

Spooky theme music starts playing

MEMO

True Tales of the Illuminati, Episode 2: Royal Pains

Opening music continues to play

MEMO

Written by Max Kreisky, Katherine Cargill and Eric Trageser.

With editing and sound design by Will Gianetta

Opening theme finishes

MEMO (over slow spooky music)

Internal Memo from the archives of the Illuminati. Egypt. 1586 BC Day 20 of the Post-Growing Season. Sunday. Office of the deputy head of Non-Administrative Support. With the death of Djoser at the hands of deputy head underboss Beck's team, the illuminati must find a new royal stooge. While Djoser was chosen for his manipulability and insanity, the next seven royals in line for the throne are regrettably competent, sober administrators invested in the day-to-day running of the kingdom. To this end, cover-up manager Dal has been attached to Beck's team to aid with the restructuring of the Pharaonic order.

THE CHIEF'S OFFICE. A BIG STONE ROOM WITH TORCHES BURNING AND SOME DRIPPY WALLS.

CHIEF

Beck, Dal, this really is a cock-up.

DAL

A thousands's of cockseseseses-up. Because Beck killed Djoser with thousands of birds.

BECK

Look, we're not in charge of what birds do.

CHIEF

Yet.

DAL

Yet.

BECK

Yet.

CHIEF

Yes, it was a tremendous number of birds. Had it have been deliberate, it might have been impressive. The birds are not the issue. The issue is that Djoser was the perfect Pharaoh. Stupid, insane, content to spend all of his time training servants to arrange themselves into geometric shapes. We spent a lot of servants cultivating that interest. And now we cannot use the library of Secret Occult Knowledge any more as Djoser is entombed within it.

BECK

Can't we use the part we already wrote down?

CHIEF

It's too public now. Also, a little spooky.

DAL

Yes, Beck sure made a mess of this, didn't she. Like a ..turtle...receiving...news.

BECK

What does that even mean.

CHIEF

While your metaphors are excellent as always, Dal,

BECK

[CROSS-TALK AT 'EXCELLENT METAPHORS']
What?

CHIEF

-- we have a big job ahead of us.

CHIEF (COT'D)

This is an emergency. The new pharaoh takes power on the first day of the pre-growing season and we don't have much time.

BECK

But that's in just-

DAL(CUTTING BECK OFF)

-We know when it is, Beck.

CHIEF

Yes, of course we do. Our second choice for Pharaoh is Sekhmet.

BECK

That nerd?

CHIEF

Yes, that nerd. His fascination with rocks makes him a perfect combination of eccentric and disinterested. Unfortunately, he stands at eighth in line for the throne. We need to ... bump him up.

BECK

You know, I think I have a scheme for at least a few of them that won't leave a trace of our intervent-

DAL(CUTTING BECK OFF AGAIN)

-I can kill seven nobles. I'll kill ten. I love killing nobles. They're as easy to kill as ibises but you don't feel guilty at destroying something beautiful.

BECK (MATTER OF FACT)

They *are* bastards.

CHIEF

Yes.

BECK

But is that the best way? It's sloppy, it's obvious, everyone stands around thinking to themselves 'I wonder how those seven nobles died so fast?' The illuminati is about subtlety. When we do our jobs correctly it looks like nothing happened at all.

DAL

That would explain your results.

CHIEF

Well, you can do it however you see fit. I'm not a micro-manager. That's too much work and not enough credit. Just get them out of the way by the first day of the Pre-Growing season. And remember our motto. "There's no Illuminati in team"

BECK

...That's really the new motto?

CHIEF

We're trying a lot of mottos.

SILENCE.

CHIEF clears his throat.

BECK AND DAL (RELUCTANTLY)

There's no Illuminati in team.

CHIEF

Good.

End Scene.

MEMO (OVER MUSIC)

Later, in the Scheming Reeds, Beck addresses Jackie, Ishmael, and Dal.

SOUNDS OF RIVER RUSHING, REEDS CRINKLING, SOME BIRDS MAKE NOISE

BECK

So Prince Pamoun is the next in line, and if he marries the dowager duchess Lucra then she and her siblings are in line after him, so that's Tanoute, Arjoun, Ruweis - you know, the one with the small head?

JACKIE

I hate looking at him.

BECK

-Yes. Those three and Barsanuphios are the next four in succession.

ISHMAEL

His head is fairly large

JACKIE

They have nothing in common. Barsanuphios is dreamy.

BECK

So if we break up the marriage we cut the number we have to deal with in half. Then there are three. The prince Pamoun, the younger prince Abadir and the old uncle Donkor. Then it's time for our boy, ol' cousin Sekhemet and his weird rock collection. The younger prince and the uncle we can frame for treason-

DAL

Why?

BECK

Well *we're* doing a *lot* of treason

DAL

Ah.

BECK

-but in order to sell it, we do actually have to... "tidy up" Pamoun. Which is ironic.

