

Imperial Coup d'État

Starting on 2 Sommerzeit and continuing over the next several days, Altdorf is thrown into political crisis. Proclamations issued from the Imperial Palace in the name of Crown Prince Wolfgang reveals his move to bring the entire province of Reikland including Altdorf under his rule. The Crown Prince's first step is to re-impose Martial Law (with curfew starting one hour after dusk and lasting until dawn) and proclaim himself Elector of the Reikland during his uncle's illness. The next follows the day after, when Wolfgang forbids his uncle's Imperial Court from certain areas of the Imperial Palace and brought in his own advisors to usurp the role of the Court. Separate calls by the Court Lector and Chancellor for meetings with Crown Prince are declined.

These acts led to the following rumours circulating about the city:

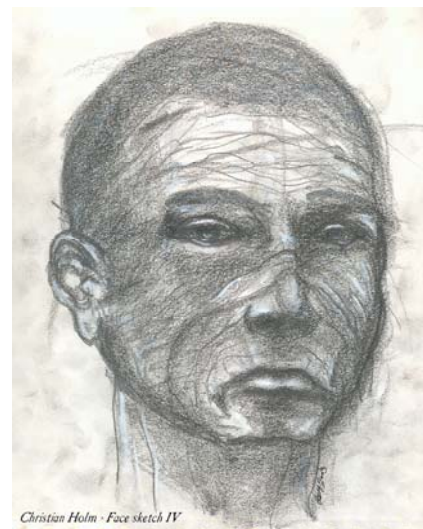
- *They say that the Emperor is gravely ill and will last for only a few days.*
- *I tell you, something doesn't smell right. First the Grand Theogonist and now the Emperor. How are we supposed to deal with Middenland marching against us?*
- *Sigmar's favour has left us.*
- *All this turmoil means that the price of the harvest, whatever there will be, has jumped up again.*
- *Rumour has it that a growing number of Reikland nobles, including senior Sigmarite priests, support Crown Prince Wolfgang to replace the ailing Emperor now.*
- *Does it really matter who runs the province? One Blue Blood is the same as another.*
- *You know what this means, don't you? More taxes. Never fails.*
- *Who will take care of our ailing Emperor now?*
- *Perhaps things will return to normal now that the Altdorf army bested Middenland in combat near Rottefach.*

- *I hear that the courtiers and diplomats are discussing whether Karl-Franz should abdicate. Can you image that? The man's taken ill and they want to turn him out.*
- *Can you believe that one victory against Middenland has the Crown Prince now publicly advocating military assistance to Ostland and even an invasion of Middenland? Prices will get worse before they get better.*

The Crown Prince is making his move on the advice of two men: Erwin von Mühlerberg, Captain of Castle Reiksgard, and Martin Fechner, Secretary to the Crown Prince. The two men are ambitious and see Wolfgang's rise as a means for their own personal goals to come true. The problem is that these objectives do not coincide.

As explained in the introduction to this adventure, Captain von Mühlerberg is a leader of one small cell of the

Purple Hand, though he is unaware of the schemes of the bigger Altdorf cell and their efforts to bring about the Time of Changes. Even if he knew of these other schemes, the Captain fully understands that the Great Mutator will only reward the one who succeeds and not the failures.



In Herr Fechner's case, it is a simple matter of power, which should enable him to turn the tables on the Cult of the Scarlet Member and destroy them once and for all. The problem is he needs to be very crafty so he does not alert his assistant of his intentions. If Greta were to discover his plans, he could be ruined. The problem for Herr Fechner is that Greta Cranach is already advancing her own agenda.

Sidebar: The Scarlet Member

The Scarlet Member is a Slaaneshi cult from Altdorf. The cult has recently initiated its own plans for corrupting Crown Prince Holswig-Abenauer. The secretary to the Crown Prince, Martin Fechner, is a man with rather eccentric tastes when it comes to fulfilling his carnal desires. He recently became compromised by the Slaaneshi cult and was threatened with exposure if he did not agree to advance their schemes.

