoon for a brief stay. They later moor in a cove further upriver for the evening. <i>Truce between the Talabecland army and the Stirland/Wissenland alliance brokered by Grand Duchess Elise Krieglitz-Untermensch.</i>
33 Sommerzeit	PCs arrive at the riverside Inn of Leaping Fish. <i>Count Feuerbach and his retinue heads towards the north along the Old Forest Road.</i>
Sonnstill Summer Solstice	PCs arrive in Schoppendorf in the late afternoon. <i>After weeks of raids on outlying villages and the destruction of woodlands by the invading Nordland forces under Baron Nikse's command, the Wood Elves of the Laurëlorne launch a devastating counterattack. Nikse's forces are utterly crushed and flee in a rout.</i>
1 Vorgeheim	PCs arrive in the town of Volgen in the late afternoon. <i>Hauptmarschall Hertwig returns to Bechafen to attend the funeral of Chancellor Dachs.</i>
2 Vorgeheim	PCs arrive in the town of Ahlenhof early evening.
3 Vorgeheim	PCs arrive at the town of Ravenstein in the late afternoon. <i>Count von Raukov elevates Matthias von Daimler to Markmarschall and sends him with several companies to relieve Ferlangen.</i>
4 Vorgeheim	PCs settle in a cove on the Talabec for the evening. <i>Bold attack by Feldmarschall Leitdorf across the river at Vordf routs and demoralises Hochland defenders.</i>
5 Vorgeheim	PCs arrive at the village of Sorno for the evening. <i>Count Ludenhof compelled to re-deploy a portion of his troops fighting alongside Talabecland's army to bolster the defences at Vordf.</i>
6 Vorgeheim	PCs arrive at the riverside Inn of the Frog and Stork. <i>Grand Duke von Krieglitz suffers defeat in a decisive battle with von Raukov's Ostland companies. Suffering from a heavy sword blow, he leads a retreat to Castle Schloss.</i>
7 Vorgeheim	PCs arrive at the riverside Inn of the Blue Kingfisher. <i>Count von Raukov lays siege to Castle Schloss across the River Wolfen from Hergig.</i>
8 Vorgeheim	PCs arrive across the river from Talagraad in the early afternoon. They reach the village of Langwiese by early evening. <i>Hauptmarschall Hertwig repulses an Orc army near the small town of Mielau.</i>
9 Vorgeheim	PCs arrive at Estorf in the late afternoon. <i>Baron Nikse found murdered and mutilated in the bedchambers of his castle outside Salzenmund.</i>
10 Vorgeheim	PCs arrive in Hergig in the late afternoon. <i>Siege of Ferlangen continues, the townsfolk awaiting a miracle.</i>
11 Vorgeheim	PCs cross the River Wolfen and enter the Ostland-Talabecland front.



### Side bar: War in the Empire – A Summary

War in the Empire more often arises from the grievances and ambitions of the ruling class than it does from outside threats and invasion. The war which takes place during Empire at War is one example of the internal strife that continues from the early days of the Empire to present.

The present war began as a series of skirmishes and raids across the Ostland-Talabecland border areas in late summer of 2512 and continued throughout 2513. Rivalry between the two provinces was a prominent aspect of the strife, but the Emperor's enfeeblement encouraged both. From Grand Duke von Krieglitz' viewpoint, the indecisive Imperial Court would give him the opportunity to extract land concessions north of the Talabec from the Sigmarite Grand Prince of Ostland. In contrast, von Tasseninck needed to demonstrate to his restless vassals – especially those who supported Count von Raukov's bid after the fall of von Konigswald – that he could gain the lands which Talabecland did possess north of the Talabec.



As the prospect of a wider war became inevitable, alliances began to form. Hochland, Middenland, and Nordland joined Talabecland in an Ulrican alliance with the goal to carve up Ostland. In opposition, Ostland gained support from Averland, Stirland, and distant Wissenland. The Orc invasion in the east allowed Ostermark to claim neutrality when, in fact, they supported Ostland in return for past support against the dictates of Talabecland.

Though the near death experience of Graf Todbringer brought him out of a recent bout of melancholia, the Ulrican Alliance hoped the powerful Middenheim Elector would join their cause or, at worst, stay neutral. For a long time, Todbringer did indeed stay neutral, trying to keep his Nordland vassal in tow too. Recently, he has moved his army south towards the border between Reikland and Middenland, although his motives are not quite clear.

Alliances in the Empire last only as long as the nobles can keep their own ambitions in check. Instead of committing all his troops against the under-defended Ostland frontier in the northwest, Baron Nikse made the decision to conquer the Laurëlor Forest and exile the resident Elves. His fateful act relied upon the war elsewhere to divert attention from his private war, as well as a faulty assumption the Elves had no real military strength to oppose his aggression. To the south, the Ulrican nobles of Middenland pushed Grand Duke von Bildhofen into an unwise war against Reikland.

By the time the PCs depart for the East, Middenland is defeated and Grand Duke von Bildhofen is sending a delegation to Altdorf to sue for peace. The Nordlanders under Baron Nikse are pushing deeper into the Laurëlor Forest and unknowingly into the Elves' trap. Those under Gausser are still besieging Ferlangen in Ostland with diminishing prospects of taking the town. The Talabecland/Hochland siege of Wolfenburg was lifted by the arrival of the Averlanders and Ostermarkers before the Ulrican alliance was thrown back from the walls of the Ostland capital by its army and allies. Grand Duke von Krieglitz and his Talabec army have now retreated to Castle Schloss, with the Ostlanders and Averlanders in pursuit. In the south of Talabecland, the fitful battles between the Stirland/Wissenland allied force and Talabecland under Count Feuerbach have ended in the defeat of the invading force.

### Abandoned Ship

This encounter can occur along an uninhabited stretch of shore either on the Talabecland side of the river or the Middenland/Hochland side. An abandoned and beached river barge with a holed hull has become a home and refuge for a band of mutants seeking escape from human persecution and hungry Beastman. The boat is tucked into a small cove and only part of the boat can be seen from the main river. The GM might want to impose an **Observe** test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*) on any PC activity looking about from the deck to determine if he spots the ship.

The mutants have no desire to get into a fight, much less with a well-armed band. They just want to live a peaceful life if they can, free from the affairs of other races. Basically, these mutants have not yet lost their humanity. They will, however, defend their home if attacked.

Should the PCs attempt to converse with the mutants, they will need to pass a **Fel-10** test (+10 for *Charm*) in order to assure the mutants they mean no harm. If the PCs inquire about any recent movement by an armed group or Beastman warband, the mutants tell them an armoured man, six soldiers, and about eight townsmen was seen heading eastward about five days ago. In the event the PCs probe further, the mutants provide a description that matches Captain Erwin von Mühlerberg. The mutants also remember all eleven men wore something purple on their attire. They noted this since purple is a rather rare, exotic colour from their perspective.

Once the conversation has ended, the mutants ask if the PCs could leave them some bread or other foodstuff to supplement their meagre supplies. Captain Halder will not be particularly pleased, but he keeps his tongue. The Captain was told of the PCs' odd proclivity to react to certain situations in a rather unconventional manner.

