

Unto Dame Brionna, Captain of the Archducal Guard and Imperial Advisor on Military Affairs
From Commander Clarence Strawberry, Director of Military Intelligence

Honored Dame:

Word reached me last night that I believed you should receive immediately. As I could not reach you as I was not exactly sure of the... patrol route you might be following... I decided to put this in writing, entrusted to Sir. Nivell Moore, my 3rd in command.

Military agents of ours presently stationed at our northern border have received a trickle of refugees from lands to the West of Enclaves for the last 2 days, after about a week of random attacks by bands of poorly fed and even more poorly equipped Goblin and Orc kind. These refugees are presently being held at the border, and I am presently en route to question them personally. What my agents there have been able to gain however is that these people were displaced from long held farmlands and villages that support the agricultural footprint of the great city by well armed and armored units of men on horses wearing green and traveling east.

While I will not know more until I reach the refugees and question them, my educated guess is that these are Hanalian forces moving toward Enclaves. The question is why? This is not a sufficient army to even threaten the united force defending Enclaves, and if such a force aroused the forces of one of the 4 great Enclaves, nothing would be left of them, not even the hooves of the horses they ride on. A sufficient army would have emptied Hanal and would blacken the ground that they moved across.

There is surely more here.

However, given the situation AND the recent spate of attacks by essentially starving humanoids, I have made a number of decisions that I hope meet your expectations of one in my position. If not, I of course stand ready to bare the neck.

1. I have assigned my 3rd, Sir Nevill Moore as standing report officer until I return, with orders to report only to you. Nevill is competent, though young, and he is an almost fanatical servant of the Archduke. You need have no fear of his loyalty, though I would be cautious of his objectivity in some circumstances. His determination is worth consideration and his service is continuous, I sometimes do not think he sleeps.

2. I have send my 2nd, Dame Asmeralda of Screaming Oak, a convert many many years ago to the worship of the Lord of Light and the service of the Crown, but raised among the witches of Borsh'tro at Screaming Oak, knighted by Her late Grace and devout in her service to Glor'diadel to Enclaves itself. She has the knack for many witchy things still, including travel by Earth ring. She bears a talisman that will allow her to speak to either you or I at any time, but only for a bit less than 2 minutes per day before exhaustion overcomes her.

3. I myself am moving now to the north border with the intention of questioning the refugees we have, and any more than join us, as they arrive. The minister of Magic has arranged my travel hither. I also bear a stone that allows me to communicate with you - and while the communication is unlimited, it is but 3 times a week.

I remain in the Archduke's service forever.

Ever your loyal

Clarence Strawberry