Secretary Fechner took on a cultist, Greta Cranach, as his assistant. Her goal is to convert the Crown Prince into the ways of her deity. Cranach knows she must tread carefully as any discovery could mean the plans of her cult would be uncovered. Cranach does not fear execution, yet though the thought of being impaled somehow thrills her.

On the evening of 2 Sommerzeit, a message is sent to the PCs' townhouse bearing the seal of the Temple of Mórr. The message is from Priestess Inga requesting the PCs meet her first thing in the morning, around 9:00 AM.

At the meeting, Priestess Inga expresses her concerns that things are spiralling in directions unforeseen when the PCs first met with her. The Priestess of Mórr is unsure as to where this may eventually lead, but she is concerned that it is not good for the stability of the Empire. The Crown Prince's actions are without recent precedence, but there's not much that can be done under the circumstances. Priestess Inga believes the key is the Emperor's recovery from whatever ails him.

If asked what the Priestess knows, Inga can only say that she saw the Emperor during the funeral procession for the Grand Theogonist and concluded he seems to be suffering from wasting malady. The Indagatrix Grandis of The High and Chivalric Order of Deserved Rest pauses in thought for a moment. She then looks at the PCs and suggest they pay Frau Doktor Silma Dönitz a visit at the Collegium Medicinae [location 27]. Priestess Inga comments that Doktor Dönitz was one

of the physicians who had a chance to examine the Emperor fairly recently and may have some idea as to what might be happening. The Priestess tells the PCs she will give them a letter of introduction to help them gain an audience.

House Call

The Collegium Medicinae is an impressive building with a colonnade façade with bas-reliefs of owls and doves signifying the guild's associations with the cults of both Verena (knowledge) and Shallya (healing). Entrance to the physicians' guild (for that is what this Collegium truly is) is relatively easy.

The guild's guards are mostly positioned to deal with any unsatisfied clients rather than limiting those visiting the guildhall. Each guardsman wears a band on his left arm with the guild's coat of arms (red sign of the hammer on a white background). Any guard or member of the guild can direct the PCs to Doktor Dönitz' office on the second floor. There is a staircase nearby that leads up to the three floors of the building.

In order to see the Frau Doktor, the PCs must present the letter of introduction to her secretary, Wenzel Albers. He examines the seal on the letter and then asks the PCs to wait for a few moments. Wenzel knocks on the closed door three times, enters the room and closes the door behind him. Minutes later, Wenzel opens the door and motions the PCs to enter.

Doktor Dönitz' office has stacks of papers and piles of books strewn about her office. She apologises for the mess and informs the PCs she can only give them a few moments of her time. Wenzel exits the office at this time and closes the door behind him.

If asked about the Emperor, Doktor Dönitz replies she has only seen the Emperor for a brief moment. Dönitz relates that the Court physicians were stumped about the decline of his health and asked her to take a look to see if she could help with the diagnosis. Frau Doktor informs the PCs she asked if the illness could be magically induced, but was told that the Supreme Patriarch could not find anything to suggest that possibility. When she could find

anything to explain the loss of the Emperor's vigour, Doktor Dönitz was told to keep whatever she learned confidential since the security of the Empire is at stake should information about Karl-Franz spread.

Silma Dönitz kept her word even after the Grand Theogonist's funeral when the Emperor's health was displayed – in a fashion – for all to see. With the Grand Prince's proclamation, Doktor Dönitz no longer feels compelled to hold her tongue.

Doktor Dönitz has been researching the Emperor's symptoms since she examined him (around 22 Sigmarzeit, if the PC must know). In her judgment, it seems his humours have tilted too much towards black gall, yet this does not entirely explain his mental state. Frau Doktor believes the Emperor does not exhibit a melancholic state, which would be one of the symptoms for which she would be looking. The Emperor's mind appears to have been dulled, though Silma Dönitz noted his eyes would sharpen for a brief moment or two before his look became more glazed.

Not wishing to look foolish to her colleagues, Dönitz kept her peace as she began her research. She tells the PCs she has confided in the PCs only as a favour to Priestess Inga. Should the PCs go public with what she has told them, Doktor Dönitz promises she will deny everything. She then bids them good day and good luck.

