

Fire Emblem: Path of Radiance Game Script

by Kh40t1x

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| Notes: -This faq has 'spoilers'.
| -Script taken from easy mode.
| -Some dialogue may be different, added, or omitted altogether in
| normal and hard mode.
| -Some of the conversations may only occur if certain people are
| still alive.
| -On the other hand, some conversations might only come up if one
| or more people die.
| -Alternate dialogue will not be included anytime soon.
| -The letter 'a' represents the script for if the Black Knight is
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| defeated in Chapter 27. |
| -The letter 'b' represents the script for if the Black Knight is |
| not defeated in Chapter 27. |
| -The WHOLE chapter is redone for each letter just for the sake of |
| convenience and organization. |
| -In the Epilogue, however, the two different conversations are |
| included together in the one section. |
| -Look for an 'a' or 'b' indicator in the corner for that section. |
| -The dotted lines mean that the scene changes. |
| -Any spelling or grammar mistakes in this script, are actually |
| found in the game and are not typos. |
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=====
Prologue: Mercenaries [000]
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(Cut Scene -> "Memories")

Mist: Are you all right?

Ike: Nn... Yeah, I'll be fine.

(Enter Greil)

Greil: So, the sleeping prince awakens!

Mist: Father! I can't believe you! I know those are practice swords, but they're still heavy! You have no right to be so rough on Ike.

Greil: If this is too much for the boy, he'll never make it as a mercenary.

Mist: But--

Ike: Mist, you don't have to worry. I told you, I'm fine.

Greil: Ha! You'd better be. Now grab your sword and get ready!

Mist: What? Don't tell me you're going at it again! But--

Ike: Just until I land a single blow. I'm not giving up until I can get one good hit in on Father.

Greil: I like your resolve, Ike. But it takes more than a strong will to...
Hm?

(Enter Boyd)

Boyd: Aha! I knew I'd find you here!

Mist: Hi, Boyd. What brings you here?

Boyd: Nothing special. You said you were going to get the boss, but you never came back. I got picked to check up on you.

Mist: Oh! Sorry, I got caught up with Ike and my father.

Boyd: It's nothing. Besides, I figured I'd get a good laugh watching Ike get worked over by the boss. You...look fine. What happened?

Ike: Nothing at all. I'm sorry to disappoint you.

Mist: You just missed it. Just a minute ago, he was out cold.

Ike: Mist!

Mist: Ha ha! Sorry.

Greil: You came at just the right time, Boyd. You can be Ike's sparring partner.

Boyd: What? Me?

Greil: I'm beginning to think it would be better if he sparred with someone closer to his own skill.

Ike: ...I understand. Thanks for your help, Boyd.

Boyd: Hmph! I don't know about this "closer to his own skill" business, but I'm ready!

(Take positions)

Boyd: All right! I'm ready for you! Let's go!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Boyd: Hey! What's the holdup? Let's get started already.

Ike: I'm coming. Wait right there!

-[Boss fight]-

Mist: You can do it! Boyd's got nothing! Take him out!

Boyd: "Nothing!?" I don't have nothing. I mean, I have-- I mean...

(End boss fight)

Boyd: Ha ha! I'm not done yet. We're just getting started.

-----[Battle End]-----

Boyd: That-- that wasn't too bad.

Mist: Boyd, you're such a loser.

Boyd: Shut your trap!

Greil: Good work, Boyd. That's enough.

Boyd: Oh, all right!

Greil: Your swordsmanship was decent enough, Ike. Don't forget how it felt. It won't always be this easy.

Ike: I know.

Greil: Now that you're done warming up, it's time for you to face me again.

Ike: I was hoping you'd say that.

Greil: But first... Mist!

Mist: Right here!

(Mist approaches Ike)

Mist: Here you go, Ike! It's a vulnerary.

-Receive "Vulnerary"-

Mist: I'd recommend using it now, before you fight Father again. Last time he knocked you silly.

Greil: Always take time to heal your wounds in a battle-- even small ones. By the time you think you're in trouble, it's probably too late... Don't get into that situation.

-----[Battle Start]-----

Greil: Get ready, Ike. Here I come!

-[Boss fight]-

Greil: Give it your all!

(End boss fight)

Greil: Come on, boy! You going to give me a challenge this time around?

Ike: ...

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Greil: Ungh...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Mist: Ike! You were great!

Ike: Father, you were holding back, weren't you?

Mist: What? Is that true?

Greil: If you could tell the difference, that means you're improving.

Boyd: You know, I wasn't really giving it my all either...

Mist: That is such a lie.

Boyd: Bah.

Ike: So, Father, does that mean you finally admit that I'm ready?

Greil: What, to join the company? To take on a job?

Ike: Yeah. I mean, Boyd's already out there on the battlefield. I'm ready. I'm tired of being a trainee.

Boyd: Listen, the difference between you and me is that I'm a professional.

Mist: A professional who just got beat.

Boyd: That was just random chance. Random chance.

Greil: You've got a point, Ike... All right. Tomorrow will be your first day as a full-fledged mercenary.

Ike: Really?

Greil: But! If I think it's too much, you're back to trainee status. You'd better work hard.

Ike: No problem. Watch-- I'll catch up to everyone in no time.

Greil: We'll see. We'd better be heading back to the fort. Everyone's waiting.

=====
Chapter 1: The Battle Begins

[001]
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-[Mercenary Fort]-

Titania: Good morning, Ike. Today's your first day as a professional soldier, isn't it?

Ike: Yeah, and I'm ready to go.

Greil: What you are is late. The others were suited up and ready at the break of dawn.

Ike: Sorry. I'll get up earlier from now on. So, what's my first job?

Greil: I'm talking with Titania right now. Wait outside until we're done.

Ike: Yes, sir.

(Exit Ike)

Titania: Very well, Commander Greil, shall we continue?

Greil: You were telling me about some bandits that needed taking care of, weren't you?

Titania: Correct. The request comes from a nearby village. According to our reports, the bandits are not all that strong. I think it best if I ride out and take a look. I plan on taking Oscar and Boyd with me.

Greil: Just the brothers? Hm. Go ahead and add Ike to your team. Shinon, Gatrie, and I can handle the other two jobs easily enough. Titania, I'm leaving Ike in your care. I'm trusting you to show him the ropes.

Titania: Understood, Commander.

(Enter Ike)

Titania: Come on, Ike. Let's get you set up.

Ike: All right... My first job.

Oscar: Captain Titania. Preparations are complete, and I'm ready to go.

Titania: Impeccable timing. It's nice to know we can always count on you to be at the ready, Oscar.

Boyd: Don't forget about me! I'm ready for action!

Titania: Is that so, Boyd? That's a surprise.

Boyd: Ha! Not today it isn't. As of today, I am going to be the absolute model of perfection. I need to set a good example for Ike!

Ike: I'll take your word for it.

Oscar: Your first campaign at last. I know you've wanted this for a while. Are you nervous, Ike?

Ike: I think I was more nervous last night. I could hardly sleep. This morning, I'm feeling pretty good. It's the calm before the storm.

Oscar: You should try to relax. You're not going to be out there alone.

Ike: Yeah, you're right.

Titania: Right. Everyone ready? Let's go.

-[Caldea]-

Titania: All right, let me explain what's going on. This is a map of Caldea. They've hired us to drive off some bandits. We're the blue marks here. The red dots are the bandits. There aren't many of them, but we can't get careless. The one in front of the building up north is their leader. Our mission is to take him out and recapture that building.

Boyd: Ike! Listen up! All this stuff is old news to me, but I can give a rookie like you a few tips. First off, don't let yourself get worked up and jump out in front of everyone. You'll just end up getting hurt.

Oscar: Don't try to do too much, Ike. When things get dangerous, you can-- and should-- rely on us. As long as you watch how the enemy moves carefully, you'll be fine. Think of this as a training mission.

Ike: I'll do that. Oscar, Boyd, thanks for your help.

Oscar: Don't mention it.

Boyd: Just sit back and watch how a professional handles things!

Titania: Enough chitchat, you three! We've got work to do!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Titania: Ike, before you engage an enemy, take a good look at his weapon. The weapon you use often determines who has the upper hand in a fight. For example, the axe I'm wielding serves me well against lances, but it fares less well against swords.

Oscar: And my lance is great against swords, but not against axes. And to complete the triangle...

Ike: Ah! My sword. It's strong against axes but weak against lances. Right?

Titania: Yes, exactly. If you can remember that, you'll be more effective in combat.

Boyd: That's just the basics, though. This'll come in handy soon enough, so don't forget it.

Ike: Swords over axes... I won't forget. Not if I remember that I'll always have the advantage over you, Boyd.

Boyd: Do you think you could maybe find a different way of remembering? Yeah, thanks.

Titania: And one more thing... Don't forget to visit the locals. We're here to help, after all. The villagers should welcome our presence.

Zawana: What's going on out there? Is that some sort of army? Pah. A bunch of mercenaries looking for their next meal. The villagers must've hired 'em. Listen up, lads! Hurt 'em, and hurt 'em bad! We let this bunch live, and we'll have hordes of hired swords hounding us for the rest of our days!

Bandit: It's those fool villagers... They think they can buy a bunch of sellswords to chase us away. It ain't gonna work out how they wanted. All they get for their trouble is a bunch of ruined houses. Tear 'em down, boys! That'll teach 'em!

(Bandits burn down a house)

-[Left house]-

Woman: Since these bandits took over, we can't even sleep at night. Please! Help us save our village. Here. My mother left me this. I hope it

serves you well.

-Receive "Seraph Robe"-

-[Right house]-

Man: Ah, you're with the mercenaries, right? Thank you for coming. We've heard a lot about you. Here, take this weapon. We're farmers, not fighters. Maybe you'll get some use from it.

-Receive "Steel Sword"-

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Zawana: Urhg! I... I'm meant for better than this... I don't want to die here...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Titania: That's the end of it. Ike, are you all right?

Ike: Yeah, I'll be fine.

Titania: You know, you surprised me. To think that you've come so far.

Ike: Look at my father, though. I've still got such a long way to go.

Titania: There's nothing you can do about that. After all, Commander Greil is--

Ike: Huh? What about my father?

Titania: Oh, nothing.

Ike: "Nothing"? Now I'm really curious.

Titania: Don't worry. You'll learn all about it someday.

Ike: ...

Boyd: Hey, Ike! That wasn't bad for your first battle. Not as flashy as my first time, though!

Oscar: Yeah, you were a real standout. I'll never forget the sight of you so keyed up you broke your own axe.

Boyd: Oscar! Dang it! You didn't have to bring that up!

Oscar: Anyway, Ike. Congrats on finishing your first mission. Welcome to the group.

Titania: Everyone's all right? Then let's get going. I'm sure Mist has a nice, hot meal waiting for us.

-[Mercenary Fort]-

Rhys: Oh, Titania. So this is where you've been, is it?

Titania: Rhys! Are you sure you're well enough to be up?

Rhys: Yes. My fever's completely gone.

Titania: Are you sure? You still look a bit unsteady on your feet if you ask me.

Rhys: Well, I've been in bed for almost a week. I doubt anyone would be in top form-- even you, my friend!

Titania: I certainly hope that's all it is. In any case, until you're back at full speed, you won't be doing any work. We're mercenaries, after all, and...

Rhys: "Even the smallest lapse invites death". Right? I know, I know. My apologies to the rest of the team, then. It looks like I'll be recuperating for a while longer.

Titania: Mm, it's for the best. Take your time and get fully rested and restored. You are our sole staff wielder, Rhys... The harder our work, the more we depend on you to be at our sides.

Rhys: Thank you for your kind words.

Titania: Oh, by the way... That paper you've been carrying around... Is it a letter? I'd intended to go into town this afternoon. I can deliver it for you if you like.

Rhys: Oh, no. This is a letter for you, Titania.

Titania: For me?

Rhys: Not more than a little while ago, I went out for a walk around the yard and... A man I've never seen before came up to me and said..."Give this to the red-tressed knight".

Titania: How curious... I wonder what it is.

Rhys: I imagine it's a thank-you letter from the people of Caldea or something to that effect.

Titania: Oh, no! How dare they!?

Rhys: Titania? What's the matter? What does the letter say?

Titania: ...Rhys! Take this letter to Oscar, and tell him to prepare for combat and wait for me! I have to go out for a moment.

Rhys: Uh, but, Titania?

Titania: I'll be right back! I'm counting on you!

(Exit Titania)

Rhys: What on earth could that letter have said?

Rhys: Everyone! Come quickly!

Boyd: Hey, Rhys. So, how are you feeling?

Oscar: What is it? Why are you so agitated?

Rhys: It's Mist and Rolf... They... They've been taken by bandits!

Boyd: What?!?

Ike: What are you talking about?

Oscar: The two of them went out early this morning to gather wildflowers...
Sure, they're not back yet, but...

Rhys: Earlier, by the gate...a man asked me to deliver a letter to Titania. It
was from a group of bandits-- kidnappers. What are we going to do?

Oscar: Let me see it.

Rhys: Oh, if only I'd known... He didn't seem like a bad person...

Oscar: Hm. I get it. They're after revenge. They want retribution for the
other day at that village... Caldea, was it? Hm. Taking children as
hostages? What cowards!

Ike: Blast!

Boyd: Wait, Ike! Where... Where do you think you're going?

Ike: I'm going to get Mist!

Rhys: But... No! Titania... She said she'd be right back. You're supposed to
get ready and wait for her...

Ike: And do you honestly think we've got time to wait? I'm going!

(Exit Ike)

Boyd: What do you think you're going to do on your own, rookie? Hold it! I'm
going, too!

(Exit Boyd)

Rhys: Stop! Both of you! I... I'm going with you.

(Exit Rhys)

Oscar: Oh, c'mon! Wait! This is crazy! Do you think you can just ignore the
deputy commander's orders?

Boyd: The road forks here... Well, which way do we go?

Ike: How am I supposed to know that?

Boyd: Hold it! Are you saying you don't know where we're going? Unbelievable!
You'd better learn to think before you act, you moron!

Ike: Shut your mouth, Boyd!

Boyd: You think you can make me? Come on!

(Enter Rhys/Oscar)

Rhys: B-both of you, this is no time to be fighting.

Oscar: I figured we'd find you like this.

Boyd: What are you two doing? So you're coming after all? It's not like you
two chambermaids to be disobeying orders. What's the world coming to?

Ike: Oscar, you know this road, don't you? Which way do we go?

Oscar: You're going to the bandits' stronghold, right? It's the left fork.

Ike: Got it!

(Exit Ike)

Boyd: I'm still talking here! Let me finish what I--

Rhys: Come on, Oscar. Let's go, too!

Oscar: I guess we've no choice.

Boyd: Uh... HEY! You're not leaving me behind!

-[Bandit Hold]-

Ikanau: So you came, did you, boys? Is it just you, then? You came alone? You
seriously underestimate what we're capable of doing to you. Now,
where's that snobby, red-haired wench you ride with?

Ike: Titania's not here. It's just us. All I want to know right now is whether
Mist and Rolf are safe.

Ikanau: Yeah, of course. We've got 'em locked up safe and sound in that little
shack back there. We got no problem with those brats. What we're after
is a little revenge. We want the redhead and her pups. And that'd be
you boys.

Boyd: Then hurry up and let those two go! We're here, aren't we? You've got no
more reason to hold them.

Ikanau: You're here, but Red ain't. We'll just keep the brats until she
arrives.

Boyd: Dang it!

Ikanau: If you're so impatient, I guess we can start by killing you whelps.
You all ready to die? Hey! Come on out! It's time to play, lads!

(Enter Bandits)

Rhys: There... There are so many... But...we must not lose!

Oscar: Rhys, move to the rear! If anyone gets injured, we'll need you on hand
with your staff.

Rhys: Understood!

Ikanau: Take 'em, lads! Without the red-haired knight, they're no match for
us!

Boyd: What'd you say, dirtbag?

Ike: We'll make you regret those words!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Rolf: Oh...sniff...

Mist: Keep your chin up, Rolf! Boys aren't supposed to cry!

Rolf: But...I'm so scared... Aren't you even a bit scared, Mist?

Mist: Of course I am, but... Listen, we'll be fine! My brother will definitely
come rescue us.

Rolf: Mm...yeah. You're right! And I'm sure that my brothers will be right
there with him.

Mist: I'm sure they will, too! So no more crying! Got it?

(Enter Titania)

Titania: I'm sure I told them to wait for me... I should have known they'd
disobey orders. They have no discipline... As deputy commander of the
Greil Mercenaries, I cannot allow any more of our people to be
harmed.

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Ikanau: This... This can't be... I don't deserve to lose to
sellswords like you...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Ike: All right! Somehow we did it.

Boyd: Somehow? What do you mean, somehow? We did it because we're better than
them!

Titania: Boyd, calm yourself. What you DID...was in direct defiance of the orders I explicitly gave you. How it all turned out is another issue altogether.

Oscar: Deputy Commander, I take full responsibility. The failure is mine...

Rhys: Accept our apologies.

Titania: Oscar, Rhys... What am I supposed to do with you two? Sigh... I think I'll leave you two to the commander. He'll know how to handle you, I'm sure. Now, let's find Mist and Rolf.

Ike: According to the bandit chief, they're in that shack back--

Unknown: Eeek!

Ike: What? Mist!

Mist: Please, let us go! I said let us go!

Ike: Mist!

Mist: Brother! Everyone! You came!

Rolf: Oh... I'm scared.

Oscar: Rolf!

Rolf: Oscar? Help me!

Boyd: Rolf! I'm here, too!

Rolf: Boyd? Wa...waah!

Boyd: Stop crying! You don't need to worry! We'll get you outta there!

Oscar: That's right! Buck up, buddy!

Rolf: Uh... I'll try!

Ike: You! Harm either of them, and I'll see you dead!

Bandit: Shut up! Shut your stinking trap! If you want these two alive, you'll throw your weapons down. If you don't, I'll start with the girl...

Mist: Eek! No!!!

Ike: Stop!

Titania: Wait!

Ike: Huh?

Bandit: Yeah?

Titania: I'm putting down my weapons. See?

Bandit: Heh...heh heh. Smart move, wench!

Oscar: Deputy Commander...

Titania: We're here to save them. Now all of you back off.

Oscar: OK...

Ike: Dang!

Boyd: This stinks!

(Everyone drops their weapons)

Bandit: Heh heh heh... All right, so now you're all unarmed. Which means...all you can do is watch while I gut this whiny brat like a fatling pig!

Ike: Ah!

(Bandit is hit with an arrow)

Bandit: Arrr... Uhh.....

(Rolf collapses)

Rolf: Ohh... Uhnng...

Mist: Rolf! Can you hear me?

Boyd: Mist! Is Rolf-- Is he...

Mist: He's fine. He just fainted is all. There's not a scratch on him.

Boyd: Whew... Don't do that to me.

Oscar: I'm just glad to see you both alive and well... You're both so brave.

Mist: Yep! Thanks.

Ike: This guy's dead. This arrow-- who shot it?

Unknown: A single arrow, right between the eyes? Who else could make a shot like that? No one, that's who!

Ike: That voice!

(Enter Shinon/Gatrie)

Shinon: Don't you children owe me a little gratitude? I did just save your lives.

Gatrie: Deputy Commander...Shinon...hah...hah... You're both so cruel. With this armor on, you know I can't run that fast...

Ike: Shinon! Gatrie!

Rhys: So, that's where you went, Titania?

Titania: Of course. I knew we'd need reinforcements. I'm glad it wasn't a waste of time. Well done, both of you.

Shinon: In the end, I got to feather someone. So it was worth the rush.

Gatrie: All I...did...was sweat... That...was h-hard...work...

Mist: Brother!

Ike: Mist... You did well, Sis. You must have been frightened.

Mist: Uh-huh... Uh-huh! I never stopped believing. I knew that you and the others would come and rescue us. I knew you'd come! So, I was fine!

Ike: Really? That's an improvement on your usual sobbing and nose-running.

Mist: You jerk! I... My nose does not run!

Titania: All right, come on! Let's head for home. My goodness... What a day this has been.

=====
Chapter 3: Pirates Aground

[003]
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-[Mercenary Fort]-

Ike: You wanted to see me, Father?

Greil: Sit down, Ike. We haven't had a chance to speak yet. Titania told me what happened while I was gone... About the kidnappings. About my own men disobeying Titania's direct orders.

Ike: I was the one who left first. I'll take responsibility for everything.

Boyd: No fair playing the martyr! Nobody made me go with you. I left of my own free will! I'm ready to accept my punishment, too! Wait, what am I saying?

Rhys: Please, Commander Greil! Titania entrusted me with her orders. If anyone's to blame for this mess, it's me. I'm the one who should be punished...

Oscar: I set a poor example, Commander Greil. Any punishment should be mine alone.

Greil: I'm pleased to see that you are willing to shield one another. However... Regardless of your reasons, you disobeyed the orders of a superior officer. You are confined to quarters for ten days.

Mist: But, Father! They did what they did to help me and Rolf!

Greil: Rules exist for a reason, Mist. Men won't survive on a battlefield if they do as they wish without so much as a by-your-leave.

Ike: ...I understand. And accept the reprimand.

Greil: That being said, we've got more work than we can handle. Your punishment is deferred until things calm down. Oscar, Boyd, Rhys. You come with me.

Titania: Shinon, Gatrie, and you, Ike. You're with me.

Havetti: Yar har ho! Me belly's emptier 'n me first mates head! Fetch me some grub!

-[Port Talma]-

Titania: That's the pirate ship is question, isn't it?

Grandfather: Aye. They sailed into port a few days ago and have been causing trouble ever since. I pray that you and your companions can drive them away.

Titania: I understand. We'll do all we can.

Shinon: Feathering sea scum is like shooting apples off a tree. Let's do the job and get out of here.

Gatrie: Ho, Deputy Commander! You want standard thunder and lightning maneuvers here?

Ike: Er... Thunder and lightning?

Gatrie: Yeah! I crash into 'em like thunder, and Shinon rains arrows down on 'em like lightning!

Titania: Sounds good.

Ike: What should I do?

Titania: Let's hold back and let Shinon and Gatrie soften them up. Once they've whittled down the numbers, we'll all rush the ship and wipe out whatever's left. Are you all ready? Greil Mercenaries, move out!

Shinon: On my way!

Gatrie: Here we go!

Ike: ...Ready!

-----[Battle Start]-----

(Enter Marcia)

Marcia: Hey! You! Boat monkey! You tricked me, didn't you?

Havetti: Tricked ye? What a vile and nasty thing that is to be sayin'. Don't ye agree, matey?

Pirate: Yar, that I do! There be nothing but honest pirates aboard this ship, missy.

Marcia: You said you knew the whereabouts of my older brother. That's why I came all the way to your ship.

Havetti: Aye, and we do know! He was on board for a while, and then... Do ye recall where he went, matey?

Pirate: Yar, that I do. He was a penniless oaf, so we tossed his worthless carcass into the rolling waves. Yar har ho!

Marcia: My... My brother? That's horrid!

Pirate: Horrid? Did ye say horrid? Yer scurvy brother was the horrid one! He lost a game o'chance, he did. If ye lose, ye must pay... And the scallywag tried to cheat me! By Chanty Pete he did!

Havetti: Arr, calm yerself, me hearty!

Pirate: Yar!... Yar?... Yar.

Havetti: After all, his darling sister's come to pay us a visit. What say ye work off yer brother's debt?

Marcia: What say I run you through with my lance and call it a day?!

Pirate: Yo ho har! It matters not that ye be a pegasus knight, lassie.

Havetti: A wee minnow like yerself is no match for us sea dogs! Prepare yourself, ye flying wench!

Marcia: Pfff! I'm not afraid of you, clambake! If your axe is as dull as your wit, this will be over in no time!

Marcia: Oh, crackers! There's too many of them. I don't want to die here... Brother...this might be the end!

Ike: Hey! Are you all right?

Marcia: ...So cold...So... Huh?

Ike: Don't give up!

Marcia: Wh-who are you?

Ike: I'm a mercenary. The villagers hired us to get rid of these pirates.

Marcia: Are you... Are you going to help me?

Ike: Of course. Let me and my companions take it from here. You can escape while the pirates are distracted.

Marcia: Oh, hey, that would be fantastic! Thanks so much! I don't know what to say.

Ike: You don't have to say anything. It's all in a day's work.

Marcia: Pshaw! You're helping me out! I should show my gratitude somehow.

Ike: That's...nice, but I can't think of anything off the top of my head. Just get yourself somewhere safe, please.

Marcia: Well then... I'll come talk to you about repaying my debt later. What's your name, handsome?

Ike: Um... I'm Ike. I'm with the Greil Mercenaries.

Marcia: Ike! Got it! And I am Marcia, a pegasus knight of Begnion. Don't forget me! All right, I'll be seeing you later!

(Exit Marcia)

-[Right house]- (For the record, this is actually Nasir)

Unknown: This town seems quite unruly, wouldn't you say? Is it always this dangerous? Oh... So it's plagued by pirates, is it? I see. That would explain why the people here seem so anxious. You appear to be a mercenary. Would I be right in supposing that you were hired to clean out the pirates? Here, perhaps you should take this. It might help you if you run into trouble contending with the pirates. But do hurry. I came all this way to see the world-famous fish market, and I'll never do so with those ruffians around. Best of luck to you.

-Receive "Elixir"-

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Havetti: Yaaaarr...arrr... Help me...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Titania: We've driven off all the pirates. Your people will suffer no more indignities at their hands.

Grandfather: Oh! That is joyful news! Here is your pay, as promised.

Titania: Thank you very much. And if you find yourself in need again, do not hesitate to send word.

Grandfather: Of course, of course. All of you put on a most marvelous show-- such combat skills! To be honest, I was expecting Commander Greil to be here today. When I saw just you, nothing more than, no offense, a band of children... Well, I will admit to being a tad nervous!

Titania: I apologize for troubling you. Unfortunately, Commander Greil had other pressing matters to attend to.

Grandfather: Oh, no. Don't apologize. There's no need. After all, you got rid of those brigands, and you did it impeccably well!

Titania: It's a fine compliment you pay, sir, but it was our pleasure.

Grandfather: As a matter of fact, you're more than good enough to be in the royal army if you so desired. Especially your Commander Greil. He's far and away better than most any general I've seen hereabouts. Er... What I mean to say is... Don't you think running off pirates is a bit...beneath you?

Titania: That's not--

Grandfather: Don't get me wrong, now. You certainly helped all of us simple folk out. Even so, it seems to me the proper place for you and your Commander Greil is in the service of the Crimean throne! Well, that's what this old man thinks.

Titania: We-- and Commander Greil-- are quite satisfied with the work we do now.

Grandfather: You've nary a selfish bone among you. Well then, rest assured we'll speak again if any problems arise. Thank you again.

(Exit Grandfather)

Titania: Hmm...

Ike: Titania? Is something amiss?

Titania: No, of course not. Our mission is complete, and that's all that matters. You did well today, every one of you.

Shinon: Pah! Jobs like this barely make a dent in my incurable boredom! It's like that old buzzard said, there's better work out there. Something with a bit of challenge.

Titania: Shinon!

Shinon: I'm joking. J-O-K-ing.

Gatrie: Come, Titania. Be honest. Don't you find the work we do to be a bit... disheartening? Unglamorous?

Titania: What? You too, Gatrie? What's gotten into you?

Gatrie: Please! Look, we're not a band of money-hungry recruits. We're professionals, and we're very good at what we do. Shinon and I have discussed this at length. All of this mundane mercenary work is unworthy of us. We're wasting out talents.

Titania: I see. You're telling me that you think Commander Greil is mismanaging us. Do I have that right?

Gatrie: Whoa! Hold it right there! That's not what I'm saying at all!

Ike: What is it, Titania?

Titania: What's what?

Ike: You seem so angry. It's not like you.

Titania: Hmph...

Gatrie: Exactly! Ike's got the right of it!

Titania: It's just that I... Look, we do good work, and we help people. I want you to be proud of that. I felt like you were saying work that doesn't bring fame or fortune isn't worth doing, that's all. Sorry.

Gatrie: No...you're right. We are the ones who ought to apologize.

Titania: Enough. Let's get going, shall we? Rest is part of our jobs, too. We can't go into the next battle exhausted.

Gatrie: Now that's a plan! I'm so hungry, I could eat a wyvern!

(Exit Gatrie)

Ike: Titania!

Titania: What is it?

Ike: If you're looking for pride...I have it.

Titania: Hm?

Ike: You and my father have kept this mercenary group together. And I'm...just ...proud to be a part of it. That's all.

(Exit Ike)

Titania: Ike...

(Exit Titania)

Shinon: Pah. I'm surrounded by idealistic fools. What's so wrong with fame? What's wrong with having money to live well?

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Chapter 4: Roadside Battle [004]
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-[Mercenary Fort]-

Mist: Ike! Ike! I've got to tell you something! Listen to this!

Ike: Settle down, Mist. It's too early for you to be yelling like that. Now, what's going?

Mist: Soren's back! He just arrived.

Ike: Really? That's odd. He wasn't supposed to return for a while yet.

Mist: I know! I wonder what he's doing back so soon...

Ike: It's probably nothing to worry about. I'll go and talk to him. Where is he?

Mist: In the mess hall. I think he wanted to talk to Father.

Ike: Right. I'll go check there.

Greil: ...Troubling news indeed. Gather the troops.

Titania: Yes, Commander.

Greil: Ike, if you've got time to waste, you've got time to work. Get over to

the briefing room.

Ike: Yes, sir.

(Exit Greil)

Ike: Hey! What's going on around here?

Soren: Bad news. Something big is happening, and we need to formulate a plan of action.

Ike: Soren!

Soren: Hello, Ike. Long time, no see.

Ike: I'm happy to see you're back. But what happened? I thought you were going to be studying for a while longer.

Soren: It's a long story...

Greil: What's the hold up? Get over here now!

Soren: Let's go. I'll fill you in later.

Greil: You probably remember that Soren's been training with another mercenary group. Well, he's back now. And he has some unbelievable news.

Ike: What news is that?

Soren: It's Crimea and Daein. They've gone to war.

Mist: War?! It... It can't be!

Greil: That's why I've called everyone here. Soren has some more information. Go ahead, Soren.

Soren: All right.

-----[Map scene]-----

Soren: Take a look at this map.

Greil: Ah. It's a map of Crimea. Quite detailed, from the looks of it.

Soren. Yes. This is the Melior, Crimea's capital. Our base of operations is... right about here. Everything started three days ago. I needed to do some research, so I went to the archives of Melior's royal library. Without warning, the scream of a terrible beast-- a wyvern, perhaps-- rent the air, and the building was rocked by a tremor. I rushed outside and saw wave after wave of knights, cavalry, and wyvern riders, each clad in glistening ebon armor, black as night.

Greil: The Daein army?

Soren: Correct.

Greil: Was there provocation?

Soren: As you know, relations between Crimea and Daein have never been... friendly. However, the past centuries have seen only minor skirmishes, nothing that has ever approached the scale of this attack. It was brutal and without warning. Daein laid the capital to waste. I've never seen destruction on this scale before.

Titania: A swift attack, devastating and brutal... A daring gambit, indeed.

Greil: But if it succeeds, a very well-chosen one at that. Yes, the king of Daein would not hesitate to employ such treacherous tactics. What happened next?

Soren: King Crimea's brother deployed the Crimean army to meet the attack. The king ordered his people to flee the city before the battle reached them. Fearing the worst, I also fled and made my way here.

Greil: So we don't know how the tides of battle flow now, do we?

-----[Exit map scene]-----

Greil: That's all right. Word of the war cannot have traveled far yet. We may well be the first ones who know of it out here. You did well to bring us this information, Soren. I know some risk was involved.

Soren: It was nothing.

Titania: Daein has invaded Crimea... We may be mercenaries, but this still affects us.

Ike: What are we going to do?

Greil: That's the question of the day. How do you see it, Titania?

Titania: Crimea is the closest thing our company has to a homeland. The Crimean royal family and noble houses have been generous, providing us with many lucrative jobs. From a moral standpoint as well as a business one, it's in our best interest to help Crimea.

Greil: And you, Soren?

Soren: I agree on one point: we are mercenaries. We are not Crimea's private militia. No coin has crossed our palms, so I think we should stay out of it.

Greil: So you would have us sit and watch as Crimea is overrun?

Soren: I would. Daein's troops are superior in both numbers and morale. The chances of a Crimean victory are slim indeed.

Titania: But Crimea is ruled by King Ramon, who is known throughout the land for his wisdom. And his brother, Duke Renning, is said to possess peerless valor and courage. Daein may not find victory so easily.

Soren: Valor and courage are for children's tales. In terms of military prowess, Daein's King Ashnard is every bit Lord Renning's equal. Victory will hinge on troop numbers and supplies, and Daein is superior in both. I think the outcome is painfully obvious.

Titania: Curse you, Soren! Crimea is not doomed! If they can turn aside Daein's initial thrust and turn it into a test of endurance...

Soren: With the Crimean army both demoralized and ill prepared? They simply will not be able to hold out that long.

Greil: All right. That's enough. Both of you. I hear what you say. However, we must ascertain the current situation before we decide on any action. We'll send a scouting party to get a closer look at Melior. Ike, I want you in charge of this. Assemble your men and get going.

Ike: What? Me?

Greil: Titania will accompany you as an advisor.

Shinon: Commander, you must be joking! He's just a boy, and he's had barely more than a taste of battle. What do you expect a whelp like him to accomplish?

Greil: Ah, Shinon. Since you're so concerned, you can go as well.

Shinon: Wait, that's not what I... Blast.

Greil: Who else... Gatrie, Rhys, and Soren. That should do.

Ike: Father, wait... Why do you want me--

Greil: That was an order. Get moving. There's no time to waste.

Ike: Yes, sir.

Greil: Titania, I'm going out for a bit. I want you to give Ike some direction.

Titania: Understood.

Ike: ...Yes, sir.

Mist: Ike! Wait up!

Ike: What?

Mist: Here! This is for you.

Ike: A sword? Where did you get it?

Mist: From Father. He told me to come and give it to you.

Ike: It's beautiful.

Mist: This is the first sword you've gotten that wasn't a hand-me-down from from somebody, isn't it? That's great!

Ike: Yeah...

Mist: Well, be careful! Oh, and bring me a souvenir! Something nice. I've never been to Melior before...

(Exit Mist)

Ike: Mist, I'm not going on a vacation. Sheesh!

-Receive "Regal Sword"-

-[Capital Way]-

Ike: ...

Rhys: Are you feeling all right, Ike? You haven't said a word in quite some time.

Ike: I don't understand what my father's doing. Why put a new recruit like me in charge of something so important?

Rhys: You're going to succeed him as our commander one day. Don't you think he wants you to know how to lead?

Ike: Me? I don't... I don't know if I'm capable. And even if I am, that day's a long way off, right? I mean, I'm inexperienced. Weak. I'm nothing compared to my father.

Rhys: I'm not so sure about that. When I look at you, I see a young man full of promise. Commander Greil is a great man, but... I think you'll be every bit his equal. In time you might even surpass him.

Ike: Don't be ridiculous!

Rhys: It's just my opinion. You need not pay it any mind. Yet, if you fear your own weakness, why not take this chance to go out and better yourself? That would be more in keeping with your personality, no?

Ike: I suppose you're right.

Ike: How did things look over there, Soren?

Soren: Same as here. There are corpses strewn everywhere. There are quite a lot of them, especially when you consider how far we are from the capital.

Titania: Are they Crimean?

Rhys: ...Judging by the armor, the vast majority of the dead are Daein soldiers.

Ike: So Crimea has the upper hand?

Soren: Just the opposite, I think. The Crimean soldiers were members of the Imperial Guard. That means King Ramon-- or another member of the royal family-- was on the move when Daein soldiers fell on them.

Titania: Could it have been Lord Renning?

Soren: No. As long as the Crimean army still draws breath, Lord Renning will not leave their command. Perhaps another member of the court...

Gatrie: We've got Daein soldiers moving in on our location! And they don't

look happy!

(Enter Maijin/Soldiers)

Maijin: You there! Who are you? What are you doing here?

Titania: We're no one you need--

Maijin: You're armed! Heed me! Drop your weapons and surrender! Act quickly, or else!

Shinon: Listen to me, fool. You're making a mistake. We're not...

Maijin: Ah, not going to cooperate, eh? Ready your weapons, men! Move in and kill them all!

Titania: Tsk! Headstrong fools!

Soren: Getting caught up in some skirmish is not part of the plan...

Ike: But they're obviously not going to listen to us. Greil Mercenaries! Get ready to fight!

Shinon: All right, Ike. Let's see how you handle the role of captain. Well? What are your orders, boy? We'll do what you say, so long as you hurry up and spit it out!

Ike: I know, I know! I'm thinking! Give me a moment, will you, Shinon?

Shinon: Bah. Useless! We'd be better led with Mist than this soft, untested whelp.

Ike: Let's see... We're in the middle of the road, and there's not much cover. Soren and Rhys are vulnerable, so we have to protect them from enemy attacks... Right?

Soren: That's a sound strategy, Ike. I can attack from behind your defenses. Good thinking.

Ike: Do you mean that? Um...all right! Let's do that then.

-----[Battle Start]-----

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Maijin: Gwaa haa... Wretched curs... You will regret your decision to oppose Daein...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Ike: Did we suffer any casualties?

Titania: Any wounded or dead? No? Excellent! Well done!

Gatrie: I don't know... Taking out these Daein soldiers may have been a bad move. Um... Hey, Shinon? What are you doing?

Shinon: This swine's got some nice weapons. Besides, he ain't gonna complain.
He won't need them where he's going.

Ike: Shinon!

Soren: Get ahold of yourself! We can't afford such behavior right now. Steal
from the dead on your own time.

Shinon: What? You judgmental little--

Titania: Soren! Shinon! Stop this at once! This is no place for us to waste
time bickering amongst ourselves!

Ike: Let's clear out of here. We have to tell the commander what happened.

Soren: Let's take this road. We should be able to cut through the forest and
... Huh?

Ike: Something wrong?

Soren: No, as I said, this road...

Rhys: Wait! Ike, I just saw something move on the far side of that thicket!

Ike: A wounded soldier, perhaps? Let's go have a look. Careful, now.

Rhys: Oh, no...

Ike: Did you find anything, Rhys?

Rhys: ...It's a woman...

Soren: Leave her. We shouldn't get involved in matters that don't concern us.

Elincia: Oooh...

Rhys: Thank goodness... It looks like she's merely fainted.

Ike: Right. We'd better take her with us for now and make sure she's all
right. Give me a hand, will you, Rhys?

Rhys: Of course.

Soren: ...I don't like this...

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Chapter 5: Flight!

[005]
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-[Mercenary Fort]-

Mist: Father! Brother! It's that lady Ike rescued... She's awake!

Ike: Really?

Greil: Come on. Let's greet our guest.

Greil: So, how are you feeling?

Elincia: Oh, I... I'm fine... And you are?

Greil: The name's Greil. I'm the commander of this mercenary company.

Elincia: My lord Greil... You are the one who came to my aid, are you not? I don't know how to thank you...

Greil: Hold on. The one who found you and brought you here is my son, Ike. If you want to thank someone, thank him.

Ike: No, please, that's not--

Elincia: Lord...Ike, was it? You have my gratitude.

Ike: Oh...

Greil: Pardon my bluntness, but I have some questions for you. Tell me, who are you? What were you doing in that place?

Elincia: ...

Greil: The place where Ike found you was evidently the site of a fierce battle between Crimean and Daein forces. Do you have some relation to the Crimean royal family?

Elincia: ...

Ike: I make no promises, but we may be able to help you. Will you share your story with us?

Elincia: You took me in and cared for me. I will...place my trust in you. My name is Elincia Ridell Crimea. I am the daughter of King Ramon of Crimea.

Ike: What?

Greil: You say you are the princess of Crimea?

Elincia: Yes.

Greil: That's an odd claim to make. I've never heard of King Crimea having any children.

Elincia: That is...to be expected. My heritage, my very existence, has never been made public.

Ike: Why's that?

Elincia: To avoid national turmoil. You see, I was born after my uncle, Lord Renning, was named as successor to the throne. So...

Greil: They kept you a secret to avert a possible blood feud. Yes, I'm willing to accept that for the time being. Very well, let's suppose that you truly are Princess Crimea. You must know what's become of the king and your uncle. I would like to hear that news.

Elincia: ...My father and my mother are dead... They fell at the hand of Ashnard, King of Daein... My lord uncle and the royal knights are still battling the Daein army, I believe.

Greil: I see.

Elincia: ...I...fled the castle...to follow my lord uncle's orders and seek refuge in the kingdom of Gallia...

Greil: In Gallia?

Elincia: ...Yes. We believed that King Caineghis would grant me sanctuary. So that's where I was going... But we were discovered by Daein troops, and I lost my escort of knights... My life-- the life I have now-- was purchased...with the blood of those brave knights...

Ike: Does King Daein know of your existence?

Elincia: Yes. I was told the royals of each nation were informed of my identity in the event of dire circumstances...

Greil: If that's the case, they must be searching frantically for you.

Ike: ...

Elincia: Master Greil, my lord Ike, you said that you were mercenaries, did you not? Please... Would you help me to gain Gallia? I beg of you! I have...no one...no one else to turn to.

Titania: Princess Crimea? Truly?

Ike: Father spoke to her as if he believed she were telling the truth.

Titania: I see...

Ike: What is it, Titania?

Titania: Mm, it's nothing. I was just remembering something from the past.

Ike: From the past? Back when you were still a Crimean royal knight?

Titania: What? How do you know about that?

Ike: A long time ago, I overheard Shinon and some others talking about it.

Titania: They keep such loose tongues.

Ike: Was it a secret?

Titania: No, it wasn't, but... Much like I have more experience than you, I also have many more things to worry about.

Ike: Like Princess Crimea?

Titania: Well...yes. I myself was unaware of the princess's existence, but... Now that I think about it, she does bear a striking resemblance to both the king and queen.

Ike: So she probably is the true princess. I wonder what Father will do. Will he take on her request?

(Enter Rolf)

Rolf: We've got trouble! Outside! There are soldiers! A lot of them!

Ike: What?

Greil: Is everyone here?

Titania: Yes.

Shinon: Commander, what are the Daein dogs saying?

Greil: "Turn over Princess Crimea and leave the area immediately. Comply now, or we will attack." Pretty straightforward.

Gatrie: What are we going to do?

Greil: That's what we're here to decide. One thing has been made clear by the arrival of our friends outside.

Soren: So, I would say this confirms her identity as Princess Crimea, wouldn't you?

Greil: Yes, but what do we do now? I'd like to hear the opinion of everyone here. Titania, I'd like to hear from you first.

Titania: The blame for the war rests on Daein. If we ally ourselves with them, the company's reputation will surely suffer. Conversely, if we deliver Princess Crimea safely, our stock will rise in the eyes of our primary employers. Our road is clear.

Greil: Soren, how about you?

Soren: There's nothing to think about. We must deliver the princess to Daein immediately.

Greil: Even if Crimea is in the right?

Soren: We are mercenaries. Our actions are dictated only by self-interest. If we want to ensure our future, we need Daein in our debt. They will win this war, after all, and nothing else serves us better.

Greil: Shinon? Gatrie?

Shinon: Soren's a pompous, superior whelp, but he's got the right idea. Besides, the destination's Gallia, so it's a moot question. I don't care how much we get paid; there's no way under the sun I'm going to stinking beast country.

Gatrie: Princess Elincia... She does possess a certain regal beauty... There's a lot to be said for that, you know. However, I do prefer country girls... A bit cuter, and not quite so standoffish... Oh! Forget I said that. Whatever you decide is good for me, Commander. Yep, uh-huh, yep...

Greil: Oscar, Boyd, what about the two of you?

Oscar: I agree with Captain Titania. If we turn the princess over to the Daein army, we're essentially giving them permission to kill her.

Boyd: I'm in favor of helping her. That's what heroes are supposed to do.

Greil: Well, Rhys? What's your opinion?

Rhys: I believe...that none of this hinges on whether she's a princess or not. Refusing to aid someone in need is not something we should ever do. That's what I think.

Rolf: That's right! Let's help her!

Mist: Please! We have to help her!

Greil: And what about you, Ike?

Ike: I agree with Titania. I say we help her and take her to Gallia.

Greil: I see. I think I know where you all stand... Well then, here's my decision. We escort the princess to Gallia.

Soren: ...

Shinon: ...Tsk.

