

Act 1: As Without, So Within

b) Parsley, Sage, Rosemary, and Alyssum (Saturday, March 17th, 2018, 7pm EST)

A leveplate reads:

"As part of my Halone given mission to spread her word, I've been working as a surgeon here in the Ala Mhigan countryside, doing my best to tend to the common folk. However, I find myself dreadfully short on supplies. I need adventurers to bring me the herbs listed below."

-Ishgardian Priest, Jacques Delacroix

1. Khenā Ridah (Jana)
 2. Ri'nji Solstan (S'imba)
 3. Turere Ture (Ai)
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(Artoria Aldsan) As the party gathers at the Castrum Oriens, though most of the Alliance activity has long since moved on, a smaller contingent remains here to hold the area, and help protect travellers heading further East. With this, comes the occasional injury, as the beasts in the wilds of Gyr Albania are often dangerous, even to hardened adventurers. Despite that, as the group shuffles into the infirmary, there's a sense that maybe there's too many people lying abed sick for how small this outpost has become. An old, kindly looking Elezen man, dressed in a surgeon's robes, looks up at them as they enter. "Ah, are you the adventurer's I requested?"

Ri'nji Solstan looks around the room with a furrowed brow, making a quick assessment of each patient as he walks in he looks to the Elezen man, his eyes give a brief flash of distrust but he gives a silent nod.

Turere Ture is impassive. And stares straight ahead. She looks somehow out of place, but her axe does shimmer slightly - as if pleased with all the suffering present.

Khenā Ridah looks around at each patient without making actual eye contact as she answers. "I... Suppose we are."

(Artoria Aldsan) "Halone's blessings on all of you. We've had... an influx of patients lately, some new disease going around, and I'm afraid that my supplies simply aren't holding up. Simply put, I won't have enough to last until the next shipment if this keeps up."

Ri'nji Solstan: "What is the disease and how does it effect a person?" He asked in an almost automatic fashion.

(Artoria Aldsan) "So far, it looks like a high fever and signs of delirium. I've been doing my best to get the fever to go down, but I haven't been able to manage much beyond that."

Ri'nji Solstan: "Hmm, how is the infection contracted?"

Khena Ridah keeps glancing around at the patients as she speaks. "Let's see the list of needed plants. Are they all local, then?"

(Artoria Aldsan) "I'm afraid we don't know for sure yet. It could be a case of bad air coming from the swamp in the south." He shakes his head before glancing at Khena. "Yes, everything I've requested is local. You should be able to find most of it in the Shroud if you pass back across the wall."

Ri'nji Solstan keeps his eyes completely locked on the Elezen watching his every movement like he expected him to suddenly attack.

Khena Ridah looks up and nods. "Perfect, we'll have this handled quickly enough." She turns to the other two adventurers. "I hope you're at least familiar with the Shroud?"

Ri'nji Solstan: "Familiar enough." He said, keeping his eyes on the Elezen.

(Artoria Aldsan) A man groans from a nearby bed and reaches up to grab at Ri'nji's sleeve, weakly tugging upon it.

Ri'nji Solstan jumps slightly reaching for his weapon initially, he pulls away and looks at the man. "Greetings sir." He said pulling out what appeared to be a wipe from his coat and wiping off his sleeve.

(Artoria Aldsan) The man doesn't look at Ri'nji so much as he does through him. "When you walk through the black forest, you will see..." With that, he falls back to the bed.

Ri'nji Solstan: "Well that wasn't ominous whatsoever." He said quickly incinerating the wipe.

Turere Ture: "...."

Khena Ridah: "Right... Let's go, then."

Ri'nji Solstan: "Come let us depart this place, before we catch a case of lycanthropy or something."

Turere Ture scratches herself.

(Artoria Aldsan) The Shroud lies dark, little light making its way through the thick tree cover, even now in the early evening. The last bite of winter lingered, a chill to the air before the final turn towards Spring. A way opens towards the south.

(Artoria Aldsan) Peering into the darkness, you manage to see the path turning again further ahead. Any other details are lost to the shadows however.

Ri'nji Solstan narrows his eyes and tilts his head in. "We could easily become lost in this maze."

Turere Ture: "...."

(Artoria Aldsan) Ri'nji manages to spot something familiar on the trunk of a nearby tree. Sticky and black, oozing liquid. Moreover, his Seeker Ears hear something prowling in the woods ahead.

