

ANTONIN

Dear Uncle,

By the time this letter reaches your hands, I shall be hiding under Redmoor's nose.

You must now know that his assassins ambushed me in my tent just before our duel.

They've shown me just how loathsome that man is, and righteous anger now motivates me.

I have spent time thinking my choices through, and have decided that I shall become a phantom and haunt him as his misdeeds haunt those who suffer his oppressive rule.

Uncle, I understand that such a choice is bound to disappoint and anger you.

And while I know and see why that may be, I wished to tell you why I've chosen this.

My first impulse was seeking medical attention for the wounds that I now nurse.

Which I think a more prudent man than I, with his house and future to live for would.

It's what I think you would want me to do, for you have always loved propriety.

While that has served your ruling of our house in circumstances others do not grasp,

I also think it has imprisoned you. Uncle I do not wish to share your cell,

I confess now that I am glad Arlene has somehow cleverly managed to flee

this artificial and political arrangement we have found ourselves within.

I wish only the best for my dear wife, who had the courage to live for herself.

She saw the pain our life might bring to her and chose the path that would spare her regrets.

I bled and thought about this very long, and noticed then what the result would be.

In the best case, under a healer's care, my path would lead me back to "normalcy".

But what is normal? And what should it be? The question haunts me more than you'd believe.

Is normal calling for another duel, likely to be met with more treachery?

Perhaps it means further propriety, such that I should declare a war on him.

Do you think now that I've come to face death, I should force all our men to court it too?

Do you see honour in such senseless waste? Should I force more horrors of war on you?

(MORE)

ANTONIN (cont'd)

Together we can keep the orcs at bay. Why should the blood of any man be spilled except the one who caused this whole ordeal? We know one is too many wars to wage.

Why is it that I want to torment him? I won't deny I want to see him squirm.

I yearn for justice to befall his ilk. No war or duel can deliver this.

Honour has failed me every time with him, why should I think success would come through it?

His honour has already blackened through, fear is the only tool at my command.

Personal visceral gut-wrenching fear is the one language he will understand.

The only language I have seen him use. The only one I know he'll listen to.

I think of Redmoor like a desert bush, dead and dry as the summer takes its toll.

If I don't burn him now, the future holds much greater dangers for everyone else.

I know that Redmoor shuns propriety. So I will not concern myself with it.

It can no longer damn me if the news that I am dead spreads far and wide and quick.

I hope that you will aid me in this plan. You hold my life, dear uncle, in your hands.

I know what I have chosen is against not just decorum but Order itself,

and when the time comes I will gladly face Galadon's mercy or judgment of me.

Arithmetic has been my greatest aide. This choice is simple when properly framed.

No matter how harsh my punishment is, the lives of my men will have been worth it.

It would be a disgrace to discard peace over a single man's wicked misdeeds.

It doesn't matter if they're aimed at me. You know I matter less than unity.

I wish you luck when our men fight the orcs. I know that they will triumph in your lead.

I hope once this is done, the ruse will die, and you will welcome me with open arms.

I do not know if this will come to be. I may be dead by this time in a week.

I love you, Uncle, and am in your debt. I love my father and my people too.

I do not wish to cause you grief or pain. I just believe this is what I must do.

(MORE)

ANTONIN (cont'd)
Sincerely,
Antonin.