Mind Games

Another trick the PCs might try is to send the Chancellor a message using the Altdorf Couriers letting him know that Herr Kastor Lieberung is back in town (or some similarly phrased letter). They could time the arrival to take place some time after they have set up surveillance to watch the front of the Chancellery. After 4D6+6 minutes of the arrival of the message, a young lad wearing the livery of the Chancellor's office hurriedly departs and makes his way to the part of the Imperial Palace where the Court Lector has his apartments.

It does not take terribly long for the courier to return to the Chancellery. The PCs might try to intercept the young man at some point in his errand, but they will need to be careful doing so. Should the lad, Paul Mendel, believe he is about to be assaulted on the streets, he will begin shouting for the Watch before running away from the PCs. In other words, Paul creates a scene that the PCs hardly need.

Should the PCs succeed in escorting Paul for a private discussion elsewhere, they can easily bribe him (for about five or more shillings) into revealing that he delivered the message to a Sigmarite priest named Brother Dieter. In the event the PCs intercepted Paul before the message was delivered, the courier is willing to let them look at the sealed letter (without an official stamp) if they pay him at least 5 GCs and can reasonably reseal the letter. If this is done, the PCs can read the following letter:

*****Handout #8*****

Kastor Lieberung has contacted me. I need to see you immediately as we need to discuss how to deal with this new complication. I am not sure hat he wants, but I fear that his return to Altdorf after a two-year absence doesn't bode well for our plans, especially in light of the problems wrought by the Crown Prince's declarations.

The PCs may inquire as to who gave Paul the message to deliver. For another monetary consideration of roughly 4 shillings, Paul replies the Chancellor himself gave him the letter. Should the PCs inquire as to whether the lad would swear to this information before a magistrate, Paul starts to become nervous, as he fears he may be released from his job if his role in this sordid affair became known. He explains Chancellor Heinz is a man who would seek retribution upon those he sees as betrayers.

Should the PCs be short of funds, they could certainly get the information from Paul by threatening violence. Of course, taking this

approach means that the PCs are going to have to imprison Paul somewhere to ensure that he cannot betray them to the authorities.

If the PCs do nothing more than watch, they will see Brother Dieter approach the Chancellery around 10-15 minutes after Paul's return. The Sigmarite priest looks about warily in the apparent hope he has not been followed. Brother Dieter will remain within the Chancellery for about three hours before the Chancellery guards escort him to his flat. The PCs may follow discreetly so they may learn where the Sigmarite priest – if that is what he truly is – lives.

This Masquerade

If the PCs have been clever, they may have observed the Chancellor from a distance several times. Johann Heinz has come out from hiding in his offices since the execution of Gustav Fokker and his fellow conspirators, but has been more frequently seen since Wolfgang's apparent coup d'état as he continues to move from his offices to the Imperial Palace in the hopes of gaining an audience.

Should the PCs have the Chancellor under surveillance, they will note he generally spends several hours in the Imperial Palace apparently awaiting the Crown Prince's pleasure. In the event the Kastor Lieberung look-alike is still among them, the PCs might boldly decide to have that character impersonate the Chancellor in order to gain access to his offices and, hopefully, any secret files or communications he has in his possession.

The first thing the PC would need to do is attempt to meet the Chancellor in the hope of gaining some knowledge to the layout of the Chancellery and location of his office. This could be done successfully if the PCs (without the Lieberung look-alike) enter the building with the goal of meeting Johann Heinz without an appointment or invitation after the Chancellor has departed for the Imperial Palace. The PCs could get far with a successful **Bluff** test (+10 for *Acting*, +10 for *Charm*, +10 for *Etiquette*, +10 for *Wit*) until they reach the

Chancellor's secretary, Herbert Krebs. Herr Krebs would put a stop to the PCs' wanderings and firmly (in a rather condescending tone) tell them there can be no appointment without a letter of introduction from a noble or reputable member of the Altdorf establishment. Though rebuffed, the PCs have gained the knowledge needed to reach their goal.

