

*To the honorable Soot-Scale,*

*I can sympathize entirely with the difficulties of being occupied, as the tasks required by my stations are many and varied.*

*The planned Embassy, as do all Embassies of Trade from Al'Daric, will contain a Path. I apologize if it feels as though I have gone around you in some manner, though I assure you that is not my intent. The Pathways are vital to the trade of Al'Daric (personally, I feel that your trade deal is perhaps the most generous of all our offers) and our offer of making you Cir'Kalan was not an empty gesture, as your markets are far more attractive than anything coming from the southern border of Al'Daric, and we do firmly believe that you would benefit far more than our enigmatic shared neighbor from such a deal.*

*Accordingly, when they requested that their Embassy not be opened near the heart of their lands, we naturally sought to attempt to benefit you as well as them. With the Embassy not within your lands, you needn't worry about foreign influence within your borders any more than currently, while still benefiting from a portion of the advantages more direct access to the Pathways can provide.*

*Speaking of our enigmatic neighbor, we have indeed noticed some more odd correspondences from them, and their correspondences to us were, curiously, written in my own hand. They likewise sent a seemingly perfectly ordinary quartz crystal with their initial letter, though to what aim I have yet to establish. As a word of warning from one national leader to another, though, I advise that you melt down any gold received in trade from them, as much of their coinage seems to be inscribed with moderately sophisticated, if fragile, divination relays.*

*As for your peoples, I cannot say I know much beyond what you have elaborated upon in your letters, and then mere rumors passed along from my traders. I have heard rumors of your politics, that you are at least to some level a theocracy, and that your economy is overflowing with, "Fruit, Fish, Spices, and Monster Parts!" to quote your traders. But beyond that, I know comparatively little.*

*Your people are of course welcome to come through Al'Daric in any expeditions you make into the Ultralands, and there are many Guilds within our homeland that would be quite interested in helping supply or perhaps even sponsor such expeditions, along with companies willing and able to purchase any findings from the lands within.*

*The Ultralands are indeed an... enigmatic place, though I must warn you that there seems to be a being within the lands that desires one of your people for... some unknown purpose. It asked Al'Daric to supply 'A Rahastan,' and while it claims to be friendly, but I do not know its true intentions. Perhaps, if you have a condemned criminal or similar, might Al'Daric gain the benefit of further determining the nature of this strange 'Friend' who, from what I have gathered, sought to reach out to us all? I do not wish to sour relations between our peoples by offering one of your kin, but likewise am intrigued by its offer and would, with your blessing, seek to investigate further (though if you do not approve of the practical use of a condemned life, I understand that not all cultures approve of such practices, and will let it be).*

*Best wishes,*

*The Headmaster*