

Highly Strung

—Corey Plover and Matthew Ng

The only item in the folder is an envelope, signed, sealed and stamped, but not yet posted. It is addressed:

To be delivered to the office of ~~the Prime Minister~~ Tony Abbott

So, this is it. The final countdown. The moment when all will be revealed. Deep breaths. Relax. Carefully unseal the envelope. Slowly pull out a letter. And read:

Dear PM,

The SCRT MSG is waiting to be collected. We are dealing with powerful forces here, so make sure you follow this recipe closely:

1 sprinkle of 'SCRT MSG', with;

2 kicks of the bucket;

3 bites of the dust;

4 shuffles-off of the mortal coil;

5 pushing-ups of the daisies, and finally;

6 feet under.

Cook slowly over a flame until well and truly roasted.

This should get the job done. Kevin Rudd is no Thomas More, but he'll go down in history as a man for all seasonings.

Yours truly, MP (future MP)

Staring at the letter, it doesn't take you long to put two-and-two together: Abbott was intending to use some sort of poisonous *seasoning* to polish off Kevin Rudd, and claim the prime-ministership! And the SCRT MSG... was *secret* msg. Of course!

You realise with sickening clarity that the only way to stop this dastardly plot is to find the *secret* msg before Tony Abbott gets there first. But how were you supposed to locate it? You hurriedly empty the contents of the envelope on a nearby table, willing there to be something, anything, that might help you. But all you find is a strange loop of string and a cube. As you realise that this doesn't contain all the information you need, your face first flushes tomato-red with frustration, before slowly fading to a sickly pickle-green, and then onto a ghostly onion-white as you begin to comprehend the enormity of your task. Your chips are well and truly down, the steaks are oh-so-high, and only you can save Kevin Rudd's bacon.

