

*To the Wolves of the Pale Raven,*

*Thank you once again for fighting for me in the duel this past winter and allowing me to take my rightful place back home in Faraden. Life – and business – has been excellent these past seasons.*

*I have lifted the exile on my sibling, Enkh, as a gesture of goodwill, and they have offered to make the journey to Anvil for the Summer Solstice to provide you with recompense for the effort you put into the duel. If I can spare the time, I will too will join them, but as I'm sure you can imagine the work of running a household and a funery business means I simply may not be able to tear myself away from Faraden.*

*The journey is long, and we may not be with you until late in the summit.*

*Yours,*

*Davah Zaya*

*Head of the Zaya household, director of unparalleled funery rites*

Tono,

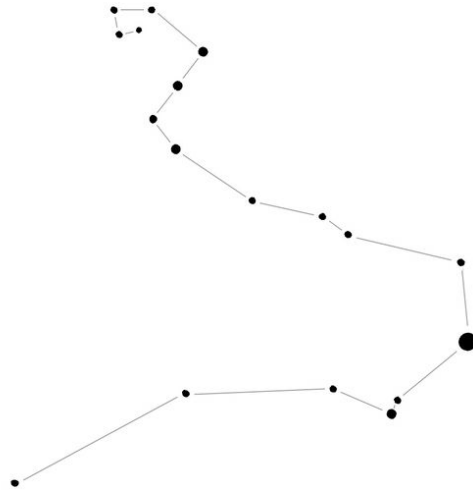
*I wanted to thank you for the danger you and your companions put yourselves in to help my family escape from Feroz. We were happy in the temple, but it's not realistic to think that we could have stayed there forever. Truth be told, even I was getting itchy feet. I missed going outside just as much as you'd imagine someone trapped indoors might.*

*One of the priests, Odalys a Câmpiilor, confided in me that Balo of the foam had come to him in a dream and had told him that this was the time for us to leave. She ran with us through the trees and into your arms. Meanwhile, the Black Bull ran with you, with her horns aligned with your swords and your spears. He put his body between your people and the Grendel. Truly, we were blessed that terrible day.*

*But above the might of the Gods, this could not have been done without you. My family has nothing to give you in return, we are only now beginning to settle and rebuild our lives in the Empire, but please know that we will never forget that you came back for us.*

Yours,

Raissa Kanza



*Dear Aristeia,*

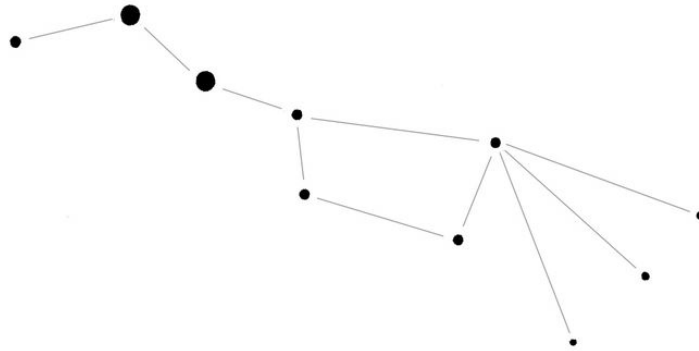
*A year has passed. You have born a curse under the light of the stars. We have an offer to make you.*

*Come to the Anvil Regio at 17:10 on the Saturday of the Summer Solstice. Together we will dive deep into your dreams, and you will be made an offer of a transformation. Whether you accept the offer is your choice to make.*

*Come with your eyes and mind open.*

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OoC Note: When you arrive at the Anvil regio, look for a person wearing a red and black marshal's jacket. If nobody arrives within 5 minutes or so, ask the refs at the regio to radio for Erin on the plot channel.



*Dear Serenus,*

*A year has passed. You have born a curse under the light of the stars. We have an offer to make you.*

*Come to the Anvil Regio at 17:35 on the Saturday of the Summer Solstice. Together we will dive deep into your dreams, and you will be made an offer of a transformation. Whether you accept the offer is your choice to make.*

*Come with your eyes and mind open.*

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OoC Note: When you arrive at the Anvil regio, look for a person wearing a red and black marshal's jacket. If nobody arrives within 5 minutes or so, ask the refs at the regio to radio for Erin on the plot channel.



