

Brother Fulbert and the Novice of the Lord of Darkness – Brother Fulbert’s First Case
(Sequence of Events)

Clothing and Equipment of the Individual Participants

July	Blue dress with linen belt, apron, women's belt, detachable sleeves, hunting pouch, headscarf, underdress, sewn socks with two linen ties, shoes with rubber soles (wear warm socks, insoles), black women's hood, coat, lantern. Emergency: Equipment for the children’s dress for demonstration.
Herbert	Very warm underwear in either black or white, white Cistercian habit, scapular, hood, black belt, shoes (Mark Wallis), black cap, medieval spectacles, white linen shirt (Black Swan), black or white socks, lantern. For the Novices: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Three children’s habits in various sizes• Three scapulars in various sizes• Three hoods in various sizes• Three ropes in various sizes
Roland	Medieval undergarments (leave the doublet open!), white linen shirt, shoes (Mark Wallis), green belt (Mark Wallis), blue checkered tunic, coif, black cap, misericorde, belt pouch, linen shoulder bag, helmet, gauntlets, surcoat, lantern.
Ingo	Undergarments, shoes, white linen shirt, black robe, linen shoulder bag (with props), staff, cap (Mark Wallis)
Guests	5 lanterns and name tags

Props in Order of Use (Bold: Provided by Ingo)

- Lanterns positioned in the cloister (Roland),
- CD player with chants in the church,
- Name tags,
- Bread and salt,
- Pewter jugs for foot washing,
- Cloth for Roland as the corpse, Key,
- Charred finger,
- “Poison” – small glass vial with liquid and cork,
- Gloves,
- Warm beer with small cups,
- Pouch with powder,
- Plate with spark fountain.

T I M E L I N E

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION AND ENTRY INTO THE DRAMA

Introduction by the civil guide at the monastery model from 1460 at the Tourist Information

Duration: approx. 15 minutes | Location: Monastery Model from 1460 | Character: Civil Historian

Content: The civil historian welcomes the group. He provides a historical overview of the Mainz Archdiocesan Feud, the siege of Maulbronn, and the political situation between the Electoral Palatinate and Württemberg. **[Clue No. 1]**

Context in the Holy Roman Empire – general conflict with Frederick I of the Palatinate (Palatine Feud):

The Mainz Archdiocesan Feud (also known as the Baden-Palatinate War, 1461–1462) was a military conflict over the office of the Archbishop of Mainz. In 1459, Diether of Isenburg was elected over Adolf of Nassau. Due to his reformist stance and opposition to the Pope and Emperor, Diether was deposed by Pope Pius II. in 1461, and Adolf was appointed as the new Archbishop. However, the city of Mainz continued to support Diether, leading to escalation.

Adolf allied with several spiritual and secular princes, while Diether was supported by Elector Frederick I of the Palatinate. After heavy fighting, including the decisive Battle of Seckenheim in 1462, Frederick emerged victorious and captured several opponents, including Margrave Charles I of Baden. The city of Mainz was taken through betrayal on October 28, 1462, plundered, and lost its freedoms. Many citizens were expelled.

The feud was only resolved in October 1463 after several mediation attempts, and Margrave Charles I of Baden was exchanged – this is why Brother Fulbert is traveling from Heidelberg to Stuttgart and staying overnight in Maulbronn. Diether relinquished the office, recognized Adolf as the legitimate archbishop in the Treaty of Zeilsheim, and received a small principality and a large sum of money in compensation.

The civil historian distributes name tags to participants, saying: *“The bus with the actors hasn’t arrived.”* Each person receives a name, a role in the monastery, and a function—making the audience active participants in the play. Important: The role of the abbot remains an “honorary role” (maybe given to an especially enthusiastic guest).

Cliffhanger: He announces a strange death that occurred a few days ago – the group is to help shed light on the mystery.

Monastery Maid in the Monastery Courtyard (She enters from the stairs leading to the vineyards)

Duration: approx. 15 minutes | Location: Courtyard area below the vineyard stairs

Character: Monastery maid, marked by war, placed in the service of field captain Roland.

Introduction: The maid introduces herself and explains why she, as a woman, is in the monastery at all. She is the servant of Field Captain Roland, Imperial Knight of Neuenheim. She cannot return to Heidelberg due to the aftermath of the war.