JACKIE

Is that ironic?

DAL

I don't know that that's ironic.

BECK

Yes, it is ironic. And convenient, since it also takes Pamoun out of the running. Since he will be dead. So it's not a perfectly elegant plan, but it does have the advantage of being incredibly straightforward, and, like my

uncle Nebuchadnezzar used to say, the perfectly elegant is the enemy of the goodly functional.

(BEAT)

Also a lot of things about how camels shouldn't be trusted. But that's not really relevant.

ISHMAEL

Not true either.

JACKIE

Well, eventually you have to murder someone. That's what my mom always says.

ISHMAEL

It's true, she does say that. A lot. A. Lot.

DAL

This is a stupid, convoluted plan. By a stupid, convoluted person. Whose name is Beck.

BECK

Hey, there's only one ruined marriage, one treason, and one.. Disposal. Which is half as many as the Illuminati used to get that road built.

JACKIE

Technically it's two treasons. Because they're both doing treason.

ISHMAEL

Technically we're doing the treason. Just to be clear.

BECK

Technically.

JACKIE

Technically.

DAL

Let's just kill all of them! Then when this is over with, I can take my rightful place back in your job, which was *my* job, for *me*!

BECK

No! We can't kill Pamoun until after the wedding gets called off, or there'll be too many royals and their coteries to handle. We must be like phantoms. Or... the wind. Maybe some kind of sneaky bird. *At most.*

...But yes, Pamoun is where you come in, Dal. You are... (begrudgingly) *talented* at...well... you know...

DAL (EXAGGERATED STAGE WHISPER)

Murderrrrrrrr. Hissssssssssssssssss.

BECK

Yes. We will need you, for that. Let's give credit where it's due. And you don't make us feel weird about it like Ishmael always does.

ISHMAEL

When you think about how all of us are simply a consciousness contained in a body, merely the act of snuffing one out makes us a little less whole, a little less-

BECK (CUTTING ISHMAEL OFF)

Enough. Enough. What did we just say. No one likes killing, don't make it worse.

DAL

I like killing. It makes me feel like a kid in a honey-coated fig shop.

JACKIE

Wow.

ISHMAEL

Nasty.

BECK

That is nasty. But useful! We all have our role to play.

JACKIE

After all, there's no Illuminati in team.

BECK

Sure. But please don't say that, I hate it. I'll take care of the ruining the wedding, since I love love. Ishmael, Dal, I need you to go and start planting evidence of treason by...

JACKIE (CUTTING BECK OFF)

Can I take the lead on the treason, Beck? I think it would really get my mom off my back if I framed someone for treason. She's really been riding me lately about my "plans for my future" and my "unstained hands"

BECK

Fine, good, take Dal with you. Ishmael, you're with me, since you're a romantic too.

ISHMAEL

Okay. Can I eat canapes?

BECK

Yes, probably.

RIVER RUSHING AND BIRD SOUNDS RAISE AS VOICES FADE OUT, THEN WE FADE TO THE PALACE MENAGERIE SOUNDSCAPE.

WE HEAR PEACOCKS AND SONGBIRDS, MAYBE A LION OR SOMETHING. DEFINITELY A PALATIAL PLACE IN A PALACE. SOME RUSTLING OF ORNAMENTAL PLANTS. A HARP PLAYS SOFTLY.

ISHMAEL

Wow, these are the nicest plants I've ever hidden in.

BECK

Shhh there they are. Shut up and listen, this could be our leverage.

LUCRA

Oh Pamoun, this menagerie of yours is so lovely. A wonderful way to spend our weekend before the wedding feast.

PAMOUN

I'm so glad you think so, my love. Your beauty and wit are more radiant than the most incredible of these animals.

LUCRA

Oh Pamoun. You always do say the sweetest things. It's why I fell so deeply in love with you. And these birds! They're so beautiful.

PAMOUN

Yes, these are the birds that killed my father. I had them all arrested and thrown into this bird jail, and now they serve me as romantic afternoon fillers. I have been using them to overcome my debilitating fear of swans.

LUCRA

Oh Pamoun, you're so sensitive. I'll protect you from the swans, my lovey dovey.

PAMOUN

Oh Lucra, you're so nurturing.

BECK AND ISHMAEL WHISPER FROM THE SHADOWS

ISHMAEL

Beck, maybe we should go

BECK

Shut up I love this

ISHMAEL

This is an intimacy we should not tread on. It's for them. Not bush-hiders.

BECK

Yeah well, Ishmael, you picked the wrong line of work if you don't want to eavesdrop on the loving mutters of people whose lives you're going to ruin.

ISHMAEL

I was kidnapped into this.

BECK

Shh, it's getting juicy.

PAMOUN

Say something nice about my abs.

LUCRA

They're positively glistening, you big strong pharaoh-to-be.

PAMOUN

Now let us make love, here, in front of my father's killers.

