20 May, 1597

It pleases me greatly to say that the talks with the Genesterian counsel were a success! The old trade deal we shared with them, that thorn which has poked and prodded us since the reign of the previous king, has finally been nipped. Even now, I can scarcely believe how simple it will be to keep our exports within the newly established restrictions – a royal secretary’s life has never been so easy!

I only wish that I could say the same for his majesty. Every day, he seems to grow yet wearier. He will not say what plagues him, but I suspect that it has something to do with the passing of his brother in the northernmost regions of Primidium. Though it has been some months, his majesty has not been the same since. None can blame him, of course. The loss of a loved one pierces the armor of kings just as keenly as it does the tatters of peasants. Still, it is not like King Talem Prodigium to dwell.

It is a truth which all kings must struggle with, I suspect – that every king has his time, and every man his end. I do hope, in the months that lie ahead, that he will confide in me, as he has done so many times before, and make peace with himself.