Topic: The monastery maid recounts the siege of Maulbronn Monastery in 1460. In the year 1460, the Maulbronn Monastery was besieged as part of the conflict between Elector Frederick I of the Palatinate and Count Ulrich V of Württemberg. This siege was part of the Mainz Archdiocesan Feud (1461–1462), which revolved around the succession of the Archbishop of Mainz. During this feud, military conflicts broke out among various princes and their allies, with the strategically located Maulbronn Monastery becoming a focal point of the fighting. Maulbronn is situated precisely at the border between Württemberg and the Electoral Palatinate. **[Repetition of Clue No. 1]**

After Ulrich V's defeat in the Battle of Seckenheim in 1462 and his capture by Frederick I, the monastery came under the control of the Palatinate, along with other territories. These events caused significant shifts in regional power and territorial control.

General Topics:

- Cistercian vows of chastity – actually punishable if they converse with a woman.
- The vow of silence.
- The harsh daily life of a maid – but life is even harder for the monks (wake-up times, meager food year-round, which the maid only knows from Lent).
- Duties of lay brothers.
- Economic buildings in the surroundings.

Dramatic Function: Here, the audience receives the first clue of the mystery. The maid recounts the dreadful death of Brother Marinus, who was found drowned in the drainage canal three days ago. She found the body herself, bloated and stuck in place.

Important: Do not mention that Marinus was the coachman.

The monastery maid leads the group into the monastery church.

Brother Herbert & the Missing Brother

Location: Church | Character: Brother Herbert, Master of Garments (Vestarius)

Brother Herbert, the master of garments, is currently at the church and is about to lock the portal. He is relieved to see his fellow brothers return safely from field work. He doesn't want to let the maid into the cloister, but she insists, invoking the authority of her master. Brother Herbert grumbles: "*Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's.*" (Romans 13)

Plot Development: Brother Herbert expresses his concern: one of the brothers is still missing – Claudatius [do not yet mention his role as Cellarer]. No one has seen him since lunch.

The maid links this to the strange atmosphere of late and the death of Brother Marinus. She believes it all started when a new novice, Godefried, came to the monastery. She suspects that evil entered the monastery with him.

She points out certain features of his appearance: green eyes, horn-like hair strands, etc. Brother Herbert defends his protégé against her superstitious talk, but the maid has

overheard that even some of the other brothers share her concern – a sense of unease remains. [Red Herring No. 1]

If Brother Fulbert of Hainaut and his assistant Stefan still haven't arrived, Brother Herbert may begin scolding the novices for being so dirty after fieldwork and begins to redress them. He is, after all, the master of garments: Vestarius.

Arrival of Brother Fulbert of Hainaut and His Assistant Stefan

Location: Church Portal & Church | Characters: Brother Fulbert & his assistant Stefan

Content: There's a knock at the church portal during vespers, though it's already closed. Brother Herbert and the monastery maid wonder who could be approaching at dusk.

Brother Herbert opens the gate: "Domini vobiscum." Brother Fulbert of Hainaut enters with his assistant Stefan, requesting lodging for the night and invoking Cistercian hospitality—though he hesitates to say why he has come. Who is this man?

Ritual Greeting: Bread and salt, brotherly kiss with the abbot. The monastery maid insists on the symbolic foot washing: "*Brother Abbot, you know, you must now perform the foot washing for the guests!*"

Dramatic Instruction: Exit of the monastery maid. She helps Brother Roland in the background—out of the audience's sight—lie down as the "corpse" in the Calefactorium. Simultaneously: Exit of Brother Herbert with the novices (the participating children). He gives the novices some early clues in the refectory (showing the kitchen hatch in the men's refectory), and after 15 minutes, the children are instructed to go look for a second corpse.

Brother Fulbert Tells the Group About the Military Conflicts

Location: On the way to the Refectory | Characters: Brother Fulbert & his assistant Stefan, Group

The two guests are hungry. On the way to the refectory, Fulbert begins to talk — He was a soldier at the fall of Constantinople in 1453, still has a bolt in his backside, and speaks about the Mainz Archdiocesan Feud.

Before becoming a Benedictine monk, he served as an imperial soldier and was hired as a mercenary during the defense of Constantinople. The conquest of Constantinople took place in 1453 when the city was attacked by the Ottomans under Sultan Mehmed II. The Byzantine capital, under Emperor Constantine XI, was taken after a long siege, marking the end of the Byzantine Empire and the rise of the Ottomans as a dominant power in the region. The city had been the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire for over 1,000 years. He still carries a bolt from the battle in his backside.