### 12 Mutants

These mutants have been chased away from their homes by other villages once they could no longer hide the changes that came over them. Unless specified otherwise below, the mutants are human in appearance (four are female) and have the following profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	41	29	4	3	8	30	1	29	29	29	29	29	25

**Equipment:** Hand weapon, Tattered Clothing

#### Mutations:

Mutant #1: Fish Face and Webbed Hands (has Swim skill)

Mutant #2: Tentacle in place of left arm

Mutant #3: Chaos Were, subject to Frenzy, changes when WP test failed with head and arms of a Tiger (A+2, bite attack, 2 claw attacks) and causes Fear.

Mutant #4: Bulging Eyes

Mutant #5: Snake Tail (A+1, bite attack)

Mutant #6: Prehensile Tail

Mutant #7: Deer Head (A+1, gore attack)

Mutant #8: Two Additional Arms (T+1, A+2)

Mutant #9: Pointed Head (Int-10)

Mutant #10: Warty Skin (0/1 AP all over)

Mutant #11: Cloven Hooves

Mutant #12: Rearranged Face

### Captain, There Be Pirates!

With the war in the east drawing many mercenaries to its deadly embrace, the rivers and roads of western Talabecland and southern Hochland are less patrolled than in (relative) peacetime. Many of the nobles from southeastern Middenland have also responded to Grand Duke von Bildhofen's earlier mobilisation against Reikland. The bandits and pirates operating in these parts of the Empire have enjoyed the lack of interference with their chosen pursuits. The only problem is river and road traffic has also diminished, especially with the depressed economic environment created by the war.

With fewer potential victims from which to choose, those preying on merchants and the like find themselves less selective than in the recent past. Targets that would have normally been allowed to pass unhindered are now objects of opportunity. Count von Walfen's riverboat is one such target.

This encounter can occur along any unsettled stretch along the River Talabec. Black Manfred and his pirate crew have been feeling the pinch from the scarcity of merchants travelling along the river. The pirates have recently ended their alliance with the bandit, Edmund "Split Lip" Hering, since the two groups came to blows over the division of loot (there wasn't much) from their last robbery. Lying in wait among the tall reeds in one of the many secluded coves along the river, Black Manfred spots the

Windrunner passing by in the late afternoon.

Through his telescope, the pirate captain sees the crew working the boat as well as any PCs on deck. Black Manfred knows the Windrunner is a fast ship, perhaps the equal of his own. If he spotted one of the PCs, the pirate captain also knows where there are travellers, there must be money to be had, maybe even an important person to ransom. The pirate will have his ship follow the Count's, but at a safe distance. The plan is to simply attack at dusk when the guard of those on ship might be down.

Black Manfred will keep the PCs' ship in view with his telescope in order to assess their strength. If most of the PCs are on board, the pirate captain may determine the chances of success may not be worth the risk. In this case, Black Manfred gives the order to abandon pursuit. His situation is not so desperate that he will lead his men on a suicide attack. On the other hand, if the PCs remain out of sight, Black Manfred waits for the Windrunner to find a place to moor for the evening. The pirate runs the river well enough to guide his boat in the dark, using the Windrunner's light to make his way to his prey.

Black Manfred's scheme may well be for naught. If the PCs spot him by successfully passing an **Observe-10** test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*, +10 if telescope is used), they can either bring their full number on board in an attempt to intimidate or set their own ambush.

#### "Black" Manfred Lorenz, Pirate Captain

Manfred is one of the more notorious pirates that plague the Talabec and its tributaries between Altdorf and Talabheim. There is a price on his head of 50GCs, payable if he is brought in to any of the towns along the Talabec.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	66	51	5	4	13	52	3	60	67	56	64	56	58

**Skills:** Boatbuilding, Consume Alcohol, Excellent Vision, Fish, Night Vision, Orientation, River Lore, Row, Sailing, Speak Additional Language (Kislevite), Specialist Weapon-Fencing, Storytelling, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Swim

**Equipment:** Leather Jack (0/1AP body), Rapier (S-1, I+20), Telescope, and Pouch (12 GCs, 10 shillings)



### Otto Furtwängler, Pirate Mate

Sadistic first mate of Black Manfred, Otto has a price of 25 GCs on his head.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	56	41	4	5	11	43	2	40	47	46	46	44	37

**Skills:** Boatbuilding, Consume Alcohol, Dodge Blow, Fish, Orientation, River Lore, Row, Sailing, Speak Additional Language (Kislevite), Storytelling, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Swim

**Equipment:** Leather Jack (0/1AP body), Sword, and Pouch (12 GCs, 10 shillings)

### 12 Pirates

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	42	41	3	3	8	43	1	31	32	33	42	34	31

**Skills:** Boat Building, Fish, Orientation, River Lore, Row

**Equipment:** Leather Jack (0/1AP body), Sword, Bow (R24/48/250, ES3) and ammunition, and Pouch (3 GCs, 10 shillings)

### On the Run

After being seen in the Purple Hand meeting by the PCs, Captain Erwin von Mühlerberg knew he could not stay in the Imperial capital any longer. These strangers' connections to the Imperial authorities meant he would not be able to return to the Crown Prince's services. It wasn't fear of torture should he be caught which concerned von Mühlerberg. He was concerned that he needed to find another way to serve the Changer of the Ways. In reflection of the events that occurred in the East End districts, von Mühlerberg could throttle the Middenheimer who would usurp the leadership of the Purple Hand in Altdorf. The man disappeared during the conflagration, but more likely by escaping rather than dying.

Von Mühlerberg led what remained of his followers on the road eastward, which the Captain concluded was the direction they would least be expected to travel. There was no direct road from Altdorf to the east, so von Mühlerberg led his men through the various paths in southern Middenland until they reached Hochland. Along the way, von Mühlerberg's band resorted to banditry like so many unemployed mercenaries. In time, the

group of Purple Hand cultists gained bows and arrows for the non-soldiers in their number.

Von Mühlerberg eventually came to the understanding that his recent misfortune was really nothing more than a trial set for him by the Great Mutator. The Captain thought perhaps his god wanted him to find a new base of operations in one of the larger eastern towns such as Hergig or Wolfenburg.

Late one afternoon, as the PCs are getting ready to anchor in another cove or spend a night at a riverside inn, they happen to be in an area where von Mühlerberg and his band are operating. One of the soldiers at the Purple Hand gathering in the Dreacksack Slums noticed the PCs at a distance and quickly alerted von Mühlerberg. Taking this as another sign from the Changer of the Ways, the Captain readies his group for attack.

If the attack is to be in the wilderness, von Mühlerberg waits until the sun is setting. He deploys his bowmen to the west using the setting sun to blind any PCs seeking to return fire. Von Mühlerberg has drilled his bowmen on how to make the best use of cover from vegetation, trees, and large rocks. He has also instructed them to

concentrate fire on any wizards and Elves (all of whom – he wrongly believes - can cast spells). The Captain leads the rest of his men to a position on their target's flanks. The tactic for the bowmen is to simply fire five rounds at their targets, pause to allow the Captain and his men to charge, then start firing on anyone who chooses to stand back of the ensuing melee.

