

*To the honorable Mansa Sino'otollo, the Shark-Binder, Voice of the Navigators, High King of the Three Fleets, Ruler of the Four Seas, Lord of the Eight Islands, the Starblessed, Councillor of the Cnidarians, Good Buddy, Binder of Men, Cleaner of Latrines, First Sword of the Surf, Brine-bound and Iron Willed,*

*I am most pleased to hear you are well and understand the difficulties which accompany cross-cultural communication. Perhaps, one day, when the chaos associated with these times has settled, we can meet face-to-face and such secrecy shall not be required. Your gift is received with great appreciation, and my finest artificers assure me that it shall be put to good use.*

*I likewise understand your hesitancy regarding the nature of the Pathways, as such a powerful tool can be used for both good and ill. But is that not simply the nature of any potential exchange? Those who visit Al'Daric, be it by the Pathways or via overland travel, will arrive to the same treatment, and will be as free to return by any method they desire. If security is your concern, you needn't be overly worried with giving your enemies a direct Path behind your defenses. Indeed, even in Al'Daric we rarely place an active Path in more secretive locations, and it is quite simple to either heavily reinforce the area around the Path itself or to place the access outside any defensive measures you may have. Your benefits from the Pathways will extend as far as you wish to utilize them, and while having direct access to the entire continent from your capital city is undoubtedly the greatest boon, even a small Embassy of Trade near one of your port cities would still bring great wealth and mobility to your people.*

*In order to traverse the Pathways, one can travel to any Path which they know the location of, for lack of a better term. Each Path is inscribed with a unique 'key,' which is used to determine the destination when setting out. We cannot (yet) simply appear wherever we desire through the Pathways. To utilize the Pathways, one must walk through a Path, which, while appearances may vary depending on the company and Pathmaker that created the artifact, is usually a stone arch inscribed with enchantments and filled with a swirl of color whose shade and pattern is dependent on where it leads, which can be changed with a relatively simple ritual (or, if one knows the proper spells, use any Path to travel to any other). The Pathways themselves can transport any amount of goods, and thus can admittedly be used for conquest, though a Path can be shut down to prevent all access at most any time. Any Embassy of Trade we open within the League would be staffed constantly by a Pathmaker, who would be able to open, close, or change the destination of your Path at close to a moment's notice, meaning that you would be no more vulnerable to*

*incursion than before (perhaps even safer, if your enemies attempted to attack through the Paths only to be stopped).*

*Your Navigators are certainly welcome to apply to the Elthin Academy, and we would welcome such aspiring mages as a method to further strengthen ties between our nations and learn more of one another's magical traditions, hopefully improving both. While I can make no assurances at this time, I personally find it quite likely that at least some, if not all, of your curious Navigators will be able to obtain a scholarship to the Academy in exchange for a few lectures regarding your arcanic techniques.*

*I also hesitate to ask for your aid in our treaty, but I fear that Al'Daric may require your martial aid in the near future. Our neighbor to the north, Dun Sancerre, has been making rather... threatening overtures as of late, and has ignored our attempted correspondence. While I hope that war can still be avoided, what correspondence I have had with other nations suggests that Dun Sancerre may attempt to overreach their bounds. Should this happen, Al'Daric would request you are able to send troops quickly, and so I give you this as an advisement that we may require your strength sooner than hoped.*

*As to not end this correspondence on such a serious tone, I shall do my best to elucidate on this nation I am proud to call home. Al'Daric was fortunate enough to not be inundated with Titans (though we still had a few to deal with), but instead our very lands themselves turned against us. Distance had no meaning, and wild magic storms would make places on opposite sides of the country connect in ways that should be impossible. Fortunately, we were in time able to not only learn to predict when and where these fractures would occur, but also how to control them, and in time, create our own, which we eventually adapted into the Pathways.*

*In our lands, even those without the Gift still find plenty of work as, if not partners, at least aides to those who do practice. After all, one who devotes their life to learning spatial magics has far less time to devote to history, to theory, and to development. Indeed, much of our theoretical work in magic is done by those with little of the Gift themselves (we have found that, with proper education, anyone can learn at least basic magic), and they simply take their experiments to those who can perform them according to instruction. Alchemists who mix potions, scribes who make runes upon our artefacts, authors who pen our books on the arcane, and architects alike rarely use much magic in their careers, and so are naturally attractive to those unskilled in the Arts.*

*As for what there is to trade, Al'Daric prizes the exotic and foreign. What drinks and foods do your people prize? What wondrous creatures live symbiotically with the Titanspawn you use as homes? The eye you provided with your letter is a wonderful specimen, useful (I have been informed) in some very interesting artifacts, though they refuse to elucidate beyond the fact to the nature of said artifacts, but I digress.*

*I shall instruct my agents to begin making preparations for the opening of a Path, with your leave.*

*Best regards,*

*May our words be bound by Magic and Blood,*

*The Headmaster*