*Dear Kespoena,*

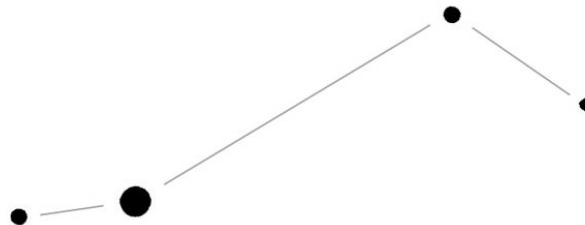
*A year has passed. You have born a curse under the light of a blood red star. We have an offer to make you.*

*Come to the Anvil Regio for 16:00 on the Saturday of the Summer Solstice. Together we will dive deep into your dreams, and you will be made an offer of a transformation. Whether you accept the offer is your choice to make.*

*Come with your eyes and mind open.*

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OoC Note: When you arrive at the Anvil regio, look for a person wearing a red and black marshal's jacket. If nobody arrives within 5 minutes or so, ask the refs at the regio to radio for Erin on the plot channel.



*Dear Decimus,*

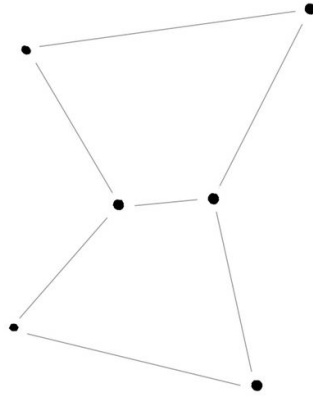
*A year has passed. You have born a curse under the light of the stars. We have an offer to make you.*

*Come to the Anvil Regio at 16:20 on the Saturday of the Summer Solstice. Together we will dive deep into your dreams, and you will be made an offer of a transformation. Whether you accept the offer is your choice to make.*

*Come with your eyes and mind open.*

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OoC Note: When you arrive at the Anvil regio, look for a person wearing a red and black marshal's jacket. If nobody arrives within 5 minutes or so, ask the refs at the regio to radio for Erin on the plot channel.



*Dear Anastasia,*

*A year has passed. You have born a curse under the light of the stars. We have an offer to make you.*

*Come to the Anvil Regio at 16:45 on the Saturday of the Summer Solstice. Together we will dive deep into your dreams, and you will be made an offer of a transformation. Whether you accept the offer is your choice to make.*

*Come with your eyes and mind open.*

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OoC Note: When you arrive at the Anvil regio, look for a person wearing a red and black marshal's jacket. If nobody arrives within 5 minutes or so, ask the refs at the regio to radio for Erin on the plot channel.

Lord Killian Mortere & Bten of Ashenhall,

You asked for a letter from anyone who considers Sermersuaq an important religious figure. I must say I was intrigued when a little bird delivered your pamphlet to me! The more I consider, however, the more sense it makes.

I'm not sure if you are familiar with the Ghodi, but I concern myself with Raðjóst and listening to his wisdom. From his teachings, I have developed a fascination not only with the ice wastes of Sermersuaq, but also with the Suaq people (your people?).

Long ago, from the words of Raðjóst and our own ancient writings, I am certain our peoples shared traditions, beliefs, a faith. I have more questions than answers: why did our religions diverge? What were the details of these beliefs and practices? But it has left me with one question above all - one that I know you will not be able to reply to answer, but still I must ask:

Why do you not draw Sermersuaq's attention to you as your ancestor?

Where are her shrines? Where are your Ghodi? Why did you turn your backs on her? I wonder if perhaps she committed some terrible atrocity to your people. I wonder if you simply forgot her in the snow and the ice, or in the difficulty fitting her into your Imperial Way.

She is not mine to worship nor to call on. And I doubt I would be able to hear her even if I tried, and yet I am drawn to her as a forgotten ancestor of the Suaq. If not me, then someone. Someone should give her the place she deserves in your great nation.



Lenochka Zabotovina Vypalse,

It was interesting to receive your letter. I agree with you on a great many aspects.

Fear is powerful. Perhaps the most powerful force we know of. I have come across auras I certainly believe to be based in Fear, though I could not say whether an Imperial priest would agree. Such auras I have seen had no identifiable source. I saw them on the battlefield, often around the dead. They made me want to flee, to hide amongst the security of my superiors' orders, to hide away forever.