Should the attack take place near an inn, von Mühlerberg deploys his men differently. Since the PCs are travelling by boat, the Captain places the bowmen such that they have clear fields of fire on the approaches to the boat, as

well as cover behind barrels, crates, and around the corner of buildings. Two of his soldiers would be dispatched to create a diversion, like setting a building near the boat on fire (or the boat itself). He and the rest of the soldiers then take a position that allows them to charge their intended victims.

Captain von Mühlerberg intent is to extract his revenge on the PCs for their interference in both his and the Great Mutator's plans. Only when the battle is clearly going against him, will von Mühlerberg attempt to flee into the woods. The PCs have an opportunity to end the threat of von Mühlerberg at this time.

### Captain Erwin von Mühlerberg, Purple Hand leader

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	65	62	6	5	13	53	3	41	76	44	65	44	51

**Skills:** Disarm, Dodge Blow, Gamble, Heraldry, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Ride-Horse, Secret Language-Battle, Secret Language-Guilder (Purple Hand Cult), Specialist Weapon-Parrying, Specialist Weapon- Two-Handed, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Strike to Stun

**Equipment:** Sword, Dagger (S-2, I+10, Parry-10), Sleeved Mail Coat (1AP body/arms/legs), purple-coloured armband, and Purse (14 GCs, 20 shillings, 12 pennies).

**Mutation:** Magic Resistance (+20 on **Magic** [WP] tests).

### 8 Purple Hand Cultists (Militia)

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	43	39	3	3	8	40	2	35	30	30	25	30	20

**Skills:** Concealment-Urban, Disguise, Dodge Blow, Follow Trail, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Secret Language-Guilder (Purple Hand Cult), Shadowing, Silent Move Urban

**Equipment:** Hand Weapon (Sword or Club), Leather Jack (0/1AP Body), Bow (R24/48/250, ES3) and ammunition, Clothing with some purple colour, and Purse (3 GCs, 10 shillings, 22 pennies).

### 6 Purple Hand Cultists (Soldiers)

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	45	41	3	3	9	43	2	35	40	30	25	30	20

**Skills:** Disarm, Dodge Blow, Ride-Horse, Secret Language-Battle, Secret Language-Guilder (Purple Hand Cult), Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow

**Equipment:** Sword, Dagger (S-2, I+10, Parry-10), Mail Shirt (1AP body), purple-coloured armband, and Purse (5 GCs, 12 shillings, 10 pennies)

### Horse Trading

Once Ar-Ulric dies, Baron Helmut Todbringer flees Middenheim before the authorities arrive to arrest him. He knew the day would come after one of the Sons of Ulric had masqueraded as a deranged Sigmarite and stabbed Ar-Ulric during a ceremony four days before. Instead of achieving glory in death, the slayer of the unworthy Ar-Ulric was captured and turned over to the Schwarzmantel for questioning. It was only a matter of time before the secret organization of his cousin, Baron Heinrich, extracted the truth. Baron Helmut tried to spark a rally for the Ulrican provinces and put pressure on Graf Boris to bring Middenheim's strength to bear against the Sigmarites, but the attack on Ar-Ulric did not sway the weak-hearted.

The Baron's first act was to collect as many of the Sons of Ulric he could find and lead them to Talabecland to fight with Grand Duke von Krieglitz. Unfortunately, Baron Helmut knew he had limited time and that many other Sons were still secretly operating elsewhere. He headed southward in the wake of the Middenheim army and gathered those he came across, including Fritz Ziegler and Kurt Hofer near Bröckel. From these two men, Baron Helmut learned about the PCs and that they have some sort of relationship with the Graf. After all, they were Knights Panther, however different they appear from others of the Order.

As planned, Captain Halder brings the PCs to the Hochland shore of the Talabec north of Talagraad. They still have some time to reach "The Nimble Frog" in Langwiese before nightfall. The traffic on the road is lighter than the last time the PCs came through this village.

The PCs easily find Willi Aufstand in the common room at the coaching inn. He opens the letter the PCs hand him and reads it. Willi looks up from the letter and tells the PCs that he has good horses, but they are not bred for war. He expects the PCs to return them no worse for the use. Willi then informs the PCs he has rooms available for the night.

Should the PCs ask about news from the war, Willi tells them news and gossip usually takes three days to reach the inn. The last thing Willi has heard is there was an attack near Vordf, a

town north of Hergig. Rumour has it the attack forced Count Ludenhof to re-deploy his Hochland troops fighting along von Krieglitz' to reinforce Hochland's defence. Moreover, the war seems to be turning against the Grand Duke.

If the PCs are on watch from their rooms, they notice a group of men in wolf-skin robes creeping towards the inn from the north and west around 10 PM. Some are on horse (5) and the rest on foot. Any PC in the common room will see seven men in the wolf-skins – the ones on horseback and two others – barging in shortly after this time, demanding the innkeeper provide them with food and horses. They tell Willi that to refuse their request would mark the innkeeper as a Sigmarite sympathizer and ensure his death. The rest of the Sons are arrayed outside in teams of two and have set up a defensive perimeter around the inn.

If any of the Sons of Ulric survived the earlier ambush of the Ostland Lector – including Wolfgang Blitzen and Bernd Küster – they will have joined Helmut's band. Two of the Sons who have accompanied Helmut inside the inn know the PCs faces. PCs in the common room at this time will eventually be recognised.. The PCs may try to hide their faces or they could stand up to challenge the Sons, but there is no chance they will avoid recognition. In the first case, the PC may buy himself a few rounds of anonymity, but the Sons are checking on the guests in the inn while Helmut presses Willi to agree to his terms. Once the PCs are spotted, the Son draws his sword and cries out, "The Graf's spies are here!"

Helmut sees the situation as Ulric's gift to end the PCs' meddling. The Baron orders his men to kill the PCs and joins in the fight if need be, targeting the best warrior in the group. The Sons on the outside hear the commotion within and come quickly to join the melee. The Sons only break from the fight and flee if Helmut (as well as Wolfgang or Bernd, if they are among the group) is killed, the PCs are winning the battle, and the number of Sons being able to fight has been reduced to four.

Should the PCs remain hidden in their room, Willi gives in to Helmut's threat and gives the Baron the horses intended for the PCs. The PCs' inaction means they are walking the rest of the way to the battlefield.



**Helmut Todbringer**, self-styled Heir to Graf Boris

An ardent Ulrican and fanatically anti-Sigmar, Baron Helmut is cousin to both Graf Boris and Baron Heinrich. Helmut firmly believes in the ancient custom of having the ablest males in a generation battle one another for the right to succeed the current Ulrican ruler. In the Baron's view, the only way for the Sigmar-influenced rules of inheritance to be overturned would be for the northern provinces to succeed from the Empire. This can only succeed with an Ulrican victory in the war, something that seems to be slipping away.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	64	61	5	6	13	54	3	42	78	67	67	58	54

**Skills:** Ambidextrous, Blather, Charm, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Etiquette, Gamble, Heraldry, Luck, Marksmanship, Public Speaking, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Ride-Horse, Secret Language-Battle, Specialist Weapon-Fencing, Specialist Weapon-Parrying, Street Fighter, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Strike to Stun, Wit.

