



My Liege Adélaïde, Empress of Dun Sancerre,

Your speech left not a dry eye in the audience, my liege.

The march has begun.

Our campaign has been bloody but relentless. This is not war as we know it in the kingdoms- this is more akin to the dragon hunts of old. I am not ashamed to say I wept with joy to see the massed ranks of our calvary, lances glittering in the morning sun, sweeping down the hillside to face a twisted abomination of scales and tentacles. We are truly blessed to live in an age of such wonders.

Alas that the terrain here means that our knights have not had so many chances to perform such heroic charges. The forests and mountains of Tauhan are frankly untamed: road systems are small or non existent, and fields and clearings are a scarce sight. Witnessing the land myself has helped me understand the Tauhan more: what choice did they have, other than to turn to the seas, when cursed with such hard and unfertile land?

In this terrain, our Rahastan auxiliaries have thrived. Though their native garb was not particularly well suited for the cold of winter, they have done wonders since having been equipped with a proper set of furs and leathers. Their monster hunters fight with a boldness beyond what I have seen in even some knights: to face these beasts all but unarmored, with nothing but a spear and their wits. Their mobility through the forests has also been a source of marveling, as they walk even the deepest of forests as easy as you or I might cross a hallway.

Our crusade has picked up a few roving towns of stragglers and survivors from the Tauhan. It seems that original casualty estimates may have been too high, as while it's true that the fleets were wrecked en-masse, we underestimated the ability of the shellfolk to survive in the ocean without a vessel. From what we have heard, it seems as though the lands of the Tauhan are littered with bands of survivors, constantly on the move, fleeing from the monsters that stalk the forests. Several of them have requested our aid in the re-establishment of their ocean bound homes. I have cautiously authorized this, under Peteros' direction, with the hopes that it could eventually lead to the establishment of a proper Sancerre navy.

We have begun the process of reclaiming the cities, under the direction of Peteros. With your leave, I shall allocate some of our resources to improve the cities to a level where they can be properly productive. Much of the forest must be cleared before we can begin farming on a proper scale.

We have established a perimeter that we believe to be clear of monsters entirely. I have elected to take land slowly but thoroughly to ensure that the cities may thrive without fear of monster attack. I have been establishing bastions along the coasts to watch for any sea bound monsters that may wash ashore.

As you commanded, Peteroes has found a master of trade: His brother, Paganini. Though I am leery of allowing so much the Boncompagni line into our halls of power, I believe that this should be fine. Paganini is a bit of a scheming bastard, but as a third son, most of his scheming seems focused on Peteroes instead of against us. Not to mention that he's certainly got a head for numbers.

Fulchini's letters have been often but frankly meaningless. He has been pushing to gain more purchase in Al'Daric, but for the moment he remains an outsider.

The most that the man can offer is news of a plague that has been spreading through Al'Daric. The symptoms begin with shivering, then progress to a stirring in the bowels, followed by death as the blood clots. He believes that by now it has most likely begun to

spread through our home lands. Troubling news. So far there is no evidence of it in the ranks of the crusade, but I worry.

He also speaks of rumors from the north: We are not the only ones with our eyes on the remnants of the Tauhan. The Keitan league has sailed up the Scar, aided by the Rahastans and the rattling scum, and has begun to establish its own settlements and outposts.

*Yours always in body, soul, and heart,
Giacomo-Henri d'Harcourt
The Dragonslayer*