Ri'nji Solstan narrows his eyes and draws his weapon, gesturing to the ooze. "More of that ooze from last time, so I guess we can expect another death dog..." He said reaching up to rub his chest.

Khena Ridah grimaces. "Great, exactly what we needed. Let's hope they haven't torn up any of the herbs we need."

Ri'nji Solstan: "Right...be on the ready, if we know it's here there's a good chance it knows we're here too."

(Artoria Aldsan) The party comes to another fork. Due to Rinji's proactive noticing earlier, they spot a beast roaming to the south.

Ri'nji Solstan: "As much as I would like to turn that into a smoking crater...I think we need to focus on the herbs..."

Turere Ture: "....."

Ri'nji Solstan: "There...those look like they may be the herbs we're looking for."

Khena Ridah looks up as they slip past the beast. "Right, let's get to them quickly. I can gather them."

Ri'nji Solstan: "Capital...then me and the Lalafell will keep watch."

Khena Ridah dusts herself off as she puts a bunch of herbs into her pack. "Right, one down."

Ri'nji Solstan walks along, focusing his aether to keep a spell or two ready for when it was needed, aether dancing along his fingertips as he flicked his wrists to prepare.

Turere Ture 's axe glows slightly brighter as it feeds on Turere's aether. Yet, there's a sense of dissatisfaction. It hungers for the aether of others. For their blood and the thrill of combat, in this event of picking flowers.

(Artoria Aldsan) As the party moves deeper into the woods, they notice that the plant life seems to be growing more sickly, much of it brown and withered though Spring should be on the cusp of arriving.

Ri'nji Solstan: "This is troubling..." He said walking over to examine a leaf. "I wonder if this is related to the sickness that the others are afflicted with?"

Khena Ridah: "I would wager those beasts are spreading their... Filth through the forest."

Turere Ture: "...."

Ri'nji Solstan: "Would make sense...one just clawed me and I started feeling sick."

Turere Ture shakes silently. The urge to slice something in two. To bathe in the blood of the enemy. To take life and to receive life. All of this confined in this little lalafell girl silently trodding along with a pair of sneaky cats.

(Artoria Aldsan) You manage to sneak past again, but the beast turns as you reach the safety of the next turn, as though it had heard something or was aware of something. Do you try to rush away or stay quiet?

Turere Ture 's axe mysteriously shows up in her hands - shimmering red. The lalafell crouches silently then launches herself at the beast.

(Artoria Aldsan) The beast snarls, its eyes focusing on Turere the moment she leaves the trees-- or more accurately, upon her axe, as though seeking it out and drawn to it. It lunges to meet the lalafell.

Khena Ridah turns away from the beast. "I'm going for the objective. I'm not much help in a fight, so you two can slay the beast!"

Ri'nji Solstan: "Got it."

(Artoria Aldsan) The beast snarls, it's /Necrotic Claws/ tearing through Turere's arm. Though it's but a scratch, the corruption begins to spread.

Turere Ture charges at the beast. A whirlwind of crimson. But the beast proves more elusive, and scratches the girl's arm. The wound festers, but the lalafell seems rather unemotional about it. The axe does dull slightly, but flares up again as the battle continues.

Ri'nji Solstan spreads his arms apart in an almost angelic fashion. Light shimmered above it before it came smashing down on it like space lazer, burning down onto it to leave it /holy burned./

(Artoria Aldsan) The beast bats at the tiny lalafell, sending her careening, though she's tough enough to avoid taking any serious damage from the blow.

Turere Ture is swatted back by the beast. She slams against a root. However, her tiny body twists and turns - her feet plant themselves on the root and with a powerful root-shattering kick - she hurls towards the beast - axe glowing and her body tightening - finally she issues a sound - a formless SCREAM of HATE as her axe whirls upward and down like a guillotine. Slicing the beast cleanly in two.

Turere Ture: "DIE!"

Ri'nji Solstan doesn't much react to the beast dying, but he turns and starts running towards where Kheena went as fast as he could, not wanting to leave her alone, this was actually the second of such beast he had encountered and the possibility of there being another nearby was not lost on him.

(Artoria Aldsan) Alright! You continue on! You find the final patch of herbs in a sickly looking grove. There's signs of black blood splashed about.

(Artoria Aldsan) After returning with the herbs, the Elezen Priest and also Chirurgeon thanks each of you personally, though he doesn't have long to spare after giving you your payment as he soon rushes back to treating the sick.