

GRIGORI'S POINTS

My friends! I've asked you here tonight to address an issue of grave importance: Leadership!

We stand here tonight in the "commons"—an area of public gathering and meeting. Look at your feet! Look where you stand! What do you see? Mud! Yet if we cast our gaze a bit, we see a grand castle! The fruits of *your* labor! Built on *your* shoulders! As is the prosperity of the entire barony of Kamedon! Yet our so-called leaders would squander your efforts—the sweat and blood that you and your families shed—for their *own* glory!

Castle indeed! What kind of resources—*our* resources—went to this grand endeavor!? Could they not have better served our community in several other ways? Could we not have, perhaps, a barracks? Or a granary? Or even (and I only bring this up for the safety of the young ladies in question, who are already "at work" on the streets) a brothel? Or perhaps a place that the public already demands—by evidence of our standing here (in the mud!) a town hall, or at the very least a tavern!

We shall return to the issue of the castle momentarily, my friends, but in the mean time, let me ask you this! While our "hard-working" Baron Ildred and his inner circle were directing the resources of our country towards expansion—building roads and mining for gold miles from our home—where were we to bury our dead? Are we to be denied the very basic "luxury" of the decency of a consecrated graveyard on this desecrated hill so we don't have to worry about the possibility of our loved ones returning as one of the walking dead? Or are our "leaders" so numb to their daily hauntings and making pacts with such foul spirits as to be ignorant to such "petty" concerns of gods-fearing folk such as us?

But no, my friends! These "Stormlords" (the arrogance of such a name!) are concerned only with expansion! Of building their roads, and lifting their own names in grandeur instead of building our home *here* and insuring our safety! Even the smallest two-bit baron with a crumbling tower on the plains of ire, when coming into some coin, builds a fence to protect his cattle—what have we? A council of fat-cats who sit on their petty thrones when a world of dangers exist right beyond our borders!

Do they bother to see what exists beyond!? Nay, they do not! Do they bother to protect us!? Nay!

We see how much they favor us, when they choose to include one of their own's "treasure" in the protection of the barony rather than claim land suitable for farming that is much closer to home! Why, I ask you, did the Temple of the Elk—50 miles hence as the crow flies—plant the flag of Kamedon, when fertile ground not 9 miles from here saw neither flag nor plough!? Glory to them is apparently much more important than the well-being of us "little folk!"

And if it's a matter of producing for the Barony as a whole, then what of the Rezbins? They who already are settling and anxious to pledge themselves to Kamedon's cause? No, these "poor folk"—folk like you and me—are not worthy of the attention of our Glory-Mongering Rulers! Much better to have the ruins of a pet temple than an actual producing settlement with hard-working people already there!

The motives of these so-called "heroes" really stagger the imagination!! They would call themselves our leaders, but where is their judgement!? Where is the evidence of their heroism!?

We have a pack of vile nasty creatures—kobolds!—living—free as you will—in the heart of our own barony! Do you feel safe traveling in the borders of your own countryside with these vile things roaming free? Do you feel safe for your children?

And now I ask you in open, honest wonderment—did these "heroes" slay a unicorn? Whether you believe they did or not, certainly there is some question! And surely by their own admission its blood is on their hands!

And beyond that, we have to wonder, and ask honestly—was there ever really a Stag Lord!? Or did they "kill him"! After all, this warden of ours certainly has a questionable past! Even if he is truly on the path of Redemption (an honorable path to be certain, yes!), what exactly *was* his role in this Stag Lord's gang? Could he have been this so-called Stag Lord? Or could this "Stag Lord" have been an invention in the first place?

And now that this "fearsome evil" has been put down, suddenly our baron now bears his entire visage. But it's not one to be feared—oh no, now it's no longer *fearsome*, but *sacred*. Are we to be fools!? Fear the visage one moment, then to bow down to it the next!?

However you believe it, be there a Stag Lord or no, it smacks of Glory-Mongering and deceit!

Speaking of deceit, have we noticed that our silver-tongued grand diplomat comes directly out of the bandit houses of Pitax? Where are his loyalties? Is he to be trusted at all?

And our national hero—the general of our armies—while certainly capable with sword—is still but a young girl! Barely of child-bearing age, and yet we can do no better? Truly!?

The elven marshal has no values in common with us, the “regular folk”! He seems to trust no god, and keeps council with no man—or woman! How do you trust someone who trusts no one!?

Not many weeks hence around the time of the full moon, there were horrible murders and talks of wolves, and bounties, and investigations, and rumors flew—and rumors continue to fly! Why all the secrets!?! I put it to you directly: Was a werewolf among us? What happened to it? They tell us it was just increased wolf activity! But common sense tells us there is more to this! Secret meetings in the castle! Investigations in-town for an increase in animal activity? No, my friends, this is merely a symptom of a greater disease: Kamedon has no law.

It is a truth we hold most honorable that Courts Are For Kings, and that in our River Kingdoms, all within a territory are subject to a ruler’s laws. What is truly upsetting in Kamedon, is that none of our esteemed rulers, least of all the good baron himself, have bothered to tell us what these laws are! Indeed, it seems as if they are making them up as they go along!

This, I suspect, is what happened to our werewolf “guest” this full moon past. Did it escape? Get executed? Cured? Released? Who knows!?

Let’s not even speculate on that any further, but rather look to something we *do* know about!

Recall, if you will, the horrible, tragic events of Abadius 22 of this year. Fourteen dead, including two children, and many wounded, with great loss of house and property in the dead of winter. As we all know, this could have been much worse, and if not for *the communnity* coming together—if not for *you all* coming together—we could have lost *all* we have worked for! The wilderness could *right this very moment* be reclaiming the land on which we now stand!

Our rulers blamed it on a poor traveling merchant who, they tell us, was drunken, and spilling his wares of *alchemist’s fire*. If you recall, this man was hanged—personally by the baron himself—and his body was put on display on the walls of the ruins.

But I ask you—who among us has not personally seen (or at the least heard of) the hauntings that follow Baron Ildred? Have not glasses flown off of shelves as he passed by? Have not doors opened or closed on their own when he was near? Has not something slipped from his grasp and flown, seemingly on its own, several feet down the street?

Is it possible the baron’s own hauntings caused that tragedy? Is it possible this merchant was falsely accused and hanged unworthily? And what was the purpose of placing his body on display? Perhaps to further the deception? Well we shall never know. There was no trial! There was no law to be broken! Was there truly justice?

Just a broken body of a poor merchant, hung with no trial, having broken no law, displayed on the walls of a ruined castle—but not for long. Fortunately, our esteemed council took the good will that came in from the surrounding counties after our tragedy and that very following month built themselves a great brand new castle!

Yes, think back, my friends. Do you remember now? While the houses that burned yet reeked of smoke, and while the bodies were yet warm in their graves (but not in any sacred graveyard), they were in the shadow of that shining new castle! Can we say “Glory-Mongerers”!?

Have we yet had enough!?! These puppets of Restov have that boy whispering the swordlords’ will in their ears! “Holiday to Rostland” indeed!

I’m not saying they’re no good at anything—they’re great at delegating their whims! The tale is told of how, when they first arrived in this land, they delegated the execution of a bandit to Oleg—the merchant.

Enough is enough! They have come to this land and built what they have built on *your* shoulders—again, I say, with *your* sweat and with *your* blood! We need someone who will respect the will of *the people* and the wants and desires of *the people*. We need a baron... or a king...or *someone* to rule us as we deserve!

Say it with me! Down with the baron! Down with the stormlords! Down with the baron! Down with the stormlords!