Ike: ...Are you sure that's for the best, Father?

Greil: Yes. Besides, I think the choice has been taken out of our hands.

Ike: What?

Greil: Open your ears and listen. Listen! All of you.

Boyd: Huh? ...What is it?

Gatrie: Uh... I don't hear a thing...

Shinon: Idiot! That's the problem. Don't you think that's a bit odd? Complete silence, in all four directions.

Gatrie: Oh, so that's what you're talking about!

Oscar: Not only are the animals quiet, but the bugs are silent, too. And that is unnatural beyond belief. Which means...

Ike: We're surrounded. The soldiers aren't waiting for an answer. They already decided to attack.

Titania: It would appear they had no intention of keeping their side of the proposed bargain.

Soren: They were planning on lulling us into a false sense of security and destroying every one of us.

Greil: Probably so. But the deal is, we're not so naive or inexperienced as to fall for their trap. Everyone, take your positions! We're going to

settle this right now!

Greil: I'll go and hold the rear entrance. Ike! You're in command here! Don't let the enemy take the front.

Ike: ...Got it! Be careful, Commander!

Greil: Hah. I'll give it a shot.

Soldier: Reporting in, sir! The mercenaries have taken up arms and formed up in the bailey!

Dakova: Oh...so they've sniffed out our plan, have they? Which means they're not an opponent that will be easily fooled. We'll need something special.

Soldier: Shall we continue with the planned attack?

Dakova: No... Princess Crimea is somewhere within that fort. If we use flaming arrows to try to smoke them out, we might bring the princess to harm. We've been told to do our best to deliver her alive and uninjured. It would be preferable if they were to come out of their own accord. If they do, slay all but the princess!

Soldier: Yes, sir!

-----[Battle Start]-----

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Dakova: I...don't believe it... What went wrong...

Soldier: General Dakova! No, not...the general... Not at the hands of these scum... I will not allow it! Aaaaah! Face me, and breathe your last, you wretched scum!

(End boss fight)

Soldier: General Dakova's gone... We're being beaten... We... We don't stand a chance. Retreat! Quickly now, retreat!

-----[Battle End]-----

Soren: We've cleared the surrounding area of Daein troops.

Ike: There's no question about it. We're enemies of the Daein kingdom now, aren't we?

Greil: We've no time for rest! Everyone, pack your things now! We leave at once, before the enemy brings reinforcements!

Oscar: Understood! Boyd! Come with me.

Boyd: Right behind you, Brother!

Mist: Ah! We've got to hurry, too! Come on, Rolf! We've got to pack as much food and supplies as we can!

Rolf: Uh, whatever you say! Let's go, Mist!

Greil: Titania! Take Shinon and Gatrie and make sure we have a secure road from here to the great forest. We'll make our way to Gallia through the sea of trees.

Titania: On my way, sir!

Greil: Rhys, you stay with me. I want you to help me pull essential documents from the library. Everything else we burn.

Rhys: Y-yes, sir!

Greil: Ike! You're in charge of the princess.

Ike: All right.

(Exit Greil)

Ike: Princess Elincia! I'm going to ready a horse for you. What should we have you do... I know-- go to the mess hall.

Elincia: I'm sorry?

Ike: Time will go by faster if you're helping Mist than it will if you're just sitting around waiting for me.

Elincia: Oh, I understand. I can do that!

Mist: Sorry, this is kind of awkward. Making a princess help with packing...

Elincia: Please don't worry, Mist. I just hope that I don't end up slowing you down by getting in your way.

Mist: Don't be silly! You're so much better at this than I am. It's a big help! Are all princesses as good at this sort of thing as you are?

Elincia: Ha ha! I wasn't raised at court, so my life was a bit different than other princesses. I cooked, cleaned, sewed... Why, I did all manner of things.

Mist: Really? That's surprising. I would never have guessed that by looking at you.

Elincia: Let's see, I also rode horses, practiced swordfighting... Ah, Mist. What's that around your neck?

Mist: What? Oh, ah...

Elincia: I'm sorry, I didn't mean to...

Mist: ...I guess I can show it to you, Princess Elincia.

(Cut Scene -> "Fire Emblem")

Elincia: Oh... It's a lovely... That's an incredible medallion, isn't it? I wonder what that light is.

Mist: It used to belong to my mother. It's all I have to remember her by. Hmm ... I don't know where the light comes from. It didn't used to be like that. A while back, it just started glowing.

Elincia: The world is full of mysteries, isn't it? One thing is clear, though ... It certainly is beautiful.

Mist: I wonder what that light means...

Petrine: What? What did you just say? I think I must be hearing things. I thought you said, "They got away."

Soldier: It appears treating them as ordinary mercenaries was a mistake. If they're strong enough to defeat General Dakova, we rank and file were overmatched from the beginning.

Petrine: So? You tucked your worthless tail and came running back here, is that it? Have you forgotten the Daein army's motto? "Success or failure, life or death." Hey, you! Get this trash out of here!

Soldier: Yes, ma'am! Move it, you.

Soldier: Noooo! P-please! I don't want to die!

(Exit Soldiers)

Petrine: Dog's breath! I'm surrounded by worthless imbeciles. Ena!

(Enter Ena)

Petrine: Tell me which way we should move to catch these mercenaries and the girl.

Ena: ...The Crimean capital, Melior, is already under King Ashanrd's control ... The remnants of the Crimean army are negligible... Which means the only place left for the princess to turn is south, to the kingdom of Gallia.

Petrine: Hah! So the girl, like her dead father before her, seeks the friendship of those hairy devils, eh? What an absolutely stupefying world we live in.

Ena: If she gains sanctuary in Gallia, capturing the princess will become that much more difficult... The mercenaries she has escorting her are a powerful group, not one to be taken lightly. I will gather intelligence on them as quickly as...

Petrine: It's not necessary. I will head up the pursuit of our wandering princess.

Ena: General Petrine, you will go...yourself?

Petrine: If we know where the princess and her band are headed, there's no need for subtlety. I'll just hunt them down and kill them.
Mercenaries? Hah! What're they to me? Remember, I am General Petrine!
No matter who I face, I have never failed, nor will I ever!
Ha ha ha...

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Chapter 6: A Brief Diversion
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[006]

Narration: The continent of Telliis, blessed by the goddess. To the northwest lies the land of Crimea, home of the Greil Mercenaries. Without warning, Crimea's eastern neighbor, the kingdom of Daein, launches an attack on Crimea's capital city of Melior. Ike leads a handful of mercenaries to Melior to confirm Soren's news of the attack. En route, they happen upon a young woman, unconscious but unharmed. Fearing for her safety, they take her to their stronghold. When she awakens, the woman gives her name as Elinicia and lays claim to the title of princess of Crimea. She relates the sad tale of her flight from Crimea and of her parents' murder at the hands of Ashnard, king of Daein. The Greil Mercenaries answer Princess Elinicia's plea for help and agree to escort her to the kingdom of Gallia. Located to the southwest of Crimea, Gallia is home to the laguz, a race quite unlike Ike and his fellow beorc. Crimea and Gallia have long struggled to overcome their differences. In recent years, the two kingdoms have done much to ease the prejudice between the laguz and beorc factions. Their combined efforts have forged a bond of trust and friendship that may yet overcome years of intolerance. Ike and company escape the Daein army, abandoning their longtime base. From there, they begin the long march toward Gallia. Their task clear and their destination far, they slip into an ocean of trees.

Gatrie: Blazes, why does it have to be so blazed humid? If we weren't being chased, I'd strip off this armor here and now!

Titania: Then I'm almost glad that we ARE being pursued. I suppose you'll have to grin and bear it, won't you?

Gatrie: Hm, I suppose I will.

Titania: Right. So enough of your griping. You're merely wasting energy. Still, this heat is appalling.

Shinon: Dense forests such as these are not made for us delicate humans. The sub-humans love 'em, though.

Ike: These...sub-humans... Are they really so different from us?

Shinon: What, you mean to tell me you've never seen a beast-man before?

Ike: No, never.

Shinon: Well, I have. They're a hairy bunch, I'll tell you. And ugly as sin, too. Their faces are all fangs and whisker. Their claws are like daggers, razor sharp and deadly. And even though they can speak our language, they're beasts through and through. Savages, every one.

Ike: Are there more than one type?

Soren: The ones Shinon calls "sub-humans" can be divided into three groups, each one named for its physical characteristics. First, the beast tribe, next, the bird tribe, and finally, the dragon tribe. They are traditionally called "laguz". The laguz tribe residing here in Gallia is the beast tribe, who possess those feline qualities of which Shinon spoke.

Shinon: To the south are the islands where the bird-men live. The dragons are in Goldoa. It's something every mercenary should know. Looks like you know even less than I gave you credit for, Ike, my boy.

Ike: Hm... Perhaps.

Soren: ...A little farther, and we'll be out of these trees, Ike.

Shinon: Really? That means Gallia proper! Compared to this forest, even a kingdom of half-breeds will seem like heaven.

Soldier: ...And that's when we lost track of them. I assigned a squad to pursue them and returned so I could give you this report.

Petrine: Understood. You may step down. So Princess Elincia is making her way through the forest to Gallia... Ena!

(Enter Ena)

Petrine: It appears your advice was sound. Well done. You have earned my praise.

Ena: Thank you.

Petrine: When the king assigned me a tactician, I wondered what I had done to lose his trust. When I saw it was a young girl, I burned with anger at the king's judgment. Still, it's worked out better than I had expected. Keep up the good work.

Ena: Of course.

(Exit Ena)

Petrine: Now then, it's time for the hunt to begin.

Greil: Hold it right there, everyone. We're coming up to the edge of the forest. Form up. Combat positions.

Titania: I don't suppose our Daein pursuers were willing to let us just slip away.

Soren: There is no doubt that they will attack again. Without knowing their numbers, it is difficult to advise a course of action.

Greil: Take your best guess, Soren. With the limited information we have, what is the best way to proceed?

Soren: ...Some of our group cannot fight. If we are caught, we'll have a difficult time defending them and attacking the Daeins. I propose we separate into two groups: a small fighting force to engage the enemy and buy the main group some time, and the rest of us-- who will escort the princess to Gallia at full speed.

Oscar: You want to divide our combat strength? The main force aside, don't you think the risk to the smaller group is too high?

Soren: I believe this is the only way to achieve our goal and keep casualties to a minimum. It's possible there's an ambush waiting for us at the edge of the forest. If we proceed with no plan, we may be caught between the pursuit and the ambush, which would be the end of us all.

Greil: Looks like we've no choice but to give it a go. All right, let's split up. The diversionary team will be Gatrie, Shinon, and me. The rest of you guard Princess Elinia and proceed to Gallia straightaway. Got it?

Ike: Are you sure you're taking enough men?

Shinon: Idiot pup. Smaller numbers mean better mobility. Your time would be better spent worrying about yourself than about us.

Ike: ...

Greil: Listen up! This will probably prove to be the biggest fight this company's faced. Remember-- you've got only one life. I don't want any of you dying on me. In times like these, it matters not what our blood ties are. We are family. If you don't want to cause your family any grief, then live! Ike will be commanding the main force. Titania, you're is support. All right, let's move out! See you all in Gallia!

Ike: So they're waiting for us after all...

Soren: There are...more of them than I'd imagined there would be. I thought they would have been spread out across the forest border... I didn't expect to see so many in one place.

Ike: Do we rethink our strategy?

Soren: No, we've already split up. It's too late to reconsider now.

Ike: Isn't there some way we can at least get the princess, Mist, and Rolf to the far shore safely?

Soren: There are two bridges... This thicket extends to the edge of the westernmost bridge. If we can use the trees as cover, we might be able to reach the bridge undetected. From there, we can launch a surprise attack.

Ike: We'll be creating a diversion, right?

Soren: Correct. While we keep the enemy's attention, the princess and the others can cross the bridge to safety.

Ike: We've no time for discussion. That's the plan we go with.

Elincia: My lord Ike, I... I will fight with you!

Ike: ...No, you won't.

Elincia: My lord?

Ike: I cannot let you expose yourself to danger of any kind. Everyone here is risking his life to ensure your safety. If you understand that, you'll cooperate and do as I ask.

Elincia: I see... I will do my part.

Soren: ...

Titania: It's settled then.

Ike: Right! Let's break through their lines!

(Enter Mist/Rolf)

Ike: Mist! Rolf! Take care of the princess. Do not let yourselves be seen!

Mist: Right! Be careful, everyone!

Rolf: Leave it to us, Ike! We'll just pretend it's a game of hide-and-seek.
And I never lose at hide-and-seek!

(Mist/Rolf exit through the woods)

Ike: Everyone ready? Let's go!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Emil: We've spotted the mercenaries! You there! Inform General Petrine at once! Request that she gather the troops!

Soldier: Yes, sir!

Emil: What's this? They're not bad! Let's go, men! Hit those mercenary scum with everything you have!

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Emil: Oooh... My life ends here... But...though you flee to Gallia...you will...fall to Daein...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Ike: I don't know how, but we made it...

Mist: Brother!

Elincia: My lord Ike!

Ike: Mist! Princess, Rolf... Are you all well?

Rolf: Yep! We're fine.

Mist: Is this Gallia? We made it, didn't we? We're safe now, right? I thought I would feel different, but I don't.

Elincia: This is all due to your efforts. Thank you...

Ike: Princess Elincia...

Soren: It's still too early to rest easy. The others haven't rejoined us yet.

Elincia: Ah!

Titania: We are talking about the commander. I don't think there's anything to worry about.

Ike: Father... Shinon... Gatrie...

Soren: ...

Ike: ...Princess Elincia, I'm afraid we're going to have to part ways here.

Elincia: But what do you mean?

Ike: We're going back to aid our companions. So I want you to continue with Mist to the royal palace of Gallia.

Mist: What? No, Ike! I'm going to stay with you!

Ike: Listen to me, Mist! We must do it this way so that everyone gets out of here alive!

Mist: Mm...

Ike: Father and I will catch up to you right away! Don't worry. Have Father or I ever broken a promise to you?

Mist: Well...no. All right, then. We'll go ahead.

Titania: Thank you, Mist. We'll see you soon.

Mist: All right. Titania... Please take care of my brother. Promise?

Titania: You have my word on it.

Rolf: Oscar... Boyd... Don't get killed out there, all right?

Oscar: Rolf...

Boyd: Knock it off, both of you! You're like a couple of old women. We're gonna be fine. Nothing bad's gonna happen while I'm around!

Elincia: Pardon, my lord Rhys...

Rhys: Y-yes?

Elincia: Take this with you, please.

Rhys: This is a mend staff, isn't it? Er, are you sure this is all right?

Elincia: Every one of you is putting yourself in harm's way on my account. I only hope that staff can mitigate your risks even slightly.

-Receive "Mend"-

Rhys: Thank you very much! This will help greatly. I will use it to aid the others in your name.

Elincia: ...Thank you. Please...be careful.

Rhys: If you'll excuse me.

(Exit Rhys)

Elincia: O benevolent Ashera... Grant them all your blessings...

Mist: All right, we're going to go now.

Ike: Good luck. Watch your step, and be careful.

Elincia: We'll see all of you again... I'm sure of it! I know you will all be safe.

Ike: Let's get moving! Where to, Soren?

Soren: We go east on the road we used before. Let's find the commander before the enemy reinforcements show up.

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Chapter 7: Shades of Evil

[007]
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Ike: They're not here either...

Soren: Ike, pursuing them any father may be dangerous. I think it would be best if we returned to Gallia for now. It's possible the commander may have followed another road into Gallia. It's something we should consider.

Ike: ...You're right. Getting killed looking for them would waste everything they accomplished by breaking away. I guess all we can do is trust that they're well and withdraw.

Titania: Ike, there's a fort over there. Just now, for a moment only... I thought I saw someone. Shall we investigate?

Ike: What? Really? Yes, let's go take a look.

-[Fort Meritenne]-

Soren: It seems as though this place has been abandoned for a long time.

Titania: There's no one here... Hm. I could've sworn I saw a silhouette, but ... I guess it was a trick of the light.

Ike: Let's take a quick look around. If we don't find anything here, we'll head back to Gallia.

Titania: Very well...

(A soldier runs in)

Soldier: Here they are! I've found the Crimean mercenaries! Surround them!

(Enter Soldiers)

Ike: Curses! Daein troops!

-----[Battle Start]-----

(Enter Mia)

Mia: Uh-oh. Daein soldiers here, too. Now, where's that exit... Hm? What's that sound? Someone...fighting?

Mia: Your name wouldn't happen to be Ike, would it?

Ike: It is, but...who are you?

Mia: I'm Mia. I'm a mercenary, hired by Crimea to bolster the army's numbers.

Ike: An army mercenary, huh? So, uh, what are you doing here?

Mia: I got careless and was captured. They were about to send me to a prison camp when Greil saved me.

Ike: You've seen my father? Where?

Mia: Just a little bit north of here. Not too far away, though.

Ike: Really? So he's safe...

Mia: Tell me, who exactly are you guys?

Ike: We're the Greil Mercenaries. As you can see, we're fighting against Daein.

Mia: Huh... You're taking on a whole Daein battalion with these numbers? Nice. That settles it then!

Ike: Settles what?

Mia: This battle. I'm coming in on your side. You don't mind, do you?

Ike: It's fine with me, but... I don't know if you'll get paid just because I let you fight.

Mia: We'll worry about the details later! Great, so that's all taken care of.
What next, boss man?

(Enter Petrine)

Petrine: Ha ha ha... Found you at last. You provided more entertainment than I thought you would.

Ike: Who are you?

Petrine: Me? I am General Petrine, and my arrival marks your doom. Lament your fortune, dear children, for all hope is lost. You will not leave this place alive.

Soren: Petrine... Of the Four Riders?

Ike: Do you know her, Soren?

Soren: She may be one of the four generals who are King Daein's most trusted confidants. She is said to wield a flame lance of terrible arcane might.

Petrine: Ha ha ha... You've heard of me? Why, I'm flattered. I'll try to make this easy on all of you. Give me the princess, and do it now. If I roast the girl along with you curs, I won't be able to present her head to His Majesty.

Ike: Sorry to tell you this, but the princess isn't here. She's been in Gallia for quite some time now.

Petrine: What...nonsense is that? Do you expect me to believe you? There's no way mercenary scum like you could get past my troops!

Unknown: They say that blind arrogance sows the field of its own destruction. Something tells me they were talking about you.

Petrine: Who-- ?

(Enter Greil/Shinon/Gatrie)

Ike: Father!

Greil: What're you doing back here, you dumb pup?

Ike: We got the princess safely into Gallia. When you didn't rejoin us, we decided to look for you. The mission wouldn't be complete until you returned.

Greil: ...What am I to do with you? Still, you did well. Good work, Ike.

Petrine: Ha! Ignoring me proves you've got more guts than common sense. So you're the commander, eh? Hmph! And I was waiting for some great hero. You're just another sellsword.

Greil: Am I?

Petrine: Ha ha. You know, I think I'll keep you! His Majesty, well... Let's just say he enjoys strong men. Yes, I do think you'll make a grand

souvenir. You don't have to come along quietly, but I must have you alive. Dead men have no value, after all.

Greil: ...So the rumors of mad King Ashanrd's twisted games are true, are they?

Gatrie: Shinon... What are these "twisted games" the boss is talking about?

Shinon: There's rumor that King Daein gathers strong men from around the continent and sets them to fight one another. Those who live, regardless of their birth, are given influential positions. Don't know if it's true, though.

Gatrie: Oh... So that weird dame's got her eye on the boss, now, does she?

Greil: Shinon! Gatrie! I'll distract the woman. You two grab Ike and the others and get out of here now!

Shinon: Got it!

Gatrie: But, Commander! We can't leave you here on your own!

Shinon: Idiot! That woman's no threat to the commander. All right? Come on! Let's go!

Greil: Move it! We'll regroup in Gallia!

Petrine: You'll not escape me. Not you or your little friends. You're far too tasty a treat to pass up.

Greil: You said your name was Petrine, is that right? Listen up. This place is nowhere near big enough. There's not enough room for a true contest between the two of us. I'm going elsewhere. You coming?

Petrine: Do you actually think I'm going to fall for such a simple ruse?

Greil: You and I, we've got more power than the average person. We don't come across a chance like this too often. I'd like to flex my muscles without any distractions getting in the way. You?

Petrine: Ha ha... You really do know how to sweet talk a girl, don't you? All right, I'm coming.

Greil: Over here.

Petrine: All right, men. I'm leaving you in charge here. Don't let even one of these Crimean vermin escape! Understood? I want them exterminated by the time I return.

(Exit Greil/Petrine)

Ike: We join up with Shinon, and we get out of here! Come on, don't fall behind!

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Balmer: Urgg... Ahh...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Ike: I have to find my father. Where did he go?

Ike: Titania! Is my father...

Titania: Don't worry. Commander Greil's the better fighter. He'll be fine.

Petrine: Dog's breath! Who are you, man? You look like a common sellsword, but you fight like a demon!

Greil: What's wrong? Ready to surrender?

Petrine: And admit defeat? Me? Don't be absurd...

Soldier: Here they are! Over here!

(Enter Soldiers)

Ike: Blast. Enemy reinforcements! Father! Let's get out of here! There are too many--

Greil: ...Looks like I've got no choice.

(More soldiers enter through the four exits)

Petrine: Ha ha ha ha... So now, the tide has turned, hasn't it? All troops, attack! Kill them! Kill them all!

Greil: Hm... Looks like our luck's run out.

Ike: Father!

Greil: You have to survive this, Ike. I'm not going to lose you, not in this place. Are you ready?

Ike: Yes, Commander!

Petrine: You've nowhere to run. Curse whatever gods you hold, for they have abandoned you!

(A roar is heard)

Ike: What was that?

(Another roar but louder this time)

Soldier: B-b-beasts! Gallian beast soldiers!

Soldier: R-r-run! We're going to be torn to shreds!

Petrine: Stand your ground, all of you! Don't panic! I will personally slaughter the first man to turn his back on the enemy!

Soldier: Noooo!

(The soldiers run off)

Petrine: Pfeh. Worthless cowards, one and all.

Soldier: B-b-beasts!

(Enter Gallians)

Ranulf: Attention, Daein soldiers! Leave this place at once! If you do not comply immediately, you will face Gallia's full strength!

Petrine: Threaten me all you like. It's not going to frighten me off. If I leave, His Majesty will have me executed. I'd rather die here in battle, with my honor intact.

(Enter Black Knight)

Black Knight: Withdraw, General Petrine.

Petrine: The Black Knight...

Black Knight: As for your king, you have nothing to fear. I'll explain things to him. Take your men and go.

Petrine: Tsk! All troops, fall back!

(Exit Petrine)

Black Knight: ...

Greil: Hm?

Ike: He's staring at you, isn't he, Father?

Greil: Yeah. He is.

Ranulf: Hey! Are you planning on taking us all on by yourself?

Black Knight: ...

(Exit Black Knight)

Greil: ...

Ike: Father?

Mist: Father! Brother!

Ike: Mist!

Elincia: Master Greil, my lord Ike... I am pleased you are well.

Ike: Princess Elincia... Why did you return here?

Ranulf: The princess came and requested Gallian aid for your mercenary company. That is what brings us here.

Ike: Are you one of Gallia's sub-humans?

Ranulf: Sub-human? Ha! What arrogance it takes to coin such a name! You think yourselves the only ones worthy of the name "human", and so we laguz must be beneath you? And thus you call us "sub-human". We are less than human to you, is that it?

Ike: I'm sorry... I don't know any other name for you. If I have offended you, I apologize. What should I call you? Laguz? Would that be more appropriate?

Ranulf: Huh? You show manners? How odd. I like that. Now, you are... Who, exactly?

Ike: My name is Ike. Ike of the Greil Mercenaries.

Ranulf: I'm Ranulf, a warrior of Gallia. We did not know what to think when this group of beorc came tramping through Gallian fields... Imagine our surprise to learn that one of them is Princess Elincia. Now, that was a shock. Two days ago, Daein proclaimed their conquest. We thought Crimea's royals had all been killed.

Ike: Conquest? They've laid claim to Crimea? So that means Crimea must be...

Elincia: I...also heard this news from my lord Ranulf... After...after I fled the capital... My lord uncle Renning... He... I... I am...all alone.

Ike: Princess Elincia...

Ranulf: This is why our king ordered extra patrols along the nation's border. It wasn't mere chance that brought my warriors here to offer you support.

Ike: I see...

Ranulf: First of all, I must present Princess Elincia to the king. As for the rest of your men, Ike, I must get orders from my superiors. Until then you may rest at an old castle inside Gallia. Sorry, but I cannot bring so large a group of foreigners to the palace without warning.

Ike: I understand. Commander, that's not going to be a problem, is it?

Greil: ...

Ike: Commander?

Greil: Hm? What was that?

Ike: What's wrong? You're not paying attention. It's not like you.

Greil: I was thinking about something. So, what's been decided?

Ike: Princess Elincia is going on to the palace with Ranulf. We're going into Gallia and setting up camp at an old castle. Which way to this castle, Ranulf?

Ranulf: I shall prepare a guide to take you. One of you! Quickly!

Greil: No, don't go to the trouble. If it's nearby, we cross the river on the border and head west. It's Gebal Castle, right? You go ahead. Get the princess to King Caineghis as fast as you can.

Ranulf: ...Understood. What thoughtful guests you are. If you'll excuse me.
Oh, and if it's not overly presumptuous, I'll have food delivered to you later.

Greil: We'd appreciate it. The road has been hard, and we had little time to pack more than salted meat and hard biscuits.

Ranulf: Then we shall provide! Princess Elincia, shall we leave?

Elincia: Farewell, everyone... Until later. I will see you soon, won't I?

Greil: Mm.

Ike: Take care.

-[Gebal Castle]-

Ike: Father!

Greil: Ike? What are you doing still awake?

Ike: I couldn't sleep, so I was lying there staring outside, and I saw you leave the castle. Where are you going at this hour?

Greil: It's nothing to do with you, boy. Go back inside and get to sleep.

Ike: Will you stop treating me like a child? I'll do as I please, got it?

Greil: Hmph. You always were a stubborn pup. What say we take a walk and chat a bit?

Ike: ...Yeah.

(They walk a bit)

Greil: Tell me, Ike, are you getting used to the ins and outs of the mercenary life? The way we approach combat?

Ike: I'm definitely a better fighter. But I don't understand... Why would you put a recruit like me in charge?

Greil: What is it with all the complaining? You have a problem with authority?

Ike: Just give me a straight answer. I've only just started. I'm barely able to handle my own duties around here. I shouldn't be in charge of anyone.

Greil: You can learn it all at once. It'll all fall into place as soon as you start to get some experience.

Ike: It's just strange is all... A while ago, you never would have said or done anything like this.

Greil: ...

Ike: Is something wrong, Father? Why are you in such a rush?

Greil: ...Ike... Do you remember anything at all about your mother?

Ike: What? Where did that come from?

Greil: Just answer the question.

Ike: Let's see... She was kind, I...think... I don't really remember. And you've never said much about her either.

Greil: Hm. Is that so...

(They continue walking)

Ike: Father? What is it?

Greil: We're done. Leave me and go back to the castle.

Ike: What? Just like that?

Greil: You heard me. That's a direct order! Return to the castle immediately!

Ike: I... Fine...

Greil: ...

(Cut Scene -> "Greil's Fall")

Black Knight: ...Unbelievable. Is this truly what has become of my teacher?

Ike: Father! Father!!

Greil: I... Ike...

Ike: Hold on!

Black Knight: Now then, will you give me what I came for?

Greil: I...don't...have it..... ...I threw...it away...

Black Knight: Ha. You, who knows better than any what it truly is, threw it away? Surely you can craft a more plausible lie. You're not even trying anymore.

Greil: I'm done talking to you.

Black Knight: So there's no way for me to get my answers, is that it? The dead keep their secrets, or so it is said. But you, however... You are not dead yet. I wonder... Will watching your son's face grow pale, his eyes grow dim as his life bleeds away... And then your daughter... Oh, the horrors I will visit upon her. Will that loosen your tongue, perhaps? I suppose we will simply have to see.

Ike: What?

Greil: No! Ike!!!

(Ike is hit)

Ike: ...Urk...

Greil: Ike!!!

Black Knight: I won't check my hand again. Give me what I am after. If you offer no more resistance, I will leave your child alive.

Greil: S-stop... You will not touch my son!

(A roar is heard)

Black Knight: ...What is this? The king of beasts? How bothersome. Do I retreat? Eh?

Ike: You're not going anywhere.

Black Knight: Tell me, is the son as stupid as the father?

Greil: ...Nng... Ahh...

Ike: Father!

Greil: Ike, stop. There's no way you can win.

Ike: But...

Greil: Ike!

Black Knight: You will not continue? Then I will finish...

(Another roar)

Black Knight: ...So close. Now is not the time for me to deal with him. Hmph. You get to keep your head today, boy.

(Exit Black Knight)

Greil: Blast.

(It starts to rain)

Greil: So willful. So arrogant... Of course... The one who...made him that way ...was...m-me...

Ike: ...Father? Father! Hold on! I can't do anything here... I've... I've got to get you back to the castle!

Ike: ...Nngh...

Greil: I-Ike...

Ike: Father? You're awake!

Greil: I... There's something I need to tell you.

Ike: Tell me later. Right now, I'm getting you back to the castle.

Greil: Forget about revenge... Leave that knight alone... Stay away...

Ike: What? Father?

Greil: Stay with the king of Gallia... Live here. Live in peace...

Ike: Father, stop talking. You're wasting your strength. Please...

Greil: I need you to take care of everything... The company... Mist...

Ike: Wait... You mustn't say such things! It'll be light soon. You'll be fine...

(They arrive at the fort)

Ike: A little longer... Stay a little longer...

=====
Chapter 8: Despair and Hope

[008]
=====

(Flashback)

Greil: What's wrong, Ike? Done already? Come on, Son! You'll never beat me with that attitude! Ha ha ha! Think you're as stubborn as your mule-headed father? Ike. Grow up big and strong. I believe you've got the makings of a great warrior.

(End flashback)

Ike: ...Father. This isn't a dream, is it? This... This is all real. Mist. The sun's going down, and it's getting cold. Come on. Let's go.

Mist: ...

Ike: Mist?

Mist: Oh... Oh, Ike...sniff...

Ike: Mist...

Mist: ...W-why... Why?

Ike: I was at his side, but... I couldn't save him. I'm sorry.

Mist: ...Sniff...

Ike: It's... It's so unreal...

Mist: Dad's gone... He's gone, Ike. Sniff...And...I...don't...I don't know what to do...

Ike: Don't worry. I'm here.

Mist: Bro-Brother...

Ike: I'll lead the company... In Father's stead... And I'll protect you all.
You, the princess...everyone. I'll protect you. You'll see.

Mist: No... Brother... Ike... No...

Ike: Mist?

Mist: I won't allow it... I can't lose you. Don't you see? If you go, then
I'll be all alone... I won't allow it.

Ike: I'm not going anywhere. I promise you, Mist...

Titania: Commander...Greil... Why is this happening? Why is any of this
happening? Why now? First, Crimea... And now you...

Soren: ...

(Enter Ike)

Soren: Ike...

Titania: Oh, Ike! Where's Mist?

Ike: She's resting in her room. Rhys and Rolf are with her.

Titania: That's good... She needs to sleep. She's been through too much. We
all have... You should rest too, Ike.

Ike: I'll be all right. Grief won't bring my father back to life. I know I've
been a burden on the both of you. Titania, Soren, I just need to thank
you both for staying here with me.

Soren: Not at all...

Titania: There's no need. Don't trouble yourself.

Ike: So...where is everyone?

Titania: Ike, to tell the truth...

Ike: Yes?

(Enter Oscar/Boyd)

Oscar: Boyd and I are back.

Titania: How did it go?

Boyd: I can't believe it! They just left, and they didn't take one look back!
Heartless scum! I'll never forgive them!

Ike: Boyd? What's going on?

Boyd: Ike! Are you all right?

Ike: I'm fine. Tell me what's happened. Start talking.

Boyd: Well, uh, it's... What I mean to say is... Uh...

Soren: Shinon and Gatrie have left us.

Boyd: Soren!

Soren: What? There's nothing to hide, is there?

Ike: They left? Both of them? Why did they-- Oh, I see. They left because of me, didn't they?

Titania: Ike...

Boyd: Titania told us you were going to be the new commander. Shinon just about exploded... He and Gatrie left not long ago.

Oscar: We went after them. We tried to talk things out, but it was a waste of time.

Soren: We all knew that Ike was going to inherit command of the company, didn't we? It just happened sooner than we wanted. It was Greil's decision. If some of us aren't satisfied with that, there's no reason we should stop them from leaving. As far as losing fighting strength is concerned, we can solve that by adding new members.

Boyd: How can you say that? After all the battles we've been through together, how can you say that?

Titania: Forgive me, Ike. I wasn't able to stop any of this...

Ike: It's not your fault, Titania. They did what they felt they had to do. They didn't want to lose their lives to an inexperienced commander.

Titania: Ike! Don't talk about yourself like that.

Ike: I'm not saying that to gain anyone's pity. It's the truth. But even so, I have no intention of giving up command of this company.

Titania: Ike? Then what will you--

Ike: I'm going to follow my father's wishes. I'm going to assume command. If everyone will accept me, that's what I'd like to do.

Titania: Of course!

Oscar: I'd already made up my mind. That's what I was going to do all along.

Boyd: What, so now you want me to start calling you Boss? Is that it? Well, I can do that. Boss it is!

(Enter Rhys)

Rhys: I'm in, too.

Ike: Rhys!

Rhys: Mist's asleep. I know I missed most of the conversation, but I have a good idea of what you've been discussing. Commander Ike... Yes, it does have a nice ring to it.

Ike: What about you, Soren?

Soren: ...Ike. I'm not sure what help I could be to you. What place is there for me in a mercenary company, anyway?

Ike: You are so weird... I've always depended on you, haven't I? I need your tactical knowledge. I need your objectivity. You're not going to leave me, are you, Soren?

Soren: Don't worry. I'll be here, watching over you.

Ike: Thank you. I know I'm not as experienced as most of you. I'm going to make some mistakes, but I'll try not to let you down.

Titania: Well, you're going to have a lot to learn about being commander. I'm glad you're serious, because it's a lot of work.

Ike: Tell me everything.

Titania: First, you'll need to understand company expenditures. Then we'll talk about ensuring that everyone is properly outfitted. And we can't forget the need to gather good intelligence. Oh, and you'll want to know everyone's abilities and relationships.

Ike: Uh-huh...

Titania: Earlier, I spoke with a merchant caravan that's taken refuge here in the castle. They fled Crimea at the same time we did. I told them who we are, and they asked if they could travel with us. I think they're worried about protection from Daein. In exchange, they've offered us a good rate on items and weapons. They'll also buy items and forge weapons for us.

Ike: Uh-huh...

Titania: They also said we could use their wagons to store our goods. That's one more worry off our minds.

Ike: Uh-huh...

Titania: So anyway--

Ike: Titania!

Titania: Yes?

Ike: I know I said tell me everything, but... This is too much. I can't keep up. Maybe I shouldn't learn everything in one sitting. Can you show me the ropes along the way? Is that all right?

Titania: Oh...yes, of course. Sorry. I got a bit carried away.

Ike: I'll take over for now. Why don't you get some rest?

Titania: I'm all right...

Ike: You worry too much. Get some rest. That's an order. I'll do my best to manage.

Titania: Yes...Commander.

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Merchant **]-

Aimee: Well, hello... You must be the young commander I've heard so much about. My, and you are a young one, aren't you?

Ike: And you must be from the merchant caravan Titania told me about. The one that asked to travel with us?

Muston: Yep, that's us. It must have been fate that brought us all here together. If you'll offer us protection, we'll supply you with the provisions you require. At a reasonable price, of course. What do you say? It's for the greater good of us all, wouldn't you agree?

Ike: Well...it is a sound proposition.

Muston: Yes! Then we have an agreement. I'm the weapon merchant, Muston. I'll be sure to stock the weapons you prefer.

Aimee: And I am Aimee, a vender of...various goods. I have a wide variety of items for sale. I hope you'll stop by soon.

Jorge: The name's Jorge. I buy things. Anything, really. You got any weapons or items you don't need, bring 'em to me.

Daniel: My name's Daniel. I'm a craftsman. I specialize in made-to-order items.

Muston: There's one last item to cover. If you'd like, we can also act as a storage warehouse of sorts, carrying your extra things. What do you think?

Ike: That would be fantastic. We recently left our stronghold, and I was afraid we'd have to carry our goods ourselves! I'm happy to take you up on your offer.

Muston: Very good. Well then, may our enterprise be profitable for us all.

-[Unknown *]-

Ike: I hear someone... Is it coming from over here?

(Titania is shown off to the side)

Titania: ...Ah...sniff... Why...Gre-Greil... Why? Why you? Why did you...have to...sniff... Sniff... Why...?

(Scene shifts back to Ike)

Ike: ...

-[Rolf *]-

Rolf: ...

Ike: What's going on, Rolf?

Rolf: Oh, Ike. If you're wondering about Mist, she just fell asleep.

Ike: Really? Sorry, I didn't mean to disturb you, Rolf.

Rolf: It's all right. I don't mind.

Ike: It's getting late. You should get yourself to bed.

Rolf: I will, but... Um...

Ike: What is it?

Rolf: Mist is just fine.

Ike: Hm?

Rolf: You're here, Ike. So she's fine. I mean, she's going to be just fine.

Ike: Huh?

Rolf: That's all! Well, good night.

(Exit Rolf)

Ike: Rolf... Thank you.

-[Boyd *]-

Boyd: Hey! Working already, Ike? If you need any help, just let me know.

Ike: Boyd, how do you feel about this?

Boyd: About what?

Ike: About me being the new commander. Before, you hated the idea, right? So, I want to know the truth. Will you really take orders from me?

Boyd: Well... I know what you can do and what you can't... I don't know if I want you in charge if things get really dangerous. But on the other hand, this is what Commander Greil wanted... He had faith in you, and I've got faith in him.

Ike: ...

Boyd: The commander hired both Oscar and me. When our dad died, I was the one who had to care for baby Rolf... I had no clue what I was supposed to do. Oscar received a discharge from his military service and came home, but life was hard. That's when Commander Greil found us... He gave us jobs, a place to sleep, food on our plates... He gave us our lives back.

Ike: Boyd, you've all worked off any debt you may have owed him. You don't have any obligation to me.

Boyd: This isn't about obligations anymore. Commander Greil always said we were all part of one big family, didn't he? I'll do anything to protect me family... That's why you can always count on me.

Ike: I see.

Boyd: Anyway, that's all I wanted to say. But don't you ever try to hold us at arm's length. You got that?

Ike: Don't worry about that. I'm going to work you to the bone.

Boyd: Oh, really? I'll take whatever you can dish out! Try me!

-[Rhys *]-

Ike: Rhys?

Rhys: Ike...

Ike: What were you doing?

Rhys: I was praying.

Ike: For my father?

Rhys: Yes. You see, the commander... He... He...

Ike: Rhys...

Rhys: I'm sorry... I know this must be...so much harder on you... Forgive me...

Ike: ...A long time ago, my father told me a story... It was about the dead... He said the more tears we shed...the more blessings they receive in the hereafter... I envy you, Rhys. For some reason, I can't seem to cry at all... Rhys, if you could, shed a tear for me, too. I'd be grateful.

Rhys: ...I-Ike. I would be honored.

Ike: ...Thanks, Rhys. Thanks for caring so much about my father...

-----[Exit Base]-----

Titania: Good morning, Ike. How are things going? Does everything look good?

Ike: Titania. Did you get enough rest?

Titania: Enough as could be expected, given everything that's been going on. But now, we've got some business to deal with. First, we need some new recruits. Oh, but our audience with King Gallia comes first. Any word from the palace?

Ike: No, nothing yet. According to the laguz who brought our food, we should be receiving word sometime soon, but...

(Enter Soren)

Soren: Ike, I've got bad news! Look out the window!

(Soldiers are shown surrounding the fort)

Ike: That's not what I think, is it?

Rhys: If I'm not imagining things, that's a squad of Daein soldiers. Why do they have to show up now?

Boyd: What gives? We're inside Gallia's borders, aren't we? They must be out of their minds to pursue us this far!

Oscar: If they've come this far, I'm sure getting out of here alive was never one of their priorities.

Ike: ...

Soren: We're in trouble. They have us completely surrounded. We cannot escape.

Titania: So many of them...and so few of us... It doesn't look good, does it?

Ike: Doesn't matter. We have to fight. Greil Mercenaries, ready yourselves!

Titania: Yes, sir!

Soren: I'll begin formulating a strategy immediately.

Mist: Ike! Brother!

Ike: Mist! I want you and Rolf to go in the back and hide!

Mist: But, Ike...

Ike: Just do it now! Everything will be fine, but I need you to do this, all right?

Mist: Mm... All right. Be careful...

(Exit Ike)

Mist: ...Ah! It's happening again... My medallion's glowing.

(Cut Scene -> "Fire Emblem")

Mist: Mother... Father... If you can hear me, please watch over Ike. Please. Will you protect him?

-[Gebal Castle]-

Ike: All right, everyone, are you ready? Greil Mercenaries, move out!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Ilyana: ...

Ike: Huh? Who are you?

Ilyana: I... I... I'm a traveling mage. My name is Ilyana. This castle...

Oh...

Ike: Hey, are you all right?

Ilyana: I'm sorry... This rain is so c-cold. I feel like I'm f-freezing...

Ike: You don't look too good. Are you sick? Do you need medicine?

Ilyana: You're awfully kind, aren't you?

Ike: You know, you don't look like any Daein soldier I've ever seen. Are you really one of them, or have they press-ganged you into service?

Ilyana: I was traveling with some merchants, but we got separated. I came here to escape this rain, but some soldiers in black found me. They thought I was a Crimean refugee.

Ike: Oh?

Ilyana: I tried to tell them who I was, but they wouldn't believe me. They said they would put me to the sword if I didn't help fight you. I'm... very sorry...

Ike: Don't apologize. You didn't have any choice. If it had been me, I'd have done the same. But listen, I think I've seen the merchant convoy you were traveling with in the castle! There was a weapons vendor named Muston, and I think a woman named Aimee sold items...

Ilyana: That's them! Oh, that's incredible! Are they all unharmed? Where are they?

Ike: They're fine, they're fine! In fact, we've all come to an agreement, and they're traveling with us now. I don't see any reason we should go on fighting. If you're with them, we can protect you from Daein.

Ilyana: You're right! Yes, would you please allow me to join your company, too?

Ike: That sounds fine, Ilyana. This is a dangerous place. Go ahead and seek safety within the castle. We'll hold off the enemy troops.

Ilyana: No... I'll fight, too.

Ike: But you're sick...

Ilyana: You'll need some help. This isn't the full force of Daein soldiers. More of them are waiting in the forest. You need me.

Ike: ...Well, I wish you weren't right, but it sounds like we will need your help.

Ilyana: I'm just glad to get away from those awful black-clad soldiers.

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Kamura: Urgh...aaa... Glory to...to...Daein...

(End boss fight)

Ike: Haa... There are...still more of them... Haa... Everyone, fall back to the castle! Regroup! Regroup within the castle!

-----[Battle End]-----

Ike: Haa...haa... Ah... Blast! Not yet... Not yet... We will not fall!

(Enter Mist)

Mist: Brother!

Ike: Mist? You're not supposed to be out here! I told you to stay--

Mist: I don't care!

Ike: Mist?

Mist: There's no way we can escape! This is it, isn't it? We're all going to die here, aren't we?

Ike: Don't be foolish! No matter what happens, I'm making sure you and Rolf get out of here alive! Once you're out of danger, you go straight to the palace and stay with Princess Elincia.

Mist: No! I'm not going anywhere. I'm staying here with everyone! I'm staying with you!

Ike: ...

Mist: As long as I'm with you, I'm not afraid to die. We'll see Mother and Father. We'll all be together again. So, please... Stop telling me to leave you. I can't. I can't leave any of you again. All right?

Ike: All right. Don't leave my side.

Mist: Thank you, Brother.

Ike: But one thing...you're not going to see Mother just yet.

Mist: What?

Ike: I'm going to protect you. I'm not going to let you die. I gave Father my word.

Mist: Ike...

Ike: ...Haa...haa...

Mist: ...

Soldier: So few soldiers, and yet you managed to defeat our general? You have fought well. But it all ends here. Prepare to die!

