

For the eyes of
Lieselotte van Holberg, Master of the Imperial Mint

I write to you today having drawn as it were the short straw: please do not consider the impersonal nature of this written communication to be by any means a snub, merely that we consider that this is a **weighty** matter and best put to the written word. By which I mean to say that I do not write **solely** upon my own behalf, but that of your staff, as it were, as a whole.

The matter that concerns us today – that has concerned some of us ever since it has been built, one might suggest, and growing numbers in the last couple of seasons – is an edifice, a statue, that is staring me in the face as I compose this memo, for it stands in our front courtyard. I speak, of course, of the '**Legacy of Ambition**' commissioned in the name of L. M.____ de S.

A great statue, it is – as if I need remind you! – of a cowled figure, six-armed forsooth, bearing butchers' cleavers, torches, a seven-pointed star and a bowl inscribed with an eye. Perhaps the man whose name it bears may represent to you how it represents Ambition, for I am certain that I cannot! Unmistakably, this thing is **not**, was **never** and is never **going** to be a depiction of a human being, and one might go so far as to say that any claim of allegory or artistic merit is wearing off faster than cheap Mestran gilt.

You are of course aware – I assume you are aware! – that this work is among those **rightly condemned** by the Synod last season, and that my colleagues and I must not only pass this statue on the way to work, but endure its haunting gaze over what used to be our favourite lunching spot. The courtyard is becoming **deserted**. We pull down our hats, avert our gaze, walk quickly past it – and not yesterday in the street, I **myself** was upbraided by a grey-clad Highborn for my **personal** lack of action where this statue is concerned!

This would all be bad enough, but Management have additionally received a deputation from the **Militia** entrusted with the guardianship of the Imperial Mint. Due to the nature of the Mint, they are required to keep out those without good business inside. I did point out to them that our position in the middle of the Vassa makes this task relatively **straightfoward** – and was thence invited to imagine exactly **what** should happen, should the Synod request and require the already febrile populace of Tassato to **rise up** and cast this statue down. I am sure and certain that your imagination is at **least** as good as mine, as to what might happen next!

And finally a **parting barb** from the Pilgrim with whom I spoke the other day. How long can we consider the Legacy of Emperor Giovanni – the money supply upon which the Empire **depends** – to remain **untainted**, when every single ring that leaves this building is doing so under the watchful gaze of an Asavean god of **Labyrinth-only-knows-what?**

I must say, I would not be composing this representation or putting my name to it, if I did not agree with its contents personally, and I would be **deeply** worried if I were not speaking for all the staff when I did so.

Yours in **Vigilance**

Cornelia Gennep van Holberg

Senior Secretary of the Imperial Mint