



Karg i Estrico i Erigol, PID: 9099.1

Cut or tear off this strip to have a completely IC document

The following letter was awaiting for you upon your arrival at Anvil along with a package containing two items: a thick breastplate of laminated, wax-pressed linen and a finely-glazed earthenware jar with a lid.

Karg i Estrico i Erigo,

I write on behalf of the Rousseau. I am Glaucia Herminia and I represent my people to your Empire, but of course we are acquainted. Your dedication to fair reason is appreciated and, as per the danger that your actions have averted, continues to contribute to our survival. I would like to convey both the thanks of not only the family of Rousseau, but of every other house protected by the efforts of you and the Imperial soldiery. Their spent blood attends a ledger we cannot fairly balance.

We send enclosed with this missive two symbols of our thanks - may the first gird you in your future campaigns: it is of a design formulated by hero of legend in Maragladia - Entelos the Ironbound. He was an artisan of skill whose ingenuity when facing martial danger is an inspiration to we true children of Maracoss. The second is on behalf of Leonorada herself - it is commonly attributed to our god of beauty, but out of respect for our differing beliefs I will not recount its association. The gift is given to assist you with your efforts as an artisan, in balance with the first gift towards your efforts as a leader.

On the subject of how your office may benefit from further variety in what might be commissioned each season: such would require a forum and discussion internally. We have, per our agreement of the past year, offered additional works in exchange for permission to practise our faith openly upon the territory ceded to us. We see that future agreements would relate to further freedoms and of course any steps taken towards the ultimate emancipation of Maracoss from the Nemorian scourge.

We will consider and send word when we have reached a consensus,

With thanks,

*~ Glaucia Herminia
Trajadoz, Maodruga.*

Remove this strip, along with the one at the top of this page to have a fully IC document.

OOO NOTE:

- This letter should be delivered with two ribbons:
 - Ribbon #36399 named 'Girding of Entelos'.
 - Ribbon #36400 named 'Adevär's Painted Vessel'.
- Please contact GOD if either of these ribbons are not present in your character pack.

The following letter arrives by Winged Messenger.

Look to the west! See the fires alight! The impotent mewling of false gods! Listen well to the sound of flinching stone - of crumbling edifice and groaning brass - it is the death knell of a moribund people! It is the dashing of a newborn faith upon the steps of destiny to deny its shame by ignoble minds!

Through Mysteries I have been transformed - through Fire I will be purged of all the wrong things that this ancient, mouldering canker upon the spirit of Asav had infested my Noble spirit with. Through the Virtues my eyes so long crusted with lucre and sloth are opened - the rheum of a wasted life runs over cheeks curved in ecstasy in a face turned to the East! The fires I saw as the slavers burned set those filthy essences to quivering terror and led them in a rebellion that almost robbed me of Apotheosis - instilling an imbalanced mind with a singular final gasp towards burrowing back down into the dirt with the other false priests and hollow spirited failures who disgust the name of Asav. I apologise now - my last act as that former self - as I shake free of the stale flesh and prepare to pass beyond - I shed tears - so many that they would drown these empty halls and once pristine tributes to **Virtue** - may your people never forgive me, may they always spit my name through gritted teeth: that is what that name deserves! That who I am **now** - that I will have once been hence - that it

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faltered when the immensity of destiny was pressed to me. Oh that I only saw spite, oh that I only felt betrayal - these are such flaws as I wish to be rid of: that I must be rid of: that I shall be rid of!

Oh how I wish that Pakt were here! That the folk of Ashborn might stand by my side - for my flesh is afraid, even if my soul is not. Were it that my brother in Virtue could witness my triumph - in the triumph of all that is Noble and Virtuous. But no - I do this alone - I must do this alone - there are few left but we are afloat! We burn brightly in these dark halls! We are like stars in the firmament above in our making ready - there is heat enough in the heart of passion, there is sup and wine enough in the Truth of the Noble Way. Oh that I might set an image of that which I will behold into your hands like an artist upon the paper - the faces of those vermin at the instant when their gloating turns to fear! Fear! Righteous fear! Fear of the future! Of the error of their ways - that their gods have abandoned them to a lonely desolation within the Labyrinth. What finer sermon for my last?

I go now - but my name will echo down the aeons - know that you shall be the first to speak it thus imbued with Legend

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*But do not be silent - tell all! Sell Pakt! Sell the Ashborn
- I do this for all who hold **Ability** and **Virtue**
within - tell all of your Empire of true sacrifice! See
the enemy crushed and burned by my deeds and
follow me into the future!*

*Portilium the Ashborn
Flame of Virtue*

The following letter arrived by winged messenger.

