

To Navigator Captain Bri'otollo, ratsbane, knife of the waves, the coral blade.

From his majesty 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, Friend of the Cnidarians, the Starblessed, Binder of Men, Cleaner of Latrines, First Sword of the Surf, Brine-bound and Iron Willed. May the stars whisper his words to you this day, so that you may hear them and enact his will.

Bri'otollo, you pathetic excuse for a pellagic mariner. I would insult you by comparing you to a rat that has managed to trick its way onboard a ship, but that would imply you have a backbone. Instead, let us visualise the most pathetic of invertebrates onboard a ship - the barnacles that encrust its bow. I write to you in fervent hope that they themselves have parasites, for every sailor deserves to sail with *some* creatures with similar wit to their own.

But enough pleasantries. You are my greatest captain, and your raids have brought much wealth and great *mana* to your name. They say I am a sculptor of men, but your fleet is the blade that will carve our legacy onto the prodigal races of this wider world. As a first step to this, we must extend our reach. The people of Al'daric will arrive in our lands and construct a Pathway to their own. I bid you to allow this. Direct them to the port of Roshane, on the Southern Shores of the Fish Twin.

Our forces must be ready to face the challenges of this new world, whose currents we do not know and whose magics are many and varied. Our Navigators must be our guide in this. I have sent you all the wealth currently in our treasury (14): use it to pay the gold-price for the services of our greatest Navigators. Assemble a Navigator Conclave and place them under your command with a suitable subordinate from their own ranks, one who is loyal to my throne and skilled in subterfuge. They are to be our experts in the ways of the mind and the mage, to shield our people from the infiltrations of the Quorum and other foes, and to bind beasts and men to make tools of war and intrigue.

I do not bid you to assemble these forces lightly. We have been given a grave insult by the lands of Quorum, who replied to our overtures with insults about the mind-bound and the gravest insult of writing

to us with a mere prodigal child. They must be taught respect, and I believe the best lessons are carved in blood and bone. After the above task is complete, I bid you to take the Shark fleet and the new Navigator Conclave and raid the Quorum lands to the north of the Brine Twin. Bid the Navigator Conclave to hide your approach from enemy detection (magical or mundane) if they can, and to determine how the Quorum are detecting our approach if not. If you can capture any Quorum, you are to send one to be drowned in the Cauldron of the Sun to avenge the insult they have given us. Be warned, the Quorum appear skilled in magic and subterfuge: they have appeared to traders from other races as members of those races, have placed scrying magic on coins and have made objects disappear from stores. Warn the Navigators of this.

However, I believe them to be cowardly things: they will likely rely on evacuation and harassment rather than a forceful counter attack. This means your raids can be lengthy. In turn, this means that if they manage to flee the cities as before, then no matter: If you take the entire coast to the north of the Brine Sea, their civilians will have nowhere to go but north. Send mind-bound shocktroops (including the new rattling mind-bound) and have the Navigators send hunting hounds and bind local predators to drive the Quorum north into Grovel lands. Moreover, an empty city is still a source of much wealth, for our lands are not rich in metal: I bid you to burn down their houses and collect the iron nails from the ashes, rip valuable stones from their foundations, and take their stores and animals for our own.

When you are done, arrange the burnt timbers of some of their dwellings into the Aywah sigil upon a beach. They apparently speak old Keitan. They will know that this sigil means We Demand Respect.

Your standing orders after this will be to patrol and defend our lands and waters, whilst your Navigators investigate magics and spies in our own lands and those nearby. The Crab fleet is to continue bringing us food

Good luck my dear friend, you insufferable invertebrate.

*Mansa Sino'otollo*