

Letter: My Darling

My darling,

I'm writing to you from Auden, the last stop on my tour of the human kingdoms, and as requested, I've given each of their kings the Council's tribute while keeping in mind the favor you've asked of me.

When it comes to that, I'm sorry to say that your fears are valid, love. The humans have grown soft, content in their domination of us and the rest of the continent.

While before, I would have celebrated this, seeing it as a chance to gain our freedom, I can only view it with fear now. Your foretelling will allow me nothing less.

For instance, one of my sources of both fear and long-forgotten hope is that out of all the human kingdoms, Auden is the only one to maintain a standing army. Even with that depressing example, however, I've found a reason to fight despair. The tales of their prowess in battle are true in every way possible. Even their king shows nothing but strength and wisdom, traits that inspire only respect and loyalty in his subjects.

His heir, on the other hand, is another matter entirely.

The child is sullen, petulant, and exceedingly self-centered. If, as you've seen, this Audish heir is to become our last hope, then we're doomed.

Maybe I'm judging him too harshly. You know how much I dislike children, so perhaps that has colored my perception of the boy. I certainly hope that's right. I hope the future's not as bleak as I'm thinking it will be.

I'll be home soon, my love, but when the time is right, I'll visit Auden once more. Hopefully, I can give you a better assessment of the Audish heir once the child has grown into a man.

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