Jaromira,

I have returned to Ossium for business in the lowlands of Ketsov. Here I have pursued my distant cousins and can only apologise for their inaction. It is a well-intentioned inaction - they hoped that time might let such topics pass out of the mind and be forgotten - I ask your forgiveness on this: there are many dangers in the dark that cannot be ignored, but there is a truism in Ossium that states **"Speak the Wolf's name and it will appear."**

The neighbours you ask after have **not** passed into the Labyrinth. Indeed they are alive and well and are kept well through their diet. **They do not retreat with The Whisperer** for the same reason you and I do not - though you might have to ask them, for we do not visit with them often. They do visit **us** though - they trade and move about like maggots beneath a spoiled carcass. Forgive me for the image - **I'd do better to not invite fell things through careless words.**

I might talk to you about traditions that my people and yours share - we respect civility, hospitality and the iron-shod rules of old: we are warded from doom when we break bread with visitors. It is a poor neighbour who visits and talks of unsavoury things - **who strain at those iron bindings.**

It is a poor neighbour too who dons a **mask** of civility and adorns themselves in lies - how good it is that no amount of falseness can evade the ruin that awaits those who break hospitality earnestly given. **I'd ask you to dwell on the danger posed by the alternative.**

The following letter arrived by winged messenger.

My cousins here in Ketsov have other news though and we would like to present to you an opportunity for Prosperity as thanks for continued Vigilance - your warnings and assistance have contributed much to our own ongoing Prosperity:

There is a place in the untrodden forests north-west of the Galath Fields - close to the border with the Bonewood, deep dark and overgrown. It is a vale called Slovaetka. It is where some of our mutually known neighbours live - or so we believe - as I mentioned, they tend against visitors. We are seeking Wardens from our West who are seeking nests of Wolves and other dark creatures that are in need of attention. We hope that such a service would convince our mutually regarded neighbours to bequeath their gardens and forests to my family in gratitude for such a service. If you were to be so kind as to encourage Wardens and other Virtuous Varushkans to seek opportunities around the Galath Fields, we would be more than happy to share a fair portion of this wealth in exchange. We'd similarly be welcoming of you keeping a Vigilant eye for news of the place.

I hope this letter has been of use - may you have a productive Autumn and a mild Winter.

- Vladimir Kazimirov Ketsov,
The House of Stern Stone, Ketsov

The following letter was amongst your belongings upon your arrival at Anvil. You do not know how it came to be there.

I HOPE THIS LETTER FINDS YOU. WE DO NOT KNOW ONE-ANOTHER. MY GRANDFATHER HAS HEARD OF YOU AND HAS TOLD ME THAT YOU AT LEAST KNOW OF HIM. I AM SORRY FOR THE STRANGENESS OF THIS INTRODUCTION – GRANDFATHER IS VERY OLD AND CAN BE FORGETFUL WHEN HE HAS BEEN SLEEPING.

I WRITE ON BEHALF OF MY EXTENDED FAMILY: WE ARE FROM A SMALL VALE CALLED SLOMAVETKA AND HAVE LIVED DEEP IN THE WOODS FOR A VERY LONG TIME – LONG BEFORE YOU AND OUR OTHER NEIGHBOURS CAME TO LIVE HERE. WE WELCOME YOU. THE LAND PROVIDES FOR ALL AND THE MARKETS OF KETSOV NOW BUSTLE WITH TREASURES WE COULD HAVE ONLY IMAGINED IN THE TIMES BEFORE.

WE INVITE YOU AS GUESTS – GRANDFATHER HAS SHARED THAT **YOU AND FIVE OTHERS** WILL VISIT SOON – **ON THE SECOND NIGHT OF THE AUTUMN EQUINOX, FIVE HOURS BEFORE MIDNIGHT.** I DO NOT UNDERSTAND HOW THIS MIGHT BE – BUT GRANDFATHER DOES NOT LIE.

THERE IS TO BE A CELEBRATION AND WE WOULD BE HAPPY FOR YOU TO CELEBRATE WITH US. WE HOPE FOR AN EXCHANGE OF GIFTS – WE HAVE GATHERED TREASURES FROM OUR HOME FOR YOU TO SHOW THAT WE ARE GOOD NEIGHBOURS.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING YOU AND HEARING ABOUT YOU AND YOURS – WE HAVE HEARD MANY STORIES – PARTICULARLY ABOUT YOUR WAY OF SPIRITS.

– YOUR NEIGHBOURS IN SLOMAVETKA.

The following letter has arrived by Winged Messenger.

Ave, Rafael.

I have many letters I planned to send. I wrote many as the time drained away towards the enacting of our plan. This I think was naivete - or wanting to believe what we planned to do was natural and everyday: that I could add it as a footnote in a letter of thanks as though we were visiting the market and your gift of a new basket was much appreciated. I wanted to believe that killing could be something expected of those who strive for Virtue: after all, haven't we spoken of fighting for Human Destiny? What is fighting unless killing lies beneath - a dark potential under calm seas.