The next item the PCs need to obtain in order to assist in their masquerade is clothing fit for a Chancellor. This could get rather pricey and requires the PCs to be willing to part with some money (say, on the order of 80 GCs for the fine velvets and fashionable silks). Some of the clothiers in the Oberhausen or Obereik districts are able to meet the PCs' needs. One well-known clothier for the wealthy is Marx and Spengler near Reichenhall Mansion [location 1] in the Obereik district.

When he is so attired, the impersonating PC may time his entry into the Imperial Chancellery shortly after Chancellor Heinz has departed to the Imperial Palace. The PC may be unsure how to react, but it should be a fairly simple guess to assume the Chancellor deals with his underlings harshly while acting like a toady around his betters. This means the PC will need to rely on **Ld** tests (+10 for *Acting*, +10 if PC has experience as a lawyer or noble) rather than **Fel** when dealing with the Chancellor's staff. Of course, there is the matter of sounding like the Chancellor, which the PC might be able to pull off if he has gotten close enough to hear the Chancellor speak (during one of his earlier sojourns to the Palace since there is usually a lackey to order about as he crosses the street) and has the *Mimic* skill. If need be, the PC could just growl at the subordinates since those other than sycophants would rather avoid the attention of the Chancellor.

Should the masquerading PC march to the Chancellor's office as if he is the agitated Chancellor, he would easily gain admittance. Even Herr Krebs knows better than to bother an angry Johann Heinz.

Once inside the office, the PC has limited time to rifle through the files looking for incriminating evidence. The office is finely furnished with a

plush couch and several armchairs for entertaining the powerful and influential. There is one desk near the picture window facing the front of the building and overlooking the buildings across to the Palace. The drawers are locked (**CR 5%**) and, assuming the PCs can open it, contain the Chancellor's personal diary and other official papers. If the PCs take the time to go through the items they have found, they will find nothing incriminating. The information contains notes of official meetings and appointments with other members of the Court.

Before searching the office, the PCs might wish to position one of their number close to the window in order to keep an eye out for the returning Chancellor. Things would get awfully complicated should he return while the PCs are ransacking his office.

Should a PC successfully pass a **Search** test, they will find a wall safe (**CR 25%**) behind a picture of the Emperor on the wall to the right of the window. If the PCs can gain access, they will find a locked journal (**CR 20%** and with *Magic Lock* cast upon it) containing coded passages. A PC with the *Cryptography* skill quickly realises they will need some time with the book, probably more than the PCs have

before the Chancellor returns. If the PCs take the book and leave the office in the condition they found it, it will take Johann Heinz about 2D6 hours to discover the journal's disappearance.

The Chancellor returns to the Chancellery within one hour of the PCs' entrance into his office. In the event the PCs are still within, they will get a chance to make good their escape as Brother Dieter meets the Chancellor in the street just outside the Chancellery for a brief exchange of words. If need be, there is a back staircase that leads out of the building to the southwest street.

Should the PCs wait to try to ambush Johann Heinz in his office, they do not get the chance. Before he could enter, the Chancellor is stopped by his bewildered secretary and asked how he managed to depart his office without being seen. The Chancellor replies he had left well over an hour before and mentioned it to Herr Krebs as he left. The Secretary states he saw Chancellor Heinz return to his office an hour ago. As a result of this exchange – most of which the PCs can hear if they put an ear to the door – the Chancellor quickly retreats to get an armed guard detail (D6+2) to enter his office and arrest anyone within. He then quickly departs for the safety of the Imperial Palace.

Standard Chancellery Guard

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	42	39	4	3	8	41	2	30	38	29	42	33	31

Skills: Disarm, Dodge Blow, Secret Language-Battle, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun

Equipment: Sword, Mail Shirt (1 AP body) under surcoat with the coat of arms of the Chancellor's office, and Purse (1D6 GCs, 2D6 shillings and 3D6 pennies)

Breaking the Code

If the PCs were clever as well as lucky, they will have made it back to the relative safety of their townhouse with the Chancellor's secret and encrypted journal. A PC with the *Cryptography* skill would need 1D6+4 hours of uninterrupted study in order to have a chance (**Int** test) to crack the encryption. The

PC gets three attempts, though each attempt requires another roll to determine the additional hours of study.