**Equipment:** Sword named Eisnir, Left-Hand Dagger, Wolf-skin Robes (1AP head/body), Mail Shirt (1AP body), Mail Leggings (1AP legs), Signet Ring on Right Hand, Face-paint, and Purse (18 GCs, 12 shillings and 6 pennies).

**Eisnir:** A finely crafted sword that has been with the Todbringer dynasty for as long as anyone can remember. It is mentioned the first time in the annals of Albert Grau in the twelfth century, and its perfect steel blade as well as the pommel with three diamonds and a wolf in gold is well known amongst the armed men of Middenheim. Although not a magical sword, Eisnir is made of an unknown silvery alloy that makes the sword glitter with the icy fire of Ulric. The balance and sharpness of the blade are such that it bestows a +5 modifier to its wielder's **WS**. Any PCs who somehow reveals their possession of Eisnir to nobles or military leaders of Middenheim may find themselves the target of suspicion and harsh questions.

**Signet Ring:** This ring has the same heraldic device (image of rampant wolf holding two axes, one in each forepaw: on the left of the image is the letter "H" and on the right the letter "T") that was impressed upon the sealing wax on the letters to Wolfgang Blitzen.

**14 Sons of Ulric** (Outlaws)

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	49	35	4	3	7	40	2	34	39	31	28	36	42

**Skills:** Animal Care, Concealment Rural, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Frenzied Attack, Ride-Horse, Scale Sheer Surface, Secret Language-Battle, Set Trap, Silent Move Rural, Spot Trap, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun.

**Equipment:** Sword, Wolf-skin Robes (1AP head/body), Face-paint, and Purse (2D6 shillings and 2D6 pennies)22 pennies).

### Into the Warzone

As the PCs approach Hergig, they can see some impacts of the war. Camps of soldiers and mercenaries have been established around the city. A number of labourers are busy erecting earthworks as if preparing for a siege. There is a long queue of peasants trying to enter, but being turned away by the garrison.

Should the PCs get into the queue to enter the city, they notice many young beggars who have lost limbs or suffered some sort of traumatic wound looking for handouts from those trying to make their way to the gate. A number will approach the PCs looking for alms or food to make it through another day. In the event the PCs tend towards kind-heartedness, they will see the fate of those who would show compassion. A young scholar berates the people near him in the line for looking away from the poverty that surrounds them. He then gives several beggars a copper penny or two. Almost instantly, the man is besieged as many beggars converge at him shouting their pleas for mercy. The queue moves away as the scholar is swarmed under by the crippled and crazed mob of beggars. Soon, a couple of guards descend on the beggars with their clubs swinging at one and another to clear the way. By the time they reach the scholar, the man has been severely beaten and his clothes torn and bloodied. The man has also lost his purse to those he sought to help.

If the PCs try to enter the city, the garrison denies them entry. Should the PCs present the Imperial warrant, the guard calls a scribe from the guard detail to read the sealed letter. The scribe reads it carefully and then hands it back. He tells the PCs their charge is impressive, but they cannot be given entry on Count Ludenhof's orders. As an explanation, the scribe (Barthold Albers) reports rioting on 24 Sommerzeit has left much of Hergig damaged. He suggests there are temporary lodging outside the city walls of which the PCs can avail themselves.

A number of shabby establishments have been erected outside the walls in addition to the earthworks being constructed. PCs with

experience as an artillerist or gunner realise these enterprises are located within the range of the city's cannons. Any PC with experience as an engineer or carpenter recognise the buildings as quite flimsy and would offering no real protection to anyone trying to hide from cannon fire.

The PCs can find lodging for the night at Viktor's Last Chance. The "inn" is owned by Viktor Bethe and is little more than a dilapidated large barn with an adjacent stable. In fact, it is the only one of these "inns" that can accommodate travellers with horses. As innkeepers go, Viktor is relatively honest and will suggest to the PCs they should consider staying with their horses in the stables for the evening. He tells them there are many thieves outside the city walls that prefer to target outsiders for their valuables, and horses are considered extremely valuable, especially these days.

If the PCs ask Viktor about the state of the war between Ostland and Talabecland, the innkeeper tells them he only knows of the following rumours from the wounded and maimed returning from the front:

- *The war is as good as over; the Ostland army soundly trounced the Talabeclanders in a battle south of Wolfenburg four days ago.*
- *Grand Duke von Krieglitz retreated to his fortress at Castle Schloss.*
- *Some say that the Grand Duke was wounded in the battle; the severity ranges from a scratch to getting his leg cut off.*
- *The Ostland Count pushed forward to lay siege to the castle.*
- *A group of Averlanders attacked the town of Vordf north of Hergig.*
- *This raid prompted Count Ludenhof to pull some of his troops from supporting von Krieglitz*
- *Some say, Count Ludenhof is in secret negotiations with the Ostland Count, suing for a truce.*
- *Many find the possibility of truce good news since a lot of Hochlanders were never keen on joining von Krieglitz' war.*

If asked where to find Castle Schloss, Viktor gestures towards the river. He tells the PCs the home of von Krieglitz is about three to four miles to the south-southeast near the Korver Hills.

Should the PCs decide to stay, Viktor charges each PC and horse 1 GC to stay in the stables. He also tells the PCs he has no grooms, so they will have to take care of the horses themselves. The PCs may scoff at the high prices, but Viktor tells them other places might only ask for a horse or two as payment. The innkeeper says horsemeat is high on many a persons' menu these days. The charge includes dinner, which is nothing more than a broth with scant vegetables added and watered down ale.

There are a number of thugs and protagonists wandering around the poorly constructed buildings outside of the city walls looking for easy prey. So long as the PCs are together, no one will bother them. The PCs hardly look like the easy pickings these hooligans prefer. On the other hand, PCs on their own, such as the person watching the horses, might be a tempting target. The thugs might spend some time observing the PC before deciding whether the payoff is worth the risk or to continue on their way.

At night, the PCs need to remain alert. Feodor Sachs is a desperate thief who has a gambling problem, as well as an outstanding debt to one of the crime lords of Hergig. He spots the PCs in the late afternoon and follows them at a discrete distance. PCs with *Sixth Sense* will feel like they are being watched, but every time they look around, they will see nothing out of the ordinary. Feodor waits until well after nightfall before he starts creeping closer to the PCs' horses. Even if Feodor sneaks past the watchful (or sleepy) eyes of the PCs, his lack of knowledge about horses will be evident when they rear and neigh at his presence. Should the PCs make a move to stop Feodor, he will flee into the night.

The next morning the PCs can make their way to Hergig's harbour area, which is outside the city walls on the River Wolfen (also known as Wolf Run). Many wounded Hochlander soldiers are being ferried across the river back to

their home province. The PCs can easily find a ferryman to take them across for a fee. In fact, with so many ferrymen available, the PCs should be able to haggle the asking price of 10 shillings per leg down to 10 shillings per PC as well as per mount.