Your 'basket' - the gifts you abjured into our hands with the awe-inflicting Wisdom of your Empire - they saved many Virtuous lives. My reservations and doubt have too been balmed by reaffirming myself to the manifestations of Virtue that your liao and your uncle's robe have allowed me. We have all suffused ourselves with such focus - in the before and after of our deeds. I am bedecked in the Purity of Courage - but still, despite my convictions, I cannot escape what I have seen and done.

I write from the open sea. We are becalmed upon the ship that ferried us to safety. But - enough - I must grasp the burning iron and tell you what has happened:

First - know that we have been successful. Alonzo Tarquinius wanders the labyrinth. His spirit is joined by his sisters, who used their standing in the Plenum to support the war - and who have seen their fortunes soar as Nemoria has awoken to conflict. It shames me to say that he is also joined by much of his and his sister's family - and many of his slaves and attendants.

When the hour came for us to act, we worked the ritual La Aubétoile had offered us and from a prepared pyre sprang beings of shadowed flame that blended human beauty and avian form: their whirling, frenzied dancing cut a maze of embers over the summer-parched heath towards the Tarquinius estate and we, swaddled in linen robes and face wraps soaked in seawater, braved the labyrinth of fire their passage had made as we stole to the estate beneath the pall of smoke.

The following letter has arrived by Winged Messenger.

We hesitated by the walls of the estate - servants and guards had not given them up despite the smoke and they desperately sought to douse the overgrown trees and briars before they offered a bridge to the flames. It is here that I recall understanding that I had perhaps misjudged the reality of our struggle - and the nature of our allies - for the mesmeric, winged silhouettes of fire shrieked and dashed themselves upon the walls - seeking out those struggling figures in the smoke to immolate with their flames.

But we pushed on - shattering the gates and beginning to comb the grounds for those on our list. The gardens had taken with flame and the wind had put the blinding, choking smoke through the estate - draining in billowing streams through the columned promenades and peristyled courtyards. We were lost to confusion almost immediately: bull-in-ked guard was indistinguishable from panicked servant as we sought to ensure no warmonger were allowed to slip away but even this resolve soon gave way to panic - we fought like blind, caged animals and I could not tell if my arrows found servants, soldiers or senators. Children - the elderly - fled into collapsing chambers and I had no air in my lungs for warning or reassurance - barely enough for survival. The fire was everywhere far faster than we expected.

The Tarquinius family temple was on a prominence overlooking the coast and rose from the smoke like an island upon an ashen sea - we found Alonzo there and faced him and his red-tattooed sisters in a struggle that claimed four of our congregation: it was not a heroic battle like those in the epics - we clawed and wrestled with knives and staves in the spilled blood of our kin. My mind reels when I try to remember - it was as though the setting sun had allied itself with the slavers - brothers and sisters in Virtue fell for want of being able to see against its glare. But our resolve was greater and ultimately those who did not cast themselves onto the rocks below died at our hands.

With our work done we carried our dead away to make a mystery of those who had committed the deed. What remains is a daze - there is only the smell of blood, smoke and burning - then the salt of the sea before we were aboard the ship Hélia had prepared for our escape. We departed on swift winds and let the angry black smear of the burning estate shrink into the gloom of night. Finally - my energy spent - I succumbed to dreams of fire and screaming.

The following letter has arrived by Winged Messenger.

Two days into this flight the winds abandoned us - falling to a whisper as the sky became empty. We have been listless ever since - pressed like insects upon the glassy barrier between the endless sky and the unfathomable deep - the sun watches us ceaselessly. We row when we can, but every day the fear of pursuit grows. It has been perhaps a week - we might make for a nearby port by oar if the currents are kind before our supplies are exhausted. It would be Pheraemos - of it I know little - it is a half-sunken place. It is our only hope.

Rafael - we know what we have done is right: we have done it willingly. Whatever becomes of us will always be second to our actions - that we chose to act - that we chose to fight when all of us could have continued to slumber in our former lives. I could have led sermons until I was old and grey within the halls of the temple beneath Felucca, I could have philosophised and taken the slow, safe road to the future: but we both know that the world will not change with safe words and deeds. I look at my burned hands and see the price of lifting but one brick onto the edifice of our shared destiny. I am filled with the desire to lift the next - and the next. That I will not will be my spirit's only regret. I am tired now - my arms ache from rowing.

May we speak again,

-Amika Acciai

The following letter has arrived by Winged Messenger.

Rafael Barossa di Tassato - greetings.