But a virtue? I am not familiar with your own idea of what a virtue would be, but by own thinking I would never describe Fear as a virtue. It is a force of incomparable strength, something which must be wielded carefully and understood by the enemies who hope to survive those who wield it. But to me a virtue is an emotion which strives you to action. Fear makes me hide. It makes me shrink myself away. I do not act. This is a powerful effect, but not virtuous I believe.

I am not sure how helpful I have been. I am not so eager to embrace Fear as yourself, but I do hold a deep respect of it.

Yours,

Vindaya Eleklerta

Hello Luca,

I was delighted when your message came to my window in the beak of a sparrow so small. What excellent questions! As you suggested I might, I do indeed follow virtues outside of your own Synod's preferences.

In my nation, we embrace all spiritual forces as products of people resisting the cruel Creator's torment. Some, like myself, who feel particularly called to spiritual action, join religious sects. Each sect operates differently, and embraces its own set of these spiritual forces.

My sect is called The Everseeing Eye. We concern ourselves with the virtues of Justice, Vigilance and understanding. Our place is to investigate the most horrifying spiritual crimes you could imagine, and bring perpetrators to Justice. It may sound intense - but let me promise you, we still know how to have a good time!

Our founder chose these forces when writing the Eye's first constitution! She understood that all forces have their place, but did not want us distracted by the carrion call of our own Ambitions or ever searing Purity. Instead, she chose three principles all Eyes must follow:

- Seek Justice for the victims of spiritual crimes
- Be Vigilant to those crimes being planned in our very midst
- Have understanding for those put in impossible positions, or who do not comprehend the implications of their actions

Other sects have come to choose their "virtues" by their own strategies, but I find these simple principles help us to keep in mind exactly why we call upon the forces we do.

Yours in service,

Photios Kyrillos, The Everseeing Eye

Gwynlim,

Inspiring to hear from an Imperial practising Purity. My name is Ophelia. I am a Toxatai. My citadel has long been caught in war with the Druj. My parents fell in battle. Their parents fell in battle. I was told that this was to be my noble duty.

I rejected this duty, and instead found a sect who nurtured the fire inside my heart. In my nation, priests may follow whatever "virtues" they see fit. I am not particularly religious, but my priest's explanations of Purity sat well within me. As with your own nation, I saw the strength it provided me and my fellow pilgrims in our fight against a foe bound by no rules or nobility.

I will not cast my life aside in my citadel's name. Instead I have fought savagely, brutally for the home I hold dear. Some years ago, we were able to liberate ourselves from the clutch of our foe. Years of Hate and Fire poured forth from our swords and our spells. Purity delivered us.

I imagine the history your Empire writes in its books will be much different. But I know the power I saw that day. Axos knows. Our faith was rewarded with the deliverance of our Citadel. I can think of nothing better.

Hold onto your faith. When the moment comes, you will be glad to have it, and so will those around you - whether they are brave enough to show that appreciation or not.

Fight on.

Ophelia Bellerophon of Kaban

Ariadne of the Auric Horizon,

Your letter has found me well, and despite my reluctance and disdain for working with such a backwater nation such as yours. I appreciate that help that you provided as well as your discretion.

The matter of preparation wasn't seen to myself, but I'm told nothing in particular was done. We simply followed a traditional rite from my family as you saw that evening.

In the interest of showing my hand and once again growing my interest in the way I am willing to share my experience. You must understand the contents of this vision ruin me within my nation, and thus lose you a very powerful contact if it were to be discovered by my family. I was working, with my calloused hands, like some landfolk or worse a slave. I had no magic, that spark of personal mana wasn't there...

There were piles of various different metal discs which I was putting into a mould, creating coins. The coins kept coming out wrong, so I fiddled with the mould. It broke. The person who was guiding the manufacture storms out claiming to ruin me, take away my job.

I raced outside chasing after, but instead bumped into someone. They were waiting for me. An autumn ritualist claiming they could help me fix it, as long as I made them a duplicate. What could I do but agree?

Even now I feel the fear of losing that job and the guilt of becoming some petty criminal. I feel there may be more to this religion than what I have read, that I need to experience. In time I may consider your offer of pilgrimage assuming you keep up your end of the bargain, no one can know that I am a fraud.

Yours from far across the ocean,

Prince Vanja of Votika