Mist: ...

Soldier: Aaah! Noooo!!!

Soldier: Wh-what happened? What was that?

(Two laguz enter and kill the remaining soldiers)

Soldier: Filthy beasts... So strong... It's incredible...

Ike: Is that why people fear the laguz?

Soldier: Glaaarr...blasted...stinking...beast...

(Soldier dies)

Mist: ...

Ike: So, uh... Are you two from the palace? Did the king of Gallia send you?

Mordecai: He did. I am Mordecai, warrior of Gallia. Your hair is blue. You are Ike. Is this correct?

Ike: That's right-- I'm Ike. You saved us back there. Thank you.

Mordecai: Ranulf told me Ike is not a bad stranger. Mordecai and Ike... We will become friends.

Lethe: You don't know that. You don't know if we can trust him. It's too soon to tell. He's a beorc. A human. You know all humans have two faces.

Mordecai: Lethe!

Ike: Beorc? What's that?

Lethe: That's what you are. We with the power are laguz. You soft, hairless things with no power at all, you are called beorc.

Ike: What did you say?

Mordecai: Lethe! You are being bad. The king forbids this. We cannot fight with beorc!

Lethe: Most beorc call us by hated names, look at us with eyes filled with scorn. "Sub-human"? Hss! Is that how beorc treat their friends? Is that how beorc treat their allies?

Ike: You're right... Some of us use that name far too readily. I guess if we had thought about it, we'd have realized it's not a polite term, but we didn't know you by any other name. I'm sorry.

Lethe: You know no other name for us? Are we really so little to you, human? You, who forced us into slavery? How easily you forget. But we laguz! We remember. We remember how we have suffered at your hands. The king can say whatever he likes, I will not trust you. I warn you now...never speak to me in such a way!

Mordecai: Lethe...

Soren: What's your point? Did you come all this way to complain to us? Ha ha

... Typical sub-humans.

Lethe: Scum! Those who use that name are enemies of Gallia!

Mordecai: Grrr, grraa, sub-human... Enemy... He is enemy...

Soren: You think you're humans? The only thing human about you is your
conceit! You filthy, hairy sub-human!

Mordecai: Graaaaooooooooow!

Lethe: Mordecai! Kill him!!

Soren: ...

(Ike is hit)

Soren: Ike!

Ike: Ow...

Lethe: What?

Mordecai: I... Ike...

(Mordecai transforms)

Mordecai: ...Ike, I'm sorry... I have hurt you... I did not intend to hurt
you.

Ike: Mordecai, this injury is nothing. I'm fine.

Soren: You're nothing but a beast!

Ike: Soren! Stand down!

Soren: Why did you stop me? He hurt you! He could have killed you! We can't
let him get away--

Ike: If you hadn't provoked him, none of this would have happened. Right?

Soren: But-- I only... I'm sorry...

(Exit Soren)

Ike: Mordecai, Lethe, I apologize on behalf of my company. Please forgive
Soren. It's a poor excuse, but we recently lost...some companions. We're
tired, and we're not thinking clearly.

Mordecai: Ike forgave Mordecai. So now I forgive Soren. No one need be angry.

Lethe: I apologize as well. My behavior has been unkind. I forgot our mission,
and I have blundered terribly.

Ike: Mission?

Lethe: The king wants to see you. We are here to guide you to the royal palace.

=====
Chapter 9: Gallia

[009]
=====

Soren: Good morning, Ike. May I have a moment of your time?

Ike: What is it? I'm listening.

Soren: Our expenses, our ability to fight...The current status of our troops ... These are all things that you must know.

Ike: I see. Having a grasp of that is part of the commander's job, too, right? Understood. Let me hear it.

Soren: Very well.

(Soren Report)

Soren: ...That's it.

Ike: I think I've got most of it.

Soren: I'll give you a report before each battle. I hope that it helps.

Ike: I'm sure it will. Thank you. I'm relying on you for all the details. Keep up the good work.

Soren: Thank you, Commander. I will do my best. But if I have your leave, I must be going.

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Soren *]-

Soren: Hmm.

Ike: What's wrong, Soren? Are preparations complete?

Soren: Yes, everything's ready.

Ike: You have only a few robes and musty books. I'm taking a bit less, but it looks as though you travel light as well.

Soren: The burden of unnecessary items is something I detest.

Ike: Me too. We're alike in that, aren't we?

Soren: Hmm.

Ike: What is it? You've got that worried look again.

Soren: Well, um... It's nothing. Never mind. ...Everyone's really slow, aren't they? Shall I go and see what's taking them?

Ike: Soren... Don't worry about it.

Soren: Hm?

Ike: Sitting here in the morning, in the sunlight... It helps me to understand. I'm alive. I have trustworthy friends. That's how I know I can go on. I just hope I'm not...fooling myself.

Soren: No, you're not! You're not.

Ike: Well then, it's business as usual. I know we'll have troubles, but let us set our shoulders straight and get on with it.

Soren: Understood.

-[Mist *]-

Mist: Ah, Ike... Good morning.

Ike: Mm. Morning. ...Are you all right?

Mist: If I said I were, I'd be lying. But I'm doing my best. Yesterday, I was so confused. Then, I awoke this morning and saw the blue sky, felt the sun on my face... And I thought, I'm alive. The sunlight was so warm. I mean, it's always warm, but...for some reason, it made me want to cry.

Ike: Oh, Mist...

Mist: It's up to us. We must live the fullest lives we can. We have to live for Mother and for Father. We mustn't dishonor their memory. So...um... I may think about them, and I may cry every now and then, but I'll carry on!

Ike: You're right... Everything you said is right. We will carry on together.

Mist: Right! Oh! Sorry, I have to hurry and get ready! I'll see you later, Brother!

Ike: Yes, look at the time! Get a move on, will you?

-[Oscar *]-

Oscar: Hey, good morning, Ike. How're you feeling today? Yesterday's battle was a rough one, wasn't it?

Ike: Hi, Oscar. Yeah, I'm sore all over. Every muscle in my body hurts. Hopefully, I'll feel better after I move around for a while.

Oscar: I hope for the same. When I woke up, it was all I could do to get out of bed. We're truly lucky to be alive. If those two beast fighters hadn't arrived when they did, we might have all been wiped out.

Ike: ...Yeah...

Oscar: Ike, I can't say I know what you're going through or how you feel. But you should try to remember all that happened last night. The men we fought were professionals. Well trained and under the command of a cunning tactician...but not invincible.

Ike: ...You're saying they follow certain rules? Specific patterns? Yes, I see. If I can learn what they are, they become vulnerable. The next time we meet, we won't lose.

Oscar: Har!

Ike: What?

Oscar: For an instant there, looking at you was like looking at Commander Greil.

Ike: I'm his son. I'm supposed to look like him, aren't I?

Oscar: It wasn't that. And it wasn't an aura or a hunch or anything like that. I don't know what to call it. It was more like the core of your character... It felt the same as his.

Ike: Huh...

Oscar: Ha ha. Sorry. That must've sounded pretty stupid.

Ike: Oscar?

Oscar: Commander?

Ike: From now on, when I practice, would you join me? I would be more familiar with the fighting style of knights.

Oscar: Of course! If there's anything I can do to help, you need only to ask.

-[Mia *]-

Mia: Oh, Boss! Morning!

Ike: Good morning. Are you ready to go?

Mia: All set! It doesn't matter how late I go to sleep, I'm always awake before the sun rises! I can leave whenever!

Ike: ...Um, I'm sorry. You know, for everything that's happened. It's all so sudden.

Mia: Oh, it's nothing. But it's been rough on you, hasn't it?

Ike: I could say the same to you. It can't have been easy joining a band of wanted mercenaries and fighting every day.

Mia: Oh, it's not so bad...

Ike: You were forced to join us by the whims of fate, not by choice. I know my father said you had a debt to repay, but he's not here anymore. If you want to leave, I won't stop you.

Mia: Um... Er... Aaaaah!

Ike: Aaah! What!?

Mia: Oooh! Times... Times like this... I never have any idea of what I'm supposed to say. None! Uh, darn! Hold on. Yesterday...in the middle of that giant mess, you didn't give up, Boss. And I knew. That is how a true man lives! So now I have to follow you. You see?

Ike: I...think so.

Mia: That's my story, Boss. So do me a favor and don't tell me to get lost. I'm good to have around. You'll see!

Ike: If that's how you feel, I guess I understand. I'm counting on you. Don't let me down.

Mia: Never! I wouldn't know how!

-[Mordecai *]-

Mordecai: Ike. Are you prepared? Can we depart soon?

Ike: It's taking more time than I thought. I'm sorry for making you wait.

Mordecai: I see. Then I will talk with you as we wait. Grr... My words, are they well? Can you understand them?

Ike: Sure, no problem. I understand you.

Mordecai: That is good. Mordecai is not so good with this language.

Ike: What language do you normally use?

Mordecai: With others of my tribe, I need no words. I say all that I must with gestures and with...how do you say...growls?

Ike: That sounds convenient.

Mordecai: Yes. But our tongue does not let us talk to other tribes. That is not good. That is why we learn these modern words.

Ike: I would think that would be enough, being able to speak with only your friends, wouldn't it?

Mordecai: It is not. If there is danger or conflict... We can use words to avoid a fighting that need not be. So using words that many can hear is good.

Ike: Hmm... Using words to avoid unnecessary fighting...That's one way to think about it.

-----[Exit Base]-----

Titania: This place brings back such memories. It hasn't changed in the slightest.

Ike: Titania, have you been to Gallia before?

Titania: A long time ago... When I was still a knight of Crimea. I volunteered for a military officer exchange program and spent some time studying at Gallia's royal palace.

Ike: I get it now... That's why you weren't surprised when we saw the laguz.

Titania: That's right. Ah, I've missed the sea. When the setting sun strikes the water, it's almost as though the horizon itself is on fire.

Ike: Hmm. Now that I think about it, my father knew where that old castle was ... He sure acted like someone who'd been to Gallia before. Was he here with you?

Titania: Mm-hm. And we weren't the only ones. You've been here, too, Ike.

Ike: What?

Unknown: Ike!

Titania: It's Mordecai. You'd better answer him.

Ike: Yeah, but...

Titania: We can finish our talk later, after we've reached the castle.

(Exit Titania)

Ike: Well, that was cryptic.

Ike: What is it, Mordecai?

Mordecai: Do you tire? Should we rest here?

Ike: No, I think we're all right.

Mordecai: Good.

Lethe: Beorc are such a weak species. A distance like this is nothing. Any laguz worth his claws could cross it in a single bound.

Mordecai: Lethe!

Lethe: Hmph! It is the truth!

Mordecai: If you persist in this way, you will shame the king. You sound like a fool.

Lethe: Hsss! You are my subordinate! Never speak to me in such a way!

Mordecai: What's wrong is wrong. You are a fierce warrior, Lethe, but when it comes to the beorc, you are far too stubborn.

Lethe: What did you say?!

Ike: Come on now, both of you... Let's calm down.

Lethe: ...Mordecai?

Mordecai: ...Wait...

Ike: What is it?

Mordecai: That smell on the wind... It's iron. It is the smell of weapons. The smell of beorc. Heavily armored. Well armed.

Ike: Are you sure?

Soldier: General Kotaff! The Crimean mercenaries have entered our area of operations!

Kotaff: Ha! They're trapped! Call every last man. Ready for battle! We stop the enemy here!

-[Fort Tatana]-

Soren: Black armor... They're Daein men, all right.

Ike: You're saying that some of the invasion force is still around?

Lethe: Daein worms... They strut about the Gallian forests as though they own them. I won't stand for it!

Mordecai: Grrr... The castle to the south. Many beorc are inside. They carry iron weapons. I smell them.

Ike: Not good... Titania! Gather everyone together!

Titania: Ha! Understood!

(Exit Titania)

Lethe: What now?

Ike: What do you mean?

Lethe: If you hope to crush the worms, you'd do well to capture the ruins in the south. Since you probably want to flee, there is an escape route...

Ike: We're going to fight.

Lethe: Oh?

Ike: There are times when running has its advantages, but I don't think we'll lose here.

Lethe: ...I see.

Mordecai: I will also fight.

Ike: Good. We could use the help.

(Enter Titania)

Titania: Ike! Everyone's here!

Ike: All right, let's go!

(Enter Muston/Jorge)

Ike: I want you two to take Mist and Rolf and retreat to the rear.

Muston: Of course.

Jorge: We're counting on you. Be careful!

Ike: Everyone who can fight, grab a weapon! Greil Mercenaries... Move out!

-----[Battle Start]-----

(Enter Mist)

Mist: Ike!

Ike: Mist! You and Rolf clear out of here! Stay back, no matter what!

Mist: No, Ike! We're going to fight with you-- both of us.

Ike: What? No. That's not going to happen. Be serious, Mist... The two of you can't even wield weapons.

Mist: I've got this!

Ike: A heal staff?

Mist: Yeah! I made Rhys teach me how to use it. I can heal injuries! I mean, just little ones, but still...

Ike: Little ones? No. There's no way I'm letting you on this battlefield... Huh?

(Enter Rolf)

Boyd: Rolf! Stop being such a brat, you little twerp!

Rolf: I'm going to fight, too! I'm good with a bow!

Boyd: Really? That's news to me. Is that the best lie you could come up with?

Rolf: It's no lie!

Mist: That's right! He's not lying.

Boyd: Of course he is!

Ike: What are you talking about, Mist?

Mist: Rolf's always practicing with his bow. And he's really good! Aren't you?!

Rolf: I sure am!

Ike: And when did you learn to use a bow?

Rolf: Well, let's see... Um... I guess I just...sorta...picked it up naturally?

Boyd: Stop lying, you booger-eating brat! You can't just pick up a weapon and

start firing away! Someone has to teach you the basics!

Rolf: Well, maybe I'm just a prodigy, 'cause I learned it all myself!

Boyd: You little...

Mist: You don't know anything, Boyd!

Rolf: That's right!

Boyd: This is ridiculous!

Ike: Enough. You two go back.

Mist: No! We don't want to! All Rolf and I do is sit and wait and worry about all of you. We're tired of waiting! We want to fight by your side!

Ike: Is that so?

Boyd: How about it, Rolf? Is that how you feel, too?

Rolf: Uh-huh. No doubt, we'd rather be with you.

Boyd: Sigh... What now, Commander?

Ike: We take them with us. We're too pressed for time to sit around here bickering. And at least if they're nearby, they'll be easier to protect.

Mist: Are you serious?!

Rolf: Yes! You won't regret this, Ike! I promise!

Boyd: I hope not.

Lethe: By the way...

Ike: What is it?

Lethe: If there is some special task you would ask of us, we are willing to listen.

Ike: What are you talking about?

Lethe: Bah! Open your ears! If you wish it, we shall...follow your orders. Hssss! But you must Direct us.

Ike: Really? You're willing to take orders from me?

Lethe: This is a beorc fight. If you don't Direct us, then we have no reason for being here. So spoke our king.

Ike: But last night, you...

Lethe: THAT... That was an...emergency.

Mordecai: We thought you were in danger.

Ike: You thought correctly. We were in danger. I thank you. We were greatly

aided by your arrival.

Mordecai: You are welcome.

Lethe: Hmm.

Mordecai: Very well. Let us fight together. If you choose not to Direct us, we shall do as we please. Do you find this acceptable?

Ike: Of course. Well then, good fortune to us all.

(Enter Marcia)

Marcia: Let's see now... Where are they? Aha! I've found them!

(Enter Nedata/Pirate)

Nedata: Yar har ho!

Pirate: Yo ho har!

Nedata: Scallywags of the sea are we!

Pirate: We fight like beasts, an' men do flee!

Nedata: We earn our gold with axes bold... Yar! Ye scurvy bilge rat! Why aren't ya singin'?

Pirate: Har! Over there, Nedata! Fix yer eyes on that. Do ye sees what I sees?

Nedata: Oh ho ho! What's this, then? Humans battling humans here in Gallia? What in the briny beard of Shanty Pete is going on?

Pirate: Oy! Do ya think they may be the king's curs out to capture us and claim the bounty?

Nedata: Gahar har har!

Pirate: Shall we unfurl the mainsail and steer for calmer waters?

Nedata: Bite yer tongue, ye kelp-brained idjit! We're pirates! We don't turn tail from government scum! I'm goin' ashore! Watch me, and you'll see a true sea-dog in action.

Pirate: Yar, well said! You've set me blood aboil! I'm with ye all the way, matey!

Nedata: Aarr! Let's see what we can see then!

Pirate: Yar! Me axe is sharp, and me spirit is bold!

Nedata: Yar har ho!

Marcia: Ike!

Ike: You! You're that...

Marcia: That's right. It's me! Marcia! As promised, I'm here to pay my debt...
I'm going to join your group!

Ike: Join us? But I thought you were one of the holy pegasus knights of
Begnion...

Marcia: Pfff! I resigned! So what do you say? Are you going to let me in or
what? Come on!

Ike: Are you sure about this? I mean, I'll be honest with you. We're a
destitute band of mercenaries. Your wages will be a pittance compared to
what you're used to.

Marcia: So, what? Are you saying no?

Ike: No, I'm simply pointing out that you'll be losing almost all of...

Marcia: Pfff! I won't lose out on anything! Plus, I'll work twice as hard as
anyone else. C'mon, please let me join? PLEEEASE!

Ike: Well, if that's what you want, I guess we'll give it a shot. We're
shorthanded though, so you're going to be busy.

Marcia: Huzzah! That's great! Just tell me what needs doing!

-[South house]-

Woman: Eeeek! Hu-hu-humans! Yaaaaah!

Vistor: Um...

Woman: Urk! Urk! Ahhh... Oh, come on! You are so rude! If you can't tell, I'm
playing dead. So go away! Huh? Why? Because my mother told me, "If you
ever meet a beorc, play dead, and it will leave you be." It's not true,
is it? Hsss! I knew it wasn't true! I knew it! Well then, take this,
and get out of here! Quickly! I HATE humans! I don't want to talk to
you! Hsss! SHOO!!

-Receive "Restore"-

-[North house]-

Soldier: You're from Crimea, aren't you? I'm a warrior of the beast tribe.
Lord Ranulf spoke of you. Doubtless you have noticed that Fort Tatana
has been taken by Daein forces. Watch your step around that bunch.
There's a dangerous mage with them. We of the beast tribe find magic,
and especially fire magic, particularly threatening. I am waiting for
friends and cannot take leave of this house, but... I would give you
this. If you use it, your magical resistance will increase. It will
help you fight that mage. Take care.

-Receive "Talisman"-

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Nedata: Scallywags of the sea...are we... An end like this is quite...worthy!

(End boss fight)

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Kotaff: Arrgh...urr...urg... In the name...of the empire...
Cleanse...my shame...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Ike: We defeated their commander, but we still don't know what they were after.

Titania: It seems unlikely that they were merely pursuing Princess Elincia. I wonder if Daein is planning to invade Gallia. Perhaps Crimea was only a stone on which to whet their blades.

Soren: No matter the motive, the fact remains that Daein crossed the border. Under such circumstances, hostilities between Daein and Gallia could break out at any time.

Ike: So, it's war... Again.

Titania: If war erupts between the beorc and laguz, it's only a matter of time before other nations become involved. Could Daein truly mean to set the land aflame in a blaze of war? If that happens, many of our citizens will be sacrificed on the altar of their ambition.

Soren: We, too, need to choose which way to move, whose side to take...

Titania: Whose side? We shall never support Daein! Unthinkable!

Soren: Captain Titania, we are human. Would you truly have us side with sub-- with laguz against other humans? THAT is unthinkable.

Ike: Beorc and laguz...

Lethe: Are you going to sit here and argue about a war that hasn't started? You beorc are all so timid! It's pathetic.

Mordecai: Lethe! You must not say such things.

Ike: Mordecai? Lethe? What do you think? Will it come to war?

Lethe: Our claws are sharp. If Daein invades Gallia, we are ready for battle. If our king wills it, war will come.

Mordecai: I like it not... War brings pain. Sorrow.

Ike: This is troubling...

Lethe: Enough. We have lost much time. Let us make for the palace. We must reach tonight's camp before the sun sets.

Ike: Is the palace still far?

Lethe: On your skinny beorc legs, it is very far. But we will do as we can.

-[Castle Gallia]-

Elincia: My lord Ike! Everyone!

Ike: Princess Elincia.

Elincia: I heard about...Commander Greil. I... I don't know what to say.

Ike: Don't worry. We're all right. We're getting by...somehow.

Elincia: ...Oh, Ike...

(Enter Soldier)

Soldier: The king has arrived.

(Enter Caineghis)

Ike: Um... Hey there.

Caineghis: Thank you for coming to Gallia Palace. I am Caineghis, ruler of the kingdom of Gallia.

Ike: These are the Greil Mercenaries. I am Ike, their commander.

Caineghis: You have been raised well, young pup. I didn't recognize you.

Ike: What?

Titania: When last you were here, you were still a small child.

Caineghis: Is that you, Titania? It's good to see you.

Titania: The pleasure is all mine, Your Majesty.

Ike: The two of you are friends? How... How does the king know me?

Caineghis: Mm. I have something I must tell you about your father, Greil...
Lethe. Mordecai. Leave us now. Prepare rooms, so our guests may have a place to rest and heal their wounds.

Lethe: At once, my lord!

(Exit Lethe/Mordecai)

Elincia: Would it be best if I were to leave as well?

Caineghis: No, Princess. I would have you stay. And this one also will stay.

Giffca: ...

Caineghis: This is Giffca, my shadow. Pay him no more heed than you would the air.

Ike: Understood. I would have Titania and Soren stay with me, as well.

Soren: Me?

Caineghis: So be it. Now then, where to begin? Titania? How much did Greil tell his son?

Titania: Ike was raised with no knowledge of Gallia whatsoever, nor does he recall ever having been here.

Caineghis: Is that so? Then it is best for me to tell him all that I know... Although that is not much.

Ike: That's all right. Whatever you can tell me would be much appreciated. I want to know more of my father.

Caineghis: Hmm... You have good eyes. Honest and brave. I see your father in them. Long ago, Greil...your father...worked as a mercenary for Gallia. We forged a strong bond, he and I. To speak truly, I still do not trust the beorc. But your father was different. Princess Elincia's father, King Ramon, and his brother, Lord Renning, are also of a different kind. All are...or were...exceptional men. Men in whom one could put his trust. Oh ho! Titania! You are an exception as well! Among beorc females, you are unique.

Titania: You are most gracious, Your Majesty.

Ike: My father was a mercenary for Gallia...?

Caineghis: Correct. And you and your sister? You were both born here in Gallia. You stayed only for a short time, but part of your childhood was spent within these borders.

Ike: Mist and I were born here? Is that so? I don't remember any of this at all.

Caineghis: I feel your parents were carrying a dark secret. Someone was hunting them, I'm sure of it. Once, over ten years ago...and after your mother had been slain... Your father chose to leave Gallia. Before he left, I went to him and asked him to share his tale. I asked him, "Why are you being chased? Is there anything I can do to help?" But I was unable to loosen his tongue. And then I heard he had returned to Gallia, and I thought I had another chance to hear his tale. His fate was black indeed. If I had been faster, if I had hastened my steps, perhaps things would be different.

Ike: Wait! Now I understand. The voice I heard... That was you, wasn't it?

Caineghis: His wound was fatal. I could do nothing. I thought it best not to interfere in his final moments, so I remained hidden. Tell me, Ike... At his last, did he confess anything to you? The identity of the Black Knight... Did he reveal it?

Ike: The Black Knight? No. I don't know who he was. My father entrusted me with his command, told me to trust King Caineghis and to live peacefully in Gallia. He said to forget everything else.

Caineghis: Is that so? Well then, let me do as I can. If any of your mercenaries desire to live here, I will so arrange it. I will vouchsafe them homes and land.

Ike: Your kindness is truly appreciated. But, speaking for myself, I couldn't live here in peace. Not now. I will avenge my father. I cannot so quickly forget the past... Or the Black Knight.

Titania: But, Ike! That's not...

Ike: I know. I'm not... I'm not strong enough. An opponent who could defeat my father is well beyond my reach... But that's why I've devoted myself to growing stronger. I will lead my father's mercenaries and prepare for the day when my chance for revenge arrives.

Caineghis: A prudent course of action. You look as one who would be more impulsive, but you are Greil's son after all.

Titania: Ha! You've matured, Ike. It seems like yesterday that you were merely a child.

Ike: Titania...

Caineghis: And now, I would ask a boon of you. The strength of your mercenary band, Ike, would you lend it to Princess Elincia?

Ike: Are you serious?

Elincia: King Caineghis!

Caineghis: Gallia and Crimea are allied nations, that cannot be denied. However, this alliance in reality binds only the royal families. It is not respected by our citizenry.

Titania: The people of Gallia are seldom seen in Crimea, are they? Even though our nations are friends, the people of Crimea have little real understanding of the laguz. Many of our people still use that undignified name, "sub-human", when they speak of the laguz...

Elincia: ...My father's heart was filled with shame and sorrow over what you describe. More than any king in our history, he wanted to deepen relations between our people, and then...

Caineghis: Perhaps that is why Daein targeted him. Their hatred of the laguz is well known.

Ike: Could it be...?

Caineghis: In my heart of hearts, I would like to take guardianship of Princess Elincia and assist in the rebuilding of Crimea. However, anti-beorc sentiment is running high here in Gallia. If we were to offer safe harbor to Elincia, I feel many of our elder statesmen would protest. They would say that we are giving Daein an ideal excuse to attack.

Ike: Which means Gallia can't offer Princess Elincia any relief at all... Is that it?

Caineghis: Unfortunately, it is true.

Elincia: My lord Ike, King Caineghis has advised me to turn to the Begnion Theocracy for aid in Crimea's restoration. He says we should make of Begnion a formal request and gain the support of their shields.

Titania: Passage to Begnion will require several months at sea. An escort will be necessary...

Ike: As you know, we lack the numbers to serve as a complete mercenary army. So, if the princess were willing to hire us as an escort, it would be an offer beyond our expectations. Titania! Soren! I think perhaps we should accept the king's offer. What do you say?

Titania: It's what you want, right, Commander? Well then, it's our job to follow you.

Soren: However you wish to proceed is fine. I will do all in my power to ensure that our road leads to success.

Ike: Understood. As of now, the Greil Mercenaries shall assume the honor of serving as escort to the princess of Crimea.

(Exit Soren/Titania)

Ike: Princess Elincia, our journey together will undoubtedly be a long one. May we serve you well.

Elincia: Oh, thank you very much! I only pray that I, in turn, may be worthy of your service!

=====
Chapter 10: Prisoner Release
=====

[010]

Ranulf: Hey, Ike! I heard you're leaving. Going to Begnion, eh?

Ike: Hello, Ranulf. I was hoping I'd see you. I'd wanted to thank you for everything you've done. I'm glad to have the chance before I leave.

Ranulf: Well, aren't you the dutiful one! Hey, that reminds me...you were born here in Gallia, right? I knew there was something odd about you. You're awfully friendly for a beorc, you know! Oh, you might not know, but a beorc is what--

Ike: I know what it means. It's what you call us humans, right?

Ranulf: Oh, knew that, did you? Well then, let me tell you something else. When we use the word "human", we mean it much the way you beorc do when you call us "sub-human".

Ike: Really? It's an insult to be called human? I'm glad you told me. I would never have guessed.

Ranulf: I should warn you, if you run across any laguz who call you that, be careful. They are no friend of yours.

Ike: Got it. Thanks. I won't forget.

Ranulf: But I've digressed long enough. Let me explain why I'm here.

Ike: Huh?

Ranulf: Princess Elincia, may I have a moment of your time?

Elincia: Y-yes. Of course.

Ranulf: The king asked that I give you this. Please, accept it as a gift.

Elincia: What? May I ask--

Ranulf: Within that leather pouch is twenty thousand gold pieces. Beorc currency, of course.

Elincia: Oh... I truly appreciate this generous offer, but a gift of this magnitude is not something I can accept. King Caineghis has done so much more than necessary already...

Ranulf: The king is ashamed that he cannot, at this time, provide any personal support. Please. Will you accept his apology and acknowledge his desire to aid you?

Elincia: But...

Ranulf: No? Well then, let's try this...

Elincia: Yes?

Ranulf: You accept the king's gift. Then, as payment for conducting you safely to Gallia, you hand it over to Ike...

Elincia: Um...

Ike: Come on, Ranulf. You can't expect her to accept this. And it's an outrageous fee, no matter how you look at it.

Ranulf: Twenty thousand gold for the life of a princess? Perfectly reasonable. In fact, it almost borders on insulting! Consider how you have suffered, the lives you have lost... Ten, no, a hundred times this amount would not be unreasonable.

Ike: ...

Elincia: I... I have reconsidered. I will accept the king's kindness. In turn, I will present it to my lord Ike... You will accept it, will you not?

Ike: I... I will. Thank you.

Elincia: No, my lord Ike. It is I who must thank you.

-Receive "20 000 gold"-

Ranulf: Well, now that that's settled, let's move on. Unfortunately, we do not have any ships here in Gallia. If you are to find a ship that will take you to Begnion, you must return to occupied Crimea.

Ike: If there's no other way, then we'll just have to risk it.

Ranulf: No matter how cautiously you proceed, you're certain to run into Daein forces. Keep that in mind.

Ike: I understand. It's too bad we're so short on soldiers... Still, there's not much we can do about that now. However, I will review our supplies carefully before we depart.

Ranulf: In regard to your personnel problems, the king has decided to lend you what aid he can. Lethe! Mordecai!

(Enter Lethe/Mordecai)

Mordecai: I will join you.

Ike: Mordecai! And Lethe? Both of you? Are you sure?

Lethe: None of the others could stand the idea of traveling with humans. I myself tremble with loathing at the thought of going to Begnion, but... When the king gives an order, obedience is the only option.

Ike: That may be, but having witnessed the combat prowess of the Gallians for myself, I know how fortunate we are.

Mordecai: We will not fail you.

Lethe: Hsss! I've no intention of becoming friends! Do not forget that... And stay out of my way!

Ranulf: Ha ha! You must forgive Lethe. Her tongue cuts as deep as her claws do. I will return once I've reported to the king. While I'm gone, please finish your preparations for departure.

Ike: Very well.

(Soren Report)

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Soldier *]-

Ike: ...

Soldier: You there! Beorc! What do you think you're doing?

Ike: I was trying to get back to my room, but I've lost my way. Can you tell me which way I need to go?

Soldier: It's this way. Follow me. Hey! Not so close! Walk behind me.

Ike: What?

Soldier: Er... Pardon me. The king has ordered us to treat beorc with kindness, but... It will...take some time. It is difficult to fight that instinct. Perhaps some memory of the slavery our forefathers suffered at beorc hands flows in our blood.

Ike: I understand. I'll keep my distance.

Soldier: Very well... Let's go.

Ike: All right.

-[Marcia *]-

Marcia: And so we put this guy right here, and this dealy-bobber goes there... and we're finished!

Ike: Packing, huh? Want some help?

Marcia: Do I want some...? Pfff! You're a hoot, handsome! I'm already done!

Ike: You're more skillful at this than I would've imagined. Or is it that Mist is woefully inept?

Marcia: Aw, the Begnion pegasus knights were always moving around, so I learned to pack quickly. They used to train us on it all the time... Go here... Pack this... Fun stuff!

Ike: Is that so? I can see that you have a strong sense of duty. Quitting the Begnion pegasus knights to join us must seem...

Marcia: What are you saying? I'm a burden now?

Ike: Um...no. I'm very grateful you're here. As I told you before, we're short on personnel.

Marcia: Oh. Good then! And I'm happy to be here! Um...say, Ike? You don't need to worry about me quitting the Begnion service. My decision wasn't based solely on my desire to repay you...

Ike: You had other reasons?

Marcia: Yes. I... I'm also searching for my missing brother. He may be a dolt and a scoundrel, but he's all the family I have in this world. Remember when you found me? When we were fighting the pirates? Well, I was trying to track him down. But every time I go looking for him, I end up in some dangerous situation with ugly boat monkeys trying to kill me.

Ike: Heh. So that's why you decided to join us, is it? I can understand that.

Marcia: So, are you sorry you asked?

Ike: Not at all. The important thing is finding your brother as quickly as possible, right?

Marcia: That's the plan!

-[Lethe *]-

Lethe: ...

Ike: You seem...depressed.

Lethe: Look at who I'm trapped with! Of course I am depressed... And keep your worthless observations to yourself. All of you are so slow... I can't

believe you're still not ready.

Ike: Sorry about that. If we were like you and didn't need to carry anything, it would be easier, but... We have weapons and things to get ready.

Lethe: Weapons of steel are a human weakness. Without them, you cannot fight properly.

Ike: But... Lethe, you're carrying a dagger, aren't you? In the scabbard on your leg?

Lethe: This...is not for fighting.

Ike: Then what's it for?

Lethe: I use it to remove small bones from meat. It can also cut fruit into bite-sized pieces. It has proven quite useful.

Ike: Hmm...

Lethe: What? If you've got something to say, spit it out!

Ike: You despise beorc, but you don't mind beorc-crafted tools?

Lethe: If something's good, it's good. Denying something's obvious worth out of petty spite is foolish. It's not that I... I do not despise everything beorc. If every beorc could get along with us as well as you do, I'm certain...

Ike: Lethe?

Lethe: This is a ridiculous conversation! I'm leaving now.

(Exit Lethe)

Ike: ...

-----[Exit Base]-----

Narration: After his father's death places the mantle of leadership on his young shoulders, Ike agrees to continue as Elinicia's escort. The company heads now for the Begnion Empire, the oldest and largest nation on the continent of Tellius. As Crimea is a former fiefdom of Begnion, the princess turns to them for succor, much as a scared child returns to a parent. Many in Tellius believe that without Begnion's might and influence, Crimea's reconstruction will be nigh impossible. However, Begnion and Gallia have no diplomatic ties and are further separated by an impassable mountain range. So the company is forced to return to Crimea, where they hope to locate a ship to carry them to Begnion. Accompanied by Ranulf, the warrior who has volunteered to guide them, the company leaves Castle Gallia behind. With heavy hearts and wounded spirits, they begin the long march back to Crimea.

Ranulf: Hey, Ike! Hold up a moment. You know, I was thinking... Since this castle is on the way, we should probably stop by.

Ike: Um...really? Why? Is there something special about this place?

Ranulf: Why yes! There is! This is Canteus Castle! Daein seized it early on in the war. Now, it serves as a camp for prisoners. I've even heard there are a number of Crimean retainers being held captive in the dungeon beneath the castle.

Elincia: What?! Are you certain?

Ranulf: Princess, I'm hurt! Of course my information is reliable.

Titania: If we can rescue some Crimean soldiers they might decide to join us. That would be quite a boon, would it not?

Ike: Yes, it would. I think it's worth the risk.

-[Canteus Castle]-

Ranulf: The question now is how do you open these cells and free the prisoners?

Ike: The cells are certain to be locked, so in order to open them--

Soren: Logic would dictate that the keys will be in the possession of the jailer. We've no choice but to steal them. If we're lucky, the guards will have keys as well... In either case, we must move with caution. We don't want to trade blows with the entire castle garrison.

Ike: Which means we stay close to the walls and avoid being seen or heard, right? All right, then. Our first priority is to get our hands on the cell keys...

Ranulf: Hey! You there!

(Enter Volke)

Volke: I have business with Sir Greil. Where is he?

Soren: You're sorely lacking in social etiquette, aren't you? State your business.

Volke: I'll speak with Sir Greil and Sir Greil alone. Now take me to him.

Titania: What you ask is impossible. Commander Greil is dead.

Volke: Well. That is a problem.

Titania: Just who are you, anyway?

Volke: Call me Volke. Sir Greil hired me. I'm in...intelligence.

Ike: My father hired you?

Volke: You are Sir Greil's son, correct? You'll do. Sir Greil hired me to investigate something. You pay my price, and I'll give you my report. Deal?

Ike: How much?

Volke: Fifty thousand.

Ike: That's a bit steep.

Volke: And worth every penny.

Ike: I don't have that much... Give me some time.

Volke: So, you're willing to pay?

Ike: My father hired you. He must have had a good reason.

Titania: Are you sure, Commander? We have no way of knowing if he's telling the truth.

Ike: We'll know when we see the contents of that report. Until then, let's have him travel with us.

Volke: So that's your plan, eh? Listen, you get the report when I get paid, and I'm not waiting around until then. I'll keep my information for the time being. Call me when you've got the gold. Stop into any tavern along your way. Tell the barkeep you've need of a fireman. You'll see me within an hour.

Soren: Hold a moment! Intelligence... You said you were in intelligence, right? Is information the only thing you sell?

Volke: Come out with it. What are you asking?

Soren: Locks. Can you open locks?

Volke: Sure. Fifty gold per lock.

Ike: You're going to have him open the cell doors?

Titania: Is that wise? We've only just met him. There's no telling is we can trust him.

Ike: ...

(Agree to hire him)

Ike: Volke, will you help us break into these cells?

Volke: As long as I get paid, I've got no complaint.

Ike: Titania? Objections?

Titania: I told you before, didn't I? You're the commander. If you decide on a course of action, I will but follow.

Ranulf: Righto! I'm off. Good luck and all that.

Ike: What? Wait! You're not going to help us here?

Ranulf: Much as I would like to, I have a job to do. I will rejoin you when I'm finished.

Ike: Hmm... I see. Well, good luck to you then.

Ranulf: Yes, and to you as well!

(Exit Ranulf)

-----[Battle Start]-----

Soldier: Gwaah! Enemy soldiers!

Soldier: Commander Danomill! The castle defenses have been breached! What are your orders, sir?

Danomill: What fortunate timing. We were starting to run low on prisoners. Do try to capture them alive. I won't have you robbing me of my fun!

Soldier: As you command, sir!

(Enter Soldiers)

Ike: We've been spotted. There is nothing left to do but fight!

Sephiran: ...

Brom: Uh...tell me something, will you? What's going to happen to us? Those Daein soldiers took my friends away, and they didn't ever come back. What did they do to them?! Oh, something bad happened! I just know it!

Kieran: Quiet, fool! Keep your cowardly mutterings to yourself. It matters not what vile torture they devise. A true knight of Crimea is bold, steadfast, and strong. I care not if they pull out my nails with tongs or insert pins into the soft flesh of my underbelly or yank--

Brom: STOP IT! I can't bear torture! I'm not a professional soldier! I'm just part of the militia! I can't believe I left my family behind for this... Will I ever see them again? Oh, I want to go home.

Kieran: Curses... If only I had a weapon of some sort.

Nepheenee: Help...will...come. I will not...give up...

(Speak to Sephiran with Ike)

Ike: You there! We've come to rescue you.

Sephiran: ...Ah!

Ike: You're not a soldier, are you? Your clothing gives you away.

Sephiran: I am...a pilgrim. My name is Sephiran.

Ike: You're a monk? Why would they imprison you?

Sephiran: I was arrested in a nearby village, where I was tending to wounded

Crimean knights. I received no trial but have nevertheless been kept prisoner in this place ever since.

Ike: I see... That explains it. We've come here to liberate the prisoners of war. You should take this opportunity to escape.

Sephiran: You will set me free? That is most gracious of you. If you've no objection, I would ask your name.

Ike: I am Ike of the Greil Mercenaries. Please, the cell door is open. You should leave while you can.

Sephiran: Thank you. Perhaps we will meet again, Ike.

(Speak to Kieran with Oscar)

Oscar: You're from Crimea, right? Come on-- we're here to rescue you. We've opened your cell. Now's the time to escape.

Kieran: Ah! It's you!

Oscar: Pardon?

Kieran: I could never forget that squint! Knights of Crimea, twelfth regiment ...your name is Oscar!

Oscar: And you're... Wait a moment... You're Kieran, right?

Kieran: That is correct! I am Kieran... The same Kieran who has sworn himself to be your eternal rival!

Oscar: Uh... Right... Kieran... So...how've you been? You look good.

Kieran: As always, your manner is listless and inappropriate. It befits one who would call me foe! You were discharged three years ago... What are you doing here now? Aha! Could it be... You dastard! You've turned your coat and gone over to Daein, haven't you? Rarrrrr! What despicable, contemptible behavior! Unforgivable! Have you no shame? You were my one true rival! Where has your pride gone?

Oscar: The mercenary company I'm attached to serves under the command of the princess of Crimea! We came here to free any Crimean prisoners.

Kieran: The princess of Crimea?!? You're not part of the royal guard! How do you know about the princess?

Oscar: Well, like I said, the princess is our employer and--

Kieran: Aha! So that's your scheme, is it? You hope to distinguish yourself by meritorious service and gain the glory that is rightfully mine! Admit it!

Oscar: Look, my duty is...

Kieran: Blast you! Curse your name! Curse the name of Oscar and all who call him kin! I will never let you surpass me! Princess! I'm coming! Kieran will be forever at your side!

Oscar: Whoa... He's even more excitable than I remember. Hard to believe he's actually a decent knight...

(Speak to Brom with Ike)

Ike: You're a Crimean soldier, right? Come on! I'm here to rescue you!

Brom: S-seriously? I'm not dreaming again, am I?

Ike: I'm a mercenary in the employ of Princess Elinia. I'll give you all the details later. For now, we have to move!

Brom: What? The princess? Oh, happy day! Wait, let me stretch a bit... Ooo... Sorry, I'm stiff from this hard floor... Ow! Ow ow ow! Cramp! Cramp!

Ike: Oh, for the love of-- Come on! This way!

Brom: All, all right! Hold on a second... I don't remember the king having any children...

Ike: There's no time to explain! Hurry up!

Brom: Oh! Uh, c-c-coming!

(Speak to Nephenee with Ike)

Ike: You're a Crimean soldier, right? I've opened your cell. Let's get out of here.

Nephenee: Who...are you?

Ike: I'm Ike. I'm with a mercenary company hired by Princess Crimea. I can fill you in on the details later. For the time being, you'll just have to trust me.

Nephenee: ...Very well.

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Danomill: You'll not escape... I will see all of you...dead...
You will be exe...cu...ted...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Ike: I've brought one of the Crimean soldiers who was being held prisoner.

Elinia: Ahem... I'm sure you are unaware of this, but I am...

Kieran: Princess Elinia!

Elinia: Oh...yes. Quite right.

Kieran: I am Kieran! I served under General Geoffrey, as leader of Crimea's fifth platoon. My platoon had the honor of escorting you from the palace during Daein's attack!

Elincia: Really? You were there when...

Kieran: I was! Lord Renning ordered my platoon to accompany General Geoffrey and serve as your escort. Our mission was to see you safely out of Crimea to Gallia's king. But we failed you... And when you were lost to us... I believed my worthless life was at its end... Yet here you are! To think that I would be so blessed as to see you again... Such emotion... I... The tears...sniff...

Elincia: Kieran, were there any others?

Kieran: Such terrific emotion... So-- I beg your pardon?

Elincia: Did anyone other than yourself survive?

Kieran: Of course! Though I was the only one unfortunate enough to suffer the misery of captivity. General Geoffrey and several of his soldiers fought off the Daein attack. They were able to slip away. Even now, they wait in Crimea, hoping for one last chance to strike a blow against Daein.

Elincia: Geoffrey... He is alive? Ah... How those words drive off the shadows across my heart... Thank you, Kieran. Thank you...for surviving.

Kieran: You are too kind, Your Highness. The opportunity to serve you again is the greatest reward I could ask for. For as long as I draw breath, I will stand ready at your side! This, I swear.

Ike: All right, we all know where Kieran stands... How about you two? Will you recognize Princess Elincia as the rightful heir to the Crimean throne? Will you fight for her?

Brom: Look here. My name's Brom, and this lass is Nephenee. We're just simple country militiamen from the same territory. Now, we don't know much about nobles and stuff. Kings and queens don't matter much when you're workin' the fields. 'Course, we know we'll be in trouble if someone takes our fields away from us, so that's why we joined the militia! This king of Daein's no friend of ours. And I hear he's doing terrible things, too... Vile tortures with rusty nails and...and more! What's going to happen to my family? I left them all back home, and I'm so worried I can hardly see straight.

Nephenee: If you can defeat the king of Daein, will this country return to the way it used to be? Is that what you're after?

Elincia: It is my hope. I may not be as powerful as my father, but I will never abandon Crimea.

Brom: You sound like a lady who stands by her word. Looks like my choice is easy!

Nephenee: Mine too.

Brom: I'll fight in your name. I'll help you and yours, and we'll send those

Daein milksops packing!

