IN THE COURT OF
THE POISON KING

The Kingdom of Pontus, led by King Mithridates VI, has long stood strong against the Romans. No longer. The Romans are on the doorstep, and Mithridates can not stop them.

But even still, of all of our losses, the worst has been our King's trust. Mithridates has heartlessly poisoned every member of his family, leaving him old and heirless, and providing an opportunity to his Court.

The Poison King's paranoid eye now turns to the Court, and to claim the throne of Pontus, you will need to be the last one standing. Let the best Courtier win.

IN THE
COURT
OF THE
POISON
KING

A GMless card game of treachery and power for 4 players, played in 30 minutes.

RULES

At the beginning of each round, pass the *Poison Chalice* to the living *Courtier* with the highest position.

Each *Courtier* secretly chooses an action. *Appeasing The King* keeps a *Courtier* safe from poisoning that round. Whispering about a target moves the *Poison Chalice* to the target. *Delaying The Romans* prevents the Romans from advancing at the end of the round. Fail to *Delay The Romans* four times, and the game is over.

At the end of the round, the holder of the *Poison Chalice* dies, unless they *Appeased The King*. They become a *Venomous Ghost*, and now will draw those cards only.

RULES CONTINUED

Each *Courtier* has the King's ear, the last and must trusted of his advisors, though that may not last long. Shuffle the four Courtier cards and deal them to the players, answer your prompts aloud, and begin play with the first round.

HISTORICAL PLAY

The actual history of the fall of Mithradates VI is interesting, but is also irrelevant to the playing this game. Instinct might lead players to attempt to be "period-accurate" but this is both boring and difficult. Embrace tropes of classical and medieval royal dramas, both realistic or fantastical. Playing loose with history lets players have fun, rather than be stuck studying.

CREDITS AND LEGAL

In The Court Of The Poison King is a game by The Logbook Project, aka Max Hervieux, copyright 2019.

Layout was done in Adobe InDesign. The fonts are Roman SD by Steve Deffeyes and Futura PT. All design, writing, layout, and logos are by Max Hervieux.

This game was inspired by Adrienne Mayor's biography of Mithridates VI, *The Poison King*. It's an excellent narrative, though it is not an excellent historical source. I recommend reading it, just take it with a grain of salt.

This is the second game of *Antiquity*. Check out the first game, *Diadem*, on Patreon!

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