

To the one and only Senator Cesare.

Patron of the Blood Red Museum.

There is a word in the language of the Commonwealth, 'backpfeifengesicht', that came to mind recently. In my role, it's never far from the surface, and it's been lingering recently. The acrid smoke of the Museum brought it to mind: the smug faces of the Faraden who cheerfully claimed responsibility; the indignity of centuries of history being carried out under the arms of volunteers in the rain to the back rooms of local shops.

Bishop Rafael is right about one thing: a Reckoning is needed. And while his high-minded language about showing defiance through rebuilding is very appropriate language for the Anvil Synod, that's not the Reckoning Tassatans want. When they put a price on Astrid's head, my old boss told me the Faraden were full of shit and not to take it seriously. Well, tell that to the Printer's Guild!

Tassatans want a real Reckoning. After that, we'll settle down to the business of living well. I have a plan and a guide. But I've not been to Anvil while the Shot Cabinet of Regrets was open. I've written to Astrid as well, but I'll be hoping to talk to your most trusted bravos as well, there after sundown, Saturday - call it 8. I'll explain how we're going to get revenge on the Modnos.

Oh, and the word means, I'm told, 'a face in need of a fist'. Does that match anyone you can think of?

Paulo