



To Eleri Bronwen's Rest and Melchior of Adina's Charge,

It brings me immense pleasure to name you the winners of Flavia of Crystal Hall's posthumous puzzle contest.

For whatever reason, Flavia did not leave clear instructions for what exactly to say at the conclusion of this competition, so I am obliged to do a little interpretation.

(A colleague has suggested that she simply did not expect anyone to care enough to make it to the end. I personally think it more likely that she was too invested in the puzzles themselves to consider the full practicalities.)

Whatever the case, there is a prize! I have not opened the box in which it was delivered, preferring to leave that honour to yourselves. I do know that it was picked by Flavia herself, from what she called her Collection of Curiosities. For all her talk of "revelation as its own reward," I suspect this is no knick-knack...

I intend to travel to Anvil for this coming Spring Equinox, and hope to be able to briefly meet. I expect to stop by the Bronwen's Rest camp around 9pm on the Friday. If I do not find you I will seek out a reliable service to see the prize delivered to you.

*Kind Regards,
Vincenzo di Sarvos*



*(To the Tribune of the Synod,
I have a favour to ask of the High Bard of the Empire. However, I see that the title will be reappointed at this coming summit. I am hoping you will oblige me by ensuring this letter is placed in the hands of the new High Bard shortly after their appointment.)*

To the High Bard of the Empire,

First, congratulations on your appointment to this lofty title. May your soul be filled with rightful Pride.

Second, I have a favour to ask of you. In short, I am hoping you, or someone you know, can arrange a suitable time and place for a series of performances at the Summer Solstice.

I recently came upon an old set of song lyrics which I have good reason to think were penned by Elayne Silverlark, Exemplar of Loyalty. Despite my searching, their melodies appear to be lost - but I believe that such songs deserve to be sung. So, at the past Winter Solstice I sent copies of these lyrics to Anvil, hoping the greatest songsmiths of the Empire could breathe new life into them. I aim to return at the Summer Solstice to hear people's interpretations - to catalogue them, and share them far and wide across the Empire.

This calls for the arrangement of a time and place suitable for performance, but I am a stranger to the particulars of Anvil. It would seem that you are best positioned to either see to this, or find someone who can. If there is a cost to be paid I will readily offer recompense come Summer.

Whatever you arrange or decide, I would be grateful for a response by winged messenger. I reside at the Lepidian University, in the White City, in Bastion, in Highguard.

*May virtue guide you,
Endric, of the Heirs of Lepidus*



*To Constanza i Kalamar i Guerra, and Marta i Guerra,
Arbiters of the contest between Jaheris and Eleonaris,
and between the Empire and the rest of the world.*

*The Unicorn Prince is not one for praise, but I sensed he was deeply satisfied by your
efforts at the Winter Solstice.*

*The names of those four champions, and their claims to preeminence, have been passed
to the one they call "Lion of Summer", Eleonaris. As you read this, her heralds scour
your world in desperate search for those with a claim to contest them.*

*In the meantime, she has been making her best efforts to find champions of her own,
and they are as follows:*

Präster Algot of the House of Ambition - Best In The World At Preaching Ambition

Kyaire, Voice of the Salt Lords - Best In The World At The Expropriation of Goods

Jarl Grima - Best In The World At Command

Bloedzuiger Anke - Best In The World At Funeral Rites

*It falls to you to find Imperial champions who can topple these pretenders in
righteous debate at the Summer Solstice, by staking a greater claim to being "Best In
The World" at those four things. Jaheris does not need their names, only the
assurance that they will be there, else that round of the contest will be forfeit.*

*Do not concern yourself with arranging a time or place for the contest in Summer. I
will ensure that all necessary details are announced in good time.*

Scrivener, of the Forest of Arden



Spymaster Dugdale,

I write to you concerning an espionage operation which was recently uncovered in my city. The flows of information in and out of Anvil are inscrutable to me; perhaps some of this is already known to you, but I will give a full account.

A Navarri Thorn handed himself in shortly after the Winter Solstice to confess to plotting to act as an informant to a Grendel scheme. He and two others, a Marcher and Winterborn, had gathered the name and address of a key civil servant working in the Courus Office of the Regario Dossier. They were to help their Grendel contact, calling himself Eminence, to kidnap her and extract the names of the imperial agents working in Asavea.