ISHMAEL

Oh no, they've heard our whispering. We deserve this failure.

BECK

Shh, he's clearly talking about the birds.

ISHMAEL

I'm not so sure.

LUCRA

Oh Pamoun, before we give into our *desperate* need for each other's *exquisite bodies*, are you certain that you're fine with....

PAMOUN

What is it my love? Is it about your secret and debilitating addiction to cats?

LUCRA

No! Worse!

PAMOUN

Your secret stable of painters who only paint your feet?

LUCRA

Far worse!

PAMOUN

Your secret diet where you only eat blood?

LUCRA

I'm not ashamed of my blood diet!

PAMOUN

Okay, well. Oh! Is it your secret son?

LUCRA

Yes! Little Bamenthoses will complicate the succession!
He's just a baby that I had with one of my secret foot
painters, you know, for fun.

PAMOUN (A LITTLE JEALOUS)

Yes, right of course, for fun.

LUCRA

but he could destroy the whole wedding if someone found
out about his illicit existence.

BECK

Oh JACKPOT.

ISHMAEL

I feel dirty. And not just because of all of the dirt I covered
myself with to hide my scent from the birds so they don't
recognize me.

BECK

No one told you to do that.

ISHMAEL

No one needed to. I anticipated the need, like the
self-starter, self-motivating person I am.

BECK

What?

ISHMAEL

deep breath Beck, as my supervisor I would like to take a
moment to point out to you that I have been a valuable
member of your team for many years and I feel I am
deserving of some recognition, like a raise-

BECK (CUTTING ISHMAEL OFF)

Shut up they're kissing.

SCENE

THE PRINCE'S BEDROOM. HUSHED VOICES. SHUFFLING AND RUSTLING

DAL

(sigh) so what are doing here, again? Framing some princes for treason to get them booted out of the royal family?

JACKIE

For the last time yes. Beck sent us to plant evidence to frame Princes Abadir and Donkor. Stop being passive-aggressive about it.

DAL

Well i'm not allowed to be aggressive-aggressive. I was told it's "too aggressive." To be honest, whenever Beck talks I just hear reeds burning.

JACKIE (CONFUSED)

That's... what? You what?'

DAL

Fwwushhhhhhhhhz~

JACKIE

No. No, that's... You're weird. And it's demonstrably untrue.

CLINKS AND CLONKS OF KNICK KNACKS

JACKIE (COT'D)

I'm telling you Dal, these princes really don't know how to clean up after themselves. This place is a mess. Look at all of these Osiris figurines and paintings of racing camels and Osiris figurines. What is Prince Abadir, twelve?

DAL

Don't be ridiculous Jackie, he's not a child, he's at least fourteen.

A CLATTER

JACKIE

Ow! Dang it!

DAL

You sneak around like a wild boar

JACKIE

How do they sneak around-

THERE IS A LOUD CLATTERING OF THINGS

JACKIE

Ow!

DAL

Like that.

JACKIE

You know we can't be all above it all, suspended by a web of ropes.

(SLOW ROPE CREAK)

(Thinking) Where did you get those? I want those. I have way more money than you, I should have those.

DAL

I made them. Idiot.

JACKIE

Okay, can we move past this whole "nemesis" thing? I know you hate Beck, but I'm not Beck. There's no reason we can't have a good working relationship.

DAL

If you wanted me to respect you, you would have usurped Beck by now.

JACKIE

Ugh, you sound like my mom.

(IN A NASAL, MOCKING TONE)

"Jackie, usurp your boss. Jackie, stab your brother in the back, Jackie, why are you petting that dog instead of training it to kill your brother?"

DAL

That sounds awfully familiar... Wait, aren't you the Sword's kid?

JACKIE

I'm more than just the surviving daughter of the Illuminati's supreme military commander. I've got my own stuff going on.

DAL

Ha. Name one thing.

JACKIE

I have a somewhat rehabilitated dog.

DAL

That sounds like it's directly related.

JACKIE

I enjoy brunches.

DAL

That's not a thing. That's everyone. Everyone enjoys brunch. That's why the illuminati invented it.

JACKIE

I'm good at tricking Ishmael

DAL

That's a skill, not a thing. And not much of a skill. I got him to kiss a snake by telling him it was my cursed wife. He went right for it.

BANGING SOUNDS START AND CONTINUE AS JACKIE TALKS

JACKIE

Classic. (pause as she thinks) Damn it, do I really not have anything else going on? No wonder I'm so insecure. I need a hobby or something. Hey thanks Dal. You know, you seem like a hard case on the outside, but deep down you're really-

BANGING SOUNDS

DAL (CUTTING JACKIE OFF)

Help me open this drawer. It's the perfect place to plant the phony ledgers that we ginned up to frame these two idiot princes.. Ugh, this is so... roundabout. I still say we just murder them.

BANGING SOUNDS

DAL

Hurry up. I don't have any leverage from the web.

JACKIE

You could come down.

