



To Vularath Sootscale, honoured ruler and bridge of peace.

Rain on the lagoon falls softly, falling
Softly falling where my heart lies.
My homelands sweet song calling
At slow moonrise.

I thank you for your latest letter. In acknowledgement of your friendship to us, I have written to Grovel, urging them to open trade and communications with you. Should their response remain in the negative I will attempt to intercede further.

Our opinion of Quroum has only been further lowered by their refusals of peace and recent news from Grovel of Quroum assassins impersonating men of my nation. I would caution you not to take what they say at face value - or any value at all. Knowing the truth of them is like finding a needle in a haystack. If you have an explanation for their strange nature, I would appreciate knowing it, for the only other reliable way to find a needle in a haystack is, in my experience, a torch.

However, your decision to shoulder their honour and pay debt for them brings further honor to you and your people. We will accept this offer. I have already given the order for my fleets to withdraw from the Quroum waters, and to reopen trade and communications. Should they refrain from further duplicity or insults at our expense, this will remain so. Send to my court the 200 nautum of gold (*1 wealth) and those of your people who wish to learn of our ways as honoured bound. I will take many of them into my own court and ensure the others are given positions of great esteem. Once their apprenticeships are complete, they will be full citizens with all due honours, should they wish to remain or return to your own people. The typical period of service is four years, but great deeds or noble service oft



reduces this time, and the honourable manner in which this offer has been made guarantees such a reduction will occur.

I too await reports from Tauhan. I have directed my ships there to leave unmolested any who seek your protection and I trust that my captains are successfully bringing order and besting the worst of the monstrosities. I look forward to word of your daughter, for she sounds fierce and mighty, and will surely feature in the sagas of our warrior poets once they return.

From his majesty Mansa Sino'otollo, the Shark-Binder, Voice of the Navigators, High King of the Three Fleets, Ruler of the Six Seas, Lord of the Nine Islands, Warden of Northern Tauhan, the Starblessed, Councillor of the Cnidarians, Good Buddy, Binder of Men, Cleaner of Latrines, First Sword of the Surf, Brine-bound and Iron Willed.

Mansa Sino'otollo