I am not certain what kept this plan from coming to fruition - I'm ashamed to say it was happening entirely under our noses. However I suspect that word made it to Anvil, and the stars shone kindly on the Sentinel Gate to allow someone to intervene.

What I do know is that when the Navarri took us to the location they had been given for the handover - a clearing close to a small farm in Enterio - we found the body of an orc which had recently been buried there.

Now alert to this danger, we believe that whatever Grendel operation was present in Tassato has been swiftly rolled up. It was not yet at the scale of a complete network, there weren't enough of them for that. They have presumably reassigned their assets to other operations in the Empire, or sent them packing home.

I am sorry to not have any further leads for you. If you had any role in the events above, you have my heartfelt thanks. If you did not, I am sure you could discover who did.

Yours in (tested) vigilance,

Heike Lorreti di Regario, Tassato Regario Militia



To Elke Sun-Mad,

I commend you on making it to the final stage of this competition, and once again thank Vincenzo di Sarvos for his support in this project. I hope that this little trilogy of puzzles has brought as much pleasure in the solving as it did in the devising.

~Flavia of Crystal Hall, deceased

Numbers become words

Words become sentences

Sentences become words

Words become letters

Letters spell a single word

- 1) 22-8 31-6 48-22 29-10 29-7 29-8 7-4 3-28 12-12
- 2) 22-8 35-11 5-5 18-1 3-3
- 3) 47-8 22-8 1-13 25-2
- 4) 22-3 2-36 5-7 15-17, 33-10 16-7 1-3 42-29
- 5) 18-1 28-11 10-7 5-6 22-3 39-11
- 6) 18-1 12-2 29-10 32-4 23-7 27-8 37-8 42-5 32-5 18-2
- 7) 28-11 10-7, 10-7 10-5 10-12

A little trivia: this is a puzzle of my own devising, from some time ago.

I had to revise it slightly after the Spring Equinox of 381YE - I forget why.

(N.B. I have now received a correct answer to this final puzzle, meaning the competition is concluded. I would encourage you (as I am certain Flavia would too) to press on and tackle this puzzle so long as your interest holds. The solution may be elusive, but undeniable once you have it. You are welcome to write to me for validation, or speak to the joint winners: Eleri Bronwen's Rest and Melchior of Adina's Charge

-Vincenzo)



Serenus Starsong,

Hope all's well in your world. I'd be surprised if it wasn't, considering how fast you put the bloody symposium together. Good work, genuinely. It's clear you've got your passion.

I'm going to be arriving at Anvil for the symposium, got a thing or two I want to chat about with your assembled lot - hope you don't mind me stealing the attention for a bit. Nosing about since last summit turned up some finds that I'm a little put out by, there's something I want to get to the bottom of.

Might be some other folk come to Anvil just for the symposium, so could be good to leave a bit of space if any show up impromptu and want to speak?

I'm looking forward to seeing the turnout though, and I expect I'll have made my way all the way south to find out everyone's got it all sorted already.

*I'll be seeing you soon then,
Annukka Juhaling*



To Serenus Starsong,

By the will of SINOKENON also named APEX and THRONE OF THE SUN

Upon the recommendation of the spire of ANKRA ASCENDANT

I - THE FIFTH ARBITER OF THE TURNING MIRROR

*Write to discuss the CURSED JEWELS borne by MEREDITH
NIGHTHAVEN and (formerly) AGNES TAPANISON*

Concerning MEREDITH NIGHTHAVEN

Your efforts have been NOTED and are appreciated

Another season remains until the item will UNRAVEL

A change has been made to the TERMS of her portion of the curse

*If the ritual SKEIN OF YEARS is cast upon it, allowing someone to bear
witness to a full vision of what has led to this moment, the curse will be lifted
without need for further intervention*

Concerning AGNES TAPANISON

*A hero of Anvil being slaughtered in battle leaves a GAP in the great structures
of state, and efforts should be focused on restoring it*

*In recognition of her SACRIFICE, albeit in a different battle, we will see to it
that the portion of the curse she bore is lifted*

If you still have CONCERNS by the end of the Equinox

Write once again to BELISARI ANKRA ASCENDANT, ANKRA, SPIRAL

May THE WHEEL OF LIGHT lead you onwards

THE FIFTH ARBITER OF THE TURNING MIRROR