***Blood Faith XII***

To Pereles, Invested Justiciar of the Ward,

I write to take you up on your offer to “hold counsel with a voice of experience across the water” should I ever need to. I find myself in a most unenviable position. I have uncovered a conspiracy with roots that go as deep as the Council itself! I imagine that this sounds outrageous to you, so I have included copies of the documents I have acquired in my search for the Truth.

In short, our entire history as we are taught it in the Catechisms is utterly false. The Shedding was not discovered as a means to continued evolution and immortality, it was to empower certain individuals (termed Hunters) to combat the machinations of a cadre of original immortals which rebelled and were cast down to the Earth. Their leader, named Amaymon, infiltrated the Order of the Hunters and corrupted their ruling council. The chilling part is that the surviving members of that ruling council now preside our very own High Council of Thirteen! The fallen being, Amaymon, with a retinue of traitorous Hunters to do his bidding, began subjugating the peoples of the Earth as none other than Mégas Aléxandros, the Makedonían conqueror! Those Hunters that were still true to their original charge gave their lives ending his reign. History is quite clear that Aléxandros succumbed to disease in Bāb-ilû, around 323 bc and his empire quickly crumbled. What history *doesn’t* tell us is that when he died his soul was captured in a tetrix. And it is now kept by Thielvar, ‘Guardian of the Holy Remnant’, in Byzántion!

This, however, does not constitute the conspiracy, *per se*, but only serves as a background to what follows. Some years ago my one-time mentor and *paṇḍitá*, Hæmming of Bjarmaland, began warning me of the consequences of Reclaiming. Yet my woman of the *delicatae*, Sybil, discovered that he himself had been dabbling in the process. Not just once, as I did; rather he has made a systematic study of it. To avoid detection, he performed his experiments on a remote tribe, called the More, high in the mountains on the east end of the island of Papua.

For a long time I believed that this was no more than a lack of trust or mild hypocrisy. But as we began uncovering the true history of our Order, Sybil and I began to realize that he was acting under orders from the Council, or at least a faction of it. We visited the Libraries of the Forum in *Rōma* and consulted a copy of the *Necronomicon* bound in human leather. It described much of the theory behind Reclaiming, including several references to entities called ‘Collectors’.

In his journal Hæmming mentioned witnessing one of these Collectors. It seems that his intention is to find a way to prevent these Collectors from performing their function—to prevent them from destroying a Reclaimed. This may seem trivial to you since many Reclaimed are not eradicated by the Collectors. At first I believe that he simply intended to create an army of Reclaimed to use in our unending war against the Opposition. But I have learned that my supposition was in error. The Council has been planning a single Reclamation, not a Reclamation of an army. And they have good reason to believe that once they perform this Reclamation, the Collectors will quickly intervene. What makes this case different from all other instances of Reclamation is that this time they will actually be returning a soul to its Reclaimed body—it will be restored as its own master, but otherwise with all the strengths and powers of the soulless Reclaimed.

I think you realize whom I speak of. They intend to Reclaim the body of Mégas Aléxandros which was mummified in al-Iskandariyya, Kemet, and so has been preserved to this day. And when they do so, they intend to reintroduce the soul of Amaymon. Imagine the dire consequences of this abominable act they have planned! Imagine what this Amaymon could do to the world, not just as Mégas Aléxandros, but as Mégas Aléxandros Reclaimed and Reborn! With a single touch he could initiate the formation of a thousand Reclaimed armies, all suppliant to his will.

It is impossible to hope that we could infiltrate the Black See at Byzántion and recover the tetrix. Hæmming discovered us and so the Council has been alerted to our activities. Currently, our only chance is to find out where the remains of Mégas Aléxandros are kept and destroy them. Barring that we are destined for despair. Even now we can only hope against hope that Hæmming has not yet figured out how to bar the Collectors from enacting their duty and so cannot yet attempt this nefarious crime. We think it has something to do with a magic circle he had in his possession. We stole it, but he has most likely memorized it, and so our act was undoubtedly fruitless.

I trust, Master Pereles, that you will understand the import of what I have told you. Our Order is rife with corruption and deceit. I cannot say that Truth rests with the Opposition, but I am convinced that our own Order has deviated from it. Terrible things lie in our future unless we act quickly to prevent them. Please come to us with all due haste. We desperately need your aid and your counsel. You will find Sybil and I in the Wat Chaiwatthanaram, in the Kingdom of Siam.

*S-ciào vostro*,

Porfirio, Devoted Servant of Truth

encl.