He also speaks again about the Mainz Archdiocesan Feud (also known as the Baden-Palatinate War, 1461–1462), the military conflict over the position of Archbishop of Mainz.

He hints that he is on an important diplomatic mission, traveling from Heidelberg to Stuttgart to negotiate. [Repetition of Clue No. 1]

Discovery of the Second Corpse in the Calefactorium

Location: In front of the Calefactorium with the door half open | Characters: All and the group

Plot Twist: The novices find a charred corpse in the Calefactorium. Shock moment with lighting effects and screams. Next to the corpse: a charred finger and a key – it's Claudatius!

The novices (children of the participants) find a second, charred body in the Calefactorium (the heating room) and scream loudly. Brother Herbert places a lantern next to the body. The rest of the group, along with Brother Fulbert, rushes in. Brother Herbert initially speaks in metaphors about the fires of hell and demons.

The novices (children) are encouraged to look around further and discover a key [Clue No. 2] and a charred finger [Red Herring No. 2] next to the corpse. At first, it's unclear why the key is there. But the finger undoubtedly belongs to Claudatius. The body must be Claudatius – and he cannot be found anywhere else in the monastery. Claudatius clearly did not voluntarily enter the fire — so this must be murder.

Important: Do not yet mention that Claudatius was the Cellarer.

PART TWO: THE INVESTIGATION BEGINS

The group stays together. Brother Fulbert of Hainaut, together with his assistant Stefan, takes over the investigation as an experienced and well-traveled Benedictine. The goal: gather all clues, examine suspects, and analyze motives. The maid assists in explaining the monastery roles.

Who was the murderer? The stations to narrow down the suspects

Task of the Monastery Maid: Since she knows everyone in the monastery, she introduces the key offices and explains their responsibilities during the investigation.

- **Station 1: The Calefactorium – the Heating Room**

Suspicious: Because they were seen near the location or were responsible for heating or fetching wood (hint from Brother Herbert):

- Jodokus, sacristan
- Cosmas, medicus
- Fastredus, mercator

Additional hints from the maid about:

- Godefried, novice [Repetition of Red Herring No. 1]
- Aurelianus, rentarius
- Rusticus, herbarius
- Damian, infirmarius

Brother Herbert now remembers another monk who was washing his hands in the fountain hall after lunch, but he could not recognize the face.

The children are sent to search the fountain hall immediately.

- **Station 2: The Fountain Hall**

Find: A small vial with traces of hemlock poison [Clue No. 3] is found in the fountain hall.

Question: Who among the suspects had access to poison? Could poison come from outside the monastery? Then suspicious are:

- Aurelianus, Rentarius (he could leave the monastery with his mule to collect taxes)
- Fastredus, Mercator (he regularly left the monastery to trade goods and make purchases)

But even inside the monastery, poison could be accessed. These monks have internal knowledge of herbs/poison:

- Rusticus, Herbarius
- Cosmas, Medicus
- Damian, Infirmarius
- Godefried, novice (formerly assisted in the infirmary) [Repetition of Red Herring No. 1]

- **Station 3: Refectory of the Fathers**

Reconstruction of the seating arrangement in the refectory. Key question: "Who sat to the left and right of Claudatius and could have poisoned his food?" [Red Herring No. 3]

Brother Herbert remembers:

- Cosmas, Medicus
- Aurelianus, Rentarius

Ruled out due to alibis:

- Rusticus, Herbarius (he was the lector that day)
- Damian, Infirmarius (was in the infirmary)
- No one recalls seeing Fastredus, Mercator – because he was cooking in the kitchen. The maid discreetly adds that the cook's duty in a monastery rotates – it is not a permanent position and may also be assigned as punishment duty.

- **Station 4: The Lay Refectory – Who Was Claudatius?**

The group proceeds to the Lay Refectory. Reflections in the refectory and questions from Brother Fulbert: What were the motives of the two main suspects – Cosmas (Medicus) and Aurelianus (Rentarius)? Who was the victim? Who was Claudatius, and what was his position?