The crossing is without incidence. The soldiers across the river are too exhausted to make much of a fuss. The officers are maintaining order, but continue looking over their shoulders. If the PCs politely ask what is going on, they are directed to the senior officer at the scene, Baron Konrad von Heeden.

The Baron looks at the PCs when they ride up and asks if they met before. He tells them they look very familiar. Waving off his curiosity, Baron von Heeden asks the PCs to identify themselves and their business. If they have not done so already, the PCs should present their warrant from the Emperor. Baron von Heeden is impressed with their warrant and says so when he hands it back. He tells the PCs the officers are concerned about the Ostland army showing up as they are crossing the river. Their commander has told them a truce has been arranged, but the commander quickly fled before any further orders were issued. Should the PCs ask for directions to Castle Schloss, Baron von Heeden points at a dirt track and tells them to be careful. He suggests the PCs should fashion a white flag if they intend to do anything other than join the Ostland army. With that, Baron von Heeden turns to oversee his men's crossing.

It does not take the PCs long to enter a devastated countryside. Whole sections of forest have been cleared and a number of construction sites can be found. A PC with the *Carpentry* or *Engineering* skills or with experience as an Artillerist will recognise this areas as being a site where siege engines have been built. Should the PCs explore the remaining forest further, the sound of crows and ravens will draw the PCs to several great and gnarled oaks. These huge trees served as gallows for the wretches who still hang from the large branches. PCs with the *Heraldry* skill recognise the red and white-coloured armbands as indicating the dead belonged to the Talabeclander army.

After a few minutes, the PCs stumble upon a large, but abandoned encampment. Smashed and ripped tents, broken equipment, and still smouldering ash



indicate the site was abandoned quickly. A number of corpses remain in the area, providing sustenance for the many carrion birds here. If the PCs investigate the dead, they will quickly notice nothing of value remains. The local residents have picked the dead clean of any loot. Some of the dead have slit throats and other stab wounds, indicating they were still alive when the indigenous plunderers arrived to despoil them.

The trail of the retreating force is easy to follow. Within fifteen minutes, the PCs can hear the sounds of siege. A PC with experience as an Artillerist can easily recognise the sounds of a trebuchet in the distance. PCs with experience as Mercenaries or Soldiers, can tell by the sounds that a major assault is not underway; the intent of the besieging army is to wear on the nerves and composure of those under siege.

The land slopes slightly upward. As the PCs near the edge of the forest through which they have been travelling, they can see the siege of Castle Schloss before them.

As the sounds indicated, the cordon is in a lull where some missile troops fire their bows and trebuchets throw large stones. Some troops rest, while others march from one place to another. Couriers on horseback ride to and fro relaying commands and other information from one end of camp to another. A number of large pavilions in the centre of the besieging force indicate where the high command can be found. Should the PCs continue to watch from cover, they will hear the sounds of horsemen approaching from their rear.

There is no time for the PCs to find new cover. In fact, to do so might give the impression the PCs are spies. The horsemen are trackers whose job it is to reconnoitre the rear of the army in order to uncover any potential relief force arriving on the scene. This patrol has picked up the PCs' trail at the abandoned

campsite and followed them to this point. If the PCs do not have their white flag to gain safe conduct, the patrol of eight horsemen point their loaded crossbows at them and move to arrest them. Given the proximity to the Ostland forces, PCs inclined to a violent reaction should re-think their options. Should the PCs present their Imperial warrant, the lead soldier looks at it and comments that he cannot read. He hands the warrant back to the PCs and suggests they accompany him to his sergeant.

Sergeant Richard Münsterberg is a dour Ostlander from near Wurzen. He is a devout Sigmarite, but has no problems with followers of Ulrican or any of the other old gods. In contrast, he hates Talabeclanders and considers them the lowest and least trustworthy of all those living in the Empire. When the PCs are led to him, Münsterberg looks them over and asks their name and home province.

Anyone from Talabecland is looked at suspiciously before Münsterberg orders his men to remove the vile PC from his sight. Münsterberg is

willing to work with anyone other than a Talabeclander.

Sergeant Münsterberg reads the PCs' warrant if they present it to him. He tells the PCs he will lead them to Count von Raukov. Also, they need to surrender all their weapons other than a hand weapon. He insists any Talabeclander PC relinquish all their weapons and possessions (wizards are especially singled out for the latter). The warrant may give the PCs the ability to operate on behalf of the Emperor, but the Sergeant does not take chances, especially not when the Count is close to defeating the Grand Duke. Once the PCs have complied with Münsterberg's demands, the Sergeant calls for nine of his men to assist him with escorting the PCs to the Count's pavilion.

Two Knight wearing surcoats with the head of a red bull on a black and white quartered field guard



the entrance of the Count's pavilion. Ostlander PCs and those with the *Heraldry* skill recognise the coat of arms as belonging to the Knightly Order of the Bull, an order dedicated to protect the Elector of Ostland. The Knights are equipped like any other order of knighthood with their black helms decorated with a stylised bull on its crest.

Münsterberg lifts a hand to signal the escort and PCs to stop. He then formally announces that representatives from the Emperor have arrived from Altdorf and desire to have an audience with His Royal Highness, the Grand Prince of Ostland, Count von Raukov. One of the knights nods his head, and then enters the pavilion. Within a few minutes, he returns and opens the flap for the PCs to enter.

At the far side of the pavilion is a high-backed chair with four chairs on either side. A well-muscled man, bearing some Kislevite features with black hair and moustache, sits in the large chair. His commanders are seated in the other four, while another two Bull Knights stand to either side of the assemblage. PCs with the *Etiquette* skill must successfully pass an **Int**+10 test in order to realise the proper protocol is for the PCs to stand before the five men, bow, and then present whatever message they have to deliver (Ostland PCs with the *Etiquette* skill automatically pass this test). Failure of the test by 30 or more prompts one of the commanders to clear his throat and tell the PCs to bow before the Count and beg his forgiveness for their insolence. The situation should be as awkward and embarrassing as the GM can make it before von Raukov waves off the social faux pas as inconsequential.

Once the PCs hand von Raukov the letter addressed to him, the Count opens it and reads it carefully. The four commanders look at him expectantly, waiting for some word or comment. Von Raukov studies the letter for several minutes, as if weighing his options.

"From the look of you," von Raukov addresses the PCs, "one would not assume you travel in such rarefied circles." Turning to his commanders, von Raukov continues, "This

### Sidebar: The Comings and Goings of Hergig and Schoppendorf

The new WFRPv2 products have continued in the tradition of poor continuity of background maintained by GW since WFB4 was released. This lack of consistency even made its occasional appearance in Hogshead products for WFRP.

Take for example, Hergig (also known as Herzig). In the earlier WFRPv1 products, Hergig was located just east of the river separating Ostland from Hochland. For their version of **Shadows over Bögenhafen**, Hogshead added a new map (pages 14-15), which placed Hergig on the Old Forest Road, contradicting the map on page 18, which first appeared in the GW version of **Mistaken Identity**. Later maps placed Hergig at its correct location until GW's **Storm of Chaos**. This book moved Hergig across the river and this is the location **Empire at War** used when it began nearly nine months ago. Recently, GR/BI maps place Hergig again on the Old Forest Road though the description in **Sigmar's Heirs** clearly indicates that the town is on the west bank of a river.

