

To Senator Rhain of Hercynia,

I am writing to inform you that there is a Navarr cult of Wendigo cultists concealing itself in Hercynia that is practicing ritual sacrifice and murder. I felt that as the Senator for Hercynia I had a duty to inform you.

My name is Karl Rostov, and I am a retired militia warrant officer. A couple of decades ago, when I was in my prime, I was charged with investigating some murders at Anvil. My investigations took me to a Navarr Striding called the Blood Ravens. I learned they were secretly Wendigo cultists with a perverted view of Navarr hearth magic.

I was told at the time that Navarr sometimes use blood-letting in rituals, but that it has to be given willingly for the magic to flow. The Blood Ravens believe that they can take power from the blood of the unwilling through sacrificial rites.

The Conclave branded the Blood Ravens as Sorcerers, the Synod branded them idolators, and the Magistrates convicted them of being Murderers. We went after them hard. We got most of them – but some of them escaped.

We pursued them all the way to Hercynia, when we lost them. Attempts to track them down failed, and we lost some people to the Vallorn. Some thought that the Vallorn got them. Other people claimed that they fled across the border into Skarsind and fell to the Thule. I never believed either. As a Navarr Striding, I knew that the Blood Ravens were capable of remaining mobile and surviving hardships. I just did not know how to find them.

Until now.

With the Empire having retaking Skarsind, I made a journey out to see if I could pick up the Blood Ravens' trail. I encountered a Wintermark refugee named Hela Starling. Hela told me she had been ambushed by "painted ghosts" who matched the description of draughir Blood Ravens.

The Blood Ravens had taken Hela and other Wintermark refugees to their camp where they threatened to kill their captives if they did not willingly accept anointing

by an Ambition priest. The refugees agreed whereupon they received The Calling of Ambition and were filled with the urge to please Wendigo.

The Blood Ravens then proceeded to use them as "willing" sacrifices to power their blood magic. Hela - being possessed of a strong will - was able to throw off the effects of the aura that had been placed on her and made her escape. However, in her disorientated state, she could not lead me back to the Blood Raven camp.

Piecing together Hela's story and other stories I came across, I now believe that the Blood Ravens have been holed up in Northpines in Hercynia, near the Skarsind border. They've been using the Thule occupation of Skarsind to cover their tracks as they abducted refugees, war-wounded and scouts and practiced their sacrificial blood magic on them. They could have carried on for years more save that the Empire's retaken Skarsind.

As the Senator for Hercynia, I felt that I should bring this to your attention.

For your information, I have also written to the Head Magistrate, and the Archmage of Winter, as this is relevant to their interests. I have also written to Drogo Morsini of the Ashen Brotherhood in the League. It was Drogo's family that the Blood Ravens killed all those years ago, and which prompted my investigation into them. I believe their deaths inspired Drogo and his brother to set up the Ashen Brotherhood as a group dedicated to catching criminals. I know the Ashen Brotherhood will have a personal stake in what happens with the Blood Ravens.

As for me, if I were a decade younger, and based at Anvil, I would check the Sentinel Gate for a conjunction leading to Northpines - and where the Blood Ravens are hiding. As it is, I am feeling my years and must pass this torch to another.

Vardas guide you,

Karl Rostov
Retired Militia Warrant Officer, Varuskha