

# Billionaire\* Consternation

## - a play in three acts

by Larry Strattnr

Talk about extravagance. An anonymous Malaysian businessman just spent \$4.8 billion on a super-yacht covered in platinum and gold, making it the most expensive yacht ever sold, according to *Luxury Launches* magazine.

### Act One

"Hello, Mr. Mital's office.

"Lemme speak to him."

"I'm sorry Mr. Mital is not currently..."

"Just put me through for fuck's sake it's Abami here."

"I'm terribly sorry Mr. Abami. I did not recognize your voice. We must have a poor connection."

"Never mind that shit, just ring me through."

### Act Two

"Lakhsmi Mital."

"Lakhsmi, Mukesh here. Is it you with that fucking gold and platinum yacht?!? What the fuck are you trying to do, turn us all into Marie Antoinette? Your goddamn extravagant lifestyle..."

"Hold on Abami. Just hold on. I have nothing to do with that fiasco. Do you think I had taken leave of my senses? A twenty seven story private residence is one thing, a platinum urinal in a gold stateroom quite another. Look what happened to the Shah. It must be Alwalid. He has never shown restraint after all. Thinks he's Bono for god's sake. Those people assume with all the oil they can do anything they damn well please. Have that wench who answers your phone get him on conference."

### Act Three

"Mr Alwalid's office. How may I help you?"

"This is Lakhsmi Mital and Mukesh Abami. Get his ass on the phone."

"Right away, sirs."

"Gentlemen. What a surprise. How may I be of assistance?"

"Never mind the sucking around, bin Talal. What's with this outrageous yacht that's all over the news. Didn't you pay any attention to what happened in Libya? The beggars will be all over us. We..."

"Whoa, whoa, wait a minute you two. Don't be giving me a ration without getting your facts straight. I don't have anything to do with that thing. I heard it was some Malaysian guy."

"Nice try, asshole, but there's only one Malaysian on the list, some Kuok. Bob Kuok. And he's only worth 12.5. Are you telling us he's going to piss away 4.8 on a stupid boat? We don't think so. This has to be somebody with some real cash. It has to be somebody on the top of the list."

"You don't think there are guys you don't know with cash in Malaysia? You must have your heads up your asses. All the piracy and slave trading and dope? Those guys have more money than god and none of them are on your precious little list. Did you check in with Shing?"

"Ha! Might as well talk to a brick wall. The guy is inscrutable. We never get a thing from Shing."

"Well you should try him or Kee. If you want to cap off this yacht crap before the natives get restless you need someone with juice in Southeast Asia. Even I don't go to Southeast Asia. Those fuckers are all nuts down there."

\* \* \*top ten of Forbes' 2011 Asian Billionaires