Elincia: Thank you.

Unknown: I beg your pardon...

(Enter Sephiran)

Ike: You're...

Nephenee: O blessed saint...

Brom: Master Sephiran! You live!

Sephiran: Brom, Nephenee... Are either of you wounded?

Brom: We're fine, but what about you? You were jailed for helping us... I'm so sorry! Oh, I hope they didn't hurt you!

Sephiran: It is nothing to fret about. Everyone is safe, and that is what matters.

Nephenee: O blessed one...

Ike: Pardon me, may I have a moment?

Sephiran: Yes? Oh, you're the man I met earlier. I owe you so much for freeing me. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Ike: You don't have to thank us. However, I am curious about your situation. Why were you aiding Crimean soldiers?

Sephiran: Do you question my story?

Ike: You're a monk on pilgrimage as well as an ally of Crimean resistance fighters? Under the circumstances, do you blame me?

Sephiran: Tell me something, Ike. If you came across a wounded person, could you ignore his plight?

Ike: Normally... No, I could not. But in times like these, where it means risking my own life... I don't know. It's tough to say.

Sephiran: Ha ha... You're quite honest. However, if actually faced with such a choice, a man such as yourself would not hesitate. If faced with an individual in pain, you would act instinctively. Your body would not wait for the command.

Ike: Who... Who are you? Really. You're so calm, so full of peace. I can't believe you're a simple monk.

Sephiran: If you'll forgive me, I must be going. Fare thee well, young warrior. I am certain that we will meet again.

Volke: ...Ike.

Ike: Oh, hello, Volke. What do you want?

Volke: I was thinking about traveling with you for a bit. I'll be in the general area, so if you need anything, you can call me. I'll help you out...for a fee, of course.

Titania: What did you say?

Ike: Why would you do such a thing? In times such as these, there must be many parties that need...intelligence.

Volke: Well, you've sparked my curiosity. And besides... No, we'll just have to leave it at that.

Titania: That's not acceptable.

Volke: Don't be so inflexible. It's not as if I'll be joining your merry band or anything. This is strictly business.

Titania: And yet you--

Ike: Titania.

Soren: I believe this is a good opportunity. We will almost certainly have need of this man's talents. He is a dubious character at best, but at least we know his motives. Everything begins and ends with gold. He'll be easy to control.

Ike: Soren, he's standing right there.

Soren: I don't think he minds.

Titania: What will it be, Ike? The decision's yours.

(Agree to hire him again)

Ike: Very well. You may do as you like.

Volke: Excellent. Call me if you need anything.

Ranulf: First the thief and then that monk... What an odd band of characters you've attracted!

Ike: Ranulf! Have you finished your errands?

Ranulf: All done! But about those two--

Ike: Yes, they're both rather mysterious.

Ranulf: Well, the monk seems like a decent enough fellow.

Ike: Determining who is a friend and who is a foe is something I must be able to do. But it's just so hard.

Ranulf: That's only because you don't have enough information to base your judgment on. All we can do now is press on.

Ike: You're right...

-[Port Toha]-

Ranulf: Well, we're here! Welcome to Toha, Crimea's westernmost port city.

Ike: What's with this place? The people are going about their business. Why aren't they worried about Daein? About the war?

Ranulf: It's because this area is fairly isolated. Daein's army hasn't come this far, and so life goes on as before. Daein's plan is to seize the capital, then slowly and steadily expand its sphere of influence until it controls everything.

Ike: Surely these people have some idea of what's happening.

Soren: Ignorance is a form of bliss, is it not? These people don't know what it's like to lose a war. They don't want to know. Crimea as a nation has always been blessed by peace. Perhaps this is due to the temperament of its rulers, but the country hasn't seen serious warfare for centuries. While minor skirmishes with the kingdom of Daein have been legion, only the eastern borderlands have taken damage.

Ike: And yet even I know this peace will not last. When we met Daein forces on our scouting mission, they attacked us merely for being within the Crimean border.

Soren: Humans are shameless creatures that carelessly ignore any misfortune which does not befall them directly. They can-- and often do-- turn a blind eye to all manner of wickedness so long as it does not touch them or their kin. They will bow their heads, condemning those victims for bringing calamity upon themselves, and then they will cast their eyes toward heaven in thanks while their neighbors lay dying around them.

Ike: But the war is happening here. This is their home, not someone else's.

Soren: When the Daein army darkens their doorsteps, perhaps they will understand. When the peace they take for granted is shattered, and their sons and daughters slaughtered in the streets... Perhaps then will they comprehend the misfortunes they so long pretended not to see. I have no sympathy for them.

(Exit Soren)

Ike: ...

Ranulf: My goodness, the nastier the truth, the blunter he gets... Quite a delightful staff officer you have there.

Ike: He, um...he has an undeniable streak of severity in him but...but this? Something's bothering him, that's for sure.

Titania: It's to be expected. Even I'm a bit shocked by this place. Can they truly be as placid as they appear? Soren's a very empathetic young man. The emotions of this place may have proven to be too much for him.

Ranulf: Ignoring impending doom because you cannot prevent it... Fatalism is by nature a disheartening beast. Well, for all those born with nothing, there are those born with everything. Perhaps those who never notice the difference are the ones we should envy.

Ike: What's that supposed to mean?

Ranulf: Huh? Oh, I was talking to myself. Pay me no mind.

Ike: Hmm...

Ranulf: Now then, I've got to see a man about a ship. While I'm gone, why don't you get your supplies squared away? I'm sure that the journey ahead will require a lot of packing.

Titania: Ranulf, I'll go with you.

Ranulf: No, no, that's all right. You should supervise the supply acquisition. You're going to be at sea for months, you know?

Titania: I know that, but...

Ike: What is it, Titania?

Ranulf: She's worried about me. She doesn't want to leave a solitary laguz wandering around a beorc city.

Ike: But I thought Crimea and Gallia were allied nations. Why would a wandering laguz be cause for concern?

Ranulf: Well, it shouldn't be, but...

Titania: Do you remember what King Caineghis told you? The friendship between Crimea and Gallia exists only between the ruling classes. It hasn't taken root in the minds of the common citizenry at all.

Ranulf: That being said, things have improved quite a bit since King Ramon ascended to the throne. The reports of hunts and such other horrors have all but disappeared... Oh, don't worry! I'll be fine! I've got connections, see? It's not like I'll be roaming the docks for passage.

Ike: All right then, the job is yours. Please be careful.

Ranulf: You, too. Don't mess anything up!

(Soren Report)

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Merchant *]-

Youth: Hey there, traveler! Do you have everything you need? If you stop by my humble shop, you'll find the best deals in town! Whattya say?
Interested?

Ike: Yeah, that sounds great. Listen, can I ask you a question?

Youth: No problem! You can ask me anything. Especially if it's about my low, low prices!

Ike: What do the townspeople think of Daein? You knew that they were coming. Didn't anyone think to flee Crimea?

Youth: Flee? Don't be absurd!

Ike: But Crimea lost the war.

Youth: Yeah, I know. And honestly? That doesn't really affect us common folk, ya know? The truth is, we don't care who sits on the throne. To us, they're all just faceless beings who rule from on high. If they tried to raise taxes or something, you better believe we'd protest, but otherwise... I mean, take the king of Daein. He's just another man, right? If we keep working, he can keep living the high life. So it's not like he's going to treat us poorly or anything. As long as we can live our lives and have a little happiness, we aren't going to worry about it all too much. Oh, but if we were invaded by Gallia, well, that's a different story altogether. If our country were overrun by those savage beasts, who knows what could happen? Now THAT scares me!

Ike: ...

(Exit Ike)

Youth: What the? Hey! Wait! Come back! What about my low, low prices?! Now what was that all about?

-[Man ***]-

Vigilante: Pardon me, buddy. I haven't seen you around town before. You a traveling mercenary?

Ike: Yes, I suppose you could say that.

Vigilante: Nice sword... You look like a man who knows his business. If you're looking for work, I've a proposition for you.

Ike: A proposition?

Vigilante: I run a vigilante group that helps keep our fair town safe. A strong man like you would be most welcome.

Ike: Thanks, but I've got something lined up.

Vigilante: Oh, really? That's too bad. Heading out to sea?

Ike: Maybe.

Vigilante: Har har! Cautious to the end! I like that! Well, just in case you are... I want you to have this.

Ike: Hm? What's this?

Vigilante: It's a special sword. It'll come in handy if you ever...find yourself at sea. Not that you would! Har har!

Ike: Really? You're giving me a sword? Are you sure?

Vigilante: Well, there is one condition... Once you've finished your job, you come back and see me. I'd like you to reconsider that vigilante position.

Ike: Understood. Thanks again for the blade.

-Receive "Laguzslayer"-

-[Elincia *]-

Elincia: ...

Ike: Princess!

Elincia: My lord Ike...

Ike: Why are you here all by yourself? That's not very safe.

Elincia: I was looking at the town. I'm unfamiliar with the world outside the imperial villa where I was raised. This is the first time I've been able to see how other people live. Everything is so new and different to my eyes. This...is a town, isn't it? There's so much energy, and everyone seems to be enjoying themselves.

Ike: With all the boats coming in and out of the harbor, this town's livelier than most. That's for sure.

Elincia: It's like nothing has happened. All the death and destruction we've seen feels like a horrible dream...

Ike: Mmm...

-[Kieran *]-

Kieran: Haa! Yaaa! Hiiii-yaaaaa!!

Ike: What are you doing?

Kieran: I'm trying to regain the superb physique I lost when I was being held prisoner.

Ike: Are you ready to board the ship?

Kieran: I was born ready! Hoooo-ha! I don't need anything! Even as we speak, many of my fellow Crimeans are suffering at the hands of Daein. If I cannot rush to their aid today, then I can at least prepare myself for the day when I can.

Ike: I see. Well, when we're ready, I'll let you know.

Kieran: Understood.

Ike: Sorry to have interrupted you.

Kieran: My lord Ike!

Ike: What is it?

Kieran: You rescued and cared for Princess Elincia. You have my heartfelt thanks. She... For us, she is our one solitary hope.

Ike: Yeah.

Kieran: Right, enough talking. Until we make our triumphant return to Melior, all I can do is keep training! Haaa! Nyaaa! Whaaaaaaaaaaaaa!!

Ike: Careful! Don't pull anything...

-[Brom *]-

Brom: ...

Ike: What are you looking at?

Brom: Oh, just this. It's sort of a good-luck charm. My family gave it to me when I left home. We never had much money, so my parents gathered some stones from our farm back home and put them in this leather pouch. It's not much to look at, but it means a lot to me. Every day, I take them out and talk to them like they're my family. "How is everyone?" "I'm out here doing the best I can." "Don't worry. I'll be home soon." Just stuff like that. I know it sounds foolish, but if I don't do this... I won't... I won't have the courage to fight.

Ike: ...

Brom: Don't worry about my feelings. You can laugh. Acting like this at my age, what a silly man I am!

Ike: It's not silly, Brom. You're a strong man who has decided to fight for the sake of his family. I know that your family is very proud of you.

Brom: ...Sniff...S-s-sniff... Mm. Thank you, Ike. Sniff... Thank you.

-[Nephenee *]-

Nephenee: Well, that's that.

Ike: Are you ready to go, Nephenee?

Nephenee: Ah! Ike...

Ike: What is it?

Nephenee: ...Um... Nope! Nothin'! I'm fine.

Ike: Are you sure?

Nephenee: Yeah! Sure I'm sure!

Ike: You know, it's hard being a prisoner. It's physically and mentally

demanding... I need to know: can you fight?

Nephenee: Not a problem!

Ike: It's easy for you to say, but you sound like you're about to fall over.

Nephenee: That? Aw, no! That's a habit... It's just the way I talk. Just talkin'! ...Sorry.

Ike: No need to apologize. As long as you're not feeling ill, everything's fine. All right, I'll see you later.

Nephenee: Right then...

-----[Exit Base]-----

-[Port Toha]-

Ike: We should be leaving, but... Looks like everyone's going to be a while, yet.

Elincia: My lord Ike, are you ready to go?

Ike: Me? As long as I've got my sword, I'm always ready.

Elincia: A sword? That's it?

Ike: If I've got my cape, I can sleep just about anywhere. And as for food, well... Something always turns up.

Elincia: Hee hee! That's delightful.

Ike: It is?

Elincia: Yes, very much so. Tee hee hee!

Ike: Princesses... I don't think I'll ever understand them.

(A noise is heard)

Ike: What's going on? Why all the excitement?

Elincia: My lord Ike! There's a crowd gathering at the town entrance...

Ike: That's--

Soldier: Attention citizens! We've received reports of Crimean army stragglers hiding in this town! From this point forth, the Daein army will blockade all points of entry! No one comes or goes without our leave! The harbor is also closed! No ships will be allowed to sail!!

(Enter Titania)

Titania: Ike... Daein troops have--

Ike: I know. All we can do is move toward the docks and try not to be

discovered.

Titania: Have you seen Ranulf?

Ike: Not yet. Wait, here he comes now. Ranulf! Over here.

(Enter Ranulf)

Ranulf: Hoo! Things sure are heating up, aren't they?

Ike: How are things on your end?

Ranulf: Everything's set. All you need to do is sneak down to the harbor. You'll be met there by a man with a dusky pallor. His name is Nasir. Nasir is a man you can trust. I've explained your situation to him, and he's willing to help. If you can reach his ship safely, he'll take care of everything and deliver you to Begnion.

Ike: Ranulf, aren't you coming, too?

Ranulf: I was planning on it, but... Daein's movements have me concerned. I'll stay behind and see what's going on.

(A woman runs into Ranulf)

Woman: Oh, I'm sorry! I wasn't watching where I was going...

Ranulf: No, pardon me--

Woman: Ah! Eeeeeeeek! Su-sub-human!!

Ranulf: Blast!

(Enter Townspeople)

Man: I-it's true! A sub-human! How dare you come prowling around here!

(Man hits Ranulf)

Youth: Beast! Ya stinking sub-humans need to learn yer place! Human towns are too good for ya!

(Youth hits Ranulf)

Lady: Eww! It's so hairy! Go on! Scat!

(Lady hits Ranulf and he collapses)

Ike: Dang!

(Enter Lethe/Mordecai)

Ike: Mordecai!

Mordecai: Ike! We must leave!

Ike: What? No! We have to help Ranulf...

Mordecai: All of this noise will attract the attention of the Daein troops.

Ike: That's why we have to hurry up and help--

Lethe: He'll be fine! Leave him.

Mordecai: Ranulf is strong. Even stronger than me. It's all right.

Ike: Ranulf has no intention of defending himself! Look, he's not even changing forms! I can't just stand by and watch as he gets murdered!

Mordecai: Ike! Wait!

Lethe: ...Idiot human...

Ike: Stop! Get out of my way! Keep your hands off him!

Youth: Who do ya think ya are? Why would a human want to protect some sub-human?

Woman: He's a friend to this monster! I saw them talking earlier!

Ike: What's that to you?

Youth: Hey, the Crimean royals had sub-human companions, didn't they? Maybe you're one of those army guys the Daein troops are searching for!

Man: You there! Daein soldier! Ho! There are some suspicious folk over here!

Soldier: Huh? That way! Hurry!

Ike: Are you mad?! Your king was murdered by Daein! And now you're going to cooperate with them?

Man: Well, um...

Youth: I heard the king was teamin' up with those sub-humans! That's what got him killed!

Lady: Yeah! That's right! If we need allies, I'll take flesh-and-blood Daein humans over some fanged sub-human freak!

Youth: Yeah! Yeah! At least we know what we're getting! Trust your own kind!

Ike: You people are insane!

(Enter Vigilante)

Vigilante: Where's the sub-human everyone's screaming about?

Grandfather: Huzzah! The Toha vigilantes are here! Grab those guys and turn them over to the Daein army! That will prove our allegiance and gain our village favor!

Vigilante: Har har! If you want sub-humans hunted down, I'm your man!

(Ranulf gets up)

Ranulf: Ike!

Ike: Ranulf! Are you all right?

Ranulf: Why did you come back?

Ike: Because some fool was going to lay here and get beaten to death instead of defending himself!

Ranulf: Ah, Ike. What would you have me do? Gallia and Crimea have formed an alliance. I cannot jeopardize that by harming these people, no matter what ill they may bear me.

Ike: Even if none of them care two figs for their own country?

Ranulf: Even if. They're citizens of Crimea, after all.

Ike: Well, I'm not Gaillian, so there's no reason for me to hold anything back!

Ranulf: Ike! Listen to me! They think that you and I are allies! If you attack, it's no different than if I do so myself! So...

Ike: Let me guess...you're telling me to avoid the Daein pursuit, leave the town vigilantes alone, get to the docks as soon as possible, find a man named Nasir and get everyone on his boat. Is that it?

Ranulf: Exactly! I don't care what anyone else says, I think you're pretty bright!

Ike: All right, I'll play along. But mark my words, if they attack, heads will roll!

Ranulf: What? Hey! That's not going to do us any good!

Ike: Titania! Soren! Get everyone together! We're getting out of here!

(Take positions)

-----[Battle Start]-----

Mackoya: Listen to me! Do not let a single Crimean soldier escape our grasp. Sweep the entire town! Arrest anyone suspicious!

Soldier: General Mackoya! Sir, there's a group of vigilantes who want to help us. What shall I tell them?

Mackoya: Hmm... Very well. Let them do as they please.

Soldier: Yes, sir!

Nasir: Pardon me, are you the commander of these forces?

Mackoya: I am. And who are you?

Nasir: I'm captain of the boat you see moored here. My name is Nasir. I stopped by to accomplish some brief piece of business, but... Your soldiers are now preventing me from setting sail. I need to leave this place.

Mackoya: I apologize for the inconvenience. However, we are trying to stop some Crimean soldiers from escaping. To that end we need the

cooperation of all citizens...ship captains included.

Nasir: My ship is a simple merchant vessel, sailing under the flag of the Begnion Empire. If I present such documentation, surely it will prove I have no ties whatsoever with Crimea.

Mackoya: Under Daein rule, such...Begnion papers are nothing more than fishwrap.

Nasir: Yet--

Mackoya: You called yourself, Nasir, correct? Protest too loudly, Nasir, and we may think you a Crimean sympathizer. If that were to happen, who knows what...unfortunate fate might your simple merchant ship...

Nasir: ...I see. So be it.

(Exit Nasir)

Mackoya: You there! Soldier!

Soldier: Sir?

Mackoya: Strengthen the watch on this ship. That man is up to something... I can feel it... No matter what happens, that ship must not be allowed to set sail. Burn her and sink her first!

Soldier: Yes, sir!

(Exit Mackoya)

Mackoya: Now then, where is our special guest?

(Enter Black Knight)

Black Knight: I'm right here, General Mackoya.

Mackoya: Oh! Sir Black Knight! I hope I didn't keep you waiting.

Black Knight: No, I just arrived. Let us proceed... I would hear your report.

Mackoya: There are no problems whatsoever. I've nothing to report, save the tedium of it all. The farther west we travel, the weaker the Crimean fighting spirit becomes. Each town displays less and less resistance --now they literally throw wide the gates at first sign of our approach! With duty as humdrum as this, I worry that my troops may become sloppy and lose their edge.

Black Knight: As a fellow warrior, I can sympathize with your plight.

Mackoya: I thank you for your understanding.

Black Knight: This town was not scheduled for subjugation until much later... Tell me, why are you here now?

Mackoya: Yes, as to that... Mere days ago, a castle that held Crimean prisoners of war was attacked and the captives freed. The perpetrators were Crimean soldiers accompanied by sub-humans.

According to our intelligence reports, their trail led here...

Black Knight: I see.

Mackoya: The princess of Crimea is said to have fled to Gallia. If we can capture this band, we may gain information on her location.

Black Knight: Do you require my assistance?

Mackoya: I thank you for the generous offer. However, if you were to enter the fray, it would be over in a twinkling. My men are starved for combat. I would beg your restraint so that they may be allowed some... entertainment.

Black Knight: As you will. The field is yours. Turn your soldiers loose, and may their blades run red with glory.

Mackoya: Your graciousness is greatly appreciated.

Ranulf: Good luck, Ike! You'll be fine. As for me... I think I'll play a little game of cat and mouse with these Daein fools.

(Exit Ranulf)

Soldier: The Gallian sub-human! After him! Don't let him get away!

(Exit Soldiers)

Ike: Everyone, move out for the harbor! Try to avoid conflict with the local vigilante group if you can. Let's go!

Zihark: Hey! Are there really sub-humans about?

Vigilante: Oh yeah, no mistake about it. And they'll as soon kill you as look at you!

Zihark: Where are they?

Vigilante: They're over there... Cunning beasts! We're just about to start flushing them out of hiding.

Zihark: I see. If you find one, be sure to give me a call.

Vigilante: Har har! I like that guy. He came to our little town just for the chance to hunt sub-humans!

Zihark: Ah!

Lethe: Grrr! Flee. You're Crimean... I cannot fight you.

Zihark: Hold on! Please! ...I am not an enemy to laguz.

Lethe: L-laguz...? How do you--

Zihark: I joined this vigilante group because I knew it would afford me a chance to help you flee. Listen, I'll distract the townspeople. While they're worried about me, you can make good your escape.

Lethe: I cannot trust the word of a human.

Zihark: ...I see. Well, if I cut down these vigilantes, will you believe me?

Lethe: Huh?

Zihark: One? Two? All of them? How many do you want? Just give the word and I'll start the cutting!

Lethe: Hsss! Quiet! Why? Why would you...

Zihark: I want to help you... That's all.

Lethe: ...I see... You're not an enemy. That much I'll believe...

Zihark: Thank you. Now, you must hurry away from this place.

Lethe: No, I cannot flee. I have fr-friends with whom I must board a ship.

Zihark: Will you not desist? It's much too dangerous. The vigilantes and Daeins want nothing more than to kill laguz!

Lethe: I'm not leaving.

Zihark: I see... If that's your stance, then I've no choice.

Lethe: Hm?

Zihark: I will join your group.

Lethe: Don't... Don't be ridiculous!

Zihark: What's your name?

Lethe: I am Lethe, but--

Zihark: That's a good name.

Lethe: That's beside the point! You--

Zihark: I am Zihark. Well met, Lethe! Whoops! I don't think we have time for formal introductions. Let's hurry!

Lethe: H-hold it! I have not agreed to this!

Jill: Commander Haar! Awake! This is no time to be sleeping! A sub-human has been spotted! Come, let us join in the thrill of the hunt!

Haar: Yaaaawn... Mmm...let's not. Even if we don't lift a finger, Mackoya's pups will take care of everything.

Jill: Battle glory awaits! Would you allow others to steal this chance from beneath your very nose?

Haar: Yawn. Go entertain yourself, will you? Fight a soldier or lance a peasant or...what you will. But for the love of flying, stop interrupting my sleep!

Jill: Ooh! You're such a--

Haar: The fighting? Um... Wake me when it's done. Yaaaaawwnn... Zzzzzzz...

Jill: That's it!! I'm going by myself!

Haar: Zzzzzz... Snort! Wha--? Jill, hold a moment.

Jill: Yes? Have you changed your mind?

Haar: You'll wait here with the rest of us. We don't move unless we're attacked. That's the word from the top.

Jill: ...Graaarrr!

-[South house]-

Lady: Say, aren't you... You are! You're one of those Crimeans that the Daein soldiers are after, aren't you? ...Go on, get moving. I'll pretend I didn't see anything. Don't worry, just go! Wait a second... Here. Take this with you.

-Receive "Dracoshield"-

-[Middle house]-

Woman: Ohmygosh...are you... Are you really fighting Daein? Ooo...that's so brave! We've heard so many rumors about Crimea's defeat... That's why everyone in town acts like they do. No one has the courage to stand up to these fierce Daein forces. Everyone believes that if they just cooperate, life here will go on as it awalys has. Please, take this magic scroll. It was my brother's... He was murdered by the Daein army. Fight for him, too.

-Receive "Elwind"-

-[North house]-

Man: What's that? Thieves are taking advantage of the commotion to sack our little town? We must close the front gate! Thanks for your help! Oh, I almost forgot! Please, take this as a token of thanks. Go on, take it!

-Receive "Killer Lance"-

(Enter Black Knight)

Black Knight: All these men, and they're still having problems? Did I make a miscalculation?

Ike: Ah! It's him!!

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Mackoya: So we were the ones guilty of miscalculation... How shameful... Your Excellency... The rest is...up to you.....

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Black Knight: ...The mercenaries boarded the ship safely. Now, how to proceed...

(Enter Ranulf)

Ranulf: You're not impeding that ship. I won't allow it.

Black Knight: One of Gallia's beast warriors... I've met you once before. Yes ...at the castle near the sea of trees.

Ranulf: From where I'm standing, we've actually met twice.

Black Knight: Oh?

Ranulf: I saw you that night... Standing in the light of the full moon. The night you murdered Sir Greil.

Black Knight: Ha ha! So you were the one traveling with the beast king, eh? Interesting. By measuring his aide's strength, I will naturally learn more of the king's true power.

Ranulf: Hate to tell you this, but my king is not to be measured against the likes of me. He is far beyond that.

Black Knight: All the better. Now then, let us begin.

Ranulf: ...

(Ranulf/Black Knight fight)

Ranulf: ...Ugh...why? Why do my attacks do nothing?

Black Knight: You fight impressively. However, you are no match for me.

(Ranulf is suddenly healed)

Ranulf: Huh?

Black Knight: Hm?

(Enter Sephiran)

Sephiran: Rise. Leave this to me.

Ranulf: You...you were one of the prisoners...

Sephiran: This knight will not raise his hand to me. ...Correct?

Black Knight: ...

Sephiran: Go now, quickly!

Ranulf: If you insist! I'll give proper thanks when next we meet.

(Exit Ranulf)

Jill: Commander Haar! Let us pursue the enemy ship! They're friends of the sub-humans! We cannot allow them to escape!

Haar: Uwaaaaaahhh... That was a good nap. Well, looks like the fighting's over. Form up. It's time to withdraw.

Jill: Commander!

Haar: Listen to me, Jill. We're scheduled to return home tomorrow. If you were injured in a place like this, your lord father would not be pleased.

Jill: It's because of my father that I must not return home empty-handed. I must have something to show him! Please--

Haar: Simmer down, girl. The Black Knight has ordered us to withdraw. Would you ignore his word?

Jill: Th-that...

Haar: Would be suicide. Correct. So let's move out!

Jill: Blast.

(Exit wyverns)

(Enter Norris)

Norris: M-my lord Black Knight! A ship is departing! If we ready our own ship and set sail without delay, we can overtake it immediately!

Black Knight: ...

Sephiran: Listen to me, Daein general. You will withdraw from this place. I will not allow you to pursue that ship.

Norris: Who are you supposed to be, fool? You've no idea who you're speaking to, do you?

Black Knight: Gather your men. ...Withdraw.

Norris: Y-yet we--

Black Knight: I will not repeat myself. Do it now.

Norris: Yes...yes, at once!

Norris: Are you sure that's true?

Soldier: Yes! You can ask these two for more details.

(Enter Man/Youth)

Man: The two of us, we're here representing the townsfolk.

Norris: You say that a green-haired lass boarded that ship?

Youth: Y-yes! She had a very noble bearing about her... And she was beautiful.

Man: Her name was... Ellie? Ellen? They called her something like that.

Norris: It's true! Princess Elincia... Ha ha! My luck has changed.

Man: All of us, all the townsfolk, are ready to cooperate in any way we can!
If you would keep that in mind... Um...

Norris: Believe me, I understand your...loyalty.

Youth: Well then...

Norris: You there! Come here!

(Enter Soldier)

Soldier: Yes, sir! Right here.

Norris: Get these two worms out of here. Find the hardest physical labor in this town and get these fools started. Work 'em from dusk to dawn without stopping. Work 'em until they can no longer move! You got that!

Soldier: Yes, sir! Understood, sir!

Youth: B-but, that's...

Man: Why? Why would you...

Norris: Stop your whining. How else am I to reward worms vile enough to sell their own princess to the enemy? Enjoy your payment, you greedy dastards! Ha ha ha ha ha ha!

Man: Our own...princess? That's not... It can't be. It can't!

Youth: No... Nooooooooo!

Elincia: My lord Ike! How wonderful! I didn't think you were going to make it...

Ike: I'm sorry to have worried you.

Elincia: Oh, no, I'm just happy to see you well. So very...happy.

Ranulf: Huff...huff... Whew! I doubt the enemy will pursue me this far.

(Enter Giffca)

Giffca: A warrior such as you, wounded? Did a beorc give you that bruise?

Ranulf: Master Giffca! Owwww!

Giffca: The king told me to come and check on you. Don't move... Hm, you're plenty banged up, but nothing appears to be broken.

Ranulf: There's one among the Daein army whose power is overwhelming. To move with such speed with all that armor... I tell you, it's not right! And now, the king's forced to use you, his shadow warrior, to check up on me... Our ministers are as obstinate as ever. No matter what happens, they will not approve of an alliance with the beorc.

Giffca: Nothing to be done about that. Every one of the older retainers has memories of laguz subordination. Even the king. If Princess Elincia were not King Ramon's orphan, I doubt he would be willing to aid her.

Ranulf: Perhaps you're right... At any rate, the princess and the others are now safely at sea.

Giffca: And the watchdog? No signs of carelessness, I presume.

Ranulf: Of course not. Even the elders will bend their ears to hear what that one says-- that one is "special", after all.

Giffca: And how do you see this? Princess Elincia's drive for the reconstruction of Crimea. Does she have a chance?

Ranulf: Eh, who can say? Which way the wheel turns depends on Ike and his mercenaries. Success and failure are but a hair removed.

Giffca: So this company, which has done nothing but flee, controls the fate of the kingdom? That's a dangerous gamble, isn't it?

Ranulf: All gambles are dangerous, Master Giffca. But no mistake about it, Daein's next target is Gallia. We must go home and prepare!

Ashnard: ...Princess Crimea, did she board the ship to Begnion with the remainder of Gawain's mercenaries?

Black Knight: Yes.

Ashnard: The hindrance that was Gawain is dead. The location of the medallion ...will soon be known. Has our "worm" worked itself into the group?

Black Knight: It appears that our worm has been accepted as a trusted member of the company.

Ashnard: Heh heh heh. All is going as planned. Now, we let them swim as they please.

Black Knight: ...There is one thing. I met someone unexpected at the harbor.

Ashnard: Who?

Black Knight: The prime minister of the Begnion Empire...

Ashnard: What?! ...Is that true? If he is nosing about, we must not make any mistakes. Did he give any indication he had caught on to our plans?

Black Knight: That... I do not know. He did tell me to deliver a message to you..."Overreaching ambition invites disaster."

Ashnard: Pah. Nonsense. Our only concern is the princess of Crimea and the medallion. We must wait and watch until such time as we can strike.

Black Knight: ...

Ashnard: In the interim, I want you to take charge of the invasion of Gallia. Be smart. You must not allow Gallia to bring their full might to bear. Understood?

Black Knight: ...As you will.

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Chapter 12: A Strange Land

[012]
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Narration: Having narrowly escaped Daein's grasp, the Greil Mercenaries are pleased to feel the ocean beneath their feet as they set sail. According to Captain Nasir, the voyage to Begnion will take roughly two months. Blessed with temperate weather, the ship's journey southward is smooth and steady. As it passes the midpoint of its trip, the ship sets a course along the coastline and begins to head east. These seas belong to Phoenicis and Kilvas, the kingdoms of the bird tribes. Both nations prey on human vessels for supplies and wealth, and their flying corsairs are feared across the seas. Additionally, the southern portion of the continent contains the realm of the dragon tribe: the monarchy of Goldoa. This country has remained isolated since its founding centuries past, preserving its closed culture behind a veil of mystery. It is these laguz-controlled waters that Ike and company must now cross.

Ike: ...

Mist: Ike?

Ike: ...

Mist: What's bothering you? You've been moping around ever since we came aboard.

Ike: I'm...just a little seasick.

Mist: Seasick? You're such a bad liar. You never even get regular sick. You're not the type to get seasick!

Ike: Really, it's nothing.

Mist: Come on, talk to me. You've been doing so much lately. I just want the chance to help you for a change.

Ike: Well... All right. I'll tell you what's been bothering me. It's that incident back in Toha.

Mist: Go on.

Ike: When everyone discovered Ranulf was a laguz, all those people-- they changed, just like that. Up until that instant, they'd seemed like such kind and decent people. I just... I had no idea beorc prejudice against the laguz was so strong. Why do they hate them so much? How are we so different, Ranulf and I?

Mist: I have to say, at first, I was scared, too. When I saw how they could change... They can do things that we hu-- I mean, we beorc can't do. They're not like us...

Ike: Mist, you can't honestly feel...

Mist: It's different now! Everyone's so very nice. But, you know, that's because of all the time we've spent together. I've seen how they are; I've gotten to know them. That's why I've changed. I'm not scared or nervous around them, but other people don't get that chance. I think that's why they're frightened.

Ike: Maybe you're right... Maybe people like me are the odd ones, the people who accept others as they are.

Mist: I wish more people were like that. I mean, no one really wants to fight, do they? Doesn't everyone WANT peace? I guess it's just hard to put all of those fears behind us.

Unknown: You're right. It is very hard.

(Enter Nasir)

Mist: Nasir! What's the big idea, eavesdropping on us like that?

Nasir: How do you find sailing? Have you gotten sick at all?

Ike: We're fine. But answer a question for me, would you? Why are you here? Why do you associate with the laguz?

Nasir: Why? Besides the obvious financial benefits, I suppose I do so because I am one.

Mist: What? No, you're not a laguz! I don't see any tail or anything!

Nasir: Because I've chosen to live among beorc, I've taken certain steps to make sure I'm not recognized. I've had to change my attire, my feeding habits... I've done many things.

Ike: Why would you do that?

Nasir: Laguz cannot survive in isolation, nor can beorc. If both races are to thrive, they must learn to coexist. I have spent many years searching for a way to make this happen.

Ike: You think that laguz and beorc can live together? After everything you must have seen? I'm impressed.

Nasir: Ike, you will never truly understand a matter unless you look at it from each party's perspective. As you say, the laguz are indeed now persecuted by the beorc. But long ago, these roles were reversed.

Ike: ...Whatever happened in the past does not justify what we do to the laguz now.

Nasir: That is the thinking of an honest man. Keep things simple and pure. I like that. Still, the strength of your conviction comes from your youth and your innocence. Trust me: it will be tested. When your journey is over, how will you be changed? I pray your conviction is not lost to despair.

Ike: Talking to you is hard work.

Nasir: Someday, you'll understand. For now, my role is simply to deliver you safely to Begnion. Ranulf has paid me quite handsomely with money from the king of Gallia himself, and I will not let him down.

Ike: We're out of our element here at sea, so you're all we have to depend on. Thank you for your help.

Nasir: I will do what I am able.

(Soren Report)

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Boy ***]-

Ike: ...

Unknown: Ah, Ike! Grab that boy!

Ike: What's going on?

(Enter Sothe)

Sothe: Mm!

(Enter Nasir)

Nasir: No more running for you.

Sothe: ...

Ike: Nasir, who is this?

Nasir: A stowaway. I gather he boarded the ship at Toha.

Ike: What are you doing here? Why did you sneak aboard the ship?

Sothe: ...

Ike: You won't talk? In that case...

Sothe: Hm? Ow...ooouuch!

Nasir: Ike, there's no need to be so rough!

Ike: I'm not going to waste my time playing games with this urchin. You want me to let you go? Open your mouth and start talking.

Sothe: Owowow! Quit it! I'll talk!! ...That hurt! I thought you were gonna break my face...

Ike: Well? What's your name? What are you doing here?

Sothe: I'm...Sothe. I'm... I'm a thief, but... I didn't come onboard this ship to steal anything.

Ike: ...

Sothe: Stop scowling at me like that! You're making me uncomfortable.

Nasir: It's not just you. Ike always looks like that. Don't mind him; just keep talking.

Sothe: I'm...looking for someone. I heard this ship was sailing for Begnion, so I decided to climb aboard.

Nasir: This person you're after is in Begnion?

Sothe: I don't know. The trail went cold in Toha, and... I couldn't think of anywhere else to go from there.

Ike: Is it family?

Sothe: Huh?

Ike: The person you're looking for.

Sothe: Yeah. I mean, we're not related by blood or anything, but...we're definitely family.

Ike: ...

(Agree to aid Sothe)

Ike: All right. Nasir, my mercenary company will look after this boy. He won't be a burden to you or your crew.

Nasir: If that's what you want to do, it's fine with me.

Sothe: Are you sure?

Ike: You're going to be put to work. I hope you're prepared.

Sothe: Sure, no problem! I'll... I'll do whatever you need!

Ike: ...Volke?

Volke: Right here.

Ike: Gah! Where've you been? You disappeared the moment we got on this ship!

Volke: Don't worry about it. I'll be there when you need me.

Ike: It's not me; it's my sister. You've never once shown up for a meal, and she thinks you're dying of hunger.

Volke: Did we ever eat together while we were on land?

Ike: All right, listen. Land? Big. Ship? Small. It's not the same thing! I don't want Mist roaming the ship with a plate of food anymore. So please, eat one meal a day with us.

Volke: One hundred gold.

Ike: You're going to charge me? To make you eat? And that's more than you charge to pick a lock! Why?

Volke: I don't like large groups. Bye. Call me if you decide it's worth it.

(Exit Volke)

Ike: Maybe I should just tell Mist he's dead...

-[Zihark *]-

Ike: Do you have a minute?

Zihark: Of course, Commander Ike.

Ike: You and I haven't had very many opportunities to talk, and I--

Zihark: You don't think you can trust me?

Ike: No, it's not that. I'm just curious-- I was surprised to see anyone in Toha who chose to fight on the side of the laguz.

Zihark: I joined the Toha vigilantes solely for the purpose of saving laguz. I'm not from Crimea, but when I heard she had joined with Gallia, I envisioned my perfect world, one in which the laguz could live normal lives, free of oppression. However, when I came to Crimea, I found things were no different there than in any other beorc nation.

Ike: It was the same for me. I couldn't allow myself to ignore these problems any longer.

Zihark: I'm happy to hear it. Of all the beorc I've ever met, you're the only one who shares my conviction.

Ike: Zihark, is there...some other reason you defend the laguz?

Zihark: I don't follow you.

Ike: You see, I was born in Gallia, or so I've been told. I just wondered if

you had a similar reason guiding you.

Zihark: ...Of course I have my reasons. Would you be upset if I didn't want to discuss them? My reasons are...extremely personal.

Ike: No, it's no problem. I wanted a better understanding of what kind of man you are, and I have that now.

Zihark: Can I ask what that is?

Ike: You are a good man. I'm glad to have you along.

Zihark: I'm glad to be here. I feel I'm finally able to do the kind of good I've longed to do for years.

-[Ilyana *]-

Ilyana: Ooo...

Ike: You don't look so well. Are you all right?

Ilyana: I'm...seasick... When I was traveling with the merchants, we sometimes used...ships... Every time was the same... Urp... I'm...sorry.

Ike: Did you travel with Muston and the others for a long time?

Ilyana: About four years, all told. I had just left home, you see... I was all alone, and I couldn't find work. In my hometown, I had so many people I could depend on...but once I left, everything changed. If Muston's group hadn't found me by the side of the road, I'd probably be dead by now.

Ike: Hm... You seem to have led quite an adventurous life. It's a bit surprising.

Ilyana: I get that a lot.

Ike: I find it hard to imagine that you couldn't find work, though. Your magic skills are amazing.

Ilyana: Aren't they, though? Hee hee! I'm always happy when people notice... Whew... Wow! I feel so much better now. I'm actually starting to get hungry.

Ike: I'm glad to hear it. Just stay above deck, and when you start to feel sick, look off at the horizon, all right?

-----[Exit Base]-----

Ike: Nasir, what is it?

Nasir: Nothing. Nothing we can do anything about, at any rate. We're being followed by pirates.

Ike: Really? I don't see any ships...

Nasir: Not by sea. By air. Look up.

Ike: Are those...birds? If they are, they must be huge...

Titania: Those are laguz, Ike.

Soren: Ravens from Kilvas. Their black wings are an ill omen for all who see them.

Ike: Titania, Soren, you noticed them coming as well?

Titania: Yes, Soren and I saw them when we were discussing our plans from the aft decks.

Ike: I'd heard stories, but...they're really flying. Wow.

Nasir: We're still out of their range, but airborne foes can be especially troublesome. I'd prefer to avoid them altogether. Let's see if we can outrun them.

Titania: From what I've been told, the flying corsairs of Kilvas and Phoenicis are far more cruel than any beast laguz.

Ike: Winged pirates... How am I supposed to fight against that?

(The ship is hit by something)

Ike: Wha-what was that?

Titania: Oof... It felt like we hit something.

Nasir: Blast... We've run aground! We must be caught on a reef or something! Move it, lads! Get the ship free!

Soren: Ike, the crows are coming!

Ike: Pull everyone together! Looks like we're in for a fight!

-[Gazaleah Sea]-

Seeker: Predictable humans. Sailed right into our trap without fail.

Soldier: Let's finish this quickly! It won't be long before Phoenicis or Goldoa takes an interest in what's happening here!

Ike: Soren! Do you have a plan?

Soren: I've done research in the past. All members of the bird tribes are vulnerable to wind magic. I think it's safe to assume that they are also as susceptible to arrows as any other flyer.

Ike: Wind magic and bows... All right! Everyone gather your weapons and prepare to meet the enemy on the deck! I want a small group to remain belowdecks to protect Princess Elincia and the crew. We've never faced an enemy like this. I want everyone to stay together. Let's go!

-----[Battle Start]-----

(Enter Jill)

Jill: Caught up...at last. I'll do this on my own. I will not let them escape!
Huh? That are those things? Giant birds? Disgusting! Could they be...
Are they...bird half-breeds?

Jill: You! Why are you lollygagging about?

Ike: Who are...

Jill: I am Jill Fizzart, wyvern rider of Daein, attached to Commander Haar's
battalion. I offer a truce! I cannot sit by and allow a human vessel to
be attacked by sub-human degenerates! I will fight with you!

Ike: We will accept no help from Daein!

Jill: This is no place for foolish pride! At this rate, the sub-humans will
devour you--

Ike: I will not accept aid from anyone who thinks laguz are sub-human.

Jill: What are you babbling about? I'm on your side! We'll talk after I chase
off these crows! Bleed the half-breed!

Ike: Hold it! What... What in the world is going on?

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Seeker: Argg... I'm falling...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Ike: Is everyone all right?

Soren: I'll check on injuries.

Titania: Those crows make fierce opponents.

Ike: Nasir, how's the ship?

Nasir: Completely immobilized. We can't shake free of this reef.

Ike: I feel useless just waiting around here. There has to be something I can
do to help.

Mist: Hey! Ike! Where are you going? Should you be leaving the ship!?

Ike: Nothing's getting done sitting around here. I just want to go ashore and
see what I can see.

Nasir: What? Hold on, Ike! You can't... That's--

Mist: Ah! Ike! Behind you!

Soldier: You there! What are you doing?

Ike: Huh?

Nasir: This could be trouble...

(Enter Goldoans)

Soldier: This is Goldoan territory. Outsiders are not permitted.

Ike: No, wait, you don't understand! Our ship has run aground. There's nothing we can do! We're stuck here!

Soldier: Then return to your ship. What happens to beorc is none of our affair.

Ike: That's ridiculous! You're a complete--

Soldier: You have been warned. You will not be warned a second time.

(They transform into dragons)

Ike: Hey!

Unknown: Cease this at once! What do you think you're doing?

(Enter Kurthnaga/Gareth)

Soldier: My... My lord prince.

Kurthnaga: Man of the beorc. My countrymen were discourteous. I ask that you forgive them.

Ike: Who are you?

Kurthnaga: I am Kurthnaga, prince of Goldoa.

Ike: The prince? Now we're getting somewhere. Thanks to some Kilvas pirates, our ship's run aground. Can you lend us any help?

Kurthnaga: ...

Ike: What is it? You can't help us, can you?

Kurthnaga: I am not used to being addressed in such a direct manner. I was... taken off guard. My apologies.

Ike: No, I didn't-- If anyone should apologize here, it's me. My father had a great deal to say about my lack of etiquette. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to offend you.

