

YOBA

Ah, Lord Josquin! Welcome back to Simitu. You look well.

JOSQUIN

You can drop the act, Yoba. I know you're not happy to see me.

YOBA

It's my job to welcome all visitors. Should we move somewhere more comfortable to talk? Wine, maybe?

JOSQUIN

I'm not a visitor, I'm here to do my civic duty as an alderman of Cailou.

YOBA

That reminds me! I got your message. I haven't had time to craft a response. Things have been very busy.

JOSQUIN

So I've heard! The Great King Starbringer has returned to Simitu. But that's not all, is it? Tell me, as a member of the royal council, why have I not been included in negotiations with the Rau? Are you trying to humiliate me?

YOBA

Mmmmmmm. The council thinks it might better if you sit this one out.

JOSQUIN

The Rau are a *planetary* concern. You need representation from Caliou!

YOBA

We've got someone. Someone who was invited.

JOSQUIN

(sarcastic)

But the *party*? You didn't invite me to the party! You know I love parties...

YOBA

Half the attendees weren't invited,
so you only really stopped yourself
from coming.

CYTHAELIA

(whispering)

Phrosy, we should stay out of
sight.

SOPHROSYNE

(whispering)

I have to see.

YOBA

Why are you here, Josquin?

JOSQUIN

To get what I'm entitled to. My
seat at the council.

YOBA

I can't do that.

JOSQUIN

Why?

YOBA

You know why.

JOSQUIN

(shouting)

I demand an audience with the
council.

YOBA

The council is busy with more
important things.

JOSQUIN

I won't leave until I get my
audience.

YOBA

Surely you have better things to do
with your time. Like launch a
propaganda campaign behind our
backs?

JOSQUIN

That accusation is unfounded.

YOBA

Is it?

JOSQUIN

What proof do you have?

YOBA

What more proof do I need? If I were you, I'd leave the capital right now. Return to Cailou, and never set foot here again.

JOSQUIN

Or else what?

YOBA

Or else I'll have you detained.

JOSQUIN

How dare you try to censure me! I have more allies than you realize. Don't think I won't go down without a fight.

YOBA

Is that a confession?

JOSQUIN

A confession to what exactly? I want to hear you say it.

YOBA

Treason. Tell me, how far did you expect this "New Regime" of yours to go?

JOSQUIN

Where it belongs -- all the way to the top. You tell your King I want an audience with the council, or else arresting me will be the single most regrettable decision he ever made.

[Sounds of weapons as guards engage Josquin]