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A vanished mage... A missing diamond... The game is afoot.

“From Broderick, Prince of Asconar, Earl of Carlshore and Thorn, Duke of Wicksborough, Baron of Highbury and Warden of Dershanmoor, to My Lady Parisan, King’s Investigator, greetings. It has been brought to my attention that a certain Reinwald, Master Historian, noted Archmagus and tutor to our court in this city of Nemithia, has this day failed to report to the duties awaiting him. I do ask you, as my father’s most loyal servant, to seek the cause of this laxity and bring word of the mage to me, so that my concerns as to his safety be allayed.”

The herald delivered the message word-perfect to The Lady Parisan, Baroness of Orandy, Knight of the Diamond Circle and Sworn Paladin to Our Lady of the Sighs. Parisan’s companion, Foorourow Miar Raar Ramoura, Prince of IIsfacar, (Foo to his friends) thought it a rather mundane assignment, but nevertheless together they ventured to the Archmagus’ imposing home to seek him. It turned out to be the start of an adventure to solve a mystery wrapped in an enigma bound by a conundrum and secured by a puzzle. All because of a missing diamond with a solar system at its core.

Authors Penelope Hill and J.A. Mortimore have effortlessly melded a Holmesian investigative duo, a richly detailed city where they encounter both nobility and seedier denizens, swashbuckling action, and magic that is palpable and, at times, awesome.

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Penelope Hill has wanted to be a writer for as long as she can remember, and her fascination with both futuristic and fantastic worlds has fuelled that ambition ever since. She is an avid reader, a long time role-player and games-master, and loves world-building: designing exotic places, writing mythic histories, and crafting cultures. She’s been a costumer and is busy developing her skills as a textile artist, so when she’s not writing she can usually be found stitching, knitting, knotting, or exercising other creative skills. During her working life, she spent many years supporting services in local government, and eventually found herself contributing to the development of both local and national policy, particularly around privacy and confidentiality. The research for her PhD helped influence some of that work, but has also brought new perspectives to both her writing and her world building. While she has published academically, she prefers creative writing, and retirement has given her the opportunity to pursue her long standing ambition to become a professional author. She currently lives in Gloucestershire with five cats, a huge library of books, a treasure hoard of fabric and thread, and far too many dice.

J.A. Mortimore (Judith) was born in London in 1953. She started writing stories at a young age and has never stopped. She wrote fanfiction for many years in a number of fandoms, all pre-internet. She has been active in science fiction and fantasy circles for longer than she cares to think about. She has a doctorate in policing young people. She has a short story in an anthology published in 2022 and has written space operas with romance which she plans to self-publish. Now retired, she lives in Gloucestershire with two friends, a number of cats, and far too many books and half-finished manuscripts.

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