Kurthnaga: Please, pay it no mind. I am more concerned with the misfortune your journey has met. Of late, the ravens have grown ever more barbarous, and this cannot stand. My father will lodge a formal protest with Kilvas, I assure you. In the meantime, we shall help you with your ship. Gareth, direct the others to push their ship free.

Gareth: At once!

Mist: Dragons! They're all dragons! They're huge! And so strong! It's incredible!

Elincia: It's overwhelming...

Ike: Yeah...it is.

Titania: Goldoa is the land of the dragons. More than any other laguz tribe, they are known for their longevity. I've heard tales of Goldoans still living who flew the skies when the goddess herself still walked the land.

Ike: How is it you know so much about Goldoa?

Titania: Everything I've learned comes from books. Goldoa itself no longer has any contact with the outside world. Seeing them now, it's like a dream...

Ike: So this is good fortune, is that what you're saying?

Mist: She's saying we got lucky! For once, your recklessness actually got us OUT of trouble!

Ike: What's that supposed to mean?

Kurthnaga: We have moved your ship safely and without harm to you or your vessel.

Kurthnaga: My subjects tell me your ship was indeed lodged against a reef. However, there was no structural damage to your ship. You need not interrupt your journey.

Ike: That's good news. Thank you.

Kurthnaga: Is there anything else you require? If you need food or fresh water, we can replenish your supplies.

Ike: That would be most appreciated. We are beginning to run low on water. As for food, any fruit, meat, fish...anything fresh would be wonderful.

Kurthnaga: It shall be done. Gareth, will you see to it?

Gareth: Yes, at once.

(Exit Gareth)

Ike: I know that Goldoa does not engage in trade with other nations, but will you accept gold in payment?

Kurthnaga: Do not worry about payment.

Ike: But you've done so much for us when you could have left us to die out there. We must repay you somehow.

Kurthnaga: Sweet courtesy is ever the herald of hospitality. Will this suffice to explain my actions?

Ike: Hospitality? Isn't that for guests?

Kurthnaga: As you know, Goldoa prefers isolation. We rarely see foreigners, especially beorc, and even more rarely do we treat with them. Chance has brought us together, and I am grateful for this opportunity. In fact, I wish we could feast a while and converse. However, my father would never allow it.

Ike: You can't expect us to accept so generous a gift--

Kurthnaga: But I do. I insist that you consider it a personal gift from Goldoa's prince. However, I have made you uncomfortable, so if you feel you must decline...

Ike: No, of course not. We will be happy to accept your gift. We appreciate it.

Kurthnaga: I'm so pleased you understand.

(Enter Titania)

Titania: Ike! Captain Nasir wants to depart as soon as possible.

Ike: Understood.

(Exit Titania)

Ike: Well then, I beg your leave. Prince Kurthnaga, I won't forget your kindness. Thank you!

Kurthnaga: It was my pleasure. Take care.

(Ike and crew board the ship)

Kurthnaga: Farewell, beorc! May your journey be safe!

Elincia: My lord Ike, is something amiss?

Ike: First, those ravens attack us, and then a band of Goldoan dragons rescues us. I can't understand how they are all considered laguz. Is that strange?

Elincia: No, I see what you're saying... Just as there are both good and evil beorc, there must be good and evil laguz as well. But they are so distinct in appearance... It is tempting to assume each race is, as a whole, intrinsically good or evil.

Ike: Aye, that it is. The beast tribes of Gallia and the dragons of Goldoa seem so honorable...and the birds of Kilvas and Phoenicis seem so cruel. It seems so easy to reduce them all to good or evil.

Elincia: I'm sure it can't be as simple as that...

Ike: Look at us beorc: Daeins are evil, and Crimeans are not. It's as simple as that. Well, wait... There were those prejudiced fools we met in port.

They weren't all that honorable. Maybe you're right.

(Enter Nasir)

Nasir: Much of what seems good and evil is simply a matter of perspective, Ike. Many conditions affect our judgment. Drawing a definitive line is nigh impossible.

Ike: Nasir! Where have you been? You vanished without a trace.

Nasir: I am uncomfortable around dragons. I thought it would be better if I stayed below in my cabin. My apologies.

Ike: Now that you mention it, Soren seems to have disappeared as well. Have you seen him?

Nasir: Perhaps he's feeling nauseated. For one unaccustomed to sea travel, it's not uncommon.

Ike: Right... I think I'll check up on him later.

Nasir: The wind is picking up. I believe I will go and check on the condition of our sails. Keep yourselves warm up here. It's a chill wind that blows in these waters.

(Exit Nasir)

Ike: Princess Elincia, you should be returning to your cabin.

Elincia: What about you, my lord Ike?

Ike: I'll stay on deck a while longer. I have a lot to think about.

Elincia: Would you mind if I stayed here with you? I won't be any bother.

Ike: Hm? It's all right with me...

Elincia: Oh, thank you.

=====
Chapter 13: A Guiding Wind

[013]
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(Soren Report)

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Youth **]-

Daniel: Commander, how are you? Staring at the sea, I see...

Ike: I know you... You're Jorge, right? You make weapons for us.

Daniel: No. Jorge buys used ware. I'm his twin brother. Well, mostly his twin. He has blond hair, you see. My name is Daniel. Just remember that I have brown hair and that Jorge has blond, and you'll be fine.

Ike: Brown hair, Daniel, and weapons... Blond hair, Jorge, and items... I think I'll remember.

Daniel: Fantastic. Say, can I ask you a quick question? You're a battle expert, right? You've fought a lot?

Ike: Enough, yeah. What is it?

Daniel: Picture this. Let's say there are two ships. And suppose there are planks connecting the ships at three different points.

Ike: All right. I'm picturing it.

Daniel: Now then, soldiers from one ship are about to attack the other one. Imagine that the defending side has fewer soldiers. If they want to mount a solid defense, what should they do?

Ike: It seems clear enough to me. Position the soldiers with the best defense on the planks, soldiers like cavaliers and knights.

Daniel: I see. So you would hold the enemy at bay by using your strongest allies to block the primary crossing points!

Ike: Then, you'd want to have your long-range attackers line up behind the tougher units barring the bridges. I'm talking about anyone with javelins, axes, or magic. You'd be able to do a lot of damage without much risk.

Daniel: Sounds like a good plan but...it seems rough on the soldiers defending the bridges.

Ike: You would want to heal them often, obviously, but maybe there's a way to reduce how much damage they take.

Daniel: It's a stretch, but what if I don't have them attack at all? That way, they won't run the risk of getting any counterattacks!

Ike: Hmm... That's not a bad idea.

Daniel: Great! Thanks. That gave me some good ideas.

Ike: Ideas? For what?

Daniel: Oh, my brother and I have been playing a wargame. I've lost four times in a row.

Ike: A wargame?

Daniel: We'll let you join if you bring some parchment and a quill. Come see us anytime if you're curious. See you later.

(Exit Daniel)

Ike: Maybe I shouldn't have been so serious with him...

-[Woman **]-

Aimee: Well, well! If it isn't our commander! What brings you down here?

Ike: I was just on my way to the deck.

Aimee: Oh, I see. That's too bad. I had a story I wanted to share with you.

Ike: A story?

Aimee: Hm mm. And quite a ripping yarn it is, too. Interested?

Ike: Well... Not really.

Aimee: Oh, you're so rude! And after you were so sweet the other day!

Ike: What are you going on about?

Aimee: When those crows attacked... I had wanted to see what they looked like, so I was hiding on the deck, watching. I had heard they could fly, of course, but I had no idea they could fight! I thought one of them had the drop on you, and I couldn't help myself! I cried out, "Commander, watch out!"

Ike: I thought I'd heard a strange, shrieking sound. That was you?

Aimee: And upon hearing my sweet voice, Commander, you turned around and brought down that crow with one shot! It was awe inspiring.

Ike: Not really. He was exhausted from the battle. He could barely move.

Aimee: And that's when you first caught my eye, my dynamic young commander!

Ike: Is that why your hand always lingers on mine when you hand me my equipment?

Aimee: Oh, no! Have I been too...obvious?

Ike: Maybe I should send one of the others down to pick up our gear from now on...

(Exit Ike)

Aimee: Hm. You're embarrassed, aren't you? You're so cute when you're being coy! But once I set my sights on a man, I never let him get away. Remember that.

-[Jill *]-

Ike: Hey.

Jill: What do you want?

Ike: Is there any reason you're still on our ship? The crows are gone. The truce is over, isn't it?

Jill: ...I have a duty. As a Daein soldier, I cannot allow a Crimean princess and her band of mercenaries to run free where they will.

Ike: If you want to start a fight, you're on the right path. Think you can take us all on your own? Because if you want to get your friends, I won't stop you from leaving the ship.

Jill: Watching you all fight those crows like a band of street rats with sticks, I could see you were no match for me. But even if I were to leave this ship, the land is too far away for me to reach.

Ike: Nonsense. I can see land in the distance from time to time, and I thought you could go anywhere on that wyvern of yours.

Jill: No wyvern could fly that far without resting, and these islands are thick with half-beast scum. Even if I wanted to, I couldn't leave this ship.

Ike: Then let me ask you, why did you follow us alone knowing that?

Jill: I wanted to be recognized... I wanted my deeds to earn me fame. A soldier has little else to strive for...

Ike: And yet you soldiers sneer at mercenaries. At least we fight for something real. There are some dumb soldiers in this world.

Jill: ...

Ike: You leave us no choice. I'll take you as far as Begnion.

Jill: ...

Ike: But as long as you're on my ship, you will not utter the phrase "half-beast". If you can't agree to this condition, I'll kick you off the ship right now.

Jill: I-- All right...

Ike: ...

(Exit Ike)

Jill: ...

-[3 Brothers ***]-

Boyd: I'm just saying, there has to be something more we can do.

Oscar: Boyd... You're not making any sense. I understand your enthusiasm to help Ike, but try to explain what you mean... We can't do anything until we know exactly what it is you want to do.

Boyd: You're so impatient, Oscar. I was just getting to it, all right?

Oscar: Impatient? You're calling me impatient? You're so impatient you can barely be bothered to put your armor on!

Boyd: Nag, nag, nag. Listen, I think we should come up with an unstoppable killer attack, something only we can do!

Rolf: An unstoppable attack!? That sounds good...

Boyd: Doesn't it? I'm glad you approve, peewee!

Rolf: Don't call me peewee!

Oscar: It is a fine plan, but you haven't explained what this new attack is supposed to be. How do we do it?

Boyd: Hey, I came up with the idea. It's your job to figure out the details. Make it cool, though, Oscar.

Oscar: Boyd, this plan sounds... Oh, dear... How do I put it?

Rolf: Let me do it! I'll think up a great one!

Boyd: No way. Forget that. It's too much for your little peewee brain.

Rolf: I told you, don't call me that!

(Ike is listening off to the side)

Ike: They may not like to admit it, but they certainly are close.

-----[Exit Base]-----

Nasir: Ike, there's someone here claiming to be an envoy from the theocracy of Begnion. She's been asking if the princess of Crimea is aboard... What do you want to do?

Ike: A Begnion envoy? How did she know about this ship?

Nasir: Hmmm... Perhaps she had word from King Gallia... On the other hand, this is Begnion we're speaking of. I imagine it has spies in every corner of the continent. Perhaps one of those spies is the source of her information.

Ike: So we shouldn't be surprised that she knows about Princess Elincia, right?

Soren: No, but it's extremely unusual for Begnion to send an envoy to meet a princess whom they do not even acknowledge.

Ike: What do you mean?

Soren: It is a complicated matter. You see, the envoy is essentially an extension of the empress herself. Both Crimea and Daein were once part of Begnion. Both nations have only recently splintered from the theocracy. I can't fathom why the empress would extend the courtesy of an envoy to a nation she must consider somewhat beneath her. She must be planning something.

Nasir: "Beneath her"? That is somewhat harsh, don't you think?

Soren: Harsh, perhaps, but it's true. Clothing it in sweet words will not hide its bitterness, will it?

Ike: Soren, even I would question the tactfulness of your words.

Soren: I will try to be more diplomatic.

Elincia: Ike, Nasir. You've no need to scold Soren. His words are just that. They do me no harm.

Nasir: I'm glad to hear that, Princess, but he should mind his manners.

Soren: ...

Ike: Deciding how we ought to treat with this envoy is a more pressing issue.
Princess, will you meet her and hear her message?

Elincia: I believe I must. We gain nothing by refusing to see her. Let us meet
with the envoy.

Tanith: Princess Elincia of Crimea, I presume...

Elincia: Yes.

Tanith: It is an honor to meet you. My name is Tanith. I am deputy commanding
officer of Begnion's holy guard.

Elincia: I must ask, what would Begnion want of me that she would send her
holy guard to greet me?

Tanith: The apostle has learned of you, Princess Elincia, and she has come
here to meet with you personally. The duty falls upon me to take you
to her now.

Elincia: The apostle? Am I to meet-- Surely the apostle has better things to
do than...

Tanith: Will you accompany me?

Elincia: I suppose that I...

Ike: We are the princess's escorts, and we will be coming with her. I hope you
understand.

Tanith: Of course.

Elincia: Then yes, I will go with you. Thank you.

(Enter Pegasus Knight)

Pegasus Knight: Bad news, ma'am. We've sighted laguz near the apostle's
position. Birdmen. Crows, most likely.

Tanith: Hmph! We've seen their kind before. They fancy themselves pirates
without a ship, but they're thieves plain and simple. Commander Sigrun
is with the apostle, and it will take more than a few winged
scavengers to get past her. Let's remain calm.

Pegasus Knight: I... Actually, I'm afraid we aren't quite sure where the
apostle is.

Tanith: What!? They've kidnapped the apostle!?

Pegasus Knight: No, no! I... From what the commander said, the apostle grew
impatient and had another of her more...willful moments. I
asked at the docks, and sure enough, one of the longshoremen
heard her order the ship to set sail without us.

Tanith: What!? Where were her attendants? What was she doing without her

guard? Why can she never just stay put? I've told her time and time again that the seaports here are rampant with pirates and crow thugs! ...Right. Where is she now?

Pegasus Knight: The wind is poor today, so we think her ship should not be too far from us. I came here as quickly as I could.

Tanith: Understood. We'll move immediately.

(Exit Pegasus Knight)

Elincia: Excuse me, but is something wrong?

Tanith: Your Highness, I must apologize, but an urgent matter has arisen, and I must attend to it immediately. I will return for you later. Await my return!

(Exit Tanith)

Ike: What was that all about?

Titania: Judging from her expression, I'd say something has happened to the person she's meant to be protecting.

Mist: Say, do you think that ship over there is involved? The envoy is flying in that direction.

Ike: If so, then the pegasus knight's fears have already been realized... They're under attack. It's the ravens they spoke of, isn't it?

Soren: Ike, why don't we go lend them a hand?

Ike: Are you feeling all right, Soren? It's not like you to offer to help anyone.

Soren: It's a great opportunity to put the empress in our debt. We'd be fools to pass that up, wouldn't we?

Ike: I should have known you'd have an angle. What do you want to do, Titania?

Titania: I don't approve of Soren's motivations, but I agree that we should help.

Ike: Well, then that's what we'll do. Will you be all right on your own, Princess?

Elincia: You're doing the right thing. I would not dream of stopping you. I know those pirates are no match for your strength. Give them... Give them a sound thrashing!

Ike: Huh... You're starting to sound like one of us, aren't you? All right then, we'd better go!

-[Coastal Bagnion]-

Tanith: Ugh! No matter how many we defeat, there are more waiting to attack! And not just those ravens of Kilvas, either-- there are beorc, too. What do they all want here!?

Ike: Need a little help?

Tanith: You! Aren't you Princess Crimea's escort?

Ike: Yes. The princess ordered us to come to your aid. May we join the fray?

Tanith: That would be appreciated. We'll keep the ravens at bay. In the interim, why don't you go ahead and move onto that ship. The big vessel is ours. I'm not sure who the small one belongs to. There are human soldiers aboard, but if they're in this part of the sea, they must be pirates. Cut them down!

Ike: Right. We'll take care of them!

Soldier: Where on earth is the holy guard? Between those crows and the pirates, we're outnumbered! It's only a matter of time before we're overwhelmed.

Astrid: I will fight, too.

Soldier: Y-you... You're one of the passengers from House Damiell, aren't you? I can't permit someone of your stature to throw herself into harm's way!

Astrid: I was once a knight of Begnion, albeit for only a short while... I won't get in your way.

Soldier: No, I can't--

Astrid: We must defend the apostle, right? We do not have the luxury of choosing how to do so. Come, we must get ready. The enemy is coming!

Soldier: You are right. We need every able fighter. Accept my apologies, and thank you for your help.

Gatrie: Lady Astrid! Allow me to serve as your shield!

Astrid: Gatrie... I'm so sorry that I've gotten you involved in this, too...

Gatrie: Oh, please! This is nothing. I'm fine!! Before I was hired as your bodyguard, I was a top-notch mercenary! I can handle this many opponents all by myself. This is nothing.

Astrid: Is that so? Your confidence is impressive, to say the least...

Gatrie: Tee hee! Well...trust me, my confidence is backed with my blade! I'm ready to fight!

(Ike and crew board the other ship)

Soldier: Oh, no! There are more of them!? We're doomed!!

Soldier: No, don't panic! We must protect the apostle no matter what!! Listen up, pirate scum! You may outnumber us, but we will not yield an inch!

Ike: Wait, wait! Don't get confused. We're here to help you! We're your reinforcements. The deputy commander of the holy guard asked us to help

drive the enemy from this ship.

Soldier: Oh! Commander Tanith sent you? We're saved! The apostle has taken refuge in the cabin belowdecks. Until the holy guard arrives, we need you to defend the entrance to the ship's cabins.

Ike: Got it! Weapons ready, everyone!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Naesala: Tell me, walker, are my soldiers proving useful?

Norris: K-King Kilvas!

Naesala: What? Aren't you happy to see me?

Norris: Grrr... Look at this mess! I paid you good money to help me outmaneuver everyone else and catch the Crimean princess's ship first. Everything seemed to be going exactly as we'd planned. But now, we're being attacked by a squad of pegasus knights! We're flying no flags! We've stripped our armor of any crests! They should have no clue who we are! Why are they attacking us!?

Naesala: Didn't you know? That is a Begnion ship you're attacking.

Norris: What?!? That's...a Begnion ship? It was your featherbrained lackey who told us that Princess Crimea was aboard that vessel!

Naesala: Call it a miscommunication... One of those unfortunate misunderstandings that seems to happen now and again.

Norris: You deceitful... King Kilvas! I wouldn't be surprised if you'd planned this treachery from the start!

Naesala: Such unkind words! You wound me. I would never intentionally lie to you. And as proof, I bring good news. I have it on unshakable authority that the ship that just sailed up alongside Begnion's carries the Crimean princess.

Norris: Oh... But unless we can break through the Begnion ranks, there's nothing we can do...

Naesala: Would you care for some assistance?

Norris: And what would it cost me this time?

Naesala: You learn quickly, my friend. Let's see, you'd be receiving my own royal assistance, so...double-- no, triple rates.

Norris: Ludicrous! So much gold... Where would I...

Naesala: I suppose I could defer payment until later. Of course, that does bring up the question of interest...

Norris: Leave my sight! I wouldn't seek your aid if the world were burning down around me!

Naesala: Very well, we've no more to discuss. Call me if you change your mind. I'll find a nice perch and enjoy the show.

Norris: Cure you! You're no better than your feral cousins!

Ike: Are you all right?

Astrid: Who are you?

Ike: My name's Ike. I'm with the Greil Mercenaries. I came to defend this ship -- and the apostle, if I can.

Astrid: Is that so? I am Astrid, of House Damiell.

Ike: A blueblood, huh? Well, unless you're good with a sword, you'd better hide yourself in a cabin.

Astrid: I'll do no such thing. I once trained with knights and cavaliers. I may be of noble birth...but I know something of battle. I can fight.

Ike: Well, if you can fight, we can use you. Let's work together. You going to be all right with that?

Astrid: More so than I would be with hiding belowdecks, certainly.

Astrid: Gatrie...

Gatrie: Lady Astrid! Are you all right?

Astrid: What do you mean? I'm fine. Why shouldn't I be?

Gatrie: I saw you talking to that rough, blue-haired lad earlier..What did he say toy you? Was he rude? Did he try to tell you to run for safety while he fought for your honor?

Astrid: ...Words to that effect, yes.

Gatrie: Oh, what a fool! I tell you, he'll never learn! You already have an unbeatable bodyguard-- me! I'll have to remind him of that later.

Astrid: You know that Ike person?

Gatrie: He is the son of a man under whom I had the honor of serving. He's not a bad person, by any means. But he has no manners whatsoever...

Astrid: I see. Well, he seemed more concerned than rude. When I told him I would prefer to fight, he seemed to understand.

Gatrie: Hm... Oh. Oh, of course! I see it now! How silly of me. Not rude, you say? I should have known my presence would have changed the boy for the better! I'm the ideal role model!

Naesala: Those humans take themselves far too seriously. It's almost as though being obstinate is a way of life to them. They let their foolish pride stand in the way, and what do they get in the end? A swift and stupid death. Now I'm getting terribly bored merely watching their foolishness.

Nealuchi: Ne-Ne-Nestling! I can sense you're up to no good again!

Naesala: Stop calling me "Nestling"... Really, how many times must I tell you that, Nealuchi?

Nealuchi: To me, you will always be Nestling, Nestling. You can tell me as many times as you like, but I can't stop. You may be king now, but in my eyes, you will ever be my little nestling with eggshell stuck to your tail feathers!

Naesala: Oh...curses! Senile old fool. Forget it.

(They move near the other crows)

Naesala: Hey, you there!

Soldier: Yes, sir!

Naesala: We should take advantage of the confusion of battle to help ourselves to the cargo. These humans seem interested only in fighting their fellow men. If they can't be bothered to defend their treasure, I think it fair to say they've lost their claim to it.

Soldier: Right you are, sir!

Naesala: Hmph. Fight. Fight till you drop, ground-bound humans. We Kilvas will be sharpening our black beaks in the mean.

Tibarn: Hm. A battle... Tell me what you see, Janaff.

Janaff: It's a bit far off, but with no fog, it shouldn't be a problem. Hmm... The middle ship... I see beorc aboard. By their crests, I'd say they serve the hated Begnion empire. And the other ships... I'm not sure who they belong to. Neither flies any flag...and I see no crest, but I can make out more beorc. From their behavior... I would say that one side fights Begnion, while the other rushes to Begnion's aid.

Tibarn: A battle between beorc ships? I do not understand this at all. Ulki, tell me what they are saying.

Ulki: Just a minute, sir... ..The apostle is...aboard the Begnion ship. And coming to her aid... Soldiers serving Crimea's princess? They appear to be mercenaries. And on that last ship... More soldiers, although I do not know which country they serve. It seems they had a contract of some sort with the raven king.

Tibarn: The apostle!? That would explain the presence of those graceless pegasus knights.

Ulki: What would you like to do, Your Majesty? We will fight if you give the word.

Tibarn: The apostle... This is a tempting opportunity. However, we are no scavengers, feeding on others' scraps. When we fight, it will be with honor. We're going back home. Do some scouting and report back to me with what you find.

Ulki: Yes, sir!

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Norris: Accursed crows... You ruined...all of...my plans...

(End boss fight)

(The Holy Guard arrive)

Sigrun: Finally! There they are! I hope we'll find Empress Sanaki...safe and sound... Ladies, chaaaarge! Show them what we've got!!

-----[Battle End]-----

Naesala: I saw this coming, of course. You know... If they'd just paid me more, I'd have been willing to lend a hand. Oh, well. What do a few human lives matter to us? They're none of our concern. We're done here. Let's go.

Soldier: Yes, sir!

(Exit Naesala/Soldier)

Titania: That's it. It looks like the dust is finally starting to settle.

Soren: Looks like those crows took flight as soon as the holy guard arrived. The other assailants fled, too.

Ike: Then our job here is done. Crows are one thing, but what were those men doing with them?

Titania: Yes, I thought that was odd, too.

Ike: They looked like pirates, but they certainly didn't act like them.

Titania: True. They weren't interested in treasure, and their soldiers definitely were trained fighters. But who were they? Which country did they serve? Was this an attempt on the apostle's life?

Nasir: It's possible. The apostle is the symbol of the Begnion Empire itself. The apostle is its empress. If she were to perish, it's fair to say Begnion itself would perish as well.

Ike: I see...

Unknown: The apostle is missing!? What do you mean!?

Nasir: That voice...

Ike: Something must have happened. Let's go find out.

Tanith: ...Ugh. This business is becoming quite the headache.

Soldier: I-I'm sorry, ma'am! If I can offer up my life in repentance for--

Tanith: Oh, stop it. If you want to repent, go do something useful and find the apostle.

Soldier: Yes, ma'am!

(Exit Soldier)

Ike: Did I hear correctly? Is the apostle missing again?

Tanith: Oh, you're that mercenary...

Ike: My men guarded the cabin entrance. As far as I know, we kept it safe from the enemy...

Tanith: From what I have been told, the apostle slipped out of the cabin on her own in the chaos...

Ike: On her own? Now why would anyone called "the apostle" do something as stupid as that?

Titania: Hey, Ike! Watch your words. You're being rude.

Tanith: It's all right, dame knight. I have more important matters on my mind. I hate to ask, but would I be able to enlist your help in searching for the apostle?

Titania: Of course! You don't mind helping, do you, Ike?

Ike: Nah.

Tanith: We'll search the enemy ship. Would you search your ship, just to be sure? I would appreciate it.

Ike: I'll do what I can to find her, but I don't even know who I'm looking for...

Soren: I think it's safe to assume she will be a woman of stature, a noble woman of some sort.

Ike: Huh.

Titania: Well, I suppose all I have to do is keep my eyes peeled for any stowaway-- anyone I don't know. Let's split up. It will go faster if we search separately. Mist and I will check this side.

Ike: Then Soren and I will search the rest of the ship.

Ike: Soren... About what I said this morning...

Soren: Yes?

Ike: About the way you phrase things.

Soren: I... I ought to apologize for that.

Ike: No, don't apologize. I know you. I know it's been bothering you, hasn't it?

Soren: No. Well...

Ike: Don't take it personally. I'm no better, you know. Your ability to speak plainly the things others won't is part of what makes you brilliant. Others are too bound by courtesy... With you, I trust that what you say is exactly what you think.

Soren: Well...yes... Thank you, Ike.

Ike: Now, about that missing apostle...

Soren: Oh...!

Ike: You found her?

Soren: No, I don't think so. But there's a child stowing away in here!

Ike: What!? What is a child doing hiding on our ship!?

Soren: She must be some aristocrat's daughter. Probably slipped on from the Begnion ship... It was a hectic battle. She must have been frightened and hid herself here in the confusion. Are you going to help her?

Ike: Well, we can't just leave her.

(The girl gets up)

Ike: Hey, are you all right?

Sanaki: I-I'm...fine...

Ike: Hey, don't be scared!

Sanaki: Uh... Wh-who might you be? You don't look like a laguz. Perhaps a new recruit?

Ike: No. I'm a mercenary. I was hired by Princess Elinia.

Sanaki: The Crimean princess? Ouch!

Ike: What's wrong? Oh, you hurt your foot. Let me see.

Sanaki: Hold! Do not approach me! Hey, I told you not to-- Oooouch! You're hurting me! You fool!!

Ike: Looks like the bone's not broken. Still, we'd better have Mist take a look at it just in case.

Sanaki: Oh? What? What are you doing!?

Ike: Just hush up and hold on to me. There's my sister. She can heal that foot of yours right up.

Sanaki: Are you trying to help me? Shouldn't you be elsewhere?

Ike: I'm supposed to be looking for some sort of apostle person. But I think there are enough other people looking, and I'd rather help the injured first.

Sanaki: Ha... I see. This is indeed...

Ike: Hm? What is it?

Sanaki: Oh, nothing. If that's the case, I accept your help.

Mist: Ike! Any luck finding the apostle?

Ike: Nope. All I found was a little lost child.

(Enter Mist/Titania)

Titania: Hey, she's quite a cutie.

Ike: Mist, do you think you could use your staff to heal this kid?

Mist: Yeah. Is she hurt?

Ike: Just her foot... But maybe she bumped her head, too. She's been mumbling complete gibberish since I picked her up.

Sanaki: I kept silent, blaming these antics on your ignorance, but I can no longer tolerate your manners!

Ike: Huh? What's wrong? It's your foot, isn't it?

Sanaki: Prepare yourselves, peasants!

Ike: Prepare? For what?

Sanaki: You stand in the presence of Sanaki, empress of Begnion! I am the apostle, the voice of the goddess!

Ike: Empress? What did she say?

Titania: What? Then she is...

Mist: Oh, no... Is she really...?

Ike: No, she can't be.

Soren: No way.

Titania: Hold your judgment... Even if she's lying, there must be a reason...

Sanaki: Y-you...ignorant...!

Unknown: Are you all right, Empress!?

Sigrun: My apologies! We were unable to reach you, and we left you in terrible peril. I accept full responsibility.

Sanaki: You're late, Sigrun! What would you have done had something happened

to me?

Sigrun: Please, Empress, I beg your forgiveness.

Sanaki: That won't be necessary. I am also partly to blame for what happened.

(Enter Ike)

Sanaki: Let's focus instead on our rescuers. As a reward for rescuing me, I would like to invite them to visit our court. And be sure that the one they serve, that girl who claims to be the princess of Crimea, is invited as well.

(Exit Sanaki)

Sigrun: Princess Elinicia's bodyguards, I presume. I am sorry for the trouble you've gone to.

Ike: And you are...?

Sigrun: I beg your pardon. My name is Sigrun. I'm a commander of Begnion's holy guard. No word of thanks will ever repay you for saving the empress.

Mist: Wait... So it's true?

Titania: Are you saying that little child...

Ike: is Begnion's...

Soren: Empress... Hm. It appears so. I can't say I quite believe it, but she seems sincere. Besides, how many people do you know who command a legion of pegasus knights?

Sigrun: The empress has invited us to join her at Sienne, the capital of Begnion. I think we should go. Where is the princess? We should ask her permission before agreeing.

Ike: She must be in the cabin. I'll take you to her.

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Chapter 14: Training

[014]
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Narration: The Begnion Empire, the largest nation on the continent, is a theocracy dedicated to the goddess Ashera. Reigning from the summit of the empire and guiding the world with the voice of the goddess, the apostle Sanaki rules Begnion. As Ashera's chosen vessel, the apostle is showered with love and respect from the entire nation. Seven imperial senators aid the apostle in the governance of her realm. This system of government has been the backbone of Begnion for many long centuries. After Ike and his company aid the apostle, her holy guard takes them to the imperial capital, Sienne. The upper class of Begnion society live lives of pampered comfort and luxury. Known as the Sainted, these elite power brokers reside in massive temple-like homes whose spires dominate the skyline. The Guiding Tower overlooks all from the heart of the city. Here, Ashera holds her vigil, watching over the world. Surrounding the tower is a series of temples, both large and small, placed in an

orderly, systematic fashion. One temple, however, is conspicuously larger than the others. It is the grand temple Mainal, home to the apostle. Ike and his company, used to the freedoms of Crimea, find the differences in culture and custom to be very confusing.

-[Mainal Cathedral]-

Sanaki: Ahem... Now then, you have proclaimed yourself to be the orphan of Crimea's King Ramon. Princess Ridell Crimea, correct?

Elincia: Yes.

Sanaki: I have heard stories that King Crimea had a daughter in secret. My men have reported as much to me in the past. However, whether you are that princess or not is another tale. Do you have nothing that would lend credence to your claims?

Elincia: Nothing at all. It took all my energy simply to avoid capture by Daein. I had no time to secure any proof of my claim.

Sanaki: Hmph. And with Crown Prince Renning also dead, there is no one who even knows your face. What am I to do?

Ike: I will vouch for her.

Elincia: My lord Ike!

Ike: I have no doubt that Princess Elincia is the true heir to the throne of Crimea.

Sanaki: Oh, really? And tell me, what gives you this strength of conviction? If we believe her story, this woman has not engaged with the outside world since the day she was born. So how is it that you, a lowly mercenary, dare to assert her authenticity?

Ike: The Daein army pursues her with bloody-minded determination. At every turn, they demand that we turn Princess Elincia over to them. What further proof do you need?

Sanaki: Hmm... If someone of...proper standing made that pronouncement, I would accept it as irrefutable proof. But you... You're a commoner. You have no surname, no documented lineage... You have nothing. I know commoners. They are poor. For a price, they will support any lie, no matter how outlandish.

Ike: ...

Sanaki: Oh! Now, I suppose you will tell me you are the son of some noble house? No, of course not. But wait, perhaps you're a royal knight of Crimea?

Ike: I am neither a noble nor a knight. I have no connection with the palace whatsoever. And no matter how much gold I stood to gain, I would not betray my convictions. Elincia has paid us, yes, but nothing more than the standard fee to purchase our services as her escort. Nothing more. We have come this far only because we believe Elincia to be a woman of integrity. We would not sell our swords to a liar. I don't care how high and mighty you might be. I will not stand here and let you mock the bond

of trust that ties us to Elincia.

Elincia: My lord Ike!

Lekain: How dare you! Who are you to address the apostle so crudely! Guards! Guards! Seize this man! For his abuse of the apostle, the penalty can be only death!

Sanaki: Halt! ...Ha ha! Ha ha ha! Sephiran was right about you. You are very interesting.

Lekain: A-Apostle?

Ike: Sephiran? That monk we rescued from the prisons?

Sanaki: A monk, was it? His disguises are always so clever. It never ceases to amaze me. As always, he remains an enigma. Heed my words! Sephiran is in truth Duke Belsys, prime minister of Begnion and my most trusted advisor. He has been traveling the neighboring lands for months, trying to ascertain the condition of the people there.

Sigrun: We have received detailed reports on Princess Elincia and the mercenary company serving as her escort.

Elincia: So...you knew we were coming. You knew who we were all along.

Sanaki: Yes. I apologize for testing you. You see, life here in the palace is dreadfully dull. I am always so very bored. Thanks to the princess and her brazen little escort, this interrogation proved to be an amusing diversion.

Oliver: Oh ho ho! So that's what this was! How very like you, Apostle. A cunning game of wits and words. Simply smashing! Even your most loyal servant, Duke Oliver of Tanas, was on the verge of being completely fooled. I am humbled! Oh ho ho! Come, Duke Lekain!

Lekain: Ah-ahem. It was all a ruse, was it? ...Oh, Apostle, you do tease us so mercilessly! Still, it was not such a bad way to amuse ourselves, was it, Duke Hetzel?

Hetzel: Hoo! Too true, my good duke! Princess Crimea, it appears that you have put quite a smile on the face of our beloved apostle. That an honor that must be! Hoo hoo hoo!

Elincia: ...Ah... Um... Yes... I suppose...

Ike: Madness!

(Ike leaves for a minute)

Sanaki: Oh, yes, I almost forgot in all the fun... Sephiran has already vouched for your identity as the true princess of Crimea. I require no further proof. You may rest easy.

Elincia: I am...most grateful.

(Ike comes back on screen)

Ike: Wait a minute!

Sanaki: Yes?

Ike: What is the meaning of this? You knew Elincia was Princess Crimea? And you continued to humiliate her for your own entertainment? For some stupid game of wits and words? This is no joke!

Sanaki: ...

Ike: Elincia's homeland is lost to her! Her family has been hunted down and killed by the monsters of Daein! And with nowhere else to turn, she endures mortal danger and terrible heartbreak to reach your door. And then you...you laugh at her?! Where is the humor in that? Where is your decency? You're horrible! You are all horrid people! You disgust me beyond words! And you owe Elincia a proper apology.

Elincia: My... My lord Ike, please--

Lekain: Wretched peasant! You loose that treasonous tongue once more, and--

Sanaki: Duke Lekain, restrain yourself!

Lekain: But... But...

Sanaki: I am speaking. Be still.

Lekain: Grrr...

Sanaki: Now then, Ike. I fully understand your feelings. Your passion for your employer is truly a beautiful thing. Would that my own fawning vassals shared your commitment. However, truth be told, your behavior does test my patience. Raise your voice once more to me, and you will seriously damage the princess's already precarious position. Do you understand?

Ike: Not really. Why don't you fill me in?

Sanaki: Even if Elincia is truly Crimean royalty, she is at best heir to a dead country. Nothing more. Without Begnion's support, Elincia's claim holds no meaning. Am I mistaken?

Ike: Pah!

Sanaki: Even if we harm her fragile feelings, for the sake of her country's future, she must stand by and say nothing. In fact, she is in no position to do anything but beg for Begnion's favor. Or...hadn't you noticed?

Ike: ...

Sanaki: I have much to consider. For now, I shall take my leave of you. I will meet with my senators soon and discuss this state of affairs. Crimea's future will not be uncertain for long. Until that time, I suggest you rest and relax. Perhaps you could try your hand at our courtly games of...wit and words?

Ike: What incredible nerve! To take advantage of our situation and speak down to us like that... I don't care if she's the empress or the apostle or whatever! I can't stand her!

Titania: Listen, Ike, isn't it possible that the apostle saved you?

Ike: What?

Nasir: Titania is correct. Begnion is a nation ruled by time-honored custom and ancient conventions. You insulted the apostle-- the very symbol of their way of life. The fact that you are still breathing is a miracle.

Ike: I...hadn't realized.

Nasir: And as her escort, your criminal behavior would fall directly on your employer, Princess Elincia. If you had truly angered the apostle, any hope of restoring Crimea would have vanished like a puff of smoke.

Ike: That's madness! They would sacrifice a whole country to satisfy their own egos?

Soren: Ike... This may not be much of an answer, but letting madness rule the day is the prerogative of nobility. The beorc divide themselves into classes. And with classes come prejudice. From the moment of our birth to our final dying gasp, we commoners know we are not allowed to defy the upper classes.

Ike: Princess Elincia... I... I'm sorry. My ignorance does not excuse my stupidity. ...I truly am sorry.

Elincia: No. I... What you said, you said in my defense and in my honor. It made me very pleased.

Ike: Huh?

Elincia: To see you so angry on my behalf... Your words filled my heart.

Ike: It wasn't as noble as you make it sound.

Elincia: However, there is one point that I would contest. It is true that I've lost my family...and my home. But I did have people to turn to ... People to rely on. My lord Ike, you and your company were at my side. For me, this has been a great source of inspiration and of happiness.

Ike: Princess Elincia...

Elincia: My lord Ike... Please call me Elincia.

Ike: Huh? That would be improper, wouldn't it? I mean, you're our employer, and...

Elincia: You called me so earlier.

Ike: I did? Really?

Elincia: You didn't notice?

Ike: No, I... Oh. My apologies. I'll be more careful. Well, I suppose we should go. They've prepared rooms for us.

(Exit Ike)

Elincia: Ah, my lord Ike.....

(Soren Report)

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Servant **]-

Maid: Psst! You wanna hear somethin'? There's a rumor going 'round that a tiger sub-human has been seen on the foggy banks of this very river!

Ike: ...

Maid: Eh, wot? You don't seem surprised! All right then, how about this? That sub-human? They say it's ALWAYS in beast form! It can't change back! Right frightening, ain't it? The only way for us humans to fight them savages is to wait for 'em to change out of beast form. I mean, how can we kill 'em if they won't change?

Ike: ...

Maid: Still no reaction, eh? What a bore! 'Owzabout this juicy morsel, then? Was saving it, I was, but... I 'eard from my darling in the army, that tigers, cats, and other four-legged sub-humans HATE fire magic. That's a useful tidbit, ain't it? Oh, I knows things!

(Enter Lady)

Lady: You there! Serving wench... There's work to be done. Why are you wasting time chatterin' on?

Maid: Wha-what's wrong? Just saying 'allo to one of the new servants is all!

Lady: You fool! This is no servant!

Maid: ...Aye? ...Oy? ...Eh wot? Oh, crickey! Princess Elincia's escort...? A guest of the apostle...?!? Oh, ohnoohmygosh! Please... Please forgive me!

Ike: ...

(Exit Ike)

Maid: Wha-what should I do? Ooo, he looked right angry, he did! I might get sacked!

-[Gatrie *]-

Gatrie: Well, if it isn't Ike! Our for a walk, Commander?

Ike: Hello, Gatrie. Yeah, if I stay in that horrible, gaudy room for too long, I start to feel depressed. Is that why you're out here, too?

Gatrie: No, I'm here for different reasons. I'm just...admiring the flowers.

Ike: Oh, right. Yes, they all seem to be in bloom this time of year. The large

yellow ones are especially pretty.

Gatrie: Not those flowers... THOSE flowers!

Ike: ...Gatrie, we're inside. There's nothing here but the temple handmaidens.

Gatrie: Exactly! It's like a whole new species of girl lives in Begnion!
Everyone in this palace is drop-dead gorgeous!

Ike: ...

(Exit Ike)

Gatrie: You know what I mean, Ike? Tee hee! Say, which one strikes your fancy?
That buxom lass with the chestnut hair is... Hey, Ike? Ike? Bah! He's
still just a boy!

-[Astrid *]-

Astrid: Um, Commander Ike?

Ike: Hm? Oh, it's you.

Astrid: Are you trying to clear your head as well?

Ike: Yeah, I guess so. I'm just walking and thinking about things. Begnion is
so...odd. I don't understand this country at all.

Astrid: Mm... I can see that. Everything's so wrapped up in form and
tradition, it feels like Begnion has lost track of more important
things.

Ike: You're some noble house's daughter, are you not? What made you decide to
become a knight?

Astrid: To escape my royal family... No, not to escape...but to confront it. I
want my life to be my own.

Ike: How do you like being a knight?

Astrid: I am still not satisfied. I may now be a knight, but my hands still
shake when I draw my bowstring. So perhaps my goal was not simply to
become a knight. Perhaps my true goal was to become stronger.
Commander Ike, the others say that you never give up, no matter how
bleak the fight. That seems like true strength to me. Please, allow me
to continue fighting by your side. If I remain with you, I will grow
stronger from your example.

Ike: Your skill with the bow is spectacular. How could I possibly refuse your
request? We're pleased to have you.

Astrid: Oh...thank you! Thank you very much!

-[Marcia *]-

Marcia: Aaaaahhhh...

Ike: That was quite a sigh.

Marcia: Huh? Aw, nuts! You heard that, handsome? Sorry about that.

Ike: You've been behaving oddly lately. Something happen?

Marcia: Pfff! I'm fine! It's just... Well, being here in Begnion is...
difficult, you know?

Ike: Difficult? You were a member of the pegasus knights here, weren't you?
Aren't you happy to see some of your old friends?

Marcia: No, I'm not happy!! It's... It's so blasted embarrassing! I can't bear
to face them!

Ike: What?

Marcia: I've told you why I resigned my knighthood, haven't I?

Ike: Yes, you're searching for your brother.

Marcia: It's my brother's fault... I... I... Aaargh! That no-good chum bucket!

Ike: Um...maybe we should just drop it.

Marcia: ...Huh? Oh, no it's-- Don't worry. I'm fine.

Ike: Don't let it get to you too much. I don't want you distracted in a fight,
all right?

Marcia: Got it. Thanks.

(Exit Ike)

Marcia: Ike's a brother, too... So why is he so different from my brother?
Grrr! Lazy do-nothing!

-----[Exit Base]-----

Mist: I am so boooooored! We've been here for five days already... And there's
absolutely nothing to do! They gave me free reign to wander the temple,
but I've seen everything! I'm tired of it!

Titania: I take it Princess Elincia has been invited to yet another social
gathering? A little time off is one thing, but this...

Ike: I guess I'll get in some fencing practice...

Nasir: Ike, the captain of the apostle's holy guard is headed this way.

(Enter Sigrun)

Sigrun: I beg your pardon. Are you and your mercenary company enjoying your
stay here in Begnion? Is there anything you find wanting?

Ike: There's nothing to do, and Mist is bored.

Mist: Ah, Ike! Why'd you say that!?

Ike: Weren't you just complaining about that exact same thing to me? You said you were bored and tired of everything.

Mist: That doesn't mean you should go spouting it to everyone! Oh, you're such an idiot, Ike!

(Exit Mist)

Titania: My apologies... Neither of them meant any offense. They're just frustrated.

Sigrun: Yes, I understand that. I will pay it no mind.

Ike: Did you have some reason for coming to speak with us?

Sigrun: I bring word from the apostle... She wishes to charge you with a task.

Ike: The apostle wants to employ is!?

Titania: I didn't expect this.

Ike: Expect what?