DAL

Listen to yourself. That's a chump's game. This is why you're a chump.

JACKIE

Oh yeah? Hey look what I can do

SOUND OF A DRAWER OPENING AND CLOSING

DAL

Thanks for doing the thing I wanted you to do, chump.

JACKIE

Damn.

DAL

Hahahahaha

JACKIE

Ok, I've had enough of this.

(SOUND OF SAWING ROPE)

DAL

---Hahaha Hey what no stop I made-!

A LOUD TWANG, A WHOOSH, A LOUD THUMP, THE SOUND OF ROPE UNSPOOLING, SOME PULLEYS HIT THE GROUND, A PART ROLLS AWAY

THERE IS A PAUSE

JACKIE

Get up.

A GRUNT TO INDICATE STANDING UP, SOUND OF BRUSHING SELF OFF, A PAUSE

DAL

Alright. Fair...

JACKIE

Good

DAL
(QUIETLY)

For now.

JACKIE

Good. There's no Illuminati in team.

DAL

Let's take a look in this little drawer that you opened. The drawers are the windows of the soul.

DRAWER OPENS

JACKIE

Now to plant the evidence. I'm gonna empty this thing out and plant some... love letters from the duchess,

RUSTLING SOUNDS

with fake smooch marks *smooch* there we go. Some correspondence from Sumeria,

RUSTLING SOUNDS

some coins from Uruk,

CLINKING SOUNDS

the bestselling scroll "How to commit treason for any reason, in any season,"

RUSTLING SOUNDS AGAIN

DAL

This is great! How could they possibly explain that.

JACKIE

Exactly! But just to be sure, I've got this big bag of money labelled "Nubian Bribes,"

SOUND OF A BAG OF COINS CLINKING DOWN

and this jar of poison that I've labelled "regicidal poison - PRINCES ONLY."

BOTTLE RATTLE SOUND

DAL

You know Jackie, this is a surprisingly thorough job.

JACKIE

Thank you!

DAL

A little on the nose. But not in a bad way.

JACKIE

Thank you!

DAL

Did you make all of these?

JACKIE

Well, I'm pretty crafty. You should see my scrapsroll of stuff from the wrecks of my favorite chariot racers.

DAL

See? Now those are things. That's an identity for yourself. A crafty race ghou.

JACKIE

I mean anyone can collect scraps of cloth and metal from the accidents that happen in every chariot race. Every child has caught a chariot rivet on the sidelines. It's a cliché.

DAL

But it's what you *do* with those scraps of cloth and metal.
And apparently you scrap-scroll them. Like a ghoul would.
But a crafty one that likes to have nice things that they
made by hand.

JACKIE

I choose to take that as a compliment.

DAL

It *was* a compliment!

JACKIE

You know Dal, you're not so bad. Now let's go frame an
old man and his nephew.

/SCENE

MEMO (OVER MUSIC

One day until the Pre-Growing season.
Operatives Jackie and Dalilah have successfully seeded
evidence of treason. Deputy Chief Underboss (undergoing
review) Beck has completed preparations for the severing
of the royal wedding. She has called a meeting of her team
today in our secret chambers within the palace walls,
immediately prior to the wedding.

TORCHES CRACKLE FAINTLY

BECK

Well it's been a long post-growing-season moon, but it's all
about to pay off, everyone.

DAL

Unlike all of your other plans, Beck! Ohhhh!

JACKIE

(Snickers)Nice

BECK

Jackie, whose side are you on?

ISHMAEL

I would like to point out that I did not taunt, snicker, or say "nice," and yet my salary is three square meals a day, where theirs is commensurate with market rate.

BECK

Thank you, Ishmael, we're just going to ignore that. In just a few short minutes, the wedding dinner is about to be interrupted with the "discoveries" we've worked so hard to cultivate.

JACKIE

Wait the wedding dinner is right now?

BECK

Yes. It's actually just on the other side of this wall. Shhh, you can hear it.

THERE ARE VERY FAINT SOUNDS OF LAUGHTER AND REVELRY. THE SOUNDS OF THE PARTY GO ON FAINTLY UNDERNEATH THE REST OF THE MEETING.

DAL

So they're all just sitting in there. In the same room.

BECK

Yes.

DAL*THIRSTILY*

Together.

BECK

Yes. That's the beauty of the whole plan, they all find out each other's secrets so that they turn against each other, completely fracturing their careful alliances.

DAL

Guards in there?

BECK

Outside on the door, probably. Which is why we've been subtle. We don't want them getting spooked and spoiling the whole thing.

DAL

Hold on I gotta go do...something. *chair scrapes back footsteps*

BECK

Sure fine whatever. Just walk off in the middle of my mission briefing, it's fine, we didn't all work hard to be here.

(SOUND OF A DOOR CREAKING OPEN AND THEN SLAMMING SHUT, RUNNING FOOTSTEPS)

Bast, I hate working with her.

