



To Vulkarath Sootscale, honoured ruler and bridge of peace.

Myself unto thyself will give
This solemn promise, to live
Free of injustice, in justice for free
A wise king's only decree.

The night of spears has become known to me, and I am saddened by it and the strife it has brought between us, though your daughters skill at arms has impressed my peoples. I wish to be clear: I did not instruct my people to attack yours. Indeed I had given them orders to cooperate with your people, and I had thought this sufficient to preclude any violence between us.

Unfortunately, it seems I was wrong. As a king, I must act through subordinates and the captains of our ships are as kings unto themselves aboard their planks. That some overreached out of greed, pride or perceived insult does not surprise me, though I am wroth with them. I will see those who gave the orders punished for attacking those under your protection, and more explicit orders will be given. If you are content to let the matter end there, so am I.

I am curious of your confusion as to the reparations, though other lands are strange and my people have been surprised by other realm's savage attitudes to warfare and honour: thus I will try to explain.

If a tribe sails to your island with spear and drums beating the rhythms of war, it is not dishonourable to slay them. Indeed, in our land, should warriors lose, they are not callously executed as in other lands: they are adopted and offered a chance to earn membership in the victorious tribe, so that the people as a whole are not weakened and both tribes are now united in blood and culture.



If a tribe sails to your island with trade-goods whilst singing songs of peace, it *is* dishonourable to slay them - or to pay them with ensorcelled coins, as the quorum did. To insult your guests and their mind-bound, as the quorum did, only compounds the error.

In the case of the situation in Tauhan, my captains acted on their own to begin hostilities against individuals under your protection. My officers report clear warning was given by the coven before hostilities - moreover my own orders had been to cooperate with your people. That you defended those under your protection is honourable and does you credit, and my own people deserve to be chastised. We hope any captives taken will serve you with honour and bring unity to our tribes once they have earned citizenship in your land.

In light of that, I hope cordial relations can resume. As a token of our continued friendship, I would offer a word of warning about the origin of a threat known to my traders as the Shaking Plague that has struck many of the nations between us, though my shamans have so far been successful at keeping the disease from our shores. We believe this plague originated from the being known as FRIEND. Do you know of this being? We would be eager to hear your thoughts of it.

I have not yet had a reply from Grovel as to opening trade with your nation. However, the issue of the assassination attempts upon Grovel remains unaddressed. As you have taken responsibility for the honour of the Quorum, I ask that you ask them of this event. Any information revealed would no doubt also improve both our relations with Grovel.

I can also confirm that some Grovel assets are operating in Tauhan, though my captains spoke positively of those they encountered and received no hostilities. For ourselves, our holdings are, as you say, temporary, and not meant to intrude upon the land. I cannot say the same of Dun Sancerre however. The Empress has stated that she desires dominion of the whole of Tauhan, regardless of the cost, and has refused my offer that our nations cooperate to stabilise the area.

I will continue to try to reach a peaceful solution - as you know, we do not intend to remain in the peninsula long. However we do not take kindly to threats either. If you wish for ideas for your child's activities, perhaps you can warn her be wary of the knights to the south, and send her to ensure any refugee groups are remove from the path of the Dun Sancerre crusade should it choose to attack others - or use her skills to delay their crusade so that refugees may escape. Alternatively, should she be at a loose end, she is cordially invited to visit Keitan and learn of our culture, though she may wish to avoid the Blackscale tribe of the southern isles lest she be swarmed by suitors.

My shamans have described the monsters attacking the Tauhan as most curious, possessed of strange powers and odd

intelligence. You mentioned the Rove had some relation to these creatures - do you have any more information on them, or how their powers came to be?

We await your reply and your traders with great interest.

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, Walker of the Elder Path, Binder of Men, Cleaner of Latrines, First Sword of the Surf, Brine-bound and Iron Willed.



Mansa Sino'otollo