Titania: You're reaction. I'd have thought that you would be spouting and fuming at the thought of working for the apostle.

Ike: If Princess Elincia can tolerate endless social gatherings to judge Begnion's mood and garner her favor, the least I can do is help her earn points by running an errand or two.

Titania: Hmm...

Soren: Ike, they're coming.

Titania: So we lay in wait for them here, right?

Soren: Yes. The apostle's orders were clear. "Stop the band of merchants traveling on the old highway, and seize their cargo." This does look to be the best spot for an ambush.

Ike: All right. I don't know who we're facing, but we're on the job. Let's do this right!

-[Old Town Road]-

Gashilama: A poor crop this time around. Cats, tigers, and a few crows... All we've got are laborers. We're not going to get rich with this.

Peddler: Aw, and we worked hard to catch 'em! Is it as bad as all that?

Gashilama: I've been selling half-breeds for twenty-five years. The ones that fetch the highest price are the trophy herons. And if they're white-winged royals, the fanatics will empty their purses of every last coin.

Peddler: Well, if that's the case, why don't we hit Serenes Forest next time?

There might be a few of 'em left.

Gashilama: You've the brains of a dead wyvern! Why do you think herons are so expensive? It's because they're rare! It's been twenty years since that mob burned Serenes. The herons were all roasted like chickens! No matter how you look it, that was utter lunacy. All that gold, up in smoke.

Peddler: Oh... If they're so valuable, I'd like to see one with my own eyes. I'd catch it and put it in a cage...

Gashilama: ...Idiot...

Peddler: Think what you could buy with all that gold. A new axe... Oh, and some furry boots, too!

Gashilama: Shut up, fool! Stop your daydreaming, and look over there!

Peddler: Wh-what? Who are they?

Gashilama: Bah! Look alive, lads! They're not common travelers!

Ike: Here they come. Titania, are we sure this is the right bunch?

Titania: This fog makes it hard to see, but their numbers and appearance match our intelligence... It must be them.

Soren: Well, they've certainly seen us. They're readying their weapons.

Ike: Very well... Get ready to fight, everyone!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Makalov: Ah... What terrible luck. My sixth sense told me that the weather would be nice today.

Peddler: Hey! Grumbling and whining won't pay off your debt! Come on, beautiful, cough up my gold!

Makalov: I'd dearly love to pay you, but unfortunately... I'm broke.

Peddler: Not again! You're employed as a bodyguard! Why don't you have enough gold to pay me back?! Grr! When we get back to the base, I'll get what's mine. Try to run, and you'll pay in pain!

Makalov: ...Threaten all you like! I can't give you what I don't have! Ooo, I hope that sounded brave... Oh, dear... What am I going to do? It seems I must go crawling back to my dear sister once again. Oh, she's going to be so mad... But in the end, I'm sure she'll help! After all, it's for the life of her brother! Right! Tonight, I pay a little visit to the barracks of the sacred pegasus knights!

Marcia: B-B--Brother?!

Makalov: Hey, Marcia! Heh... Hey, long time, huh? Good timing, though! I was just thinking about paying you a visit, Sis.

Marcia: Long time? Long time?! You dungheel! Where in the name of heaven have you been? You racked up all that debt and then ran away? You're such an irresponsible skunk! Thanks to your worthless hide, I had to leave the sacred pegasus knights!

Makalov: Huh? But why?

Marcia: Because there were a bunch of debt collectors hanging around the barracks! That's why!

Makalov: Oh, that's... That's a shame. Listen, I was trying to increase the money I borrowed and pay off the original, but it, um...vanished. And I swear that just kept happening! I'd almost get enough and then... poof! Gone! Ha ha! Ha? Hmm...

Marcia: You rat. You cheese-eating rat! You haven't changed at all... Let's go. You're coming with me.

Makalov: With you... Where are we going? What am I going to do?

Marcia: You're joining my company. I'm going to let Ike beat some sense into you. We'll see how that works.

Makalov: No, wait... I'm working for these guys at the moment, and... Well, if I just up and joined with the other side, it might cause problems--

Marcia: STUFF IT, SPONGE-BRAIN!!! NO MORE LAME EXCUSES!!! FOLLOW ME!!! NOW!!!

Makalov: Sorry, Sis! Sorry! I'm coming...

Gashilama: They... They're crushing us... They're nothing but a pack of rats, but they fight like demons! Har har! But not matter how tough they are, there's no way they can stand up to a real monster! Hey! You there! Release the feral! Har har har! Now, all we have to do is sit back and watch 'em chew their heads clean off!

(Two Feral Ones enter)

Ike: Hey, you! Why don't you lay down your weapons and walk out of here with your lives? You can posture as much as you want, but there's no way you can beat us!

Gashilama: Shut it! I don't know why you're here, but if we lose our cargo, we lose everything! It ain't happening!

Ike: In that case, we've no choice. You'll receive no mercy from us!

-[South house]-

Calill: Oh...bother. Buying all these things is well and good, but I simply can't carry it all. And where's Largo?! He leaves me in this backwater burg and wanders off to goddess only knows where...

Mercenary: Hello?

Calill: Oh, you there! Today's your lucky day. You've arrived at just the right time. I have something nice to give you. I just got back from a shopping spree, and I got this as a free bonus of sorts. Oh, please, no need to thank me. When you're a sophisticate like me, you never want for trinkets. Or men, for that matter. Well, toodle-doo, then! Be sure to treasure that for the rest of your days! Now...which way to the nearest city?

-Receive "Spirit Dust"-

-[North East house]-

Grandmother: EH? DID YOU SAY CATTLE? ...A BATTLE? STRANGER? WHAT? ...OH, DANGER! GOODNESS! WHAT AM I TO DO? Oh, maybe this will help, dearie. It's just lying here collecting dust... Just like me... Never a visitor... Anyway, I don't know what it does, but...it's pretty. If I gave it to my grandkids, they might write once in a while... HERE! TAKE IT! NOW DO ME A FAVOR AND PROTECT MY HOUSE, ALL RIGHT? ...NO, MY HOUSE! ...A MOUSE?! WHERE?!

-Receive "Vantage"-

-[North West house]-

Girl: I found this in the river. But...my mom said it was dirty, and I had to throw it away. Do you... Do you want it? Really? All right, you can have it. Take care of it, please.

-Receive "Secret Book"-

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Gashilama: How did this happen? I've lost everything...

(End boss fight)

Ike: Our duty is done. Let's grab the cargo and get out of here!

-----[Battle End]-----

Ike: The Greil Mercenaries have returned.

Sigrun: Well done. The news of your victory is welcome, as is the cargo you seized. Now, about your payment...

Ike: Wait. This mysterious cargo was a bunch of really heavy crates... Would you tell me what they contained?

Sigrun: That--

Tanith: Your job was to deliver the cargo. You've no need to investigate further.

Ike: But--

Tanith: Princess Elincia has returned to her quarters. You would do well to inform her of your safe return.

Ike: ...

Sigrun: It appears that the apostle will handle your payment on the morrow. Perhaps you can speak with her then. I beg your leave. I must be going.

Ike: Very well.

(Cut Scene -> "Gathering")

Caineghis: Thank all of you for coming, my fellow laguz kings. It's been decades since all of us were gathered in one place. I would extend my gratitude to King Deghinsea of Goldoa, who arranged this meeting place at short notice.

Deghinsea: It was nothing, King Caineghis.

Caineghis: Fellow kings and countrymen, attend to my words! As you no doubt have heard, Daein has invaded Crimea and overrun her. Of course, Crimea is a beorc nation... However, since the time of her founding, she has made every effort to engage the laguz with honor and dignity. Never has this been more true than during the thirty-year reign of good King Ramon. During this era, Gallia and Crimea initiated many ambitious cultural projects in an attempt to bring our divided people closer. Yet one man has always reviled our work ... The Daein king, Ashnard. Why he took this recent course, however... I know not. Ashnard's actions are monstrous. His army has put much of Crimea to the sword. Her people live in terror. Her king lies dead. And now, the Daein forces continue their ruinous march and cross the border into laguz territory... Into Gallia.

Tibarn: That trespass, O king of lions, is because your country chooses to harbor King Crimea's orphan. Is it not?

Caineghis: Yes, that is the justification they would present.

Tibarn: But the princess of Crimea is no longer in Gallia, is she?

Caineghis: Your spies are as efficient as ever, King Tibarn of Phoenicis. As you say, the princess has already departed for Begnion.

Tibarn: I know this only because she came to the aid of a ship carrying Begnion's apostle.

Caineghis: Ah! So Princess Elincia is safe and in contact with the Begnion Empire? That news gladdens my heavy heart.

Tibarn: I do not believe that Daein yet has this information. If word got out

that the princess of Crimea has been granted sanctuary in Begnion, Daein might halt its invasion of Gallia.

Naesala: Your information is dated, hawk king! Have your legendary eyes and ears abandoned you after all these years?

Tibarn: You have something you wish to say?

Caineghis: Would you be so kind as to explain yourself, King Kilvas?

Naesala: Princess Elincia barely escaped Crimea with her life and then fled to Gallia. And yet a certain king of beasts there, one on whom she had pinned all hope, chose not to support her.

Caineghis: ...

Naesala: With nowhere else to turn, the princess and her retinue spent two long months at sea, arriving in Begnion mere days ago. Daein knows of these events as well, and the king has dispatched a team of hunters to make a corpse of the girl. And that, dear kings, is the latest news... At least, to the best of my poor knowledge.

Caineghis: Daein knows the princess is in Begnion?! King Kilvas, how did you come to possess this information?

Naesala: Why, there's no trick to it. I just perk up my ears and...point them in the right direction.

Tibarn: You expect us to believe that a stray wind carried it to your ears? This is an odd tale, Naesala.

Naesala: Hmm? Do you think so? Well, there is one trick to information gathering that I know. Shall I share it with you?

Tibarn: If it involves dealing with human scum, I'll pass. Forgoing my laguz pride is not something I'm willing to do.

Naesala: Ha! Is that not always the way of Phoenicis, to cling to those last tattered remnants of pride? Instead of proclaiming that you will attack none but Begnion ships, just admit that you don't have the power to do more!

Tibarn: What did you say?

Deghinsea: Both of you will desist at once! King Naesala of Kilvas, your actions of late can indeed be judged as too extreme.

Naesala: Black Dragon King of Goidoa, what do you pretend to know of my actions? Please, enlighten me.

Deghinsea: I would remind you of the beorc ship you attacked in Phoenicisian waters...and left stranded in Goidoan territory.

Naesala: Oh...that.

Tibarn: Naesala, you lying crow! You've been sneaking about in my territory again, have you?

Deghinsea: I heard from my own son, Kurthnaga, that a beorc resembling Princess Crimea was on board that ship.

Kurthnaga: It is true.

Caineghis: What? King Kilvas, you...

Naesala: Don't act surprised! I have no intention of ruling some tiny island nation forever. I will make Kilvas a name to remember! To that end, no amount of gold is enough. Laguz or beorc, I care not. If the pay is right, there's nothing I won't do.

Deghinsea: I care not about the reach of your ambition, but you should choose your methods with more care. What good will it do you to expand your domain only to find enemies at your every border?

Naesala: I will take your words to heart for the time being.

Deghinsea: And you, too, King Phoenicis. What good will your piracy do you if it earns the wrath of Begnion? Continue at this pace, and there's no telling when the hostilities will end.

Tibarn: Until the people of Begnion apologize for the slaughter of our brother herons, I will do no such thing.

Deghinsea: Prince Reyson of Serenes? Are you of the same mind?

Reyson: Those humans burned Serenes Forest and killed my people. No amount of human blood can slake my thirst for vengeance. For my siblings, for my countrymen, I demand justice. I cannot even return my bedridden father to our forest home! I am no soldier. I know nothing of war, so King Phoenicis acts in my stead. I am most grateful to him, and I would not see him stop until Begnion has paid.

Deghinsea: Blood leads only to blood, and violence begets violence. Nothing more. Revenge is simply another name for murder.

Reyson: ...

Deghinsea: And you, king of lions? What will you do about your home of Gallia? Now that you know Daein's feint toward Gallia is merely another move in his game of war, how will you act?

Caineghis: They've made no formal declaration of war. Until they do, we watch and wait.

Tibarn: If it's the first step towards eradicating all human scum, Phoenicis will help you destroy Daein.

Caineghis: No. Unless this becomes a true war along all nations, I want you to stay your hand. As long as Gallia is protected by the sea of trees, we can stave off Daein's attacks.

Naesala: Ah, the luxury of a large nation! You would waste a chance to expand your territory just to maintain the status quo? Sad.

Deghinsea: I agree with King Gallia. If we were to form a laguz alliance against Daein, we would drive Begnion to Daein's side and lose a valuable ally. The flames of war cannot be fanned haphazardly. Above all, we must think of Lehran's Medallion. Its location is unknown... But it still exists. We know this. And as long as it does, we cannot allow any war that could stand to engulf all our

nations! Do you understand, laguz kings? I beg of you, do not forget it.

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Chapter 15: The Feral Frontier
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[015]

-[Castle Kilvas]-

Nealuchi: Oh my! If it isn't young Prince Serenes! Welcome, welcome, welcome.

Reyson: Nealuchi, you're looking well.

Nealuchi: And feeling well, too, thank you very much. This old crow's as spry as ever. Hee hee! ...Tell me though. How fares your father, King Lorazieh?

Reyson: The same as ever. Since that terrible day, he remains abed... He seldom rises anymore.

Nealuchi: Mmm... I'm not surprised. In the span of a few days, he lost his family, his friends, and almost all of his countrymen.

Reyson: Yes...

Nealuchi: And yet, we're blessed that you are still with us! Prince Reyson, if there's anything this doddering old bird can do for you, please do not hesitate to ask.

Reyson: Thank you. I appreciate your kind sentiment.

(Enter Naesala)

Naesala: Sorry to have kept you waiting, Reyson. Nealuchi! You can talk ancient history later. Leave us at once.

Nealuchi: Yes, yes, of course. I'm sure you've much to talk about, much to say. I'll just take my leave of you... Please, Prince Reyson. Make yourself at home.

(Exit Nealuchi)

Naesala: Hmph! Old Nealuchi's always been fond of House Serenes. When he heard the White Prince himself was gracing us with a visit, he could barely contain his joy. So, Prince. What's this all about? We haven't seen your face around here in a long time, and I'm naturally quite curious as to your intentions.

Reyson: Your attitude during the Goldoa meeting piqued my interest. What is it you're after, Naesala? Why do you provoke Tibarn?

Naesala: You came all this way for that? Are you serious?

Reyson: Do not mock me, crow king! Tibarn is my father's guardian. If not for him, we might have suffered the end of House Serenes itself. I will not brook any insults to him.

Naesala: Oh, I see. So rather than ally yourself with me, your trusted companion of old, you would side with this new protector? That's an

unfortunate shift in attitude. I trust you remember that when you and your sister were young, it was I, and not Tibarn, who watched over you?

Reyson: Any change in my bearing can be laid at your roost, Naesala. After all ...you, my old friend, are the one who continues to engage in commerce with my enemy. With humans. If you were to change your ways, I'm sure we could rebuild the relationship the two of us once shared.

Naesala: Oh no, that I could never do. You see, humans are essential to the fulfillment of my ambitions.

Reyson: ...You've changed, Naesala. If this is the path you've chosen, I've nothing left to say.

(Exit Reyson)

Naesala: ...I doubt you could ever understand what it means to guard Kilvas, Prince. To protect an entire country.

Soldier: King Naesala! Duke Tanas of the Begnion Imperial Senate has arrived.

Naesala: Bring him in.

(Enter Oliver)

Oliver: Your Majesty! J-just now, I brushed against the most splendid specimen! W-was that a Serenes noble? They're supposed to be extinct!

Naesala: And what if it were?

Oliver: Oh, I was right! Wonderful! My eyes did not deceive me. Those dazzling white wings. And that shimmering hair, sparkling like falling gold dust... That is the crystallization of beauty in its purest form--

Naesala: Duke Oliver, can we please discuss the business at hand? Per your request, we have appropriated several pieces of art from the ships of Duke Gaddos.

Oliver: Yes, yes, and you will be compensated as promised. But right now there is...something else that I simply must have.

Naesala: Really? Another request? What can we purloin for you today? More art, perhaps?

Oliver: Oh ho! Something much more stunning. And if you agree to my proposition, I will double your normal fee!

Naesala: That's a most generous offer. Tell me, what is it you desire?

Oliver: Desire? But surely you've already guessed...

-[Mainal Cathedral]-

Ike: Meeting with the apostle was fine, but all she did was pay us and give us another job. She answered no questions.

Titania: I wonder what she's planning. That cargo... I can't help but believe

that there were living creatures inside, but... What do you suppose the apostle intends to do with them?

Ike: I don't know. Titania, are all nobles and royals like this? They have plans and paperwork for every little thing, and their speech is as confusing as it is tedious.

Mist: But, Ike, the other nobles we know are different! There's Princess Elincia, and King Gallia, and the dragon prince, too! All of them have been so nice and friendly and easy to talk to.

Titania: Perhaps the rudeness of the upper echelon is unique to the beorc class system. Princess Elincia was raised in special circumstances. Maybe that's why she's so different.

Ike: Bah! I could never get accustomed to the culture of beorc nobles.

(Soren Report)

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Servant **]-

Servant: Ahem. You are from the northwest nation of Crimea, are you not? You have my condolences for the terrible misfortune that has befallen your country and people. Yet you remain blessed! Fate has brought you here to the Grand Temple Mainal! To the splendor of Begnion, grandest of all the nations of Tellius. By the way, I hear you are traveling north to the Grann Desert. There are ancient ruins there, you know? They are the remnants of a race known as the Zunanma, who come from a civilization that predates our own. I'm sure you will enjoy the sensation of being immersed in such primordial surroundings!

Ike: Um...yeah. It'll be a real picnic.

Servant: Oh, yes, picnics are indeed nice. Oh, but a word of caution. Studying the ruins from afar is one thing, but you would be well advised to keep your distance... For safety's sake! It's said that there's a bandit stronghold near the northwest ruins. And we hear occasional reports of strange figures wandering the dunes in the northeast. Be careful!

-[Sigrun **]-

Sigrun: How are your preparations progressing?

Ike: They're underway. We leave within the hour.

Sigrun: Your next mission takes you to the Grann Desert. You must choose your companions with care.

Ike: A desert is just a large patch of sandy soil, is it not?

Sigrun: Ha ha! With one major difference! Unlike sandy soil, you'll not find solid earth near the surface. You could dig and dig and find only more sand. Those on foot and horseback may find it difficult to move

around.

Ike: I see. I'm sure that Soren knows much about these things, but...

Sigrun: Hmm? Has something befallen master Soren?

Ike: I don't know if he's feeling ill or just moping about. It all started when we arrived in Begnion.

Sigrun: Oh...

Ike: Be that as it may, it won't hurt for me to have this information. Can you tell me more?

Sigrun: Of course. There's little water in the desert, and the soil is very dry. Few trees or grasses grow there. Which means there are no groves or anything else which would provide cover. And, as I mentioned before, those on foot or horseback will find the sand slows their pace considerably. The exceptions are magic users, staff wielders, and thieves. Such people will not be affected to so large a degree.

Ike: Thieves are agile, so I understand why they would be unaffected. But those skilled in the magical arts? That doesn't make sense.

Sigrun: I once heard an explanation from a magic user that I know... He claimed that the spirits he employed flew before him and cleared the sand from his path. However, considering the source, I'm not sure how much of that is truth.

Ike: Who was the source?

Sigrun: Prime Minister Sephiran.

Ike: Would he play a joke like that?

Sigrun: Ha ha! Well, the prime minister is a very amusing man. But, please, allow me to continue my explanation. What else...? Others who are unaffected by sand are pegasus knights, wyvern riders, and other flying units. Oh, and laguz too. Terrain features don't seem to affect them much in either form, although they will be slowed some.

Ike: You said laguz, didn't you? Almost everyone here says sub-human.

Sigrun: Well, of course. Beorc and laguz are both living things. Every precious life was created to be equal by the blessed goddess. The fact that there are still those who persecute laguz in the land of the goddess... It is deplorable.

Ike: ...Are you of a noble house?

Sigrun: Yes, I am. One must be of noble birth to serve the goddess.

Ike: But I thought...that all nobles were half-crazed fools who can't speak the truth. You seem quite honest.

Sigrun: Ha ha, I'll take that as a compliment... Oh, and one last thing.

Ike: What is it?

Sigrun: The desert contains the remnants of more than one lost civilization.

Rumor has it that treasures from those times still lie undiscovered beneath the shifting sands. Those with good luck may come across such treasures during battle.

-[Makalov *]-

Makalov: Hoooweee! The Grand Temple! Luxury and...gorgeousness as far as the eye can see. If a scoundrel like myself can find employment in a place like this, I guess my luck hasn't abandoned me after all.

(Enter Ike)

Ike: ...

Makalov: But...for all the glitter and gold, there's an equal amount of dangerous work. Hmm... That I could do without. Maybe I can use my prone-to-illness ploy... Cough! Yes, I think I can arrange to work about one out of every...five jobs or so! And now that I've a fixed income, it's time to visit the local inns and see what games of chance are about!

Ike: Evening.

Makalov: WHAAAA! You... Did you happen to hear any of that?

Ike: You were talking out loud. Loudly.

Makalov: Um... I, uh... I wasn't being serious... I am an extremely diligent man! Yes, I am!

Ike: Those peddlers you were with... You were in debt to them, right?

Makalov: Huh? How do you know that?

Ike: When we took out that group, your debt vanished...

Makalov: Yes! You're right! That was a tremendous help. Thanks much!

Ike: Come now, you can't believe that the world is as forgiving as that. Or that we are so foolish.

Makalov: What?

Ike: Debts are debts, and you have many. Those peddlers weren't the only people who were owed coin by you... Right? We can't have debt collectors hounding the company day in and day out. My staff officer repaid the rest of the money you owe.

Makalov: Tha-that's...very kind of you.

Ike: It was from the company coffers. You, my friend, are now in OUR debt. You fight to repay the Greil Mercenaries.

Makalov: Ah! But! Aaah!

Ike: Payment will be deducted from your wages. For...quite some time. It seems you're working for free, friend.

Makalov: Oh! I--! Oooh!

Ike: Until your debts are completely repaid, don't even think about leaving the company. Or getting sick. Right then! I trust you'll do your best.

(Exit Ike)

Makalov: ...What a mess... Awww... Nuts!

-----[Exit Base]-----

Ike: Tell me, Soren, are you all right?

Soren: Hm?

Ike: Recently-- ever since we reached Begnion, in fact-- you've seemed depressed.

Soren: Is...is that so? How odd. Well, I can think of nothing specific that's bothering me.

Ike: Well, if you say so. So, it's time for the desert! Which is the best direction to enter from?

Soren: ...

Ike: Soren?

Soren: ...Eh? Yes, what is it?

Ike: All right, I know there's something going on!

Soren: I'm... I'm sorry... I was...thinking. What is it you wanted?

Ike: Well, I was going to ask you for directions, but it's no longer necessary. It looks like we're being met.

Soren: Ah!

(Enter Tormod/Muarim)

Unknown: Who are you? Answer me!

Ike: We're mercenaries. We were hired to take care of a group of bandits operating in this area.

Unknown: More of the senators dogs'! You cast us as thieves so you can murder us and hide your guilt! But we will not be defeated! Mark my words! The day will come when all slaves are free, and then you will pay for your crimes!

Ike: What on earth are you talking about?

Unknown: No more useless words! Come, my brothers! Take them!

-[Grann Desert]-

Ike: What? We're facing laguz? I don't like the look of this!

Soren: Laguz or no, it doesn't change the fact that they are brigands. Do not lower your guard!

Ike: I know what I'm doing. Everyone! Watch your footing in this sand. Take care and fight well!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Lethe: ? Sniff... Hm? I...sense...something... ...Grrrr.... Must be my imagination...

Stefan: A female cat! Splendid! I've not seen your face in these parts before.

Lethe: Aaaaah! Wh-where... Where did you come from?

Stefan: Oh, I see that I've startled you. My apologies.

Lethe: Who are you?

Stefan: If you wish to learn someone's name, isn't it polite to introduce yourself first?

Lethe: Grrr... I am...Lethe. From Gallia.

Stefan: And I...am Stefan! I live here in this desolate wasteland, playing at being a hermit.

Lethe: Is that so? Well, don't let me interrupt your...life.

Stefan: Oh no! Please don't worry about it.

Lethe: Oh, I won't. ...And?

Stefan: What?

Lethe: Why are you standing there staring at me?

Stefan: I'm interested in Gallia's beast tribes. Fascinating, really. I have an idea! Can we go somewhere and talk?

Lethe: ...I don't think so.

Stefan: Why not?

Lethe: My companions and I are in the middle of a battle! I've no time to chitchat with you!

Stefan: Very well... Then I will help you! And once this battle is finished, you'll have time to converse, yes?

Lethe: I suppose...perhaps...

Stefan: Right! Off we go then!

Lethe: ...What sort of lunatic have I found now?

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Muarim: ...Urk... N-no...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Muarim: Haah...haa...haa... We lose...

Ike: You! You're the leader of this band, aren't you?

Muarim: Yes...I am. I'll resist you no further. Take me with you or execute me here... I care not. But my companions... Would you let them go? ...Please?

Unknown: No! I won't allow it!

Ike: Huh?

(Enter Tormod)

Tormod: I won't let you take Muarim!

Muarim: Grrr... Stay back, little one! You were not supposed to expose--

Tormod: If you want Muarim, you'll have to kill me first!

Ike: You're--

Muarim: Yes, he is a beorc child. I claimed him when he was little more than an infant. He has nothing to do with us...sub-humans...

Tormod: Stop lying! I'm here because I want to be! Who's the leader of the laguz emancipation army? I am! You're a big jerk, Muarim! Trying to cover for everyone and get yourself killed? I won't allow it!

Muarim: Little one...

Ike: Hey! I don't care who the real leader is. A laguz who calls himself a sub-human is protecting a kidnapped beorc who claims to lead a laguz emancipation army? Do I have that right? Because if I do, I have absolutely no idea what any of you are talking about. Would someone please tell me what is going on here?

Tormod: ...

Ike: All right... Please go over that again. It's been customary throughout Begnion's history to keep laguz as slaves?

Tormod: That's right.

Titania: But that's in the past now! Twenty years ago, all slavery was outlawed, and all laguz were freed!

Nasir: And as far as the general public is concerned, that is exactly what happened.

Ike: So there's a portion of society that willingly breaks the law?

Tormod: The commoners obey, but there are still many laguz slaves in the homes of nobles. Muarim and I brought this to the attention of the senators, but they would not listen. That's why we gathered other fighters. We break into the homes where slaves are kept and help them escape. Of course, the nobles can't let this be known publicly, so they brand us thieves and turn us into wanted outlaws.

Ike: All right. I think I understand your motives, but you're not going to solve the basic problem this way.

Tormod: We know that. But we can't give up and leave them in chains. We can't and won't!

Ike: Do you mind if I try to help?

Tormod: Huh?

Ike: This sort of beorc behavior is something that's been bothering me. I think there may be something that I can do...

Reyson: Naesala! Stop this foolishness! Where are you taking me? Tell me!

Naesala: It's only a little farther! I'll tell you once we've arrived, just as I promised.

Reyson: I left no word with Tibarn. If I had known we were coming this far, I would have left a message...

-[Serenes Forest]-

Naesala: Here we are. This is what I wanted to show you. Look below you, Reyson. What do you see?

Reyson: What...what is this? How is this possible? What happened here?!

(Reyson flies off)

Naesala: ...

(Naesala follows Reyson)

Reyson: This...is Serenes? Is this what you're trying to tell me?! This colorless vista, these cracked and withered branches, these lifeless trees... This is my forest?

(Reyson flies around)

Reyson: -Heron language-

Naesala: ...The ancient tongue. It's been many years since I heard it last. You can still speak it.

Reyson: The voice of the forest is still. Why... How did this...

Naesala: It's been like this since your clan's been gone. The area near the entrance is especially bad. They used fire... Most of the trees are dead.

Reyson: ...Unforgivable. How...how can they do things like this. Cursed humans ... What did this forest do? What did my clan do...

Naesala: Humans hold all laguz in contempt. And in the same way, they hold all of nature in contempt as well. They think everything exists for their pleasure and betterment... They are beneath contempt.

Reyson: Naesala... It appears that I have misjudged you. I called you a groveling toady to humans and labeled you traitor. I was overly harsh. I apologize.

Naesala: Not to worry. I engage in occasional commerce with humans... That much is true. A more pressing issue is the growing darkness. You can return to Phoenicis tomorrow, can you not? I'm certain that some noble has a villa in this area. At this time of year, it is almost certain to be empty. I suggest we borrow it for the evening.

Reyson: You would sleep in a human building?

Naesala: Think about it... Bird folk like you and I have no night vision whatsoever. If we were discovered by humans, they would surely overwhelm and capture us, right?

Reyson: Mmm... I see your point.

Naesala: Very good. I'll go stumble around until I find something to eat. Please...make yourself comfortable.

Reyson: Naesala!

Naesala: Yes?

Reyson: Thank you. For everything you've done. I... I appreciate it.

Naesala: Don't be ridiculous. We're old friends, are we not?

Reyson: Right you are! Old friend.

Naesala: Is everything in place?

Soldier: Yes. That Duke Tanas cannot sit still. He is literally...quivering with anticipation. It's not pretty.

Naesala: I bet it isn't. Just make sure that mountain of suet stays hidden. If Reyson catches so much as a glimpse of his bulk, he will take wing.

Soldier: Understood.

(Exit Soldier)

Naesala: Now, time to put on the finishing touches. This, too, I do to raise

up Kilvas. Reyson, please don't judge me too harshly. That being said, I'm sure you will. Ah, well. Such is life. Enjoy your new one ... Old friend...

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Chapter 16: The Atonement
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[016]

Reyson: What is this? Who are you? What have you done with Naesala?

Oliver: Oh... Ooooo... This is something everyone should see. There can be no doubt-- I gaze upon the last living wonder of the Serenes royalty. Those golden locks! Witness how they gather in the morning sun and multiply its brilliance. The gentle luster of those argent wings! Manifest proof of royalty, as sure as I am alive. Magnificent... Absolutely magnificent. A true work of art wrought in flesh and feather. All this beauty... Mine... The fortune I paid the raven king seems like a pittance compared to this treasure!

Reyson: What? Naesala...sold me? To YOU?!

Oliver: Oh ho ho ho! You are exquisite, even in rage! Now, if you behave yourself, I'll grant you a life of luxury...

(Reyson punches Oliver)

Oliver: Ow!!! My nose! My beautiful nose!

Soldier: Bishop Oliver?! You winged freak! You'll pay for that!

Oliver: Noooo! You mustn't harm him! You mustn't ruffle a single feather of those gorgeous wings!

(Exit Soldier)

Oliver: My beauty, you mustn't be frightened. In time, you will come to see how kind and charitable a master I can be.

Reyson: This is madness!

Oliver: Oooh! S-so frightening! How delicious! But I fear that we must now be separated for a short while. Loyal servants! Attend my words! You must not raise a hand to this one. Prepare his meals with care, and do not disturb his rest. I would not see his countenance marred by displeasure. Herons, you see, are such delicate things. And then, at the proper time... Yes, the proper time. When will it be? I say to you, those haughty senators and their ilk have looked down their noses at me for the last time! I shall show them all! Ooooh, but I must have a grand stage. One where none can fail to see me. The Serenes royals are creatures of legend, and when I arrive with one at my side... I can hardly wait to see Duke Gados's face. Oh ho ho ho! Aho ho ho ho ho ho ho!

(Exit Oliver)

Reyson: Naesala, you wretch... Curse your eyes! How dare you do this to me...

-[Mainal Cathedral]-

Ike: I've brought him.

Sanaki: Well done, Ike. I shall see that you are well rewarded.

Ike: Where's your usual entourage? I see only two of your holy guard...

Sanaki: Oh, there was some sort of disturbance. I think they're clearing away the rabble. But on to business... Is that one there the ringleader of the thieves? Why, he's nothing but a child! Has he offered up any kind of defense for his deplorable actions?

Tormod: We are no thieves! We are trying to free the laguz that these filthy aristocrats hold in captivity!

Sanaki: What manner of absurd fairy tale is this? In the year Begnion 624, Apostle Misaha, my honored grandmother, emancipated every last laguz slave. In accordance with her law, today there is not a single slave to be found in all of the Begnion Empire.

Tormod: You lie! Countless noble houses even now keep laguz as servants or entertainment...or worse! And the senate! Those vast windbags grant tacit approval by doing nothing!

Ike: That's enough! I told you to keep a cool head.

Tormod: Bu-but--!

Sanaki: Ike... Whyever would you bring such an ill-mannered rogue to meet me? What is it you're planning?

Ike: If anyone's planning something, it's you.

Sanaki: Really? And what could you possibly mean by that?

Ike: Your last mission showed us the slave trade, and now you've put us in contact with an underground emancipation group. From the very beginning, I found this whole arrangement a little odd. You have more vassals than you can use, yet you hire us for these missions? Your motivations have me puzzled.

Sanaki: Oh, I see. And have you solved this puzzle of yours?

Ike: You want to expose the depravity of the inner circles of power. But you don't want the general public to know that the majority of the senate is involved in slavery.

Sanaki: And to think I thought you were as untutored as a wild monkey. You're actually quite bright.

Ike: I didn't figure it all out by myself. I have companions whom I trust with my life. They helped.

Tormod: Hey! Hold it! What in the world are you talking about? Would someone like to explain this to me?

Ike: The apostle is aware of the laguz slavery. On top of that, it appears she intends to do something about this problem.

Tormod: Are you serious?

Sanaki: I am. However, whether I succeed or fail depends largely on what you do next.

Ike: So be it. I think it's time you told us about the next job you have lined up for us.

Sanaki: I've received reports that Bishop Oliver, the duke of Tanas, is up to something suspicious. Duke Tanas has a villa near the woods of Serenes. Go there, and return with irrevocable proof of...whatever he's doing. If you succeed in this, I promise to support your Princess Elincia with all the power at my command.

Ike: We'll bring back whatever information it is you're looking for. Be ready for us!

(Soren Report)

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Muarim *]-

Muarim: Ahem...

Tormod: Muarim!

Muarim: Little one! How... How was it? Were you treated roughly? Did they attempt to punish you?

Tormod: No, it was nothing. And the apostle? I thought she'd be some mean old hag, but she's just a kid. Really, she's even shorter than I am.

Muarim: Li-little one! You must lower your voice. And watch your tongue!

Tormod: What? Why?

Ike: Rest easy, Muarim. Everyone in this room is with me. The apostle has no ears here.

Muarim: That is good.

Tormod: Muarim?

Ike: Speaking ill of the apostle here is considered treasonous. Keep it up, and they'll kill you-- or threaten to.

Tormod: What?

Muarim: Little one... While we are here, please choose your words with more care than you have shown. I beg of you.

Tormod: Oh, right. I understand.

Ike: For a laguz, you seem to know more about the court etiquette here than my fellow beorc, Tormod.

Muarim: Bah...

Tormod: That's 'cause...'cause I don't know much about any of this stuff.
That's all!

Muarim: It is no matter, little one. Ike, the reason I am familiar with the
customs of the Begnion nobles is... I myself was once a slave.

Ike: What?

Tormod: Oh, no...

Muarim: For generations, my family...served as slaves to one house. They were
wealthy and powerful, senators all. As a child, I was raised never to
question my station as a slave. From the day that I was born, the most
grueling physical labor was as natural as breathing. I knew nothing
else. To ensure we were liked by our masters, we were drilled in the
etiquette of polite society until it became second nature. We were
slaves... We did what we could to live as long as we could. The most
important thing was not to incur the wrath of our masters. If we
displeased them, we were punished. If we were lucky, we were beaten.
If we were unlucky...

Tormod: Muarim! That's enough!

Muarim: I am sorry. Lord Ike... If a former slave like myself is present, all
of you will be judged, scorned, and looked down upon. I came here...to
ask if you would...take care of something for me. I would have you
take care of the little one.

Tormod: Why would you say such a thing? You were born a laguz slave... And
you're not allowed to be free... That's not right! That's why we
promised each other we'd change all of that. We made a promise! Laguz,
like beorc, would build homes and plant fields! Families would live
together in peace and freedom! That's the world we dreamed of...

Muarim: That's a dream that belongs to us as former laguz slaves. We don't
need the help of another beorc like you.

Tormod: What? ...sniff!

(Exit Tormod)

Muarim: Little one! ...

Ike: ...Does it really warrant that much concern?

Muarim: Huh?

Ike: Since I first arrived here in Begnion, it's something that's been
bothering me. If you're born into a noble house, you're a noble. If your
parents are slaves, you're a slave. Do you think a person's worth is
decided at the moment of their birth? That's... I can't understand a
country where that passes for normal, I just can't.

Muarim: Those don't sound like the words of someone working for Princess
Crimea. Princesses are princesses because they're born into royal
families, right? Are you going to deny that?

Ike: No, you're right. Elinacia... She is a princess. I don't think we've
treated her with more respect than any other employer we've had, but...

Heh. Funny. We've addressed her as "Princess" the entire time, but I've never really considered what it meant.

Muarim: From where I stand, I think you've been blessed. You were born a beorc and raised in a country with a lenient social structure. That's an enviable life.

Ike: It's so hard... I... No matter how I try, I'll never fully understand your pain. But listen, I didn't treat Elinicia any differently after I learned of her heritage. I'm not going to think of you or treat you differently just because you used to be a slave. It's not going to happen. You're...you. And I'm free to think of it that way if I want, right?

Muarim: ...

Ike: Muarim, there's nothing anyone can do about your past. About the burdens you carry. And I know I don't know everything that's going on, but you shouldn't be trying to push Tormod away. He's dedicated to you, and being with you is his choice. It's part of his freedom.

Muarim: ...I see now. I will go...and find him.

Ike: If meeting those in the temple is uncomfortable, I can go and bring him back. What do you think?

Muarim: No, I can do it. I have a good nose. Tracking the young one's scent while avoiding other beorc is an easy task.

Ike: I see.

Muarim: Ike... I want... I mean... Never mind. May our friendship be true and enduring.

Ike: I share your sentiment. Our troop will have you for as long as you wish.

-[Stefan ***]-

Ike: What the...? Um...who are you? How long have you been a member of my troop?

Stefan: I joined after the battle in the sands. My name is Stefan. I apologize for not introducing myself earlier.

Ike: Why are you here?

Stefan: In part it's because I'm curious. But mostly, it's the guiding hand of fate that has led me to you.

Ike: Huh?

Stefan: In the desert, I watched the dance of your sword. You have a unique style, but it is incomplete, filled with hesitation. You have recently lost your teacher, no?

Ike: Ah...

Stefan: Luckily, your foundation is quite strong. Which is why I can be of

service. Your technique... How powerful will it be when perfected? I would like to know.

Ike: Wh-who are you?

Stefan: You can learn the dance of blades from me without knowing my history, can you not? What say you? Let your heart decide.

(Agree to let him train you)

Ike: I understand. If you can help me perfect my technique, I will gladly accept an invitation to learn from you.

Stefan: Then prepare yourself. Come! Attack me with all your strength.

-Receive "Occult"-

-----[Exit Base]-----

Ike: Is this the place?

Soren: Yes, it is. It's rather heavily guarded. Even so, I think a direct attack would be our best chance of gaining entrance.

(Enter Soldier)

Soldier: Halt! Who goes there? What are you doing? This villa is the property of Duke Tanas, senator of the empire! No trespassing!

Ike: I am Ike, of the Greil Mercenaries. Under orders from the apostle, we've been charged with investigating the duke.

Soldier: What? The apostle sent you? Wa-wait here a moment!

(Exit Soldier)

Mist: All right, Brother, we'll sneak around out here and see what we can see.

Ike: Good idea.

Titania: Leave it to us. If we get stopped, we can talk our way out of it. All right, Mist, let's get going.

Mist: Yeah!

(Enter Oliver)

Oliver: What is it I hear? That you lads claim to be here on the apostle's business?

Ike: We have a letter here that bears her seal.

Oliver: Hmm... Well... I see. It appears genuine. Very well. Am I in a position to ask what, exactly, I am suspected of doing?

Soren: We are here by the apostle's leave. Do you honestly intend to make us discuss this private matter outside?

Oliver: Oh! No, no, of course not. Never! I would never insult... Please, c-come inside...

Oliver: Oh? Slavery? Me? The apostle would honestly accuse me of such an unfashionable thing as slaveholding? Oh ho ho ho!

Ike: Do you claim no knowledge of such a thing?

Oliver: I've shown you every nook of my mansion, every cranny. I've been most thorough, have I not? And you saw no trace, not a single sign, of any laguz here, did you?

Ike: That is true.

Oliver: This accusation is absolutely ridiculous! To think that I, a bishop who serves only the apostle's will, would do anything to violate our country's emancipation act! Be certain that you tell the apostle everything! Tell her that Duke Tanas is upright and cleanhanded! There is not even a shadow of falsehood in my noble eyes! Look into them deeply, my boy, and tell me what you see... Well? Hmmmmm?

Ike: Ugh! Hey, stop that! Back off!

Soren: We have little choice, do we... I think it would be best if we left for the time being.

Unknown: Hey! Halt! You can't go in there!

Ike: Ah!

(Enter Mist)

Mist: Ike!

Ike: Mist, what is it?

Mist: Ike, I saw him! In a room on the top floor of this building, I saw someone-- I think he was one of the bird tribe! He looked like he was trying to jump out a window, but he was forced away from it and back into the room.

Oliver: Wha-what? What is this...this child babbling about?

Soren: Someone from the bird tribe? Can you describe him?

Mist: Um, he had long hair! It was...sparkling, like gold. And his skin...it was so pale-- almost translucent. Oh! And his wings! They were pure white!

Ike: Is that accurate, Titania?

Titania: It is. I saw him as well.

Soren: That can only mean there is a member of the heron clan in this place. According to books, only members of the royal heron family possess white wings.

Ike: It appears that there is at least one room we have yet to see. What is it going be, Duke Tanas? You can cooperate and show us this room that you somehow forgot, or...

Oliver: Guards! Kill them all! Don't let a single one escape!

Ike: So this is how you want to play it, eh? I thought it might come to this.
Mercenaries! It's time!

-[Dukedom of Tanas]-

Devdan: Devdan hears the sounds of battle...

Kimaarsi: You dare to bring conflict into Bishop Oliver's home? My lance will
make you pay for your impudence!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Devdan: Uh-oh. This won't do. Youngsters like you aren't supposed to be
fighting, you know?

Rolf: Huh? Uh, who are you, sir?

Devdan: Sir? Ho! Devdan is no knight! Devdan is just a simple man who was
imprisoned for looking at the flower garden. The punishment was to
work here for an entire year...without pay, unfortunately.

Rolf: Is that so? That doesn't seem fair.

Devdan: This sad world knows little of "fair", does it? Now tell me, young
one, what are you doing here?

Rolf: Um, well...there's a laguz birdman being held captive here. I came to
help him. Duke Tanas is a bad man who keeps laguz as slaves. That's why
my friends and I are here to stop him!

Devdan: Slaves? That is not acceptable! Devdan cannot forgive such callous and
unjust actions!

Rolf: In that case, you should join up and help us free them!

Devdan: Mmm... A fine idea! Devdan is ever on the side of justice.

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Kimaarsi: What... What fate is this? Is it just punishment...for
my complicity...in this evil...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Reyson: Ah!

Oliver: Oh, my sweet, beautiful little bird! Don't be frightened! Come, let us
fly away together...

Reyson: Stay away from me, you filthy fat man!

(Oliver casts a spell)

Reyson: ...Urgh!

Oliver: Come quietly! You belong to me! I will not give you up. No one shall take you from me...

Reyson: Though the price may be my life, I will never cooperate with you!

(A knock is heard)

Unknown: Hey! Where are you, Duke Tanas? ...Are you in here?

(Another knock but this time louder)

Oliver: ...Ah... N-n-nooo...

Ike: Duke Tanas...

Reyson: Who are you?

Ike: Ah! You... You're the Serenes-- Are you unharmed? We have come to help you. Your injury... Did that man do that to you? This wound must be tended to...

Reyson: Stay back!

Ike: But...

Reyson: Do not approach me! Cursed human!

-[Mainal Cathedral]-

Ike: The Greil Mercenaries have returned.