Brother Herbert clarifies: "He was our Cellarer." - The one responsible for managing supplies and keys. [Clue No. 4]

Proof that the charred body was indeed the Cellarer: A key was found next to the corpse. His charred finger was also found. The key was discovered by the novices in front of the heating room when they found the corpse. [Repetition of Clue No. 2]

- **Station 5: The Cellarium (via Cloister into the monastic Storehouse)**

The group proceeds into the cellar under the guidance of Brother Fulbert. But in the cloister, they are intercepted by Field Captain Roland, Imperial Knight of Neuenheim. He is the vogt (secular overseer) of the region and represents state authority within the monastery. He wants to take over the investigation and immediately arrest the novice Godefried, claiming he is possessed by the devil. He gives the maid a bag of coins as a reward for the tip-off. [Repetition of Red Herring No. 1]

When Brother Fulbert stops him, Roland shifts suspicion to Rusticus, the gardener — *“Because the gardener is always the murderer.”*

Brother Fulbert calms him and leads the group and the field captain into the cellar. There, the children are asked to search for clues, and they find a suspicious pouch. [Clue No. 5] Brother Fulbert keeps it to himself for now — he suspects it contains gunpowder. Although the bag is labeled clearly with “pepper,” Fulbert knows that the Cistercians forbade the use of exotic spices. He grows suspicious — but he isn’t sure yet.

- **Station 6: Cloister Garden**

Brother Fulbert invites the group to follow him into the cloister garden — he wants to demonstrate something. Under the large linden tree, Fulbert tests the “pepper” ... He ignites a small amount on a pewter spoon — It erupts in a flash of flame — it’s gunpowder!

Now Fulbert has a motive: As a military man and envoy of the Elector Palatine, he had already suspected that a Württemberg traitor was hiding in the monastery.

Conclusion: It was not a murder out of hatred or greed — it was an act of treason. The powder was meant to blast a breach in the monastery wall, so that in the event of another Württemberg siege, the monastery could be stormed from within. Claudatius had discovered the plan — and was silenced.

PART THREE: RESOLUTION AND VERDICT

Chapter Room: Resolution and the Tribunal

The group follows Brother Fulbert into the Chapter Room to discuss and solve the case.

Still suspicious:

- Cosmas, Medicus (but he has no way to leave the monastery to acquire powder)
- Novice Godefried (also cannot leave the monastery — finally cleared of suspicion!)

Now the maid builds the case against Aurelianus, the Rentarius (Tax Collector of the Abbey):

- He was near the Calefactorium,
- He can leave the monastery

- So he could have obtained both poison and powder

But wait — what about the coachman Marinus? Let's not forget him. Earlier, the maid explained the monks' duties and mentioned Aurelianus' mule: "*The Rentarius rides — he doesn't need a coachman!*" So Aurelianus had no motive to kill Marinus — he's not our man.

The Twist: Now Brother Fulbert shifts suspicion to Fastredus, the mercator!

- Murder of Coachman Marinus: Fastredus had regular travel routes to the Monastic Outpost in Speyer — using a coach driven by Marinus. In Speyer, he received orders and a sack of gunpowder. Marinus must have discovered the gunpowder — and was killed for what he knew.
- Murder of Claudatius the Cellarer: But how did Fastredus poison Claudatius and burn him in the Calefactorium? He wasn't at the meal, nor seen near Claudatius ... Answer: Claudatius found the powder sack in the cellarium and confronted Fastredus. So Fastredus had to silence him. And today, Fastredus was the cook. Earlier, the maid discreetly informed: cooking duties rotate and are sometimes a form of punishment. Fastredus poisoned Claudatius' food, then later dragged him to the Calefactorium and burned the body.

Field Captain Roland, Imperial Knight of Neuenheim, arrests Fastredus and ties his hands.

Penance Circle in the Abbey Church – The Abbot Calls for Repentance

The abbot, following Brother Herbert's advice, calls everyone to gather in the Abbey Church. There, Fastredus must publicly confess his sins in the circle of penance. Then, he is led away by the Field Captain to meet his fate.

Final Scene: A solemn closing with a reflection on guilt, penance, and peace. Farewell to the guests, as the monastery settles into its well-earned rest. Open Q&A about the concept and guests' further interests.

The Names of the Involved Monks

The Murdered	The Offices	The Suspects
Marinus, Coachman	Zölestin, Abbot	Jodokus, Sacristan
Claudatius, Cellarer (Cellarer)	Primus, Prior	Rusticus, Herbarius (Herbalist)
	Herbert, Vestarius (Vestment Master)	Cosmas, Medicus (Physician)
	Gernot, Magister Quadrigarum (Master of the Stables)	Damian, Infirmarius (Infirmary Keeper)
	Hienrich, Portarius (Doorkeeper)	Aurelianus, Rentarius (Rent Collector)
	Kunibert, Magister Conversorum (Master of the Lay Brothers)	Fastredus, Mercator (Merchant)