Should none of the PCs have the appropriate skill or they have failed all three of their **Int** tests, their only option is to take the book to Priestess Inga. Though there are few Mórrians

who have the skill, the Indagatrix Grandis sets up a meeting with Count von Walfen and hands over the book to him with the proviso that he informs her of the essence of the book after his own men decipher it. Priestess Inga will relay what she learned to the PCs, but it will take some days.

The following handout consists of a few notable entries in the journal. This should be given to any PCs who have the *Read/Write* skill so they can attempt to break the code. The GM should only allow those PCs with the *Cryptography* skill to take the appropriate test. It is assumed that the PCs will not get a hold of this journal until after 2 Sommerzeit.

*****Handout #9*****

<p><u>Geheimnistag 2510</u> <i>soqd qdi lupqokc ub uan jek ok qdi ydanyd qu eppopq qdi kis hiyqun si eni now in lupouk qu xicok qdi cnezaeh yunnalqouk ub qdi heizin. qdi qoji ub yhekcip op yujokc.</i></p> <p><u>30 Pflugzeit 2512</u> <i>fapq e znul ub qdi yunnalqokc yukyuyqouk ok soki dep qdi ziponiz ibbiyq. qdi kis izoyq op yeapokc juni yukpqineqouk qdek si deri duliz.</i></p> <p><u>5 Jahrdrung 2513</u> <i>sunz dep yuji qdeq qdi ikijv dep ynapdiz qdi yihhp ok suhf yoqv ekz jekv jijxinp eni joppokc. qdi cneiq jaqequn ukhv nisenzp qdupi soqd qdi jupq yakkokc.</i></p> <p><u>29 Pflugzeit 2513</u> <i>eqqijq xv ikijv qu niyukyohi beohp. qdi ikijv qegip ekuqdin pqil qu sen.</i></p> <p><u>22 Kaldzeit 2513</u> <i>ku pock ub yhekcip uk qdi heizin viq. di jev viq payyajx xaq akqoh qdik di op ub api qu qdi cneiq yeapi.</i></p>	<p><u>12 Sigmarzeit 2514</u> <i>qdi heizin op jezi ub pqink pqabb. pqohh ku pock ub yhekcip qu dop linpuk. dop jokz ekz diehqd deri ziyhokiz pokyi si xicek ezjokopqinokc qdi yukyuyqouk xaq di oiijp qu deri pqexohopiz ok qdi hepq qdnii jukqdp. ukyi di uaqhorip dop apibahhkippp dop zupeci sohh okyneipi.</i></p> <p><u>21 Sigmarzeit 2514</u> <i>kisp ub qdi uaqxnieg ub sen ok qdi iepq nieydip qdi yoqv. oq dep xicak. qdi qoji ub yhekcip op ehjupq aluk ap.</i></p> <p><u>29 Sigmarzeit 2514</u> <i>itlhupouk eq ydanyd gohhp docd lnoipq ub qdi eyynapiz nihocouk. kuq pani shu yujjoqiz qdop eyq xaq oq ezrekyip uan lhekp.</i></p> <p><u>2 Sommerzeit 2514</u> <i>qdi pkorihhokc ynusk lnokyip ziyheneqouk ub dop okqikq qu qegi qdi qoqhi ub uan qenciq sep akitliyyqiz ekz aksihyujiz. si eni bunyiz qu yiepi soqd qdi phus luopukokc ub qdi heizin akqoh si yek ziqinjoki uan kitq yuanpi.</i></p>
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Should the PCs be successful in determining the cipher, they find that vowels are shifted by a factor of one to the right (thus, “a” becomes “e”) while consonants shift three to the left (“b” becomes “x”). In addition, any capitalisations

or punctuation marks other than a period are ignored. Dates remain unchanged so as not to easily give away the encryption. The following may help the GM:

Letter	Encrypt	Letter	Encrypt	Letter	Encrypt
A	E	J	F	S	P
B	X	K	G	T	Q
C	Y	L	H	U	A
D	Z	M	J	V	R
E	I	N	K	W	S
F	B	O	U	X	T
G	C	P	L	Y	V
H	D	Q	M	Z	W
I	O	R	N		

Once deciphered, the text reads thusly:

Geheimnistag 2510

With the posting of our man in the Church to assist the new Lector, we are now in position to begin the gradual corruption of the Leader. The Time of Changes is coming.

30 Pflugzeit 2512

Just a drop of the corrupting concoction in wine has the desired effect. The new Edict is causing more consternation than we have hoped.

5 Jahrdrung 2513

Word has come that the Enemy has crushed the cells in Wolf City and many members are missing. The Great Mutator only rewards those with the most cunning.

29 Pflugzeit 2513

Attempt by Enemy to reconcile fails. The Enemy takes another step to war.

22 Kaldzeit 2513

No sign of a change on the Leader yet. He may yet succumb, but until then he is of use to the Great Cause.

From the text, it should be easy to figure out that the Chancellor is behind a plot to corrupt the Emperor. The problem is that there is no proof that the locked journal is his, though the active *Magic Lock* spell and last entry indicates that the journal has been fairly recently opened. There is no name in the book and the block printing partially disguises the writer's identity.

12 Sigmarzeit 2514

The Leader is made of sterner stuff. Still no sign of changes to his person. His mind and health have declined since we began administering the concoction, but he seems to have stabilised in the last three months. Once he outlives his usefulness, his dosage will increase.

21 Sigmarzeit 2514

News of the outbreak of war in the east reaches the city. It has begun. The Time of Changes is almost upon us.

29 Sigmarzeit 2514

Explosion at Church kills High Priest of the accursed religion. Not sure who committed this act, but it advances our plans.

2 Sommerzeit 2514

The snivelling Crown Prince's declaration of his intent to take the title of our target was unexpected and unwelcome. We are forced to cease with the slow poisoning of the Leader until we can determine our next course.

If the PCs also have the message sent by the Chancellor to Brother Dieter, they can compare the writing style and see some similarities.

The PCs will need to get more proof in order to tie the Chancellor and Brother Dieter to the conspiracy. Even Priestess Inga will point this out to them.

Late Night Visit

Should the PCs find themselves at a point where they have no idea where to go next, the GM can help by bringing in a character from the very beginning of **The Enemy Within** campaign: Doktor Quintus Fassbinder from the University of Altdorf. Alternatively, they may have approached his office at the University, which will prompt this visit as well.

Doktor Fassbinder is a scholar whose research into hidden cults had brought the Purple Hand to his attention over two years ago. He assisted Adolphus Kuftos' failed quest to bring the Magister Impedimentae, Kastor Lieberung, to justice. Since the Bounty Hunter's death and the subsequent odd behaviour by the object of the hunt, Doktor Fassbinder has gathered enough information to conclude that following the activities of Herr Lieberung would lead him away from the Purple Hand. He has since redirected his investigations.

By the time the PCs return to Altdorf (or arrive, if no PC from the earlier parts of TEW survived), Doktor Fassbinder has reached the conclusion that the Purple Hand has infiltrated the Chancellery and Church of Sigmar. He doesn't know who the agents are, but his views are supported by the fact that only the Chancellor and Court Lector have been rumoured to have access to the Emperor.

The activities of the PCs have also come to Fassbinder's notice, though he will not let the PCs know how this came to pass – the good Doktor uses informants, some of dubious character. Masquerading as a physician, Fassbinder comes to the PCs' townhouse late one night on the pretence to see an ailing individual. When the PCs answer his knock, the 50ish, thinly built Doktor passes them a card while in a clear voice stating he has been summoned to see a person suffering from an uncertain ailment. If the PCs look at the card, they see:

*****Handout #10*****

I have some important information to discuss with you. Please play along as we are being watched.