Sigrun: Ah, Master Ike. It is good to see you well. How went the mission? Did you unearth any meaningful proof?

Ike: Where is the apostle?

Sigrun: Master Ike?

Ike: I must speak with the apostle. Where is she?

Sigrun: Apostle Sanaki is in the garden, having a pleasant conversation with Princess Elinia. I will go directly and see if she will meet with you. Please wait here.

Ike: In the garden? Great.

(Exit Ike)

Sigrun: Ah, Master Ike! No! You mustn't behave so! You will cause such problems!

Ike: Apostle...

Sanaki: What? You! What are you doing? How dare you approach me unannounced!
This is most inappropriate, and I will not--

Elincia: What has happened, my lord Ike?

Ike: All of it. I want to hear all of it... Now!

Sanaki: What are you talking about?

Sigrun: Master Ike! One must not speak to the apostle in such a discourteous
fashion!

Ike: Twenty years ago, something happened in Serenes Forest. Something
terrible. I want to know.

Sanaki: What?

Sigrun: Master Ike?

Elincia: W-what happened twenty years ago?

Sanaki: You found one of the heron clan? And a Serenes noble no less... One of
them still lives? But that...such a thing...

Sigrun: Apostle Sanaki...

Ike: Tell me.

Sanaki: That is a very...difficult problem... Hmm... How to impart this
tale...

Nasir: It would appear that no one is willing to begin this story. That being
so, I would open with what is commonly known of the matter. Do you find
this acceptable?

Sanaki: And you are?

Ike: He is a friend of mine. Nasir, if you know something, I would hear it.
When you are done, the apostle can clarify. Agreed?

Sanaki: Hmm...

Nasir: It begins with the assassination of the previous Begnion apostle. It
was twenty years ago... One year after the declaration of emancipation
was made. The leader at the time was the Apostle Misaha, who was more
adored by the public than any apostle before...or since. When she was
assassinated, the citizenry was wracked with grief. All of Begnion
despaired. And then, a rumor began to circulate that the assassination
was the work of the Serenes herons. In the twinkling of an eye, the
rumor spread throughout the Begnion capital. One night shortly
thereafter, it happened. The citizens grew violent. They massed at the
edge of Serenes Forest, home of their supposed enemy, and set it to
burn. The crowd raged on for three nights, and in the end, the heron

clan was lost.

Elincia: But their involvement was just a rumor... Wasn't it? Why, why did they...

Sanaki: Oh, the shame of it...

Nasir: Apostle? The remainder of the tale is yours. You stand as the empress of Begnion. You are responsible for the acts of your citizens, are you not?

Sanaki: ...False. The accusation was completely false.

Ike: The assassination of the apostle was not the work of the Serenes clan?

Sanaki: That is correct.

Nasir: The heron clan possess no fighting skills. Their tribe survived by living a life of peace and piety within their forest. Unlike other laguz, they never focused on developing their strength for the purposes of combat. Anyone with any knowledge of laguz would have known such a thing. At the very least, the citizens of Begnion would have known this. However, they had lost their leader, and in their grief, they cared little for the truth. They were merely looking for some way to vent their rage and despair. Isn't that true...Apostle?

Elincia: Please, Lord Nasir! Your tone of voice...

Sanaki: It's all right, Princess Elincia. He speaks the truth, be it with a sharpened tongue or no.

Nasir: Ike, the bird tribes of Phoenicis target only Begnion ships with their piracy. The ravens of Kilvas are after cargo, and so they attack everyone with equal vigor. The hawk clans, however, hold the heron clan as brethren...and still remember the false accusations. And their brutal murder.

Ike: The heron at Oliver's mansion... He slapped my hand away when I tried to help him. He had such hatred in his eyes. When he leapt from the window, he spoke to me. "Remember the genocide", he said. "Twenty years have passed, but I will never forgive what you did!"

Sanaki: Such needless pain... It may sound like utter hypocrisy, but my people regret deeply the actions of that horrific night. We stole the heron clan from this world... Every time we see the blackened forest, our grave sin comes back to haunt us.

Nasir: Apostle... You are honorable. The majority of the senators have done their best to banish all memory of the Serenes and that night. Yet you have resisted. That is your intent, is it not? You are not like them... You are attempting to take responsibility for the actions of the people. To undo the wrongs of the past, you launched your own investigation into the laguz emancipation issue. You've even gone so far as to hire outsiders like Ike and his mercenaries to expose the problem, haven't you?

Sanaki: ...Princess Elincia?

Elincia: Yes?

Sanaki: I would like once more to make use of your escorts. Would you grant me this boon?

Elincia: Of course! Er, that is... If Ike and his group agree, I have no objection to your proposal.

Ike: Depends on what you want.

Sanaki: The member of the heron clan you met... I want you to find him. I want to meet with him. I want to speak with him.

Ike: If that is your wish, we will do it. In any case, we let that monster Oliver slip through our grasp. We'll handle both tasks at the same time.

Sanaki: I'm counting on you.

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Chapter 17: Day Breaks
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-----Part 1-----

[171]-----

-[Phoenicis Hall]-

Tibarn: Is that it?

Nealuchi: Wait, there's more! It seems that Prince Reyson was able to escape Duke Tanas's villa and make his way safely to Serenes Forest. However...we have word that Tanas's men have entered the forest in hopes of recapturing the prince. We've not a moment to waste! Please, O king of hawks! Reach out your mighty talons, strike down these wretched humans, and rescue Prince Reyson. I implore you, Your Majesty, take wing at once!

Tibarn: Why is Naesala not here?

Nealuchi: That...er... His Highness must not be seen here at this time... It's--

Janaff: What's going on, you old buzzard? King Kilvas is the White Prince's friend, isn't he?

Nealuchi: Well...how do I put this? Hm, it's all very complicated...

Tibarn: I care not for excuses. If anything happens to Reyson, blood will be spilled.

Nealuchi: Oh, no! Please! There's no cause for worry. Duke Tanas treats his works of art with a delicacy so extreme that it could best be called ...abnormal. He would never let any harm befall Prince Reyson. ...He probably can't even bring himself to touch him. The king himself told me so. That is the only reason he accepted this proposal--

Ulki: Proposal?

Nealuchi: Ah! Um... What I mean is... Er...

Janaff: Hold it! You crows set the prince up?!

Nealuchi: S-set up? Set up? Oh, no, no! Well...not exactly. Um... Please don't hurt me!

Tibarn: So that's the truth of it, eh? Naesala treated Reyson like a piece of merchandise and sold him. To a human...

Nealuchi: No, that's not... The only one who referred to him as merchandise was Duke Tanas. We never--

Tibarn: It doesn't matter! Claiming ignorance does not grant you innocence. You treated Reyson like a trinket in a public market!

Nealuchi: Oooh, dear...

Tibarn: If Reyson hadn't escaped on his own, perhaps the crow king would have rescued him when things cooled down. Regardless, Reyson trusted in his friend and followed him into the trap... And Naesala spit on that friendship. That, I cannot forgive!

Nealuchi: Your assessment of this old bird is correct. I am a worm, nothing more. But please, I beg of you... Temper your outrage. Let it cool.

Janaff: You're unbelievable. What is it with you crows, anyway? Everything you do is so dirty and deceptive. We will never understand your ways. Do you hear me, greywings?

Nealuchi: I hear you well, young hawk. But our nation... Our nation has... It has its own issues. Please, this is not the time to yell at a tired old man. You must hurry to Prince Reyson's side! Once he is safe, you can punish me in any way that you see fit... Tear me limb from limb if you wish... But please! Go to Prince Reyson! I beg of you!

Tibarn: This begging is unseemly and unwanted. We would rescue Reyson regardless of this pathetic show of tears. Return to Kilvas and report these events to your accursed king. Tell him that when this is over, King Tibarn of Phoenicis will be paying him a visit.

Nealuchi: ...Y-yes, Your Highness!

(Exit Nealuchi)

Janaff: Sigh... I know he deserves it, but I still feel bad for badgering the old coot.

Ulki: Your Majesty, what will we do now?

Tibarn: Ulki, use your ears to pick out the sound of Reyson's wings, then tell me the direction from which it comes.

Ulki: At once!

Tibarn: Janaff, use your eyes to peer between the trees and find me a road.

Janaff: You got it!

Tibarn: Human scum... If you think to replay that night from twenty years ago, you'll get no quarter from me.

-[Mainal Cathedral]-

Ike: Hm? Is that you, Soren? You're up early.

Soren: Actually, I'm always awake at this time.

Ike: Really?

Soren: Yes. You're the one who's up earlier than normal.

Ike: I want to finish our mission today. I think my nervous energy woke me up.

Soren: I understand... The last two days spent searching Serenes Forest for that heron have been frustrating and fruitless. I'm sure he's in there somewhere, but...

Ike: I agree. And Duke Tanas's men are still hunting away. They must think the heron is there as well.

Soren: The only place left is the forest's heart. That's where we should go today. With luck, we may finally locate our target.

Ike: I get the feeling it's going to be a long day.

(Soren Report)

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Servant **]-

Tanith: Commander Ike! A priest from Duke Tanas's villa insists on speaking with you.

Ike: Yes? What is it?

Official: I'm... Master mercenary. It is my understanding that you...you pursue Duke Tanas. I hear that you're searching Serenes Forest in hopes of capturing him.

Ike: And if I am?

Official: Duke Tanas's property borders the forest, and he knows much about its layout. For quite some time now, he's been sending men into the forest to look for any herons who may still live there.

Ike: I see... So you're saying that his troops know the forest well.

Official: I, too, have been taken into the forest.

Ike: You? Why take a priest?

Official: He thought that herons would make themselves known if a priest called to them. He's also taken dozens of chaste maidens and tried having them call to the herons as well.

Ike: But he didn't find any, did he?

Official: No. And yet, this time... The joy he expressed after paying such an

exorbitant price for the Serenes royal was aberrant. It was...not natural. The duke has gone mad. To think that he would dare to defy the apostle... He is damned.

Ike: And here you stand. You're going to tell me what you remember about the forest, even though it means you're betraying Tanas...right?

Official: Hmm... You read me well. To begin with, the heart of the forest was divided into three large sections. Maybe more. It was nearly colorless, and difficult to see far. The muddy floor pulled at our feet, and progress was slow. Many of the soldiers around me were afraid that they didn't bring enough supplies. They said a person would need them if he got lost, because getting out again would be no easy task.

Ike: What can you tell me about Duke Tanas's forces?

Official: There were a lot of them... He had soldiers of every type. It was said that his mounted units and magic users were especially powerful. So at the very least, you should be prepared to deal with those two groups.

Ike: Thank you.

Official: ...My parents... They both participated in the Serenes massacre. They're nearing the ends of their lives, but even now they lie awake at night and beg the goddess for forgiveness. I became a priest in order to help my parents, but then I was assigned to work at Duke Tanas's villa... I knew of his terrible deeds, but his position as an imperial senator frightened me. I have been silent for far too long. Master mercenary... You must rescue that Serenes youth. I beg of you. May the goddess guide your hand.

Ike: Don't worry. I have no intention of letting that villain steal him from before my very eyes.

-[Jill *]-

Ike: Here you are.

Jill: ...

Ike: We've been in Begnion for a while now. So tell me something... Why are you still here? Are you pretending to be our friend so you can lance us in the back?

Jill: ...You have to understand... I... I didn't know anything. I was born and raised in the Talrega region of Daein. It's a very remote area. My father was a soldier, and I grew up thinking that I, too, would one day be a soldier. A soldier to make my father proud. My life was simple... I questioned nothing. Doubted nothing.

Ike: ...

Jill: Do you know the first thing we're taught in Daein schools? Sub-humans are evil. Sub-humans are the enemy. Sub-humans must be eradicated. The army stages periodic sub-human hunts. We'd find refugees from Begnion hiding in our mountains and forests...

Ike: You participated?

Jill: You don't get it! That's just how things are in Daein! No one taught me the word laguz! No one taught me that sub-humans could be...could be like this. No one cared.

Ike: ...

Jill: When I saw the bird tribes at sea, I was convinced that the teachings were true. They were inhuman monsters. But later, I saw the dragons push your ship off of the reef, and it confused me. What if I had been raised to believe a lie? My heart pounded at the thought of it. And my doubts only grew with time.

Ike: So you decided to remain aboard in order to ascertain the truth. That's your true motive, isn't it?

Jill: How did you know?

Ike: I've known a lot of soldiers, and none would ever accept charity from an enemy. It would wound their pride. You obviously have pride to spare, so I knew there was some other factor at play.

Jill: Oh...

Ike: Well, have you reached a conclusion? What will you do?

Jill: I...want to stay here. At first, I thought I could protect my old life, that I could prove the sub-humans were monsters. But I was wrong. And now things are different. The sub-hu-- I'm sorry, the laguz... I want to know the truth about them, and I need to base that on what I see, not what I am told by others.

Ike: In that case, you can stay as long as you like.

Jill: I appreciate it. I think meeting all of you...was a very good thing.

-[Devdan *]-

Devdan: La la la! La la laaaaa! Hmmm... La laaaa hmmmmlaaaaaa! La de di da de laaaaaa...

Ike: ...Um... Hey there, you. Have a minute?

Devdan: Oh, Captain! How are you today?

Ike: It's commander. Not captain. Well...you seem to be enjoying yourself.

Devdan: That's because this garden is so pretty. Devdan loves all plants and flowers. How about you, Commander?

Ike: They're all right, I suppose.

Devdan: That makes Devdan rather sad. All right is not a very strong feeling. It is boring. You should be a more emotional commander. Even things you're used to will show you something new if you look hard enough. And discoveries are exciting! That's what life is all about! At least,

that's what Devdan thinks. Some disagree...and that makes Devdan upset!

Ike: ...You may be on to something. In Crimea, when my father was still alive, I think I was more open to such things. But now... I just don't have the time. Honestly, all I can think about is defeating Daein. I've no energy left to spend on flowers.

Devdan: ...If you talk like that, you will never defeat Daein.

Ike: What did you say?

Devdan: The war is new. If you are already so focused on preparations, you'll wear out before the fighting begins.

(Exit Devdan)

Ike: Hold on a minute! ...

-----[Exit Base]-----

-[Serenes Forest]-

Soren: I believe this is the place where we ended our search yesterday.

Ike: I realized something a couple of days ago... Even in this forest, you always know exactly where you are, don't you?

Soren: Hm?

Ike: How do you do that? I think it's the lack of color, but these woods are starting to look the same to me.

Soren: Yes, that's a problem...

Nasir: Ike! We're approaching a large clearing. I think we should have the apostle and some of the others wait there.

Ike: Good idea. Even if we find the heron today, there's no need for them to tramp through the forest with us.

Soren: Mmm...

Ike: We're going to head deeper into the forest and continue the search. Please wait here. If we find the heron, we'll send for you immediately.

Elincia: I understand. My lord Ike, everyone, please be careful.

Sanaki: ...We're counting on you.

Ike: Sigrun? Tanith? May I entrust the princess to your care?

Sigrun: Of course.

Tanith: You've no need to worry. We will protect her with our lives.

Ike: Very well. Until later.

(Ike and the others walk farther into the forest)

Ike: All right. Greil Mercenaries, move out!

Oliver: Gah! Haven't you fools found my precious little bird yet? I've no doubt the poor thing is even now quivering with loneliness and cold.

Soldier: Duke Tanas! I've just received word that the mercenaries who invaded your villa are in this forest!

Oliver: Blast! Those wretches... They're here to steal my bird! Their souls are black with greed and jealousy! I have found beauty incarnate, and I will not relinquish it! Only I, Duke Tanas, can appreciate its worth!

Soldier: Um... I'm...sure that's true, Your Grace, but what about the mercenaries? What should we do about them?

Oliver: Hunt them down like dogs! Let none leave this forest alive! They will not rob me of my prize.

Soldier: But, You Grace, they serve at the pleasure of the apostle herself! Striking them would be--

Oliver: Leave the apostle to me! I can deal with her once this is finished! All I need from you is silence and obedience. Is that clear?

Soldier: Yes, Your Grace! I beg your pardon.

Soldier: There they are! Do as Duke Oliver commanded! Slay them where they stand! Let none leave the forest alive, not man, woman, or child!

Ike: Oh, not the duke's soldiers again... I think it's about time we put an end to these fools. Listen up, everyone! Let's end this here!

-----[Battle Start]-----

-----[Battle End]-----

Ike: Curses! They just keep coming! How many soldiers does he have?

Soren: There's no telling. He is a bishop and a senator, and he holds peerage, and that means he could command many men.

Nasir: Perhaps we, too, should call in a few reinforcements. What do you think?

Ike: That's not a bad idea. And while we wait, we could take a breather and reorganize our attack strategy... Let's do it.

-----Part 2-----[172]-----

(A high-pitched noise is heard)

Tibarn: What was that sound?

Janaff: I heard something, too.

Ulki: It came from the northeast. It's unlike anything I've ever heard.

Janaff: To the northeast...? Aha! There are ruins over there. Perhaps the White Prince found them to be a good hiding place.

Tibarn: Let's check it out. Maybe we can find him and escape while the humans fight amongst themselves.

Janaff: What are those humans thinking? Why would they be trying to lop each others' heads off?

Ulki: Shall I make an inquiry?

Tibarn: Leave them. They're nothing but trouble.

Janaff: I second that! Now, if we want to avoid the human skirmish, we should head...thataway! Though these trees!

Tibarn: Let's go.

Ulki: Yes, sir!

Ike: All right, let's figure out where to go next.

Mist: Brother!

Ike: What is it, Mist?

Mist: Just now, did you...hear a sound?

Ike: Huh? No, nothing special.

Mist: Really? I guess it was just me then.

Nasir: A high-pitched sound? Like the chime of a bell?

Mist: Ah! Yes, it was! That's it exactly!

Ike: I didn't hear a thing.

Nasir: It came from the ruins to the northeast. It was a very slight sound indeed-- one that required extraordinary ears to hear. Which means that your sister has hearing par on with that of the laguz.

Mist: Wow! Did you hear that? Neat!

Ike: Don't let it go to your head. A sound that beorc can't hear... Hmm... That's interesting.

Nasir: It is said that those of the heron clan are all practitioners of seid magic. Perhaps this sound is related to that?

Mist: Seid magic? What's that?

Nasir: It involves arcane songs known as galdrar. The effects of galdrar on

the listener depend on the lyrics and melody. For example, a galdr can restore lost strength and vitality to those who hear it. And if the singer is of royal blood, the galdr may be powerful enough to move its listener to extraordinary feats. I've even heard tales of a galdr that could give one the speed to do the work of two men. The galdrar grant many powers.

Mist: Wow... That sounds incredible, doesn't it, Ike!

Ike: Yeah. But even with all that power, they were still wiped out by the beorc...

Mist: Right...

Nasir: Herons are highly attuned to the forces of balance. Even if they had the means to resist, I doubt they would have used them.

Ike: ...We leave as soon as our reinforcements arrive. Duke Tanas must not succeed! Let's rescue the heron while there's time!

Mist: All right!

(Exit Ike/Mist)

Nasir: ...

Reyson: Cursed humans... How dare they defile this forest again! I will brook their savagery no more! The forest whispered earlier, but I must drive these wretches out before I can speak to it further. I will go to the altar... I will give voice to the forbidden magic and destroy the humans utterly!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Soldier: There they are! The Crimean mercenaries! Surround them! They must all die!

Ike: Listen, everyone! We must make our way to the ruins in the northeast. Fight if you must, but keep up!

Soren: Ike! What about the reinforcements?

Ike: They'll have to catch up. We can't wait any longer!

Soren: Understood.

-----[Battle End]-----

Ike: Whew... We finally made it. Let's split up and search the surrounding area.

Nasir: Ike, what do you think of calling in more reinforcements?

Ike: The duke's army seems nearly limitless, and I'm worried about our weapon situation. Let's do it.

Ike: Hey, what's this?

Nasir: What is it, Ike?

Ike: Look here. This is the only place in these ruins where I've seen healthy grass growing.

Nasir: You're right.

Ike: And I found this.

Nasir: A white feather? Of course. So this is where...

Ike: Where what?

Nasir: This way. Come with me.

Ike: What now?

Ike: Nasir! What have you found?

Nasir: ...A heron.

(Enter Leanne)

Leanne: -Heron language-

Ike: ...Um... That's a girl. Nasir, you said that the male heron we met was the only surviving member of the race.

Nasir: I believed it to be true. To find another survivor... It's a miracle.

Leanne: -Heron language-

Ike: Hey, wait, please! I must speak--

Leanne: -Heron language-

(Leanne collapses)

Ike: Come on. Wake up.

Leanne:

Nasir: She's lost consciousness.

Ike: I guess there's nothing I can do but wait for her to come around. I wasn't trying to frighten her.

(Enter Oliver)

Oliver: Oh! Oh! Oh! I've found you at last! My beautiful treasure!

Ike: It's about time you showed your bloated face, Duke Tanas!

Oliver: Oh! Oh... No mistake about it. That is the spectacular work of art I paid so much to obtain...

Ike: You still claim ownership, do you?

Oliver: No, wait... Something's different... This is...a female!? You mean to tell me that yet another lives? How spectacular! Men! Bring me that heron! But do her no harm!

Ike: You'll never have her!

(Take positions)

Ike: Again? Will this corpulent windbag never learn? Form up, troops! We must protect the heron!

-----[Battle Start]-----

(Enter Oliver)

Oliver: Aaa...aaarrrrrgggghhhh! What vexatious wretches! I am...overmatched! I can't believe I'm saying this, but...there's another white heron! Re-retreat! Leave them their prize!

-----[Battle End]-----

Ike: Blast! Duke Tanas has escaped!

Soren: Ike? Perhaps trying to fight with that heron on your back is not the wisest of ideas. Why don't we take her to the apostle before moving on?

Ike: We've finally got Duke Tanas on the run! I don't intend to stop until we've captured or killed that monster!

Soren: I understand, but shouldn't we at least let someone else carry the heron?

Ike: Truth be told, she's unbelievably light. I barely know she's there.

Soren: Is... Is that so?

Ike: I think she weighs... Oh, I'd say about half as much as Mist.

Mist: Wow! I'm surprised!

Boyd: I'll bet you are...

Mist: What are you grinning about, Boyd?

Boyd: Oh, nothing... I'm just amazed... Did you know you're two times heavier than she is!? I'm glad I don't have to carry you around! It'd be like wearing an extra suit of armor!

Mist: You... You pig! You're the worst!

(Mist hits Boyd)

Boyd: Gaaa!

Ike: All right, maybe I exaggerated a bit. But she's still lighter than you.

Mist: Well, what do you expect? She's a bird!!!

Titania: Commander, if this battle is going to continue, I think we should get more reinforcements.

-----Part 4-----[174]-----

Reyson: Avoiding those human scum cost me time...but I've almost made it to the altar.

(Enter Tibarn/Janaff/Ulki)

Tibarn: Reyson! Are you well?

Reyson: Tibarn! How did you--

Tibarn: Nealuchi told us everything.

Reyson: Oh... Allow me to apologize. I left on my own without a word to you, and this is what happened.

Tibarn: As long as you're unharmed, all is well. Let's go home.

Reyson: Please, give me a little time. I cannot allow these humans to remain in the forest.

Tibarn: I understand how you feel, but we're completely outnumbered. Let us wait for another day--

Reyson: Once I stand at the altar, I can take care of them. Every one of them.

Tibarn: You can't mean... Are you thinking of using the forbidden magic?

Reyson: ...Yes. I will sing those monsters the dirge of ruin.

Tibarn: Are you mad?! You mustn't! I can't allow it!

Reyson: With permission or without, I do what I must! It is retribution for genocide! Retribution for this forest!

Tibarn: Reyson! You must not let yourself be ruled by despair! Each member of the heron tribe is an embodiment of balance! Do this, and you warp your very existence!

Reyson: That's what they all said... My family. My tribe. And then...they died. The humans were drunk with joy. They laughed! They sang! ...And then they slaughtered us like livestock. My mother, my brother, my elder sisters... Even my infant sister, Leanne! All killed in a single night.

Tibarn: Reyson...

Reyson: I know. This thing I intend to do brings dishonor to my house. And yet ... I cannot forgive. And their past actions weren't enough; now, they violate the sanctity of the forest without a trace of regret! Accursed humans... I will never forgive them!

Tibarn: Don't you think we understand that?

Reyson: ...

Janaff: That's right! Prince Reyson, there's no need for you to reject your honor based on the likes of them!

Ulki: The tragedy of the herons... The horror and pain of that night...lives on in all of us.

Tibarn: Let's return to Phoenicis, and think of a plan. You are right. This will not stand. The full power of the hawk nation is behind you. The humans will pay.

Reyson: ...As you wish...

Ike: Enough already! Lay down your arms and surrender. We will let you live!

Oliver: Grrrrrr... No! Never! I'm not giving up! I'm not finished yet! Out of my way, penniless wretches! Your very existence is an insult to all that is beautiful! All you really want is my wealth and beauty! Miserable curs... You reek of poverty and envy! Oh, but I understand your emotions... Yes, I do. How could you sad vagabonds not want to be me?

Ike: ...That's the last thing in the world--

Oliver: Silence! I am not one to be daunted by mean beggars such as you. Oh ho ho ho! In the name of the goddess, I, Oliver, duke of Tanas, will smite your hideous evil!

Ike: Um...

Oliver: To arms! To arms! Defend me with all the strength you possess! Oh, and bring me the little bird that blue-haired lout is carrying while you're at it...

Ike: ...Oh, please.

(Take positions)

Ike: Here they come! Combat formation, everyone!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Janaff: Uh-oh! They're still going at it over here. Shall we go around?

Tibarn: I suppose so. Two human armies bashing one another's brains out... I wonder what they're after.

Reyson: Ah!

(The same noise as earlier is heard)

Tibarn: There's that sound again. Reyson, are you doing that?

Reyson: ...

Tibarn: No, I suppose not.

Reyson: ...The forest is whispering something. -Heron language-

Janaff: King Tibarn! Prince Reyson! Look! There!

Tibarn: Eh?

Reyson: Ah?

Janaff: The blue-haired human is carrying something on his back... No, it can't be...

Tibarn: Is that...another heron?

Reyson: ...But...that's not...

Tibarn: I think some of the humans might be fighting to protect the heron. Grr ... It's against my nature, but...we shall aid them! Janaff! Ulki! To me!

Janaff: Right!

Ulki: Yes, sir!

Reyson: Tibarn! Please... Allow me to go with you.

Tibarn: If you forswear the forbidden magic, you may come.

Reyson: Agreed.

(The three of them enter the battlefield)

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Oliver: Ohhh...ahhh... I...cannot...fall here... It cannot...be ... Such a...loss...to beauty...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Ike: It's you!

Reyson: On your back... Who is it you carry?

Ike: Oh, the girl? I think she may be somebody you know, but...

Leanne: ...

Reyson: -Heron language-

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: -Heron language- How is this possible? How did you survive all this time?

Tibarn: Leanne? Do you know who I am?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Tibarn: That's right. You remember my name. Have you been here by yourself for all these years?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: The forest protected her. It kept her asleep for so long... There's no way to express my gratitude. -Heron language-

Tibarn: You there, beorc.

Ike: Me?

Tibarn: I am Tibarn, king of Phoenicis. Since the loss of their homeland, the Serenes royal family has been under my guardianship. Who are you, and why do you aid the herons?

Ike: My name is Ike. I am commander of the Greil Mercenaries. I am under orders of the empress, the apostle Sanaki, to protect the herons.

Tibarn: The empress of this country wants to protect the herons? Ha! That is an interesting tale. The herons were blamed for the assassination of the last empress. They were massacred on hearsay. And now her ancestor wants to help them? Touching.

Ike: The empress Sanaki knows that the herons are not murderers. And now, she is trying to atone for the crimes of her people.

Reyson: ...No. I cannot believe that.

Tibarn: ...

Reyson: Pathetic apologies and half-baked platitudes are easily spoken! Humans burned Serenes Forest. They killed my family. I cannot trust one who allies himself with them.

Ike: Please, withhold judgment until you speak with the apostle. She's waiting at the forest's edge.

Reyson: The apostle is here?

Reyson: So you...are the apostle?

Sanaki: I am.

Reyson: ...

(Sanaki kneels)

Sanaki: ...I'm...sorry... I am ignorant as to what words of contrition will be appropriate to one of the heron tribe. Yet I stand before you as a representative of my people... From the depths of my heart I apologize to you... I am sorry... So truly sorry...

Sigrun: Emp-Empress Sanaki! What are you doing? You are the apostle! You cannot bend your knee to another!

Ike: Peace! Let her speak her heart.

Sigrun: I...um...

Reyson: ...

Sanaki: I'm sorry... I'm sorry...

Leanne: -Heron language-

Sanaki: ...?

Reyson: Leanne?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Sanaki: You... What is it you want? Are you telling me to stand?

Sanaki: You...

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: Leanne!

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: Leanne! You cannot ask me to forgive them! You were asleep... You don't know what these humans did to us...

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: You...know?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: That's right... Everyone is gone. That's why I cannot release my hatred.

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: -Heron language- I understand. If that is how you feel...

Sanaki: ...

Reyson: Apostle Sanaki... We accept your apology. We may not be able to release our hatred of hum-- of beorc, but... You need not let the fate of Serenes Forest trouble you any longer. You are absolved of that guilt.....

Sanaki: Th-thank you...

Ike: That was well done.

Sanaki: Yes...

Elincia: My lord Ike, what will happen now?

Ike: The heron siblings said there would be some sort of ceremony, but I don't know what that entails.

(Enter Janaff)

Janaff: You there! Beorc mercenaries! Prince Reyson wants all of you to come to the Serenes altar. The presence of Princess Crimea and the apostle is also requested.

Ike: Altar?

Janaff: Just come with me. It's this way.

Elincia: Empress Sanaki, Commander Sigrun, let us go.

Sanaki: Very well.

Mist: Let's hurry, Ike!

Ike: Right.

(Cut Scene -> "The Forest")

Tibarn: That was excellent.

Elincia: It's so beautiful...

Sanaki: The Serenes Forest, beloved of the goddess, is alive once more.

Sigrun: You spoke so well earlier, Empress Sanaki. You fill my heart with pride... Sniff...

Sanaki: Here now! None of that. This is no place for tears!

Sigrun: I'm sorry... I'm just so happy...

Nasir: Ah, excellent. The gap between laguz and beorc has been bridged. I think this may be enough...

(Exit Nasir)

Soren: ...

Titania: What's wrong, Soren? You look so grim. What are you looking at?

Soren: It's nothing. Nothing at all.

(Exit Soren)

Titania: Wait, Soren! What in the world is wrong with him?

-[Mainal Cathedral]-

Sanaki: You have done excellent work, Ike. Thanks to you, the wound that has scarred Begnion for many long years can finally begin to heal. As promised, Begnion now offers its support to Crimea's restoration. However, Prime Minister Sephiran has yet to return, which limits the reinforcements I can provide. Be that as it may, what troops I can spare await your command. Use them as you see fit.

Ike: I understand. Thank you. That's good news, isn't it, Princess Elincia?

Elincia: Yes. Yes it is.

Sanaki: This has taught me a valuable lesson... Our land needs the laguz. I also believe that beorc and laguz need each other to survive. The previous apostle, my grandmother, was desirous of such a world, as were my own parents. Princess Elincia, your father, King Ramon of Crimea, was a true pioneer in the area of beorc-laguz relations. In the very near future, I will give the imperial senate a few... suggestions on achieving a fully integrated society. I doubt the road will be easily traveled, but I can no longer turn a blind eye to these issues. Princess Elincia, you must rebuild Crimea. If you are successful, we will join forces and change the world.

Elincia: Empress Sanaki, your vision surpasses even my own... My father would be so pleased to hear your words.

Ike: Looks like you're through with me. I'll wait outside until you're finished talking.

Sanaki: Hold! I am most definitely NOT through with you.

Ike: Huh? What did I do now?

Sanaki: You're as impudent and impatient as ever. Heed me, Ike. If you are to help lead the Crimean Liberation Army, you must be given a more appropriate title.

Ike: If you're talking about making me a noble, I'll decline, thanks. That's not my kind of thing.

Sanaki: You are not in a position to refuse. Giving some nameless mercenary control of Begnion's troops would be...problematic. And more importantly, it would affect the troops. You will resign yourself to this and receive peerage from Princess Elincia.

(Exit Sanaki)

Ike: What? No, wait! This is absurd... Blast! Of all the foolish...

Elincia: I'm...sorry about this. If you're absolutely opposed to it, I won't force you.

Ike: No, I have to do what's necessary. What am I supposed to do now? Put on a funny hat or something?

Elincia: Um, will you...lend me your sword? Thank you. Now, may I ask you...to

kneel before me? Th-thank you. All right... Let me begin. In the name of House Crimea, I hereby grant you the title and rank of lord and all the honors it conveys. Rise, Lord Ike.

(Ike promotes into a Lord)

Elincia: It is done.

Ike: What an odd feeling.

Sanaki: Aha! Your new rank suits you.

Sigrun: I completely agree.

Elincia: Yes, it truly does...

Ike: Hmm... I suppose. Not that it matters to me.

Narration: Western Begnion is home to a great forest. At one time, these woods were home to the kingdom of Serenes and ruled by the heron clan of the bird tribes. Following the Serenes Massacre, the forest lost its color and vitality. Some said it was the sorrow of the goddess made real. For twenty long years, the devout citizens of Begnion trembled in shame and loathing over the crime they had committed. The Begnion Empress, Apostle Sanaki, stepped forward as representative of her countrymen. Kneeling before the surviving heron prince and princess, she gave voice to the apology of her people. She spoke not as one nation to another but as neighbors on the same continent. The massacre was unforgivable. However, hatred breeds hatred, and if the cycle of grief and anger is not broken, it will continue for time without end. It was with this in mind that the herons accepted the apostle's apology. And so it was that Serenes Forest was returned to its former glory. Afterward, as payment for Ike's service, Princess Elincia gained the services of a regiment of Begnion army regulars. Though of common birth, Ike receives peerage from the princess and is given command of the army. As the first snow of the season falls, the newly commissioned General Ike takes control of the Crimean Liberation Army. He leads it toward the knife-edged mountains that mark the border between Begnion and Daein.

Ashnard: So they've left Begnion, have they?

Black Knight: According to our spy, they march with a regiment of Begnion's army. They plan to take a land route through Daein and then into Crimea.

Ashnard: Hah! They plan to cut across Daein? With nothing more than a single regiment at whose core is a tattered band of ragtag mercenaries? Gawain's son leads this rabble, yes? How does he stand up to his father's legacy?

Black Knight: He doesn't. He's just a boy, not yet worthy of his father's name.

Ashnard: Hmph. Disappointing.

Black Knight: Though his skill with the blade is rough, there is something...
uncanny about him. People seem drawn to him. And not just
Begnion's apostle, either. He's also gained the trust of the
Serenes survivors...and of King Phoenicis as well.

Ashnard: The herons are alive?

Black Knight: It appears that two members of the royal family survived.

Ashnard: Heh heh... Look how nicely the table's been set for us. Bring one of
them to me... I care not which one. And I want the medallion as well.

Black Knight: ...As you wish.

Tanith: Once we cross that great wall, we'll be in Daein. Look there, atop
that building! ...Daein wyvern riders on patrol. They won't be happy
to see us. Tell me, General Ike, have you faced wyvern riders in
combat?

Ike: Only a few times. I got the impression that the Kilvas ravens were the
more dangerous foe.

Tanith: If that's your impression, then you have yet to fight true wyvern
riders.

Ike: What do you mean?

Tanith: I have no way of judging the ones we see here, but I know another
unit, one that was attached to Begnion's temple guard. They had their
reasons for leaving... But the important thing to remember is that
they are exceedingly powerful.

Ike: Which explains why the apostle sent you to accompany us.

Tanith: That's right. Pegasus knights fare better than most against wyvern
riders. We know the skies as well as they do.

Ike: Yeah, I prefer to keep my feet on the ground, thank you. Can I entrust
the flying business to you?

Tanith: Of course. We'll bring honor to the name of the apostle's sacred
guards.

(Soren Report)

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Soldier **]-

Soldier: General Ike. All troops are ready to move out.

Ike: All right. Can you have them wait?

Soldier: Do you want them to fall out and wait in their tents? Or would you
rather they form up and stand at attention?

Ike: Go ahead and have them stand down. I'll call them when I'm ready.

Soldier: Yes, sir!

Ike: ...

Soldier: Begging your pardon, sir! All troops have been ordered to stand down. However, General Tanith requests her orders. Are her pegasus knights to stand down as well?

Ike: Am I supposed to decide that, too?

Soldier: General Ike... You've been given command of the entire army, sir. We will not move without your orders, sir.

Ike: General Tanith's troops...are to follow General Tanith's orders.

Soldier: Understood, sir! General Tanith's pegasus knights will not be deployed unless there is a request for reinforcements. Those are the orders of General Tanith. By your leave, sir!

(Exit Soldier)

Ike: ...

-[Tanith *]-

Ike: Tanith, do you have a moment?

Tanith: General Ike. What is it? Is there a problem?

Ike: I thought you might be able to provide me with some information.

Tanith: Yes?

Ike: What can you tell me about King Daein? I'd like to know something of him before I have to face him in battle.

Tanith: Truth be told, I've never fought him, either. I cannot give you any specifics, but I will tell you what little I do know.

Ike: Please. Whatever you can tell me would be appreciated.

Tanith: Ashnard's coronation, let me see... Yes, it was eighteen years ago. You see, a plague had struck the capital, spreading out to affect the surrounding region of Nevassa and beyond. Ashnard was crowned the year after that great tragedy finally subsided. In the entire history of Tellius, no calamity has claimed the lives of so many beorc and laguz -- not since the great flood. Two years before, it struck Bagnion, and the entire population of Serenes was nearly obliterated. The year after that, close to a thousand beorc-- nobles and peasants alike-- perished in Daein.

Ike: Nobles, you say? So the royal family fell victim to this plague as well?

Tanith: Yes. The reigning king and queen and some twenty or so princes and princesses fell ill. And everyone who fell ill perished. For a time,

the people despaired of losing the entire royal bloodline of Daein. It seemed that none would survive.

Ike: And yet Ashnard survived.

Tanith: He did. It is quite interesting, in a sense. You see, his name was never mentioned in any talk of succession before that time. He was of such a distant bloodline that he was unlikely to be king. In another place though, his name was already well known.

Ike: Where was that?

Tanith: On the battlefield. As you know, Daein is home to many brave warriors. At the time, then-prince Ashnard was said to have been a match for an entire troop of pegasus knights. Begnion and Daein both keep close watch over their borders, and their patrols fought in many skirmishes. Although there was no war to speak of, these land disputes did end with Daein claiming a small portion of Begnion soil. It would be no exaggeration to say this was solely due to the strength of one man: Ashnard.

Ike: ...

Tanith: Forgive me. I have spoken longer than I intended. It's about time we get back to the business of marching preparations.

Ike: No, thank you for telling me so much. If we have another chance, please share more of your stories.

Tanith: Understood.

-[Tormod *]-

Tormod: Ike! Which troop should we fall in with? We have received no orders yet.

Ike: Tormod, Muarim, I know I've asked you many times, but... Are you sure you want to be here?

Tormod: You keep asking that! Maybe you don't want us here. Is that it? I don't know what to think!

Ike: No, it's not that at all. To be honest, the battle ahead is going to be hard... It looks bleak. I'd rather that those without direct ties to Crimea not get involved.

Tormod: A bleak battle? What about trying to free all the slaves in Begnion? Now THOSE were bleak battles. Bleak battles are our specialty. Right, Muarim?

Muarim: Yes, you are. Yet...thanks to Ike's time in Begnion, things have changed completely.

Ike: That's right. The apostle has promised to press her investigation until there's not a single laguz slave left in the entire nation. So, there's no reason for you two to continue fighting, is there? You don't owe me anything--

Tormod: We're going to fight with you, Ike. We want to help!

Muarim: It is our right to join you in this. Just as it is your right to refuse us.

Ike: To be perfectly frank, I would be willing to beg to get you to join us. Both of you, all right?

Muarim: All right.

Tormod: Ha ha! You can count on us!

-----[Exit Base]-----

-[Tor Garen]-

Elincia: My lord Ike. Are preparations complete?

Ike: Yes. The enemy should not yet be aware that we've come this far. We're going to launch a surprise attack and try to capture the wall on our first charge. Please wait for us at the base camp.

Elincia: Very well...

Ike: There's no need to look so worried. We're well prepared. And we've got you as our good luck charm.

Elincia: Thank you for that, but... Do be careful, my lord Ike.

Ike: Hey, don't worry! This may be our first battle as an official army, but we've fought Daein many times. We're going to win. After all, I can't lose my very first battle as a snooty noble, now can I?

Elincia: I believe in you, and I know that you will be victorious. Come back safe.

Ike: Is everyone ready? Let's move out!

Elincia: Hold a moment, my lord Ike! In the sky...something's coming!

Ike: Who's that?

(Enter Hawks/Herons)

Tibarn: Ah, Ike! Well met. It appears that you're getting ready for your first battle as Crimea's army.

Ike: And you're escorting the heron siblings back to Phoenicis, right?

Tibarn: That was the original plan, but... Someone here insisted that we follow you. Quite unreasonably, I might add.

Reyson: You treated us with courtesy, beorc. We must act accordingly. Isn't that so, Leanne?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: You said your name was Ike, correct?

Ike: Yes.

Reyson: You aided my sister and me during a time of danger. We herons hold courtesy in high esteem. We must repay our debt to you.

Ike: That's really not necessary.

Reyson: We are practitioners of seid magic. We cannot fight, but we can imbue our allies with strength. If you so wish it, I will travel with you. In this way I will repay you for what you have done.

Ike: ...

(Agree to let Reyson join you)

Ike: You were lucky to find your sister; shouldn't you stay by her side?

Reyson: Leanne understands what I do.

Ike: I see. In that case, welcome.

Reyson: Thank you. I swear on the honor of my clan to do all I can to strengthen your cause.

Tibarn: It's settled then. And you'll get aid from me as well. Janaff!

Janaff: Right here, Your Majesty!

Tibarn: You'll go with the Crimean army and protect Reyson.

Janaff: Leave it to me!

Tibarn: You, too, Ulki. All right?

Ulki: Of course.

Reyson: Tibarn! It's too much, I cannot accept this. You're already watching over Leanne and my father as well.

Tibarn: These past twenty years... I know what it's been like for you living in Phoenicis. I'm only sorry I can't do more.

Reyson: Tibarn... I thank you, from the bottom of my heart.

Ike: King Phoenicis, I will guard Reyson well. When Crimea is retaken, I will see him safely returned to you.

Tibarn: I will take you at your word. Your actions have created a bond of trust between yourselves and the hawk and heron clans. If you find yourself in a dire position, you can call on me. No matter what, I will fly to your aid.

(Exit Tibarn/Leanne)

Elinacia: We gained a strong ally where we had not thought to look for one, didn't we?

Ike: Yes. Beorc and laguz... Beast tribe and bird tribe... There's no difference between us. We finally understand one another.

Elincia: Yes, I think you're right.

Ike: Now, let's really get started! Everyone, move out!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Kayachey: It appears the Crimean army has arrived. It's time to put our plan into action.

Naesala: The main body of the Kilvas army will wait atop the western summit. A small unit will remain here and cooperate with you. This is correct, is it not?

Kayachey: Mm, it is.

(Exit Naesala)

Soldier: What could His Majesty be thinking? Why does Daein ally herself with some backwater sub-human nation?

Kayachey: ...I don't know. There's no way we can expect to understand the supreme thoughts of the king. All we can do is perform the tasks set before us by His Highness. That is everything.

Soldier: Yes, of course!

Kayachey: The Crimean army has no idea we're aware of their every move. Bah! What vermin... What does that untrained group of vagabonds think they can do? I don't care how talented he is. Their commander is nothing more than a young mercenary with delusions of grandeur. We've nothing to fear.

Soldier: We'll show them what real war is like! And...the Kilvas ravens? How should we deal with them?

Kayachey: Those sub-human freaks! Let's use them as bait. We can sacrifice them and reduce our own human casualties.

Soldier: A fantastic idea!

Kayachey: Make sure that the men are thoroughly instructed.

Soldier: Yes, sir!

Kayachey: You there! Halt! Mmm...you're an unfamiliar face.

Shinon: You'll know it soon enough.

