

To **Cardinal Giuliano da Santi**
Prefect of the Easter Liturgy and Keeper of the Papal Eclipse Records
ROME

Holiest Sunday of Easter of Resurrection, 8th of April
Anno Domini Nostri Iesu Christi 1556

Cardinal Giuliano,

Write this in your ledger, but seal it in the black vault—not as sermon, but as confession.

At the third hour, as I stood beneath the baldacchino and raised the chalice for Resurrection, the sun darkened.

Not a passing shadow. Not the soft dusk of clouds. It dimmed as if a great veil had been drawn across Heaven's face.

The crowd gasped. A woman fainted. The Swiss guards looked to the sky with their hands on their hilts.

The Host in my hand grew cold.

I turned toward the Cross, and for the first time in my life, I wondered if it was empty.

The astronomers said it was a natural eclipse, foretold in their ephemerides. But I say: nature does not eclipse grace. And Easter morning does not weep for no reason.

They will call this a sign. Of judgment. Of cleansing. But I have begun to think it is none of these.

Perhaps it is not wrath. Perhaps it is absence.

The light did not return as it usually does. It came slowly, reluctantly, like a penitent returning from a crime too great to name.

You once stood beside me when we signed the Index of Forbidden Books. We burned the heretics. We silenced the whispers. We made the light pure.

But what if, in doing so, we removed the only voices that could call the light back?

Let it be known:

In the first year of the Pontificate of PP. PAVLVS IV, when the sun darkened at terce upon the Day of Resurrection, the Pontifex Maximus Himself, servant of servants of God, sealed the silence of Easter into the heart of the Church.

You are receiving this because you saw the eclipse and still held your hymnal. Bury this scroll beneath the crypt of Saint Cecilia, she who sang in silence.

Let it say: *on the morning we sang of resurrection, the light refused to rise. And the Vicar of Christ looked upward—and was not sure he was seen.*

Divinely yours,
Paulus Quartus
Servant of the Servants of God
ROME