I am Alberto and I am family to Amika - we share the same name, though I was not born to it. I am not lucky enough to have made your acquaintance, but I see plainly the quality of your character in consequences of your deeds and am often told of your efforts. One who has earned the Loyalty of my cousin is close to receiving my own. I greatly look forward to working with you.

I have not many words and would rather ink gloaming on actions. What follows is a season of work: We travelled at cost and in care to Maracossa and spent our Virtuous Prosperity to see the state of Calatupos and of Sulesca. These places are still wounded by war: soldiers make and execute the law to create an appearance of peace. It is a punishment that rebels and loyalists bear alike - the only difference is uniformity of distribution.

Calatupos is a dry land whose wealth lies beneath its interior hills. In those hills, near the rivers that lead to the sea is its capital, Marilen. Here Asavea massed its armies to siege Maragladia. While garrisoned here the conquerors consumed the settlement's stores. Today the people of Marilen fear starvation after seasons of failing crops. The mines have been taken from Maracossan nobility and are held by the Asavi plenum who lead the remaining garrison. There is much suffering here. I have been told that the fountain at Marilen's heart still runs red with spilled blood from the victory sacrifices made in its water. The slaves are closely watched and the nobility feel the spears at their back. We have made contact with some in the dry hills and less in the mines who are endlessly thankful for the liao we could give them.

Sulesca did not join in the uprising and many of its nobility were rewarded with grants of land elsewhere in Maracoss and then the seizure of their ancestral estates around in this area. Where now were leagues of farms, orchards and forest without stewards, the most loyal to Asavea saw their fortunes increase and many sixth sons and daughters from Nemoria who were granted titles. This is how Asavea has secured this port.

The following letter has arrived by Winged Messenger.

Lumber for ships, grain for supplies and much other cargo departs from the docks - all to Nemoria. Only empty ships arrive - this is not trade, it is payment. There are many slaves here but their masters are very attentive - they know the Prosperity they steal is greatly important to Nemoria. We have found many contacts - but we have also found complacency.

Rafael - my cousin has tasked me with delivering those enchained in Maracoss to freedom. I and others from the Temple have decided that there are several ways in which we might achieve this:

In Calatupos there are many rivers that travel into the hills. These rivers carry the wealth dug from the mines to the coast and then to Sulesca. This connection to the sea might allow decisive action in one of two ways:

First, with care and coin we might bring liao, weapons and other means to those enslaved in the estates and barren fields around Marlien - and work to rouse many all at once. The garrison of Marlien is wielded as one brutal club and it remains poised over the mines of Calatupos. Such a weapon would cut a slow arc as it turned to fall on one place. With this time those self-emancipated elsewhere might free others and travel to the coast before it turned to them.

Or, if not a breadth of effort then we might focus on Marlien alone. With care and resolve the Marlien's garrison might be distracted long enough for us to arm and prepare the mines. When we are ready, La Aubetoile has shown us a means by which their burning envoys can be conjured to create the needed disruption for the freed to wash from the mountains and to the coast. The eternal has made this offer for only this audacious approach.

In both approaches there is a flaw. The number of ships needed to carry such a number of the freed is beyond our means. Those arriving at the Calatupos' coast would need to find vessels enough to ferry them to safety. Felucca is too small and lies too



Rafael Barossa di Tassato PID: 2979.7
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The following letter has arrived by Winged Messenger.

close to Nemoria to be their destination. These ships must be ready to sail to a free land. I believe this is something you could achieve, Rafael: raise a call to the crews and

captains of the Casinean Empire and secure the needed ships and prepare the destination. Such action would be noticed by Asavea - if not the call, then the consequence.

In Sulesca our opinion is that such immediate action is impossible: the threats are more distributed and the people - free or otherwise - too aware of their relative security. Into these circumstances we would seek slower change: building the Way and establishing routes from the fields and lumber camps to freedom. Here, we are confident that we can apply our mutual Prosperity to deliver a safe, steady trickle of the enslaved to intermediary ports such as the Sarcophan. But it would be a trickle compared to the deluge that might be won by daring.

Such care and patience might also be applied to Galatupos with a small amount of additional risk.

Rafael: We have the willing Virtuous and funds needed to enact one of these approaches in one of these territories. Be it through sudden, violent struggle or slow subversion - we are ready to spend these lives for the Way. My cousin has told me of your ability to send ritual texts and heirlooms across the Wind like this letter is sent to you. He has asked me to bid you share what you believe will support our efforts.

-Alberto Acciai,

La place de la Vertu, Île de Felucca

OOO Note:

Efforts to provide ships and willing crews to support an evacuation as described in some of the opportunities in this letter will require either an appropriately worded **synod judgement** raised in an appropriate assembly being upheld (or better) or something else of similar impact.