ISHMAEL

Well you know there's no Illuminati in tea-

BECK (CUTTING OFF ISHMAEL)

I told you not to tell me that! Fine, we're just going to proceed as if my nemesis Dal were in the room and enjoy the fact that she's not here to undercut me. Proceed with... this celebratory wine!

THE POPPING OF A CORK AND SOME GLUGGING SOUNDS

BECK

We've completed all of our plans, so I'm throwing you all this little secret passage party to celebrate and debrief while all of the pieces fall neatly into place behind those closed doors.

THE SOUNDS OF THE PARTY BEGIN TO CHANGE TO MURDER SOUNDS - THE SOUND OF A BOTTLE BREAKING AND THEN A SCREAM.

It's perfect, There's an elegant dinner, they each have their own place card, I've coordinated the pairings so that everyone's secrets come to light through artful slips made by servers, who are now all on the payroll

SERVING PERSON (MUFFLED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALL)

So I heard that the Duchess is addicted to cats - no please
I'm just a waiter! We had a deal!

SPLUT SPLORCH BANG CRASH

ISHMAEL

So we have money to bribe servers but-

BECK

Thank you. Anyway, next there's a five course wine banquet, which loosens tongues *and* inhibitions.

SOUNDS OF SHATTERING AND GLUGGING, SOME SPURCHES AND SPORCHES AND BONE BREAKING SOUNDS. SCREAMS ETC.

BECK

Then the glass swan is rolled in, to heighten Prince Pamoun's paranoia by bringing up his worst fear.

JACKIE

Oh that's great, classic psychological warfare.

BECK

Exactly, and-

WHEEL SQUEAKING SOUNDS,

DAL (MUFFLED)

Hup!

LOUD SNAPPING SOUND

PAMOUN (MUFFLED, SCREAMING)

"Oh Anubis not the swan beak! I had a dream it would end this way!

(LASS SHATTERING, THUMPS AND SPURTS. WILHELM SCREAM

BECK

And we wrap it up with the reveal of the duchess' baby, held by his painter father and accompanied by a painting that we commissioned showing him, making love, to Lucra,

lowered from the ceiling with a system of ropes. That was Dal's work, and, much as I hate to say it, a truly elegant system of pulleys.

SOME WINCHING SOUNDS.

PAINTER (MUFFLED)

Oh my god honey don't look

(BABY LAUGHING)

PAINTER (MUFFLED)

Winch us back up!

MORE WINCHING SOUNDS.

JACKIE

You know boss, I've been hanging out with Dal on this whole 'framing the princes for treason' thing, and she's really not so bad. When we were planting journals marked "battle plans to give to Sumeria parentheses For Treason close parentheses" she said this really funny thing. She said "Traitor? I hardly know her!"

BECK

Huh. Where is Dal, anyway?

THE SCREAMS AND CRASHES GROW LOUDER AND THE GANG REALIZES WHAT'S GOING ON

BECK

Oh no. Ishmael, open that door!

CREEAAK SLAM RUNNING FOOTSTEPS

JACKIE

Oh my god there are so many heads.

SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS STEPPING IN LIQUID. (THE LIQUID IS BLOOD)

BECK

I've never seen so many heads!

ISHMAEL

I would never behead thirty people and fill a room with blood. And I think that's one more reason why I believe I deserve a raise.

BECK

My perfectly placed puzzle pieces! Pulverized like so much pottery!

DAL *BREATHING HEAVILY* *YELLING*

Illuminati! That's how we do it! Yeah! I do not need to see my therapist this week! I could wrestle a sphinx right now.
AAAAAAAHHHHHH

BECK

You took a thing of beauty and made it cheap!

DAL

Well, I was going to go with the treason thing but they were all just *standing* there. I hate to say it, but, good job there, *Beck*. You really know how to set up a massacre.

BECK (ALMOST IN TEARS)

It was going to be so elegant and brutal. Like making a swan cry. Like a lion dancing.

ISHMAEL

Like a lion doing anything, really. I once saw a li-

DAL

Shut up, Ishmael.

ISHMAEL *QUIETLY*

A lion wearing a hat...

JACKIE

Maybe put that in your back pocket for later buddy.

ISHMAEL (WHISPERED)

Where'd he even buy it?

DAL

Now that we've got all of that hullabaloo out of the way, lets go frame that old ass prince Donkor for this.

BECK

How. How could a fifty-three-year-old man with gout *do* this. And he lost his left arm gambling for Ra's sake!

DAL

Not my problem, cutie. *You're* the one with all the big, subtle plans. Idiot.

BECK

I hate you so much.

DAL

Well, you better get to that decrepit old man quick before-

THE DOOR BURSTS OPEN AND GUARDS SEE WHAT HAS HAPPENED, THEN START RACING TO PROTECT DONKOR, GETTING PROGRESSIVELY QUIETER

GUARD 1

Oh my Ra! They're all dead! Alert dowager prince Donkor!! Someone other than him has committed terrible murders!