The movement of Schoppendorf only began with GW's **Storm of Chaos**. From most of its "history", this town was located on the north bank of the River Talabec between Delberz (until its relocation) and Ahlenhof (where this scenario places the town). In the GW book, Schoppendorf was shifted to the east so that it was situated closer to Hergig. In **Sigmar's Heirs**, the town of Schoppendorf was shifted again to be nearer Middenheim.

letter is jointly signed by the Emperor and the powerful Electors of the West: Graf Boris Todbringer and Grand Countess Emmanuelle von Liebewitz. They are requesting our presence at Grand Duke Leopold von Bildhofen's hunting lodge northeast of Schoppendorf on 25 Vorgeheim to discuss a truce to end the fighting. Interesting the Middenland Grand Duke is not one of the signatories."

The Count turn his attention to the PCs, “We assume you also have a similar letter for Grand Duke Gustav von Krieglitz. In the spirit of the Emperor’s request, we think we can see to letting the Grand Duke out of his present situation.” The Grand Duke smiles, “We will be at the Emperor’s conference on the appointed day. If it helps your mission, you can tell Grand Duke of our plans. You could also tell him we will guarantee his and his entourage’s safe passage through our lines.”

Count von Raukov looks past the PCs to the outside. He continues, “If you haven’t eaten,

please avail yourself of the food we serve to our soldiers. You will find our cooks at the rear. Once your bellies are filled, you can go forward to see the Grand Duke. Sergeant Münsterberg will escort you. One more thing: we expect that you will not feel the need to wander off before going forward to complete your mission. We would be most displeased to learn you were mistaken for spies and unintentionally harmed. In fact, Sergeant Münsterberg will have some of his men attend you to ensure nothing untoward occur. Now if you would excuse us, we have much to do.”

#### Feodor Sachs, Thief

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	41	44	3	3	8	44	1	45	31	32	31	31	44

**Skills:** Concealment Urban, Evaluate, Secret Language-Thieves’, Secret Signs-Thieves’, Silent Move Rural, Silent Move Urban.

**Equipment:** Sword and Sack.

#### Typical Thug

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	33	25	3	4	7	30	1	29	29	29	29	29	29

**Skills:** Specialist Weapon-Fist, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Wrestling.

**Equipment:** Club, Leather Jerkin (0/1AP body), Knuckledusters (WS-10, S-1), and Purse (2 shillings and 8 pennies).

#### Reconnaissance Unit (8 Mounted Soldiers)

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	45	41	3	3	9	43	2	35	40	30	25	30	20

**Skills:** Disarm, Dodge Blow, Follow Trail, Ride-Horse, Secret Language-Battle, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow

**Equipment:** Sword, Dagger (S-2, I+10, Parry-10), Mail Shirt (1AP body), Crossbow (R 32/64/300, ES 4, 1 round to fire, 1 to load) and ammunition, Black and white-coloured armband, and Purse (3 GCs, 10 shillings, 16 pennies)

### A House Divided

After the PCs have had a meal, it will be time for them to visit the Grand Duke within his castle. If the PCs did not enter the Ostland camp with a white flag of truce, Münsterberg brings one to them. “You will need this,” he tells them matter-of-factly. “It would not do to have the scum kill you with missile fire. You should also leave your horses here. The way things are going at Castle Schloss, they would as soon eat your mounts as care for them.” The PCs may want assurances their mounts would be safe while in the Ostlanders’ care. Münsterberg replies they are not treacherous dogs like the Talabeclanders who started this war by invading Ostland and burning its villages.

As the PCs approach the closed gates of Castle Schloss, a crossbowman fires a shot in front of them. “That’s far enough, you Ostland swine,” a man shouts from the battlements. “Are you here to surrender?” If the PCs merely reply “no” to the question, the man demands they state their names, birthplace, and the nature of their business. Once the PCs state they are in the service of the Emperor and are carrying a letter from His Imperial Majesty to the Grand Duke, the man instructs them to advance to the gate.

The PCs can easily hear the bolts of the gate slide. The gate opens enough for a heavily armed man to step out. He asks to see proof the PCs are the Emperor’s agents. The PCs can see a number of armed men within the castle grounds waiting for the command to protect their captain. If the PCs do not offer their warrant, the man tells them to go back to their patron and report they have not delivered the letter to the Grand Duke. Should the PCs hand their warrant to the man, he stoically reads it with care. Satisfied at its authenticity, he instructs the PCs they must put on blindfolds to proceed further. He cuts off any objection by stating the blindfolds are non-negotiable.

When the blindfolds are in place, the PCs are escorted into Castle Schloss. Any self-identified Ostlander can expect to be handled in a rougher manner than the others, occasionally

led into some obstacle with a subsequent (and perfunctory) apology. In the darkness of their temporary blindness, the PCs can hear large doors open before them, followed by the sounds of their footsteps on a polished floor. A tug on their arms brings the PCs to a halt and their blindfolds removed. The PCs find themselves in the throne room of Castle Schloss.

A man in his late twenties is seated on small chair next to the throne. An elderly man standing next to him introduces the noble as His Lordship, Regent of Talabecland, and Guardian of the von Krieglitz princelings, Count Helmut Feuerbach. Etiquette dictates the PCs bow their head in recognition of his position, though the PCs might not be able to recall this given their surprise.

Should the PCs ask to see the Grand Duke as they have a private letter for him, Count Feuerbach replies the Grand Duke is currently indisposed. Moreover, the Count has a writ signed by the Grand Duke authorises him to act as regent until His Grace can resume his duties. Count Feuerbach demands the letter from the PCs as well as their Imperial warrant. Any PC with the *Etiquette* skill must successfully pass an **Int**+10 test to realise they are not in a position to deny Feuerbach’s request. If the PCs fail to react appropriately, the elderly Seneschal sternly reminds the PCs they are guests in the Grand Duke’s castle and have no choice but to accede to the demands put to them.

Count Feuerbach hands back the Imperial warrant after reading it, but holds on to the letter from the Emperor to the Grand Duke. He asks the PCs if Count von Raukov made any comment about a temporary truce and safe passage so Talabecland could be represented at the conference. The Count knows protocol forces the Ostlander Count to grant such, but Feuerbach is testing the PCs’ honesty. No matter how the PCs respond, Count Feuerbach thanks them for delivering the letter. He tells them they can report to His Imperial Majesty they were successful. The Count then tells the PCs they will be escorted out in the same manner they were brought in. After all, Count Feuerbach mentions in passing, he wouldn’t want the PCs to report the defensive measures employed at Castle Schloss to the enemy.

### The Road to Peace

The following table marks the events that will take place across the Empire while the PCs are returning from the warzone and heading towards the hunting lodge where the high and mighty in the Empire seek to reach a truce. As before the events in *italics* represent those affairs occurring elsewhere. GMs should note that news of these outside endeavours take some time to reach wherever the PCs happen to be.