Once inside, the PCs might ask why he would seek to talk to them, if they did not approach him earlier themselves. In this case, Doktor Fassbinder tells them he has learned of their investigation (through a contact in the Graukappen that he will never divulge), which coincides with his own. In the event the PCs did go look for him at the University, he will just state his identity. He is hoping perhaps they can mutually benefit from one another. To this end, Fassbinder suggests they continue their discussion in one of the upstairs rooms, preferably the one in the back since it is harder for those lurking in the darkness outside to get a good view.

As a show of good faith, Fassbinder introduces himself if necessary and reveals his role in assisting Adolphus Kuftos two years in the past (**Shadows Over Bøgenhafen**, page 40). If the PC who resembles Kastor Lieberung is still among the group, Fassbinder turns to him and apologises for having mistaken him for one of the Purple Hand leaders. The Doktor states it was only his reflections upon the PC's behaviour since then that led to realise the PC must be a different person.

Fassbinder is willing to start if the PCs agree to alternatively exchange information with him. The scholar is willing to divulge the following bits of information and reasoned speculations:

- *The decline of Emperor Karl-Franz's health is unnatural. Outwardly, the Emperor has aged about 20 years in the last two.*
- *Court physicians and wizards have been unable to ascertain the cause of the Emperor's illness.*
- *Given the inability of the two groups to uncover the nature of the ailment, the Doktor believes – without any proof – that a pinch of Warp dust might be involved. Its chaotic nature might allow it to go undetected by even a Detect Magic spell.*
- *He suspects that the Purple Hand has infiltrated the Chancellery and Church of Sigmar, though he has no direct proof of their identities.*

- *Only the Chancellor, Court Lector and – he assumes – their aides have had recent access to the Emperor.*
- *Other advisors of the Emperor have not been able to meet privately with Karl-Franz since over one month prior to the death of the Grand Theogonist.*
- *In addition, the Purple Hand also infiltrated the cult of Ulric and one individual, Reinhardt von Kutenholz, managed to penetrate the Sons of Ulric.*
- *The 12 Hexenstag had not been infiltrated as such, but the alleged Brother Karl is likely to have been a member.*
- *The move by the Crown Prince to take over for the ailing Emperor likely took the Purple Hand unawares.*
- *It is rather likely that the Purple Hand has someone on the Crown Prince's staff, though they may not be working in concert with other Purple Hand leaders.*
- *If asked about Günther Kohl, Fassbinder will respond that Kohl was suspected of affiliation with the Purple Hand but disappeared sometime around 2507 or 2508, possibly in connection with an internal feud of the Altdorf cell.*

Should the PCs ask why the Doktor is willing to risk himself to help them, Fassbinder smiles and replies that – as corny as it sounds – he does not wish the Empire to fall into Chaos. “This is a great nation,” he explains. “Those who seek its destruction should meet that same fate.” From Fassbinder’s view, the PCs seem to be open to information, no matter the source, that would help them with their effort. Many other groups would prefer to dismiss information from an old scholar.

As the meeting comes to an end, Doktor Fassbinder warns the PCs to tread carefully as contacts of his, including a small number of the Empire’s finest spies, have disappeared recently – some of them turning up dead in the Reik. “Indeed,” Fassbinder says, “opponents of the cultists of chaos are getting increasingly

rare here in the capital.” He smiles and continues, “Your arrival has certainly been well timed. I wish you good hunting for the beasts amongst us,” after which he turns to leave. If the PCs inquire as to whether Fassbinder needs an escort back to his residence, the Doktor smiles and replies he will be fine as no one sees a 50ish scholar as a threat, not even crazed Chaos cultists. He then tells the PCs that there comes a time for bold action. “The time will present itself,” Fassbinder says, “and then you must seize the opportunity to do something unexpected.” With that the Doktor leaves.