GUARD 2

Alert Donkor! Form a guard around Donkor!

GUARD 3

Form a guard around Donkor! Protect him from assassination! Take Donkor to the safehouse up the mountainside!

GUARD 4

Take Donkor to the safehouse up in the mountainside! Call the army to protect Donkor!

GUARD 5

Call the army to protect Donkor! Kill anyone that comes within a mile of the safehouse up on the mountainside!

BECK

Oh come ON.

JACKIE

We should go.

BECK

Come. On.

SCENE

MEMO

Memo from the office of the Eye. Dowager prince Donkor has retreated to the royal mountain fort and has been holed up there for several days. All attempts to infiltrate, attack and expunge the fort have failed, including, in order, bribing the guards, dressing as a horse, dressing as a guard, dressing as a sexy guard, bribing the horses, and, out of desperation, asking nicely. Deputy chief underboss Beck has called a meeting of her team to try and find any plan that may work.

WHOOSHING WINDS, TENT FLAPS FLUTTERING, SLEEPY BAAS FROM SLEEPY SHEEP

BECK

Well now what.

ISHMAEL

I could get more apples.

BECK

That didn't work the first time!

JACKIE

I have the sexy horse costume?

BECK

I don't love that whole angle. It's weird, even for this.

DAL

See, it's taking you days to do what I did in minutes! You're going to *fail*, Beck. And I'm going to ascend, into the sky, like a hawk with a snake in its talons, to feed myself in a glorious display of acrobatics and viscera!

BECK

You fail with us!

DAL

I dealt with six of seven on my own. Partial credit. Like a hawk carrying most of a snake. Like maybe the snake got stuck in some thorns on the way up and tore a bit, but it's still good if you eat the rest of it.

ISHMAEL

She's right! I've seen that happen lots of times!

JACKIE

You know, even though we're going to fail and Egypt will be ruled over by a sober administrator whose goals are at odds with those of our organization, I feel like I've really grown close with all of you, even Dal.

I remember how often I fell short of my mother's unrealistic expectations for me, and yet here I am finding my own path and learning from my mistakes, on my own, finally out from the perpetual shadow of being the daughter of the Sword.

BECK (EXUBERANT)

That's it! Jackie, you're a genius!

JACKIE *FLUSTERED*

Wow. Well, thank you. It's like, I've been looking at myself a lot lately and with a lot of reflection I-

BECK (CUTTING JACKIE OFF)

We can call your mother!

JACKIE

What? NO!

BECK

Ishmael, go run a message from Jackie. "Dear Mom, I Have Blown It, Please Come Bail Me Out-"

JACKIE

I didn't blow it! YOU blew it!

BECK

"-love Jackie." This is a team, Jackie, everyone blew it.
Especially Dal.

DAL

Or did I?

JACKIE

I thought there was no Illuminati in team!

BECK

I don't really see what you're getting at. Ishmael!

ISHMAEL

Got it boss! Let's see... eye, sun... hawk... river... flooded
river...

BECK

Hawk-cat-frond-frond. Go!

ISHMAEL

And seal it with a kiss *mwah*

JACKIE

*a slowly building scream that cuts to-

SOUNDS OF BATTLE. HORSES, MEN SCREAMING AND DYING CLANGS AND CLASHES
OF SWORDS.

THE SWORD *CHEERILY, INTENSE*

Okay everybody, good hustle. Now, I *feel like* we should
bring the archers around to the west to rain death on their
exposed flank. That way, and this is just a thought, their
cavalry will crumble like so much stale, bloody bread. Then
we'll be able to catch them in a pincer movement, roll up
the army, capture the generals, yadda yadda yadda
executions by sunset and home in time for after-work
drinks. The company buys the first round!

SOLDIERS

Yes, Ms. The Sword. Right away.

MARCHING FOOTSTEPS

THE SWORD

Great. Remember, there's no Illuminati in team!

SOUND OF RUNNING AND PUFFING

ISHMAEL (OUT OF BREATH)

Ms. The Sword, I have a message from your daughter.

THE SWORD (LIKE SHE'S TALKING TO A FAVORITE DOG)

Oh *hi there* Ishmael! How's my favorite little guy doing? Let me just take a look at this...

UNROLLING SOUNDS

(COLD, ANGRY VOICE)

I see.

ROLLING SOUNDS

ISHMAEL

Uh, we ran into some problems...We did too many murders.

THE SWORD [CHEERILY]

There are never too many murders, only... well, there are never *too* many murders.

[VOICE BECOMES COLD AGAIN]

So. She needs my help. Again. Although she doesn't usually ask for it with an "I have blown it." It's really only to be expected, though. I should never have let her go off on her own to take this... *internship*.

ISHMAEL

Your help would be very valuable, I'm kind of hoping for a raise right now, so it's important to me that this mission goes well.