Day	Events
12 Vorgeheim	The PCs depart the Ostland army camp and make their way to Estorf by early evening.
13 Vorgeheim	PCs arrive at Langwiese by late afternoon. <i>Markmarschall Matthias von Daimler and his troops reach the vicinity of Ferlangen and begin probing the Nordlander lines.</i>
14 Vorgeheim	PCs arrive at the River Talabec by early afternoon and cross the river to Talagraad.
15 Vorgeheim	PCs spend the day in Talagraad
16 Vorgeheim	PCs depart Talagraad mid-morning and arrive at the riverside Inn of the Blue Kingfisher by the evening.
17 Vorgeheim	PCs arrive at the riverside Inn of the Frog and Stork.
18 Vorgeheim	PCs arrive at the village of Sorno for the evening.
19 Vorgeheim	PCs settle in a cove on the Talabec for the evening.
20 Vorgeheim	PCs arrive at the town of Ravenstein in the late afternoon.
21 Vorgeheim	PCs arrive in the town of Ahlenhof early evening
22 Vorgeheim	PCs arrive in the town of Volgen in the late afternoon.
23 Vorgeheim	PCs arrive in Schoppendorf in the late afternoon.
24 Vorgeheim	
25 Vorgeheim	Conference at the Hunting Lodge.

### Back to the Talabec

The PCs return to the Ostland camp by late afternoon where Sergeant Münsterberg greets them. He informs the PCs Count von Raukov has asked him to show the PCs to a tent which has been set up for them to stay for the night. The Sergeant tells them they will be guarded throughout the night so they should not feel the impulse to wander about and be mistaken for spies. After all, he points out, accidents do happen.

So long as the PCs mind what they were told, the night passes by without incident. The following morning, the PCs are allowed to depart from camp and make their way back. The PCs are able to procure passage across the river to Hergig without a problem, though they will note there isn't the evacuation of the Hochland troops as there had been early the previous day. As the PCs ride on the road to Estorf and Langwiese, they will notice groups of soldiers in ragged clothing – some of whom bear wounds – returning to their homes on foot. Those who look unwell ask the PCs for any food they can spare. Should the PCs ask the soldiers about the war, the men tell them their captains have released them from service. Rumour has it Count Ludenhof agreed to a truce with the Ostland Elector.

The PCs are able to make it to the “Nimble Frog” so they can return their horses to Willi Aufstand. The innkeeper greets them and asks for news from the war. He is relieved if the PCs tell him the Hochland Count was able to secure a truce. If the PCs ask about the Sons of Ulric, Willi tells them he has had no problems since the PCs departed. In the event the PCs have killed Helmut Todbringer, Willi informs the PCs the Baron is buried in a marked grave in the rear of the coaching inn face down. A wandering priest of Mórr has not yet appeared and Willi did not want to leave the corpse in the meat cellar. The innkeeper also reveals he sent a letter to the Graf in Middenheim notifying him of his kin's death.

Should the PCs have avoided the confrontation with the Sons or Baron Helmut escaped, Willi simply mentions they never came back. For this small favour, he has made offerings to Ulric, Sigmar, Taal, and Mórr.

Back on foot, the PCs are able to return to the north bank of the River Talabec, but there is no Windrunner waiting for them. PCs scanning across the river must make an **Observe** test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*) to see Count von Walfen's ship berthed at Talagraad. Once again, the PCs will have to rely on the ferry service of Tobias Föhremann and his sons, Ernst and Walter. There is a bell near the old temple of Karog so anyone wishing to cross can summon Tobias.

Tobias' fee has risen to 15 shillings per person for a one-way trip across the river. The talkative ferryman is keen to hear any rumours and news the PCs have. He will question them during the entire five-minute trip it takes to get across the river. Given the recent unpleasantry with the war and all, business has not been very good.

As the PCs reach the south shore, a single bell from the local chapel of Ulric pells mournfully. At the busy harbour, a town crier announces:

"Harken to me, good people of Talagraad. Word has reached Her Grace Grand Duchess Elise Krieglitz-Untermensch that her cousin, His Grace Grand Duke Gustav von Krieglitz, has died from wounds suffered in battle. May Ulric and Mórr take mercy on his soul."

The PCs may be surprised for many reasons, one of which may be that Count Feuerbach or the seneschal did not tell them of the news. The fact of the matter is the Grand Duke died during the night of the PCs' departure from the Ostlander camp. News travels faster by river and the messenger to the Grand Duchess had only reached Talabheim late the day before the PCs arrived at Talagraad.

The PCs can find the Windrunner easily enough, but Captain Halder is not on board. The rest of the crew is on board and they tell the PCs the Captain had a sealed message to deliver to the Grand Duchess. If any event, the Captain told them he doesn't mean to return to Altdorf until mid-morning on 16 Vorgeheim. So, the PCs are welcomed to stay onboard for the night or they can come back before the boat

departs. Should the PCs inquire, the crew tells them they prefer the PCs stay onboard. Talagraad is not known to be a particularly safe port.

Should the PCs visit any of the riverside taverns – such as the Ten-Tailed Cat, The Hare & Hounds (both of which are described in **Warpstone # 22**, pages 52-53), the River Maiden, and the Tumbling Waters – they may hear the following rumours and news (much of it misleading in part):

- *The craven Count of Hochland pulled his troops from the fight against the Ostlanders because Averlanders sacked one of his soft towns.*
- *The Grand Duke was killed by foul sorcery.*
- *They say that there was treachery in Castle Schloss.*
- *The Ostlanders had to have many wizards in their midst. How else can they fight Talabeclanders, Nordlanders, and the Orcs in the east with some success?*
- *I've heard that half of Altdorf was burned to the ground by a small band of mutant-lovers.*
- *It's said that the Emperor led the victory against the allied Middenland-Middenheim army.*
- *No, Middenheim has thrown its lot with the Emperor. The two mean to divide up the Empire between them.*

Captain Halder returns to his ship in the evening of 15 Vorgeheim. It took him some time to be able to deliver the message from the Emperor to the Grand Duchess personally, but he was finally able to do so. The Captain welcomes the news of the PCs' success. The Windrunner leaves the next morning once everything is ready.

The trip to Schoppendorf can be as eventful or dull as the GM wishes. River traffic is still slow since many do not know how the war fares and shortages in crops are beginning to be felt. In some place, locals have taken the law onto their own in the absence of roadwardens and hung whatever bandits or pirates they could find. In turn, these have been met with reprisals by some of the stronger bands of pirates and bandits.



### Alone in the Woods

In the late afternoon of 23 Vorgeheim, the Windrunner pulls into the small harbour of the rich timber town of Schoppendorf. Captain Halder comments that the PCs might prefer to stay in town on this trip since it is too late in the day to make it to the hunting lodge to the northeast. If so, he recommends the Grandfather Oak Inn, located near the Timberplatz and close to the Woodcutters Tankard. He wishes them luck.

The guards at the Waterway Gate tell the PCs that while they can wear their weapons and armour in town, they are prohibited from using these in town. As the PCs walk through the gate and past the wooden palisades, they can see the buildings in town are mostly made of wood with few workings of stone. Finding Timberplatz is easy enough since it is at the junction of the streets leading to the harbour and Timber Gate.

