



*Imperial Ambassador to Faraden*

*Ricardo Almieda Desmondo di Tasetto*

*of the Printer's Guild*

*For the attention of Ricardo Almieda Desmondo di Tasetto of the Printer's Guild, Imperial Ambassador to Faraden*

*I trust your stay at the Ambassador's residence was to your liking, and that your return trip was as uneventful as the first. I have no doubt the Jotun will have kept to their part in our treaty, but I understand there are still pockets of Lasambrian banditry here and there that might still prove problematic in the long run. Again let me urge you to reconsider offering sanctuary to the Hierro clan. Of the three, they are the most treacherous and vicious - remember that it was they who united the Corazon and the Naguerro and urged the invasion of Segura. Ultimately, they are the ones directly responsible for the slaughter of so many of your Freeborn citizens.*

*Indeed, the Empire's refusal to mete out Justice to the Lasambrians - to offer them a safe haven no less - is easily seen as a moral weakness by the followers of Justice. It contributed directly to the current discord among the Houses of the generals. The crippled state of Marad of House Ogudai remains a significant concern; until it is addressed there is no way that the Seat of the Five Winds can sign a military accord with the Empire.*

*You must not underestimate our need for caution; I lent my voice in support of the brave, foolish expedition to partake of the True Liao. If I attempt to intervene too directly, then the grim weight of Ogudai Justice may fall on me. I will pass on messages, as is y duty, but I am sure you can understand my desire to avoid any additional complications with the soldier-Houses. By the same token, if the Seat of the Five Winds expresses too loud a support for the Empire, she may in turn lose the support of the military*



*Houses and the more traditional of the other Houses if the priesthood become involved.*

*At the absolute minimum, a heartfelt and sincere apology should be sent from your Synod to the Ogudai, possibly with a convincing explanation as to why this has taken so long. Ideally it should be accompanied by evidence of the punishment of those priests responsible for the unforgivable assault against the mind and spirit of young Marad. I do not wish to coach you, but I think you might wish to consider delivering those priests whose negligence caused the assault against that much beloved warrior to the Ogudai so they may exact their own retribution. Failing that - and I know the Empire is somewhat squeamish about imprisoning it's errant citizens - the severed heads of all those involved may go some way towards balancing the scales.*

*As to matters with the trade of liao to Axos, I think you need not concern yourself in that regard. Our priests have little enough of the substance as it is. Unlike our Imperial neighbours, we do not view liao as a commodity - it is a sacrament, and precious, and not merely due it's scarcity. My interest in Axos lies in securing a land trade route - and route that must pass through the Empire. With that in mind I think it would be a simple matter to arrange either an embargo on liao passing over your eastern border, as part of the treaty to secure the route; or a significant customs duty if that were preferable. Given that we will not, in all likelihood, be importing any liao to the Axou that we have not first bought from the Empire, such a stricture is unlikely to prove onerous.*

*Any trade route with Axos proper is theoretical at this time I believe, given that you do not share a direct border with them? An obvious alternative for us is to discuss constructing a Faraden*



*enclave in the same town as an Axos trade delegation, perhaps in Urizen or Highguard? Can you comment on the feasibility of this?*

*With regard to trade, I have been instructed by the Lord of the Five Winds to begin negotiations with the Empire for the establishment of a significant trade presence, as I touched on in my last letter and in our discussions at the Palace. I am still waiting for final confirmation of my budget, but our expectation is that we will be able to negotiate a joint-project with the Empire to construct enclaves in Meade, in a suitable location in the Varushkan territory of Volodmartz, and somewhere in central Astolat. Our merchant Houses are keen to gain access to the bounty of Marcher livestock, grain, and especially apples; to Varushkan timber and ore; and to fine Dawnish cloth, wine, and metalwork.*

*These larger enclaves would serve as "hubs" from which Faraden merchants may operate in safety, as well as trading posts where Imperial citizens might bring goods for trade. I predict that this will lead to a flow of wealth between our nation and yours - the farmers of Mitwold, the miners and forest owners of Volodmartz, and the landowners and businessfolk of Dawn alike will see significant profits in coming years after the initial investment in roads, structures, and legal protections.*

*With the establishment of these routes, I would also predict that with a little effort similar enclaves might be established in Tassato), and in Temeschwar (specifically to support the northernmost route). I would expect profits for businesses and perhaps even soldier-bands in these two cities to be improved (especially given that any Faraden caravan passing into the haunted forests of the far north is likely to want to employ mercenary*



*guards in Temeschwar).*

*These great works are unlikely to be cheap; a conservative estimation sees an investment of some hundred and fifty wains of white granite and weirwood, merely to establish the most primitive trade routes to the three nations - with another eighty wains to establish trading enclaves in Tassato and Temeschwar. We are obviously prepared to meet some of the burden, but will need the support of the Senate and perhaps the Synod before construction can begin. With that in mind I am intending to send a small party of hand-picked envoys to meet with you at the Winter Solstice - one that will also be empowered to discuss a more thorough treaty with you, and through you, your Empire*

*Yours with true sincerity*

*Lady Saretta of the Red Moon, Advisor on Imperial Trade to the  
Lord of the Four Winds The Court of the Four Winds*