Abduction

On the morning of 6 Sommerzeit, word reaches the Imperial capital about the defeat of the Altdorf army across the Reik from the Furdienst and the death of Reikmarshall von Bock. Panic spreads across the city since many believe nothing is left to block the victorious Middenlanders from racing to sack Altdorf. No one knows Reikskapitän Kurt Helborg has managed to pull back the defeated Altdorf army in good order.

As with any panic situation, mobs gather demanding unreasonable answers to difficult questions. This eventually leads to rioting and looting. With forces spread thin, the authorities of the city are unable to quell the unrest. Their first priority is to protect the important personages in the city and the wealthier neighbourhoods. Several districts east of the Reik depend on private militias to try to keep order.

With the situation on the streets in disarray, the PCs should conclude that this is an opportunity to make a bold step. To help them along in their endeavour, a note mysteriously appears under the door to their townhouse. It was slipped under approximately three hours before dawn and states:

*****Handout #11*****

Brother Dieter, aide to the Court Lector, is a man with secrets. He lives near the Pious Pilgrim Boarding House in the Domplast District and scurries to the Imperial Palace around noon. He may be your key.

Though there is no way for the PCs to know this, the information is being passed to them by one of Count von Walfen's men (in fact, Simon Helmholtz, who has been recently updated on the PCs' activities though he will not admit to any such thing). This information may confirm the PCs' suspicions, or arouse their concerns that their investigations have been compromised. In the event the PCs search the area across the street from where the Purple Hand cultists have been observing the townhouse at night, they will find some blood on the ground, which streaks away as if the still bleeding body was dragged away. Following these marks leads the PCs to a sewer grate where the corpse was tossed. The blood is sticky and almost dry having been spilt just before the message was delivered. Should the PCs open the grate and look down with a lantern, they will see a dead man with a slit throat lying in the sewer as if dropped from above.



Should the PCs decide to abduct Brother Dieter in order to make inquiries of him in private, the upheaval of the day will provide them with the best cover. The priest makes his way without any escort since many would only see him as a lowly priest. If the PCs make the same mistake, they may find their assumptions blow back at them.

The PCs should try to get themselves in position well before Brother Dieter leaves his residence. The plan must be swiftly carried out and afford the target no opportunity to react, much less scream out for help. Given their warrant as agents of Mórr, the simplest method is to come up from behind the priest, quickly place a bag over his head and muffle him with a gag, and then lead him away claiming to anyone seeking to intervene (few

would at this time) that the man must be questioned about "rumoured" necromantic activities in the Great Forest. Allow the PCs a reasonable chance if they can find some other creative way to pull this off. Should they fail to plan, the GM should make this endeavour proportionately difficult.

Only the occasional Watch patrol would stop the PCs as they escort Brother Dieter to a place of questioning and they can be easily persuaded by the PCs' official position with the cult of Mórr (assuming the PCs don't panic). Given the time for planning is likely to be short, the PCs have no choice other than the cellar of their townhouse. There is a chance (20%) that a member of the Purple Hand will observe the PCs enter their premises with the captive should they return straightaway. This will increase by 5% per hour after mid-afternoon should the PCs dally elsewhere. By evening, Chancellor Heinz realises Brother Dieter is missing and starts considering drastic action to rectify the situation.

The PCs face a dilemma: how to effectively break Brother Dieter without killing him? If any of the PCs has experience as a Torturer, they know of several non-lethal manners of coercing information, though these methods do take time to become effective. PCs without this type of experience may stumble on such methods if they think on it. **[GM Note:** Allow the PCs to discuss at some length before allowing them an **Int** test to help them through this]. Since the PCs would reasonably expect Brother Dieter to be able to cast spells, they should know through experience they should keep him tied, gagged and hooded.

Of all the non-lethal forms of torture, sensory deprivation is one of the best approaches. If the PCs succeeded in preventing Brother Dieter from seeing their identities when they kidnapped him, the Purple Hand cultist is already experiencing fear. He has no idea how he was uncovered or by whom. Several covert organisations will come to his mind, none of which are known for their subtleties or restraint from doing violence upon a captive.

If the PCs approach Dieter too soon, he will be defiant, demanding in the name of Sigmar to be