The prices for private rooms at the Grandfather Oak Inn are reasonable. Wenzel Haydn runs a clean establishment and serves good fare. The war hasn't affected the local area at this time, so the cost of lodging and food is roughly that listed in **WFRP**, page 293. If asked for news, Wenzel beams as he tells the PCs the Emperor, Graf of Middenheim, and Grand Countess of Nuln arrived from Altdorf just two days before. He comments that knights from several Orders escorted them, among them the legendary Knights Panther. In the event the PCs mention they are Knights Panther, Wenzel scoffs since they do not look like the knights he's seen. Should the PCs show him their medallions, Wenzel apologises profusely and then, once excitement takes over, offers to give them their room and board free for the night.

About an hour after the PCs arrived at Schoppendorf, they can hear the sound of the bell on the gatehouse clanging. The slow rhythm of the bell signals the approach of someone significant rather than an attack. If the PCs held towards the docks, they will see the arrival of Count von Raukov, a scribe, and an escort of ten Knights of the Order of the Bull. After talking to the gate guards, the Ostlander party make their way to the manor house of Lord Albers Wasserbad, where they will spend the evening. Should the PCs try to speak to the Count, they will be pushed away

and told the Count is exhausted from the long travel.

**[GM Note:** The background information on Schoppendorf used in this scenario comes from the Schoppendorf material from the Warpstone website ([warpstone.darcore.net](http://warpstone.darcore.net) – direct link is [warpstone.darcore.net/articles/schoppendorf/](http://warpstone.darcore.net/articles/schoppendorf/)). We strongly urge GMs to look over the site and add whatever elements necessary to make this segment of the scenario more enjoyable for their players].

The Woodcutter's Tankard is a lively and crowded place. It's a huge alehouse that once was an unused warehouse. Johann Wetterloffel is the owner and has known many of the local woodsmen for over two decades. While Johann serves standard fare, he has three very good varieties of ale from which his patrons may select and pay extra for a pint: Boars Head Red (1/2 or 14d), Taal's Amber (1/5 or 17d), and Ulric's Dark Bitter (1/8 or 20d).

While the PCs are having a jolly time in the Woodcutter's Tankard, they can hear the following:

- *Something big must be happening. The great lords of the West have arrived two days ago and made their way in the direction of the Grand Duke's hunting lodge.*
- *Grand Duke von Bildhofen was not in their company.*
- *Some say the Grand Duke has fallen out of favour.*
- *Ostlanders have arrived in town. Did he come to surrender?*
- *Bands of Beastmen are still attacking isolated homesteads. Why did the Grand Duke attack Altdorf rather than defend us?*
- *Or attack the Elves. Did you hear that the Elves murdered Baron Nikse of Nordland?*
- *Perhaps the meeting is to plan an attack on the Elves in the north?*
- *I'm more concerned about the price of hemp from Ostland. There are stories that there will be a shortage.*
- *The harvest in the east has been lost due to the war.*

If there are any Elf PCs, they will notice the unkind manner in which the woodsman patrons

glare at them. They make no move to attack anyone, however. So long as Elf PCs make no antagonistic moves, the patrons will soon forget them. Should Elf PCs try to aggressively defend themselves, they may incite a brawl. Drunken woodmen need little encouragement.

With the coming of 24 Vorgeheim, the PCs still have a day before the truce negotiations begin. They could either venture forth to the hunting lodge early or stay in Schoppendorf until they receive a summons from Baron Heinrich to meet him at the hunting lodge by 2:00 PM. A Knights Panther delivers the summons. By early afternoon, horns from the direction of the Waterway Gate sound the arrival of Grand Duchess Elise Krieglitz-Untermensch of Talabheim and Count Helmut Feuerbach of Talabecland who are travelling together along with their aides. The Grand Duchess has provided the escort of nine Storm Guards (an elite group of nine knights named in honour of the nine survivors of the Battle of Nizkiy Ridge in 2302 I.C.) and eleven Knights Panther, Talabheim chapter. Count Feuerbach decided to leave Talabecland's elite Order of the Eagle behind defending Castle Schloss and the late Grand Duke's young wife and twin boys.

When the PCs make their way to the hunting lodge, the trip takes them around two hours. As they near, two helmeted Knights Panthers bid the PCs to halt and identify themselves. PCs will have to pass an **Int** test (+10 for *Acute Hearing*) to recognise the voices as belonging to von Gutzkow and von Schelling. Whether the two guards are recognised, the Knights Panther still require the PCs to produce their Imperial warrant or summons from Baron Heinrich in order to pass. In the event the PCs have lost both, they will not be allowed to pass the established perimeter without the help of Count von Walfen or Baron Heinrich. Luckily for the PCs, one of the two men do check on the security situation from time to time, so the PCs can wait for as little as 10 minutes or as much as two hours.

Once the PCs have produced the warrant (or summons if they have it in their possession), one of the Knights Panther tells them they are to report to Baron Heinrich straight away. They instruct the PCs to stay on the path and they will reach the hunting lodge in five minutes. If the Baron is not there when they arrive, the PCs are expected to wait for him.

As the PCs make their way, they can see campsites set up in several clearings with "off-duty" Knights and their attendant Sergeants out of their armour (leggings may still be on, but all other pieces have been removed) and enjoying a moment of relaxation in the woods. Many are practicing their craft, sharpening weapons, or taking a moment to eat some food and drink some ale. In addition to Knights Panther, High Helms, and Imperial Guards, the PCs can see men wearing a surcoat of a Red Lion on a field of Black and Yellow. PCs with the *Heraldry* skill recognise these knights as belonging to the Order of the Red Lion from Nuln.

Whenever a contingent of Knights appears escorting their lord, a trumpet (or some such horn instrument) is sounded summoning the Knights Panther Grandmaster and two Knights Panther to the entrance of the encampment. He welcomes the arriving noble and hands an Imperial writ to him or her placing their accompanying Order of Knights under his command for the duration of negotiations. Von Plauen then has his two Knights escort the noble to the hunting lodge while he takes the newly arrived knights and sergeants to their campsite.

The Ducal hunting lodge is actually an old stone keep built on an ancient earthen mound. Two Imperial Guards stand at attention at the entrance of the lodge. They will not let the PCs pass unless they are in the company of one of the nobles in attendance. The PCs are obliged to wait outside until then.

When they are in the company of the Baron, Heinrich Todbringer has the PCs follow him into a private chamber within the lodge. Before they get down to business, the Baron wants the PCs to relate to him everything that has passed since they were last in his company. Baron Heinrich urges the PCs to not leave out any details. Should the PCs mention their part in the death of Baron Helmut Todbringer, Baron Heinrich assures them they are not in any trouble. The PCs were lawfully in the service of both the Emperor and Graf at the time, so they are protected from any legal ramification for killing a noble.

Once the PCs have finished, the Baron tells them negotiations for a truce to end the eastern war begin at noon on 25 Vorgeheim. In honour of their service to the Empire, the PCs will be given a place in the meeting to observe the proceedings. The meeting would otherwise include only the nobility and their clerks. In order to ensure the