

To my ally, the headmaster, honoured educator, master of the paths and keeper of secrets

Your apologies are gracious, and no offense was taken. The stars bring us many tasks, and to be busy answering them is the burden of rule. We have indeed noticed the great wealth your traders bring to our lands, and your friendship does you credit. We have had you added to our tribal annals as an honoured raft-guest. If you are amenable, we will approach the Heralds to publicly declare our alliance, as our open support may make other nations such as Dun Sancrre wary of attacking you.

To answer your questions about the Quorum. As you may know, our current disagreements originate from our initial contact, where my traders were met by disguised quorum plying them with ensorcelled coins. In our lands, such cowardly skulking and dissembling is the action of those with no honor, those who heed not the stars and cloak their actions in the concealing darkness of a moonless night. This behaviour might have been born, for I understand that their ways are not ours, yet they insisted on insulting our ways, rejecting my envoys, belittling my traders and ignorantly referring to the mind-bound members of my tribes as mere slaves. Not content with insulting those amongst our society who seek to discard their prodigal childhoods and achieve citizenship, they then directed our correspondence not to their king, but to some form of child or student. We expected some degree of confusion in translation, but some insults are surely universal.

However, the great sage Alo'cto teaches that to correct the ignorant is a virtue, but to deny them the opportunity to try again is a grievous flaw. As such, should the Quorum learn the error of their ways and make amends for their past insults, we would be happy to cease our punitive raids and reopen communications. If you are still in communication with them, please inform them that we will consider their insults atoned for should they send a formal apology and 200 nutulan of gold.\* We will not be making this offer to them directly, for should they slight my personal envoys for a third time I will be honour-bound to turn their nation into a funeral pyre, lest my own people cast me down from the shame.

In happier tidings, it gladdens me that the packages we sent have assisted in your research. If such items interest you, I will arrange to have specimens from a multitude of nations sent to you - perhaps including any corpses of men or monstrosity found in the lands of the Tauhan. I was unclear from your reply if you

have a pathway in Tauhan already. Could you clarify? I suspect that Dun Sancerre means to strengthen itself by claiming the Tauhan lands and peoples, as might the other neighbouring lands. I suggest we counter this by sending a force of our own.

As we speak, my captains are amassing a fleet of ships to sail to the Tauhan lands and occupy the northernmost shore, then use this as a base to rally the strongest Tauhan tribes, bind the weakest to our banner, and disrupt the efforts of other nations attempting to claim the area. I expect this to lead to great profits in captured and tamed beasts as well as potential allies and protectorate tribes, whilst giving us a base to harass Dun Sancerre shipping should they invade you again. I would be willing to split the profits of this venture in exchange for your support.

My suggestion would be that you instruct the pathway builders currently in Keitan to accompany my fleet when it sails, along with any mercenaries, adventurers and mages you wish to equip and send through the pathway to Keitan. Once our combined forces (or mine alone, if you wish only to send the pathway builders) reach the northern coast and islands, your pathway builders can construct a pathway there. Refugees will trade great treasures for supplies through the path-gate or safety on the other side of it, and a pathway in the far north would give our alliance unprecedented access to trade and military opportunities. We will both benefit from this trade and tactical opportunity, and in exchange for your support I would send you the corpses of any beasts, men, tauhan or their... devolved cousins that result from our expedition.

Let me know your thoughts on this plan, for soon my captains must sail, with or without your aid. However if you do not wish to participate, I would appreciate, given the nature of this expedition and its reliance on surprise, that you do not mention it's existence or my plans to any other nation.

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, the Starblessed, Councillor of the Cnidarians, Good Buddy, Binder of Men, Cleaner of Latrines, First Sword of the Surf, Brine-bound and Iron Willed.

May the tides bring succour to both our nations

*Mansa Sino'otollo*

\* 200 nutulan of gold = 1 wealth.

(attached is a map with 1-2 potential pathway locations noted, indicating supply/trading outposts the Keitan fleet intends to set up)

