



Act I Scene S



“And you. And you. And you.”

Attila proceeded to point at almost every member of the crowd within several metres of his reach.

Lara placed her head in her hands. The situation was worsening by the minute.

“Friends, don’t you see? The errors that you have made? You have allowed this foreign threat to hijack your work, your welfare, your ways! That’s not how one should live!”

An unsettling silence.

“Look at us. Look at us all. Gathered here like fools, debating on whom we should deliver the unpredictable sword of extrajudicial punishment to, on the off chance that we might pick out the werewolves in our midst. What a ludicrous proposition!

“How many have been lost? How many? How many!?”

The audience murmured as a collective. They struggled to maintain eye contact with the old man.

“How many of us are there? A few hundred? Why don’t we just stand in the dark and await these creatures?”

There were a few nods of approval. The old man’s argument was gathering momentum.

“Don’t be ridiculous. Breaking curfew? That’s not how we do things here,” responded the Sheriff.

“Well, why not? Otherwise, we stand to pick ourselves apart at these Purges during the day, and get picked off by the werewolves during the night. No, I say. No! We need to fight back!”

The crowd erupted in applause.

The Sheriff, realising that he had lost the crowd, gathered the Neighbourhood Watch and cantered away. Attila, meanwhile, drew his crowd in closer and detailed his plan...



The villagers shivered in the frigid moonlight. The sun was long gone, and it was difficult to keep still without the cold seeping into their bones. This was something that they had never done before — something they were ill prepared for.

“Are you sure this is going to work?” asked a shivering Lara. Arms shaking and teeth chattering, the cold was getting to her. Or the nerves.

“No... but it’s better than being lynched.”



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Even in the direst of situations, he was always right, Lara thought.

Attila surveyed his surroundings. To his left and his right, the mob stood, axes and torches and pitchforks in hand, ever vigilant, and ready to spring into action at the slightest moment of trouble.

In front of them, a number of traps and fortifications lay deceptively still, almost goading any enemies to challenge their integrity and see what they were capable of.

Behind them was a collection of cages, to isolate anyone who turned from the mob. Attila shuddered at the thought of potential betrayal and hoped the cages would not see any use.

In the distance, there was a howl. The hunt had begun. The villagers cheered in excitement. No more waiting. But who were the hunters and who were the hunted? Only time would tell.

The lone wolf stalked the outskirts of the village, sniffing for its prey. Seeing them gathered in one place, trapped between a number of wooden structures, made it excited. It would be an easy feast tonight, it thought.

The werewolf beelined for the mob, looking for a target in particular. The frail old one in the middle would do, it thought.

It tore through the woods, burst free from the shrubbery, bolted up the hill and...

...impaled itself on one of the sharpened stake fortifications lying in front of the mob.

The villagers, though enthusiastic, were nervous about the need to lift a weapon, and cheered out of relief for not doing so. A few of them gave the werewolf a number of pokes with their repurposed tools, just for good measure. They would wait until morning to unmask the identity of the culprit. But it didn't matter. It was all over.

—————

Lara and Attila were transported back to the archive room. The Cube, which Attila had been inspecting in what felt like mere moments ago, rattled across the damp concrete floor.

“Look!” exclaimed Lara.

The red face of the Cube was now restored and gleaming, its vivid crimson no match for the faded oranges and yellows and greens and blues scattered across its other faces.

“Does that mean we solved it?”

Attila harrumphed.

“I suppose so,” he mused, “I suppose so.”

“So what now?”

“Well, we ought to proceed with caution. For starters, I don't even know how this Cu—”



Act I Scene S



Lara took Attila's wrinkly hand and pushed down hard on the white face, as if it were a buzzer in a competitive game show. A flashbang. And then they were no more.



LETTERS AND NUMBERS

TRIPLE WORD SCORE

DOUBLE WORD SCORE

DOUBLE LETTER SCORE

TRIPLE LETTER SCORE

SYMBOLOLOGY

TRIPLE WORD SCORE

DOUBLE LETTER SCORE

TRIPLE WORD SCORE

A ₁	A ₁	A ₁	A ₁	A ₁	A ₁	B ₃	B ₃	C ₃	C ₃	C ₃	C ₃	C ₃
D ₂	D ₂	E ₁	E ₁	E ₁	E ₁	F ₄	G ₂	G ₂	H ₄	I ₁	I ₁	
I ₁	I ₁	K ₅	K ₅	L ₁	M ₃	M ₃	M ₃	N ₁	N ₁	N ₁	N ₁	N ₁
O ₁	O ₁	O ₁	O ₁	P ₃	P ₃	P ₃	P ₃	R ₁	R ₁	R ₁	S ₁	S ₁
S ₁	S ₁	T ₁	T ₁	T ₁	U ₁	U ₁	U ₁	U ₁	U ₁	U ₁	X ₈	



Act I Scene 5



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