THE SWORD [CHEERILY]

Well if it's for you, Ishmael honey. You just keep doing your best. I think I have a hard candy around here somewhere...

ISHMAEL

Yes please!

EXTERIOR, FORTRESS ON A MOUNTAIN. THE GANG IS CONVENED AROUND A WOODEN TABLE SET UP AT THE BASE OF THE MOUNTAIN. WHOOSHING WINDS, SOUNDS OF STING'S DESERT ROSE, SLEEPY BAAS FROM SLEEPY SHEEPS

BECK

Just give me the sexy horse costume. I'm throwing it away. Your mother is coming to bail us out and that's final.

A HORSE GALLOPS TOWARD THE GROUP

BECK

That's her, act natural

JACKIE

Scoff.

HORSE HOOFS TURN TO A WALK

ISHMAEL *AROUND A HARD CANDY*

So there was this lion and he was wearing the hat, and I was like, woah where did you get the hat? And he was like, *roar.*

THE SWORD

That's nice, sweetie..

ISHMAEL

Thank you!

THE SWORD

You eat that quietly.

ISHMAEL (WHISPERING)

Okay!

BECK

Ms. The Sword! Thank you so much for coming to see us.

THE SWORD

Oh Beck, it's been too long! How are you, you little honey fig? Still weaving your fun little intrigues?

BECK

Yes, ma'am I am. I had quite a good one this time but, well... .. Dal came on the scene, and as they say.... There's no Illuminati in team.

DAL (TRIUMPHANT)

And I made things *happen*. I took what was mine by right! Wahahahahahahaha!

THE SWORD

Oh I could just eat you up with a spoon. I remember my first rival. I think I still have her head somewhere. You let me know when you two finally work it all out in an orgy of violence, won't you?

BECK

Or an orgy of intrigue?

THE SWORD

Sure, whatever suits your fancy. Boop!

coldly

Now where is that daughter of mine

JACKIE (NERVOUS)

Uh.... Hi mom.

THE SWORD

Jackie, why are you dressed like that? It's... tacky.

JACKIE

I.... I panicked.

THE SWORD

Come here, girl.

CLIP CLOP CLIP CLOP

THE SWORD (COT'D)

You've really made a mess of this one. I knew you would when you decided to go into Direct Action instead of Conquest, like you were supposed to.

JACKIE

But I'm so much better at this! Look, maybe the prince holed himself up in an impenetrable fortress, but we framed him for treason like a ten shat picture! With the evidence I made! Or we would have, if Dal hadn't killed everyone. Now it seems kind of irrelevant.

DAL

Hey! Way to throw me under the palanquin there newbie.

THE SWORD

That's just not a thorough job. You get things done with the blade, honey. Or the club. You had so much potential with the club! Remember the club lessons?

JACKIE

Beck didn't kill anyone! You never judge her about it!

BECK

Well my plan did involve one murder--

DAL (CUTTING BECK OFF)

I was just more ambitious about it. Because one murder is never enough.

THE SWORD

Right. And you know what I always say, Jackie. Sooner or later you will have to murder someone.

DAL

Someones.

JACKIE

--But if this situation has taught us anything, it's that you can't solve *everything* with murder!

THE SWORD

I'd say "I can't believe you said that," Jackie, but at this point I expect to be disappointed.

JACKIE

Well maybe you wouldn't be so damn disappointed in me all the time if you ever supported me!

THE SWORD

And just what do you think I'm doing here now?

JACKIE

Not just when there's someone to kill, Mom! When I got dumped by my first boyfriend, I wanted to talk about it with my mother and have her tell me everything would be okay!

I didn't want you to give me all his teeth in a leather bag labeled "LITTLE IDIOT MAN"

THE SWORD (HURT)

I had that made special. It had little beads. I thought you'd like that specifically.

JACKIE

And when I started my own wine stand and the kids up the street knocked it over, I wanted a *hug*, not an easy-slay battle axe and a list of their addresses!!

THE SWORD

It's important to teach children mediation skills.

JACKIE

With an AXE?

THE SWORD

Just try mediating without it and see how far you get.

JACKIE

I was eight!

THE SWORD

You were always more comfortable with the club, to be fair. But it's important to be well-rounded.

JACKIE

There's more to life than ending it!

ISHMAEL

crunches hard candy Deep.

BECK

Jackie, just make up with your mother so she'll bail us out.
You're being very selfish.

THE SWORD

Yes, Jackie, thank you for sharing all of those happy
memories, but I think I deserve an apology.

JACKIE

But I-- they-- I wasn't--
[unintelligible yell]

THE SWORD

Oh Beck, it's fine. I sent 400 troops up the far side of the
mountain an hour ago. Hear that?

THEY VERY FAINTLY HEAR BATTLE SOUNDS ON THE WIND.

