

*STRIDING INTO TURBULENT WATERS*  
*OR*  
*COMPLEX THOUGHTS LEAD TO SIMPLE TROUBLES*  
*OR*  
*BETTER GO HOME*  
*A PLAY*  
*IN FOUR AND A HALF ACTS*  
*WITH TWO INTERLUDES*  
*FOR A LARGE COMPANY OF DRAMATURGS*  
*FROM THE PEN*  
*OF SEBASTIEN RANSETTO VON HOLBERG*  
*SPONSORED*  
*BY ARIETTA DI SARVOS*  
*AND PIOTERRE'S CURED MEATS OF TEMESCHWAR*

*Notes for Directors:*

*Our play takes place in Bastion at the Foundation of the Empire.*

*Our scenes are set across:*

- The Basilica of Seven Doors, in The White City*
- A balcony overlooking the banks of the River Couros*
- The Knife In The Back - A wayhouse*

*Our cast includes*

- The First Empress and her cortege*
- An assortment of Highborn priests*
- The passing Navarr striding of Long Play*
- A boisterous band of League bravos attempting a daring theft*
- A Freeborn ghost, set upon vengeance*

*Dear Diary,*

*Barely can I find the will to string out another set of tawdry, rambling musings for your inanimate enjoyment. So lonely are the nights that I squander here in your presence, alone in my office, with no friendly ear to lend some fleeting succour to the immense burdens of my wasted existence. Only a sheaf of papers for sympathy and comfort. Such a pitiful, pitiless creature I am.*

*I do not doubt, dear diary, that you grow weary of my nightly wailings, searching and scrabbling around in my sorry excuse for a soul. Nonetheless must I submit you to another scrabbling, scratching search in the dust of my innermost being.*

*I came to wonder today if perhaps my troubles owe themselves to my parentage. To be born to a Marcher mother and Varushkan father in the harsh streets of Mestra was no easy thing. I have come to see their marriage as more of an alliance of outcasts, with little love lost between them, not to mention my poor childish self. And so for me then set my eyes on nobler things, the bright and shining lantern lights of Regario! Must I perhaps find it in myself to forgive them their callous displeasure? We are all but human, after all. To see one's child seek to enter a new, unfamiliar space - and so to "come-a-cropper" of all the cruelty and unpleasantness that one has borne through a hard life of one's own. What seemed to my youthful ears as displeased, disloyal disownment were perhaps wise words of warning.*

*Never mind that. I grow distracted, as ever. Dawdling down the ancient alleys of my misspent past. Would that there were some solace to be found in the present, dearest diary. Today brought another round of rehearsals, another day of my drab words being rendered even drabber by lacklustre performances delivered by frankly unbearably overpaid actors, I find myself laughing at what was meant*

*ACT IV - SCENE XV*

*CARDINAL BIRCH (cont.)*

*I'll finish with a joke: A Freeborn, a Winterborn and a Highborn walk into a bar...*

*THE FIRST EMPRESS (interrupting him)*

*Thank you, Cardinal, for that rousing and... challenging speech. There is a lot in there I would like to address, but I will start with the matter of corruption...*

*BRAVO CAPTAIN (aside)*

*Here comes the interesting bit!*

*THE FIRST EMPRESS*

*I assure you that our Empire's civil servants are quite beyond reproach. They have sworn solemn oaths, and know that justice will be swift should they ever break them - not to mention the stain upon their souls...*

*BRAVO CAPTAIN (aside)*

*It'll get really exciting, any minute now I'm sure!*

*THE FIRST EMPRESS*

*Every dossier they compile draws on years of bureaucratic expertise...*

*BRAVO CAPTAIN (aside)*

*Or so I thought...*

*THE FIRST EMPRESS*

*I refer you to the documents circulated before this meeting...*

*BRAVO CAPTAIN (aside)*

*"Star in a play about politics," they said. "It'll help your career!" they said...*

*Things are coming together - time for you three to actually make yourselves useful.*

*My target is one of the ~ 11 7+8 ~*

*currently compiling reports for the ~ 16 5 ~ ~ 17 2 ~*

*Bring me the following:*

*The name of someone working in the ~ 19 9 ~ ~ 4 8 ~*

*The time they typically ~ 5 2+3 ~*

*Their ~ 7 6 ~*

*And you'll have your payment once my work is concluded.*

*To be abundantly bloody clear: do NOT bring any mates or back-up.*

*If I see anything other than one ~ 12 6 ~*

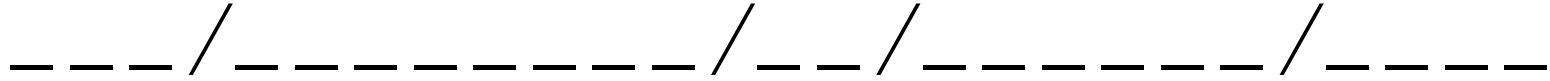
*one ~ 3 9 ~*

*and one ~ 24 3 ~*

*I'll be turning around and heading home, and you can forget about your payment.*

*Meeting place attached, as discussed. Midnight, Saturday, Winter Solstice.*

*~ Eminence*



Aesh



Bravash



Cavul



Diras



Evrom



Feresh



Gralm



Hirmok



Irremais



Jotra



Kyrop



Lann



Mawrig



Naeve



Ophis



Pallas



Queros



Rhyv



Sular



Tykonus



Ull



Verys



Wyr



Xun



Yoorn



Zorech

*THE /*

<i>21</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>22.</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>1</i>

<i>20</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>2.</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>

<i>14</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>~</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>4</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>		<i>4</i>