THE SWORD

Wait for it-

THERE IS A BLOODCURDLING SCREAM JUST SLIGHTLY LOUDER THAT STRETCHES
OUT FOR SEVERAL MOMENTS BEFORE GOING UP AND HALTING ABRUPTLY.

THE SWORD (CHEERILY)

There. All done.

DAL

We've finally finished the cover up for you all murdering the
Pharaoh.

ISHMAEL

A lot of interpretations would say that I didn't touch him.
Really, he was dead when the birds took him. We're not in
charge of them.

THE SWORD

Well, not yet. Anyway, I can't take too long here, I have to get back to the secret front. So I'll see you next week for brunch, honey.

HORSE GALLOPS AWAY

JACKIE*through gritted teeth*
Bye mom. Love you.

BECK

Thank you Ms. The Sword!

ISHMAEL*candy in mouth*

Thanks for the second butterscotch!

SCENE. SOUNDS OF MOUNTAINS TRAIL OFF AND FADE INTO DOOR CREAKING

INTERIOR, ANCIENT STONE OFFICE BUILDING. DAY. A BIG STONE DOOR CREAKS OPEN.

CHIEF

I'll be with the two of you in just a moment. I have some scrollwork to finish up.

BIG STONE DOOR CREAKS SHUT

BECK

It's done. Sekhmet will be crowned king at the beginning of the pre-growing season.

DAL

And I will be crowned deputy chief underboss of direct action for the Egypt region once more! I did all of the work in that mission and *you* had to go crying to your underling's mother! I will ascend, a glorious phoenix burning through the night sky on a plume of glorious, violent flame!

BECK (IMPRESSED)

You're back on your game.

DAL

Action makes me stronger. Like my new all-blood diet.

BECK

Ew.

DAL

I guess you learned a lesson. Spending worthless hours plotting away on schemes is the path of the weak, and strength is the path of the strong. Like me, a glorious she-wolf with her jaws on the neck of the owl. The big nerdy owl.

BECK

You know what? I did learn that. Thanks, Dal.

THERE IS A PAUSE

DAL

You're oddly calm for someone about to *lose everything*.

BECK

I guess I'm just having a moment of clarity, like a horse on a hot rock.

DAL

What does that even *mean*? That's a terrible metaphor.

BECK (SWEETLY)

I learn from the best.

CREEEAAAK

CHIEF

Okey dokey, come on in.

BECK (TALKING QUICKLY AND LOUDLY)

I'm happy to report that I successfully executed my plan to have all seven princes killed.

DAL

What?! No! *I'm* the one that did the murders!

BECK

Exactly. Knowing Dal's endless capacity for egomania and violence, I created a plan so subtle that she, in her perpetual bloodlust, would never go for it. I banked on that zeal for murder and arranged all of the princes in one

convenient place, a set up for slaughter so irresistible that it drove her to an act of single-handed and effective violence that would have been otherwise nearly impossible, like a snake making, then eating, a sandwich.

CHIEF

Yes, very impressive. And your similes have improved.

DAL

What.

DAL

You didn't plan for me to do any of that!

BECK

Sure I did. It's in the report.

DAL

You needed the Sword to bail you out!

BECK

I *got* the Sword to bail me out. It was *very impressive*.

CHIEF

Yes, very impressive.

DAL

(inarticulate yell)

CHIEF

Well that is what upper management is for, in their infinite wisdom and power. So, whatever works. Good job Beck. I see that your time on Clean Up has, appropriately enough, made you adept at cleaning up your own messes.

DAL (WHISPERING)

I know you didn't plan that out.

BECK (WHISPERING)

He thinks I did. That's intrigue, baby.

DAL (WHISPERING)

I'm going to get you for this.

BECK (SMUG, NORMAL VOLUME)

There's no illuminati in team.

CHIEF

Oh, that's not the motto any more. We thought about the library being a tomb and we decided we liked it. Now the motto is Novus Ordo Spookorum.

PAUSE

CHIEF (TRANSLATING)

A new Spooky Order.

BECK

What language is that?

CHIEF

Latin. It's going to be big.

END

THEME STARTS PLAYING

MEMO

Royal Pains was written by Max Kreisky, Katherine Cargill and Eric Trageser.

In this episode,

Chloe Zwaicher was Beck

Julie Snyder was Jackie

Noel Naczi was Ishmael

Meredith Gulley was Dal and Lucra

John Serpico was the Chief

Dennis Bruno was the Memo

Liz Roderick was the Sword

Salvatore Fabianno was Pamoun

With additional voices by Alex P Roy

Logo Design by Tom Crowley

Theme by Arnie Parrot

It was recorded by Mertz at The Bridge Sound and Stage in Somerville, Massachusetts

It was directed and produced by Max Kreisky.

With editing and sound design by Will Gianetta

Special thanks to blood dieticians Leah D'Errico, Diana Lu, David Fouhy, Bibek Gurung, Sara Siegel, Jackie Presedo, Alvaro Amor and Eric Fields

Novus Ordo Spookorum