Soldier: Y-you filthy piece of offal! You will bow your head to a superior officer!

Shinon: ...

Kayachey: He's got a lot of nerve, hasn't he? Is he one of yours?

Soldier: Yes, sir! He's a new recruit who was only assigned to me today. Please accept my apologies for his lack of any training or manners

whatsoever.

Kayachey: If he's good, I can overlook almost any character flaw. Go and kill as many Crimeans as you can! Help my name be remembered with honor and glory.

Soldier: Yes, sir!

Shinon: ...Pah.

Kayachey: Come to me, dregs of Crimea! I will teach what it means to oppose the might of Daein.

(Enter Ravens)

Reyson: Ravens! They betray not only me, but all laguz! Naesala, you dastard...

Rolf: Shinon?

Shinon: Rolf...

Rolf: Shinon! It is you!

Shinon: Look at you. You've grown so much... You actually look like an archer.

Rolf: Really? Ha ha!

Shinon: You always did have what it takes. It's just like I told you-- you train the right way, and you'll surpass both your brothers.

Rolf: I had a good teacher!

Shinon: Yeah, you did. You...haven't told anyone else about that, have you?

Rolf: Nope. Never said a word. I keep my promises.

Shinon: Good man.

Rolf: Ha ha ha! Um... Shinon?

Shinon: What?

Rolf: Are you...with the enemy?

Shinon: Yep.

Rolf: ...Sniff...sniff...

Shinon: Stop that. I told you things like this happen. Did you forget?

Rolf: ...But...it's...not... It's not...fair... Sniff...

Shinon: Ready your bow. It's time for the pupil to face his master.

(Ike and Shinon fight)

Shinon: Heh. I always knew it would come to this, Ike.

Ike: Shinon...

Shinon: Watch yourself!

(Shinon dies)

Death Quote- Shinon: Unnhh... Curses...

Ike: Don't move. You'll tear the wound wide open.

Shinon: What're you planning? D-do it...now... Finish me.

Ike: ...

Shinon: ...Ha... Idiot...

(End fight)

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Kayachey: I let them get...too close...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Shinon: Crud, I lost... This was a plum chance for me to get a leg up in this world, too.

Ike: Shinon.

Shinon: Ha! And I can't believe that the one who defeats me is little lord Ikie. Looks like I've lost my edge. I'm ready, boy. Go on. Finish what you started.

Ike: Come back to the company.

Shinon: I don't think so.

Ike: You've never liked me. As far back as I can remember, you have never liked me.

Shinon: That's right. Still don't.

Ike: You... You called me a weakling. Said I was nothing without the help of my father. That's what you said, right? That's why you hated me.

Shinon: ...Sounds like me.

Ike: Don't you get it? I just beat you. So your reasons don't hold water anymore, do they?

Shinon: Pah! It's enough you beat me, now you gotta talk me to death?

Ike: I'll say it once more. Come back to the company. I acknowledge your abilities. As commander, I want you with us.

Shinon: ...Let's have another go around. I win, and I'm commander. Agreed?

Ike: I win, and you fall in line. Agreed?

Shinon: Don't worry, boy. I'll make it quick.

Ike: Let's go.

Soldier: General! We've seized control of the surrounding area, and the remaining Daein troops are retreating... General?

Ike: Oh, right. Understood.

Soldier: I beg your leave.

(Exit Soldier)

Ike: General, eh? Weird.

(Enter Nasir)

Nasir: You know, you never look relaxed.

Ike: Nasir. What's going on? We haven't seen much of you lately.

Nasir: I've been a bit busy. In order to leave Begnion, I had to sell my ship and dismiss the crew... There was a lot to take care of.

Ike: Is that so? Heh. It looks like you've been caught up in our struggle after all. Are you all right with that? I mean, I know you've got a lot of your own matters to handle.

Nasir: It's not like I've abandoned my own interests to join up with the Crimean army. For me, I've judged that there's value in traveling with you. So, don't worry about it overly much.

Ike: If you say so. You're a fairly knowledgeable fellow, so it's nice having you around.

Nasir: Ha! I think that's mutual. Now then, I've got some good news.

Ike: What is it?

Nasir: Senior officials in Gallia are moving to action. Until now, they've been content to take a defensive stance and wait it out, but... It appears this neverending stalemate has exhausted their patience. Ike, this victory here today was a very important thing. It may prove to be a decisive first step in breaking Daein's power. News of it will spread like wildfire over the entire continent and give countries confidence to speak out against Daein. With Crimea as a rallying point, Gallia may well be moved to join this war. You just need to keep winning. If you can do that, the road will open before you.

Ike: History will be made... Could Daein truly fall at our hands? Can I make that happen? Me?

Nasir: Use what you've been given, and great things will happen. You have it in you to lead, Ike. For now, it's merely one portion of the bird tribes, but...your relationship is established. It's because you resolved to gain their trust, and then made it happen.

Ike: It's all due to my father... If my actions prove to be the right ones, it will be due to the way my father raised me. "If you treat others in good faith, they will follow you of their own volition." That's what he taught me.

Nasir: He was a magnificent man, wasn't he?

Ike: When I was younger, I want nothing more than to be as strong as my father. And then I wanted to surpass him... Now, that is a goal I'll never achieve.

Nasir: ...

Naesala: What's that? The border's been breached?

Soldier: Everyone was defeated. Not only the Daein troops, but our brigade as well. Cut down like wheat in a field.

Naesala: Huh! Well, that was impressively done. Er, for a band of sellswords, that is. There's nothing else to do. Send a message to the Daein command and tell them the enemy is stronger than expected.

Soldier: At once.

Naesala: Wait! Hold a moment.

Soldier: Yes?

Naesala: Send a Daein human instead. I don't care which one. Just don't use any of our troops.

Soldier: But a wingless human will take such a long time to--

Naesala: General Petrine commands the next front. She's a very...temperamental woman... But go if you like! Tell her that the Kilvas ravens have been defeated... She'll roast you like a chicken and use your bones for stock!

Soldier: Un-understood! I will find a human!

Nasir: Who's there?

Soren: ...

Nasir: Soren? What are you doing here?

Soren: What are you planning?

Nasir: Where did that come from? I've no idea what you're talking about.

Soren: Don't play dumb with me. We're past that. Gallia's decision to join in this war was based on some new information they received, wasn't it?

Nasir: ...

Soren: Cat got your tongue? Fine. I'll tell you what you've been doing here... You were to deliver Princess Crimea to Begnion to see if she could garner any support for her cause. And-- regardless of whether she got that assistance or not-- to judge if she was worthy of laguz support. Am I wrong?

Nasir: If you've figured all of this out, why remain silent?

Soren: Because your actions were beneficial to Princess Crimea. I determined that even if left to your own devices, you would not harm the princess.

Nasir: It sounds like you don't think that's the case anymore.

Soren: You accomplished both missions, but you've come back anyway. To what end?

Nasir: I don't have to explain myself to you.

Soren: That's true only until I reveal your purpose to Ike.

Nasir: Everyone has a secret or two that he wants to bury somewhere deep. Including you...Soren.

Soren: ...I don't know what you mean.

Nasir: Oh, I trust that we understand each other. The army rises early tomorrow. I suggest we turn in.

Soren: The enemy knew we were coming today.

Nasir: And you think I'm responsible?

Soren: Yes, I do.

Nasir: My, oh, my... You really ARE suspicious, aren't you? Good night, Soren.

(Exit Nasir)

Soren: ...

Narration: Princess Elincia's newly-formed Crimean army, with Ike as its commander, marches to Tor Garen and claims its first victory. Tor Garen is a vast wall guarding Daein's border. Manned by battalions of well-trained soldiers, it was long thought impenetrable. Yet the strength of the Crimean army under General Ike's leadership far outstrips Daein's expectations, and Tor Garen falls. Learning of Gallia's increasing interest in the war, Ike wastes no time

ordering his troops further into the heart of Daein. The gears of history, which had come to a halt with the fall of Crimea, slowly creak to life once more...

-[Daein Border]-

Petrine: Naesala! King Naesala of Kilvas! I would speak with you now!

(Enter Naesala)

Naesala: Oh, if it isn't General Petrine. What brings you up to these frosty mountain peaks?

Petrine: I've no time for pleasantries. Is it true? Has Crimea's army breached Tor Garen?

Naesala: Though I am loathe to report it, this appears to be the case.

Petrine: Bah! Kayachey, you worthless dog! Being defeated by that girl's motley band just proves how useless he was.

Naesala: Surely it's not the general's fault alone. He was told that Crimea's army was weak and that Tor Garen was impregnable. And yet...he was defeated. I'd say that someone severely underestimated our enemy. Wouldn't you?

Petrine: What was that? Do you dare to insult Daein, crow? Men have forfeited their lives for less.

Naesala: Insult Daein? Never! Come now, General Petrine. I'm merely stating the facts. Regardless of the previous battle's outcome, Crimea's army will be stopped here. I will be taking the field myself.

Petrine: ...Hmph. Sounds like you've set the stage for a grand performance.

Naesala: General Petrine, Kilvas will always stand at Daein's side... As long as we receive our payment, of course.

Petrine: If gold is all it takes, then may our friendship never end. See to it that your performance warrants such consideration! Homasa! Come here!

(Enter Homasa)

Homasa: Yes.

Petrine: Work with King Kilvas and put a stop to Crimea's army. Now screw ups! Or else!

Homasa: Leave it to me, General.

(Exit Homasa)

Petrine: I will not suffer another failure, King Kilvas. You must finish them, and do so quickly... Are we clear? Arrr! I am sick to death of being made a fool by that Crimean floozy and her pathetic band of sellswords!

Naesala: And the remaining portion of my fee?

Petrine: Don't worry, we have it ready. You'll get paid when the job is done.

Naesala: As long as we're clear on that point, everything's settled. Well then, I'm off.

(Exit Naesala)

Petrine: Dog's breath! Even by half-breed standards, those crows are complete scum! Give that one even the smallest opening, and he'll steal the eyes from your skull. What an untrustworthy wretch.

(Soren Report)

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Jill **]-

Mist: Bye. See ya later!

Jill: Yep. Oh, Mist! Watch your step! It's slippery...

Mist: Whooooa!

(Mist falls)

Jill: Mist!

Mist: Ow! I landed right on my butt! Hee hee! This snow's cold!

Jill: Be careful!

Mist: All righty! Hey, watch, Jill! I'm gonna make a snow angel! Wheeee!

(Exit Mist)

Jill: ...It must be nice to be so cheerful.

Unknown: Jill!

Jill: ...Who's there?

(Enter Haar)

Haar: It's me.

Jill: Captain Haar? B-but... This is an enemy camp!

Haar: I've been trying to track you down ever since you disappeared at Toha. I figured you were off chasing after the Crimeans. I never imagined that you would join up with them.

Jill: At first, it was just circumstance, but... But now it's different. Now I'm with them because I want to be. Spending time with them-- and coming into contact with laguz-- has shown me what a fool I've been.

Haar: Laguz? I never thought I would hear that word from someone who once said "sub-human" with such absolute hatred. Sounds like you've had some good

experiences with this happy little band.

Jill: I knew that if anyone would understand, it would be you, Captain.

Haar: So you're forming your own set of values for the first time. That's good. That's very, very good. But what are you planning to do now? If you keep moving forward, you're going to face General Shiharam before long.

Jill: Causing trouble for my father was never my intent. However... As a member of this army, I will face him with my shoulders straight and my head held high.

Haar: So you're determined to see this through?

Jill: I am!

Haar: So be it. Then there's nothing left to be said. Farewell. The next time we meet, it will be as enemies. Prepare yourself... And get some rest! You know how important it is.

(Exit Haar)

Jill: ...

(Ike and Mist are talking off to the side)

Mist: Ike? Can I talk to you? A few minutes ago, a man I've never seen before showed up and spoke to Jill. I wasn't sure what was going on, so I went and found you. W-what should we do? Whatever they're talking about, it sure looks serious!

Ike: Jill trained in the Daein army. Fighting against her countrymen will be tough... No matter how prepared she thinks she is.

Mist: I don't care what happens! You can't let her fight against her own father! All right, Ike?

Ike: Hmmm. It might not be a bad idea to keep her at the base camp... Just while we're in Daein.

-[3 Brothers ***]-

Boyd: What do you think, guys? Are we going to be able to perform a new special attack?

Oscar: I think we might. I was looking through some old scrolls on fighting techniques, and I found one that looks perfect.

Boyd: Awesome! Nice work!

Rolf: What is it?! What is it!? Come on, tell us how it works!

Oscar: Well, if we want to learn it, there are some things we'll have to do.

Boyd: Aw, dang! I hope it's not all technical, 'cause I won't be able to keep up. Just summarize it, will you?

Oscar: I can do that. All right, the most important thing is we all have to use the same weapon. So, if all three of us can use a bow, that'll be one problem out of the way.

Boyd: A bow? You and I have to use bows?

Oscar: Boyd, are you even listening to me? Yes, we all have to use the same weapon. That's part of the deal.

Boyd: Crud! Nothing we can do about it, I guess. You better not slow us down, Rolf! You little brat.

Rolf: Stop calling me a brat! I'm a better archer than you! If anyone slows us down, it'll be you, Boyd!

Boyd: What did you say? I'm gonna--

Oscar: Knock it off, Boyd! Your skills with a bow aren't as polished as Rolf's. Anyone can see that. Which means that even if Rolf has some natural skill, whoever taught him the fundamentals was an expert archer...

Boyd: Yeah, I know, but he just keeps blabbering this nonsense about how he taught himself.

Rolf: I... I did teach myself! I'm a prodigy.

Oscar: Well, judging by your stance and the way you hold the bow, I think we all know the real story.

Rolf: Eeep!

Boyd: Huh? What is it? What real story?!

Rolf: Oscar! No! Shhh!

Oscar: ...The story... That Rolf's lucky to have a genius like me for a brother, that's what.

Boyd: Aw, stop messing around. This is getting stupid.

Rolf: Whew...

Unknown: What're you guys talking about?

(Enter Ike)

Ike: The three of you have been huddled up here for a while now. What are you scheming?

Boyd: Shh! Um... Uh... Hi, Ike!

Oscar: Scheming is such an ugly word! We're just--

Rolf: Oh, hey, Ike! We're working on this special man--

Boyd: Yaaaaaaaaaaa!

Oscar: Gaaa... I forgot something...

(Exit Oscar)

Rolf: Oooo...gotta go...

(Exit Rolf)

Boyd: Sorry about that, Ike. He's been acting a bit odd these days.

Ike: Really? Seems to me that you're the odd one in the bunch.

Boyd: Um, sure, all right! Do us a favor, though, and make sure the three of us are all in the next battle.

Ike: Sure, I guess that's fine. But why?

Boyd: Well, it's a surprise. That's all. We'll show you later! I'm sure you'll like it! Come on! We can't be standing around all day. Let's go! Oscar!
Rolf!

(Exit Boyd)

Ike: Special man? Hmm... Man... ...Mandolin? ...Manicotti? ...Manifesto? Oh, who cares?

-[Janaff *]-

Janaff: Brrr... I'll take on any number of enemies, but this snow is another story! I think my beautiful wings are icing over.

Ike: That sounds like trouble. Are you going to be able to fly?

Janaff: ...Yes, of course I can fly. These wings aren't for looks, you know? They're made of flesh and blood and feathers. It's not like I'm some animal that has to hibernate when winter rolls in. Sheesh! Can't you beorc tell the difference between comic exaggeration and serious conversation?

Ike: Um... Oh, I was supposed to laugh, was I? Sorry about that.

Janaff: Oh, my...such sincerity. This is unexpected. It looks like someone taught you manners.

Ike: Er...

Janaff: By the way, I've been meaning to ask... What are our chances for victory?

Ike: We're still at an extreme disadvantage.

Janaff: What? That's not the answer I wanted! You gotta do better than that, beorc general! I'm here! If we lose, how am I ever going to show my face in Phoenicis again?

Ike: We're at a disadvantage, but I don't intend to lose. There's a man in Daein that I need to find...and I will be the last thing that he sees.

Janaff: Ha ha! Well said! I wish you could repeat that to today's younger generation. There are some weaklings back home that I don't even want

to call hawks. I'd love to stick 'em back in their eggs and start over from scratch.

Ike: Hey, you hatch from eggs?! Eh?

Janaff: I was speaking figuratively. You know? Like...a metaphor? We haven't hatched from eggs for many generations now. Silly beorc... All right, I'm outta here. I gotta warm up the ol' wings before battle, or who knows what might happen.

(Exit Janaff)

Ike: I figured that egg thing was a joke, but I had no idea it ever really happened... Bird tribes... Go figure.

-[Ulki *]-

Ike: Excuse me, do you have a moment?

Ulki: ...Oh. General Ike. What is it?

Ike: It's nothing really... I just thought I'd say hello.

Ulki: That's...considerate.

Ike: Um... Your king is very generous, isn't he? And it's not just Reyson I'm talking about. He left us his two retainers as well.

Ulki: ...How do we pertain to the king's generosity?

Ike: I guess it's because Reyson kept apologizing... I just thought that... Am I misinterpreting something?

Ulki: I...don't know. But I know that the king can survive without our help.

Ike: Is that true? That's pretty amazing. I've been given the title of lord, but I still can't run this army on my own. Titania and Soren handle all the little details, and that's what keeps us from collapsing into chaos.

Ulki: Our king...does nothing special. Everyone just does what's needed. There is no chaos.

Ike: He's really trusted, isn't he?

Ulki: That's...natural. In laguz society, the strongest become king. Unlike the beorc, kingship is not tied to blood, so we have no weak kings. I'm sorry... Perhaps that was improper.

Ike: No, I agree with you. Choosing a ruler by strength instead of birth makes much more sense.

Ulki: When we face Begnion troops, we target the units with weak leadership and eliminate them first. Beorc weapons can be very powerful, but not everyone wields them well. Since beorc also choose generals by bloodlines, their competency is uneven...and that is a weakness of beorc armies. As for you, General Ike, the time to prove yourself is approaching.

Ike: It's true. No matter how strong the individuals are, that strength is worthless if they're weak as a unit. An army's power comes from leadership and management... That's good to remember. Thanks.

Ulki: Mmm.

-----[Exit Base]-----

-[Daein Border]-

Janaff: So, General...there look to be a lot of enemy soldiers ahead. Mostly Daein, but there are some crows from Kilvas as well.

Ike: More than our last fight?

Janaff: Yeah, there's a lot, but the most troubling thing is that King Kilvas is with them.

Ike: The crow king himself is cooperating with Daein?

Janaff: Yep. And compared to the other crows, the king is in a class by himself. Obviously, he's no match for our king, but... Anyway, you should move carefully.

Ike: An entire unit under the command of King Kilvas? I think that bodes ill for us.

Soren: The outcome of the battle hinges on how we deal with them.

Ike: ...

Titania: Kilvas soldiers, hm? As fellow bird tribe laguz, what can you tell us about them?

Janaff: Please don't lump us together with those carrion birds.

Ulki: We're not partial...to the crows.

Reyson: ...

Ike: As you know, we are outmanned by the Daein troops. Is there any way to get the ravens to withdraw? That would be a tremendous help.

Janaff: ...Well, suppose I could go meet with King Kilvas... If I had to. I don't think that my speaking to him is going to make a difference, though.

Ulki: If you like, we will try, but... Don't expect anything to come of it.

Reyson: No matter the circumstance, I will never again speak to a crow.

Soren: No matter what we decide, sitting here like this is giving the enemy more time to prepare.

Ike: You're right. Come on, let's get moving!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Soldier: Sir! The Crimean army has arrived!

Homasa: I hope they are prepared to pass into oblivion. For this will be their final resting place!

Naesala: Crimean stragglers joined with an army on loan from Begnion. I've even heard they have a betrayer in their midst. And yet they still march on... What an odd group. But as long as Kilvas stands at the side of Daein, they have no future. Ah, I suppose they're just unlucky.

Nasir: It appears the enemy has spotted us.

Ike: Well, a group this large is hard to miss.

Nasir: How will you proceed?

Ike: No tricks. Nothing fancy. We'll hit them from the front-- fast and hard.

Nasir: I'm sure you're already aware of this, but if you don't do something about Kilvas, you're at a disadvantage.

Ike: Yes, I've heard about the ravens... But even so, it's not as if we can turn tail and run away.

Nasir: Now that I think on it, King Kilvas and Prince Reyson used to be close friends. Did you ask him to speak to the king?

Ike: He was most emphatic in his refusal. It seems that Naesala was responsible for Reyson's capture at the hands of Duke Tanas. I can't really blame him.

Nasir: And the hawks? They, too, are of the bird tribes. Surely some connection can be found there.

Ike: They...weren't very excited about the suggestion.

Nasir: You could command them to do it.

Ike: There's an antagonism between the tribes that we don't understand. I'd rather not force the issue. Trying to coerce them into doing it would be...unfair. I will let them do as they please.

Nasir: That is so very like you. However, giving orders that are unpopular is often necessary when one is in command, and--

Ike: Maybe so. But I can only do things the best I know how. My own way. Come, it's time to go!

(Nasir leaves the battlefield)

Naesala: You...

Janaff: King Kilvas! You egg-stealing snake.

Naesala: One of Tibarn's flock, eh? You are his "eyes", if I'm not mistaken.

Janaff: It's not enough that you sold the White Prince to humans? Now you're fighting against laguz?

Naesala: You hawks rescued Reyson didn't you? So everything worked out in the end! What's the problem?

Janaff: I'd like you to repeat those words to the prince's face.

Naesala: Reyson is here? HERE?! Why?!

Janaff: He supports the Crimean army! The beorc leading this army helped him to escape Serenes Forest.

Naesala: Helped him? Are you saying a human came to the aid of Reyson? A laguz?

Janaff: Yes! And he rescued Princess Leanne, too!

Naesala: Leanne...is alive?

Janaff: Don't play the fool! You know the life of the forest has returned. That was their power at work.

Naesala: I see. That's how the forest... Of course.

Janaff: Listen up, crow! You need to fly over there and talk to the prince. If you don't do it, I'm gonna know that you really are the enemy and report that back to King Tibarn. Think it over!

Naesala: Yes... Mmm... What to do.

Naesala: Reyson!

Reyson: ...

Naesala: Hey, Reyson! Look at you! You look sharp, kid!

Reyson: Go...away...

Naesala: Oh, so you can talk.

Reyson: You... How dare you show your face to me!

Naesala: Well, I have been called brazen before. Some have gone so far as to say shameless. Come on, at least let me give you a reason.

Reyson: Begone! My ears are closed to you.

Naesala: Reyson, we're friends, are we not?

Reyson: Oh, yes! Friends! In fact, we're such good friends that you sold me to that wretched sack of lard!

Naesala: I didn't really sell you! Besides, I planned on rescuing you right away. You were just impatient and flew away on your own, so--

Reyson: Are you blaming me?

Naesala: No, no! Well, maybe... I mean... It was I who was in the wrong. On all accounts.

Reyson: ...

Naesala: No one was hurt in the end. Come on, smooth those ruffled feathers. All right?

Reyson: Leanne is alive.

Naesala: Yes, Tibarn's attendant told me. That's wonderful news. When he sees her face, I'm sure King Lorazieh will begin to feel better at once. Things are really looking up, aren't they, Reyson?

Reyson: ...I suppose that... If you hadn't deceived me and taken me to the forest... We might not have discovered her... So, I will forgive you. Just this once!

Naesala: Reyson! Oh, that's--

Reyson: WITH...conditions. Will you accept them?

Naesala: What, what are they?

Reyson: Pull your troops from this battle. Now. And never again enter into combat against your fellow laguz.

Naesala: Oh, come now, Reyson. That's asking too much--

Reyson: What will you do, then? Will you continue to fight the Crimean army to which I'm in service?

Naesala: Very well. You win, Reyson. I'll leave and take my soldiers with me. Yet, I cannot say what the future will bring. I have the fate of my nation to consider after all.

Reyson: Hmm... Very well.

Naesala: So, we're friends again? Come to Kilvas for a visit, will you? Nealuchi will be so pleased.

Reyson: I'll do that. When this war is over, Leanne and I will both come.

Naesala: Oh, and as for Tibarn...

Reyson: I'll speak with him. There's no need for you to worry.

Naesala: Thank you. Farewell. And watch yourself! This is war, you know? Oh, I almost forgot. I've got something for you. Call it an "I'm sorry" present.

Reyson: Eh? What's this supposed to be?

Naesala: It's a human trinket. It's called a knight ring.

Reyson: Something made by beorc?

Naesala: Don't make such a disgusted face. It tried it, and it proved to be quite useful.

Reyson: Understood. I'll take it for now.

Naesala: Don't get killed, Reyson. If anything were to happen to you...
Nealuchi would never let me hear the end of it.

Reyson: Naesala... Thank you.

-Receive "Knight Ring"-

Naesala: Listen to me, darkwings! We of Kilvas are leaving. Turn at once and
head for home.

Homasa: Kilvas has betrayed us?

Soldier: I think "abandoned" would be more accurate, but--

Homasa: Idiot! It's the same thing! Aaaargh! Accursed sub-humans! We should
never have trusted them.

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Homasa: ...The shame...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Ike: We won...somehow.

Nasir: It's because you did an excellent job of driving off the ravens.

Ike: Yeah, if we had continued to fight them, we would have suffered more
casualties than this. I must extend thanks to Reyson.

Elincia: My lord Ike! I'm pleased to see you well. You haven't been injured,
have you?

Ike: Princess Elincia. I'm fine. I'm unharmed.

Elincia: Oh, that's good...

(Enter Titania)

Titania: Ike! May I have a word? And if you don't mind, Princess Elincia,
would you join us as well? Please join me in that building.

Elincia: What could it be?

Ike: Let's go see.

Elincia: This is...

Ike: Holy...

Titania: Incredible, no? It's gold. All of it.

Ike: Daein must be filthy rich! There's so much, it doesn't even seem real.
What do we do with it?

Soren: It's the spoils of war. So naturally, it's ours.

Ike: In that case, I'd like to borrow fifty thousand. Would that be all right?

Titania: That's a lot of money. What are you planning on doing?

Ike: It's a private matter...

Titania: I apologize, Commander. You're not a child. There's no reason for me
to pry.

Soren: ...

Elincia: My lord Ike, please use this gold for the mercenary company. Until
now, I haven't had the resources to adequately pay them. So please...

Ike: No, if I may borrow the fifty thousand, that will be more than--

Titania: You won't borrow it, you'll accept it! And in good faith. The
remainder we'll give to Soren for company maintenance. Would that be
all right, Princess Elincia?

Elincia: Yes, of course.

Petrine: Grrr...

Soldier: Um, General P-Petrine? P-please, General! I'm just a...m-messenger!
H-however... I have to tell you--

Petrine: I already heard, you dunderhead! I hated those filthy crows right
from the start. Even so, to be betrayed in such a fashion... Grrr...
Someone will pay for this! Oh, you certainly had your way with us,
didn't you, King Kilvas? But if you want to make an enemy of Daein,
then so be it! Once Gallia's fallen, we'll turn our attention to your
puny nation and wipe it off the face of the world!

Soldier: ...

Petrine: Why are you still there? Do you find me amusing?! Shall I make my
lance dance for you?

Soldier: N-no, ma'am! No! Never! N-not at all! I beg your pardon! So sorry...
I'll be...going...now...

(Exit Soldier)

Petrine: Dog's breath! I need...something. A brilliant plan... If this
continues much longer, the king will have my head.

Volke: You wanted to see me?

Ike: You've waited a long time. Take this. It's the gold you were promised.

Volke: Finally scraped it together, eh? I'll gladly accept it.

Ike: Aren't you going to count it?

Volke: There's no need. I'll trust you.

Ike: All right, then I'll take what was promised. The report you wrote for my father.

Volke: There isn't one.

Ike: What?

Volke: There is no report. Never was.

Ike: You lied to me? You exploited my need to know more about my father!?

Volke: There is something I must tell you. However, it could not be written down. It is too great of a secret for that. Your father told me to wait until I thought you were mature enough to hear it, and then to tell you myself.

Ike: Mature? Then what was the fifty thousand gold for?!

Volke: Ah, the gold. That was my idea. I thought it would be a good way to test how resourceful and responsible you were.

Ike: Get started. I want to hear it all.

Volke: I've spent a long time as Greil's hired shadow. A long time. I remained hidden from sight in case the day ever arrived that I needed to fulfill my contract... All that time, for one job.

Ike: What was it?

Volke: If Greil were ever to go berserk, I was to stop him. I was to take his life.

Ike: What?!

Volke: Actually, there was one other thing. If Greil were ever slain by his pursuers... I was to watch over his son and tell him Greil's secret at an appropriate time. That was my job.

Ike: Berserk... What are you talking about? Why would you have to kill my father?

Volke: Because of Lehran's Medallion.

Ike: What medallion? What are you talking about?

Volke: The medallion your sister carries.

Ike: Huh? That old bronze thing? I thought it was just a keepsake of my mother's... Are you telling me that it's something more?

Volke: Greil told me it was an object of great peril, but nothing more. I did some investigating on my own, though. And what I discovered...surprised me.

Ike: Tell me.

Volke: Lehran was one of the heron clan, an ancestor of our Prince Reyson, who carried with him a bronze medallion. Long, long ago, a band of heroes defeated an evil god and imprisoned it therein.

Ike: An evil god? Do you think this is funny? You ARE joking, aren't you?

Volke: Unfortunately, I'm not. And I've no idea how the cursed thing came to be in Greil's possession. That being said, I do know that the men who hunted your father were actually seeking the medallion. Why they wanted it and what they planned to do with it... Just thinking about it gives me chills.

Ike: I'm finding all of this a little hard to believe. You said the medallion was "an object of great peril", didn't you? Then why would my father allow Mist to carry it around? That doesn't make any sense.

Volke: It's because she can carry it safely. Actually, she's the only one who can. If you want proof, think back. Have you ever once touched it?

Ike: ...No. I haven't. A long time ago, I remember reaching out for it while Mist had it in her hand... My father scolded me harshly. After that, I assumed...it was my sister's alone, and I never reached for it again.

Volke: Compared to other people, the balance within your sister is extremely strong. Your mother, it seems, was the same. That's why they could bear it safely. The medallion is like a strong poison. It takes the worst aspects of a person and magnifies them a thousandfold. Greil touched it only once, and it drove him to complete madness.

Ike: So that's what you meant when you said he went berserk?

Volke: That's right. Beorc and laguz are made up of two forces: balance and chaos. In this, there is no difference between us. It is the proportion of balance to chaos that determines how much the medallion affects a person. In that sense, it predicts how much harm that person might do. Your father was one of the preeminent swordsmen of his generation. That day, after he touched the medallion... Twenty soldiers had come for him. Twenty highly trained killers. Your father barely broke a sweat cutting them down. Then he began attacking his neighbors, those who had taken him in, concealed his identity, and called him friend. He slew them one by one, until your mother rushed in...thinking only to save her husband from himself. It was over in an instant. Your mother grabbed the medallion from his hand and stepped away from him... They say she smiled as he pulled his sword from her breast and forgave him as her life's blood spilled into the street.

Ike: My father...killed my mother? No. That can't be...

Volke: It was the medallion. Its power is too great for any man. Even one of your father's caliber. Me? You? If either of us touched it, I'm certain that we both would have been consumed by madness. When your father regained his senses, he tracked me down. It seems he'd heard rumors of me some time before. He said he had need of someone like me:

closemouthed, skilled, and most importantly, willing to do any sort of work. Of course, after hearing what he wanted me to do, I turned him down. Greil was once a famed general... He was Sir Gawain, one of Daein's Four Riders, and I recognized him at once. There was no chance someone like me would ever be able to stop him.

Ike: But you took the job anyway... Why did you change your mind?

Volke: Greil had lost his wife, and his grief was overpowering. To keep anything like that from happening again, he crippled himself. He slashed the tendons in his sword hand so that he could not wield a sword again. I took the job only because he had become someone my skill could handle. And even then, he was still far stronger than most men...

Ike: I... I don't know what to say...

Volke: That is Greil's secret, as I know it. I now entrust to you the responsibility of seeing that the medallion does not fall into the wrong hands. Your sister must keep it.

Ike: ...As my father lay dying, he told me to forget everything and live in peace. What did he mean?

Volke: He didn't want you to lose yourself and go hunting for revenge, I suppose. He was killed much, much sooner than he ever expected to be.

Ike: So my father's dying wish was for me to protect the medallion? If I can do that, everything will be all right?

Volke: I believe so. At the very least, that must take precedent over everything else.

Ike: I understand.

Volke: Oh, one last thing.

Ike: What is it?

Volke: Do you want to hire me? In the event that you go berserk someday? If we make a deal now, you won't have to worry about it anymore. As for payment... I can take it out of the fifty thousand you just gave me. What do you say?

(Agree to hire him again)

Ike: Please.

Volke: That's a wise decision... And in that case, I no longer need to conceal my true identity.

Ike: Huh?

(Volke promotes into an Assassin)

Volke: I'm not really a thief. I'm an assassin. From now on, I'll take on any job you've got, no matter how...dirty.

(Exit Volke)

Ike: Father... Mother... ...Oh, why...

Narration: The kingdom of Daein lies on the northernmost edge of Tellius. Its coastline is bathed in the icy currents of the northern sea, and frigid winds howl inland with terrible ferocity. As a result, Daein winters are raw and brutal-- ice and snow scour the land, leaving frozen scars in their wake. Through these blizzards, General Ike and the Crimean army press ever forward. Begnion's imperial senate may have lent Crimea troops, but even they doubt that the army can successfully fight off Daein. Yet somehow, Ike and company defy all odds and capture victory after victory. Embracing both Princess Elinicia's dream of a liberated Crimea and the tragic history of his parents, Ike marches in grim silence.

Soren: ...This can only mean one thing: the enemy knows exactly how we are going to move. With your permission, I'll begin an investigation to see if there's anyone suspicious among the troops... ..Ike?

Ike: ...

Soren: Ike? Are you all right?

Ike: Hm? Oh, yes... Sorry. What is it?

Soren: Nothing. I was just giving you the standard update. Shall I put it off till later?

Ike: No, sorry, but can you start over from the beginning? I'll pay attention this time.

Soren: Understood.

(Enter Titania)

Titania: Good morning, you two. What's wrong, Ike? You look so sleepy!

Ike: I've...had a lot on my mind. I meant to sleep last night, but I was up thinking. Before I knew it, it was morning.

Titania: Really? I never thought I'd hear that. Ike didn't sleep because he was thinking. I wonder if Soren will start being polite...

Ike: Listen, Titania... Can I just--

(Enter Mist)

Mist: B-Brother! Ike!

Ike: What's wrong, Mist?

Mist: What am I going to do, Ike? My medallion's gone!

Ike: What? It's gone?

Titania: No!!

Mist: What am I going to do? It was my only memento of Mother--

Ike: Did you drop it? Or put it somewhere and forget? Something like that?

Mist: No! I always carry it with me! I would never lose it! I had it before I went to bed last night... It vanished while I was sleeping! Sniff... waaaa...

Ike: Don't cry. It's not your fault.

Mist: But...but...

Ike: I said don't cry! I'll find it! All right?!

Mist: All...right... Sorry...

Soren: ...

Shiharam: A-are you serious?

Petrine: You are to begin immediately.

Shiharam: Yet, that's... General Petrine! If we do this thing, Daein will suffer.

Petrine: It's for the good of the country. Besides, it's only one territory! Stop mewling like an old woman.

Shiharam: I hear you, and yet... If the goal is merely to stop the Crimean army, this is not necessary. The strength of my troops will suffice to--

Petrine: The last idiot who told me that ended up on a corpse pile! Now listen to me, and listen well. No matter how passionate you are when you tell me you'll defeat Crimea, I'll never pin my hopes on a bunch of foreigners. All you have to do is stop their forward progress. That's all. My plan will accomplish this.

Shiharam: General Petrine! Do you truly think so little of us? It's true that we were born in Begnion and not Daein, but my men and I have been loyal to this country for eighteen years. We have spared no effort to learn all the proper manners and customs of this land. But now, after all of that, to be dismissed as a "bunch of foreigners..."

Petrine: No one asked how long you've lived here. Want to know why? Because no one cares! Certainly not me! Where were you born? Huh? Where were you raised? Ha! This country doesn't need squatters like you! The only people Daein can count on in times of crisis are Daeins themselves! Everyone else is just gutter leavings!

Shiharam: So we're useless... Is that what you're saying?

Petrine: You tell me, migrant! Why is it that your unit, which was trained to be an elite royal guard, is here patrolling this hick-infested backwater? The answer's clear to me! How about you?

Shiharam: I... I...

Petrine: Oh, I'm sorry... Am I offending you? Well, here's your chance to show us your worth. Halt Crimea's advance! If you are as skilled as you claim, you should be able to limit the damage to its bare minimum, should you not?

Shiharam: Grrr...

Petrine: Hmph! Angry is a good look for you. I look forward to seeing the results of your work. Get going, outlander.

(Exit Petrine)

Soldier: G-General Shiharam... Must we truly go through with this? It's such a horrific act! It's only recently that the citizens hereabouts have even come to trust us.

Shiharam: We have no choice but to obey. It's as the woman says. The only thing we can do is ensure the Crimean army is defeated as soon as possible.

Soldier: General--

Shiharam: Open the floodgates. DO IT NOW!

(Soren Report)

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Woman ***]-

Calill: Yoo-hoo! You there! Young man! I have business with the general of this army. Would you convey a message?

Ike: Who are you?

Calill: ...Who am I? What kind of low-born greeting is that? My name is Calill, and I am a first-class mage.

Ike: And what would a "first-class" mage want with this army?

Calill: What's your problem? You look as if you don't believe me! Well, I suppose I can't hold that against you... It's not often you find beauty like this coupled with intelligence like mine. But it's true nonetheless.

Ike: A mage, huh? Well, I guess you can never have too many mages lying around.

Calill: Oh, and as a bonus, I'm quite skilled with a knife, as well. Beauty, brains, and brawn... Sigh! The goddess has seen fit to put the abilities of three people into one delectable package. Sounds like favoritism, doesn't it? ...Um...hellooooo? Are you listening to me? There's a beautiful woman talking!

Ike: Yeah, the point is that you want to join the Crimean army, right? How much are you planning to charge?

Calill: Well, aren't you the little businessman? Let's see... How does free sound?

Ike: Suspicious. What's the catch?

Calill: I like my fees to be based on performance. Watch how I do in combat, and make me an offer. Depending on what it is, I'll decide whether or not to grace you with my assistance.

Ike: You're not lacking for confidence, are you?

Calill: Of course not! I already told you, I'm a first-class mage.

Ike: ...

(Agree to hire her)

Ike: All right, you're in.

Calill: What? Are you allowed to make decisions like that on your own? Perhaps I should speak to the general!

Ike: I am the general.

Calill: Whaaaaaat?!

-[Reyson *]-

Ike: Reyson! Could you come down here for a moment?

Reyson: What do you need?

Ike: I've got something I want to ask you about.

Reyson: If I can help, I will.

Ike: Your... Your ancestors...Forget it. It's nothing.

Reyson: What? Is something wrong?

Ike: I apologize. Please let it go.

Reyson: It seems like something important has happened, but if you do not want to discuss it, that is your right. However, if this weren't a battlefield, your secret might not be safe. Please take care in the future.

Ike: What do you mean?

Reyson: We of the heron clan... If we choose to, we can read the thoughts of others.

Ike: Seriously?

Reyson: However, this power is only available to us in a calm and peaceful environment. Here, in this desperate maelstrom of chaotic emotion, it avails me not. Energy here is warped and distorted.

Ike: You know, now that you mention it... Reyson, are you feeling sick?

Reyson: ...

Ike: You're so pale that it's hard to tell, but I think your face looks more wan than usual.

Reyson: Pay it no mind. I'm...fine.

Ike: You've got nothing to prove. Why don't you stay off the battlefield for a while?

Reyson: Ike! I'm fine, I promise. Please, do not give me special treatment.

Ike: As far as giving you special treatment goes, I don't really have a choice. I promised King Phoenicis I wouldn't push you too hard. If anything were to happen to you, I'd be at war with Daein and the bird clans at the same time!

Reyson: ...I see. I came to repay my debt, but I'm really just being a burden. That was not my intention.

Ike: Hold on a moment! Who said anything about you being a burden?

Reyson: I cannot engage in combat, so I'm nothing more than an obstacle in the field.

Ike: Reyson, no! That's absurd! Don't you understand how useful your abilities are? No one else can do the things that you can. You're irreplaceable. So if you're not feeling well and try to do too much, you may not be there when we really need you.

Reyson: I'm of use to you, then?

Ike: That's what I've been trying to tell you. We depend on you, and that's why I need to make sure you stay healthy.

Reyson: In that case... I wouldn't mind taking a short break. But you can call me anytime. I'll come right away.

Ike: I got it.

(Exit Reyson)

Ike: ...

-----[Exit Base]-----

Elincia: My lord Ike, were you able to find the medallion?

Ike: No. It's gone. I fear that Daein may have somehow stolen it.

Elincia: What? Is such a thing possible?

Ike: I don't know to what degree, but there can be no questioning Daein's involvement.

Elincia: Is the medallion...special?

Ike: ...Yes... Oh, yes...

Elincia: ...I beg your pardon.

Ike: What is it?

Elincia: My question may have touched a sensitive area.

Ike: Oh, no... It's not that I don't want to discuss it with you personally. I just can't really talk about it to anyone. It's a private matter.

Elincia: Ah, I see.

(Enter Ulki)

Ulki: Ike.

Ike: What is it, Ulki?

Ulki: I hear the sound of rushing water just ahead. A lot of it.

Ike: Rushing water?

Soren: According to the map, there's a large river up ahead.

Ike: That must be what you hear.

Ulki: This is unnatural. Warped. It is not the sound of a normal river...

(Enter Soldier)

Soldier: General Ike! Sir, we've got trouble! The road ahead is blocked by water!

Elincia: What? How can that be?

Soldier: Perhaps a local river has flooded. The whole region is soaking wet.

Ike: Is the road completely impassable?

Soldier: No, sir! We can move forward, but the water's turned the ground to mud. And the water is still flowing at a tremendous rate, sir! This is going to cut back our speed dramatically.

Soren: This is the work of Daein. They thought to impede our progress in order to gain some time for themselves. And they've succeeded.

Titania: Blast! Is there nothing we can do?

Soren: Well... If they were able to flood the road only when we approached, there must be floodgates in the area.

Ike: So if we can close them, we'll shut off the flow of water, right? That makes sense. Let's get some scouts looking for gates.

Janaff: What's that? Hey, if you're looking for something, leave it to me. I AM the hawk king's eyes, after all!

Ike: What do you mean?

Janaff: These peepers of mine can see for miles and miles. They're quite handy. It would be a shame not to use them.

Ike: Is that some laguz power? You're a hawk with the eyes of a...hawk?

Janaff: It beats your fantastic wit! My eyesight isn't a racial ability, it's just my own natural talent. Heck, my pal Ulki has ears that can hear grass growing on the other side of the country.

Ike: I see. Well then, the job's yours. Do you think you can find the floodgates?

Janaff: I just look for some openings with a lot of water pouring out, right? Yeah, I can handle that!

-[Talrega Floodgates]-

Shiharam: The Crimean army is here! All troops! Combat formations! Hit them fast and hard! We can't let this battle drag out!

Ike: So those are the floodgates.

Soren: If we can get them closed, the water will recede in about twelve hours or so.

Ike: All right, let's get going!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Soldier: Ge-General! How long are the floodgates to remain open?

Shiharam: Until the Crimean army has been defeated.

Soldier: Sir! If we wait that long, all of the neighboring farmland will be drowned! The locals are already quite upset. They may not abide this much further.

Shiharam: ...

Soldier: General!

(Enter Haar)

Haar: Enough, soldier! If you've got the time to be bellyaching, take your butt out to the battlefield and kill some Crimean soldiers.

Soldier: Captain Haar! Do you support this action? This is inhumane! Lives will be ruined! Daein citizens will die! Even if we claim that it's necessary in order to achieve victory... This is too much!

Haar: This is Daein's way. Are you ready to disobey the king and be put to the death for your troubles?

Soldier: I would rather die than kill innocent Daein civilians.

Haar: If you're executed as a traitor to the throne, your parents and siblings

will also pay. Are you still prepared?

Soldier: ...

Haar: Now do you understand what I'm trying to tell you? Go. Fight bravely.

Soldier: ...Y-yes, sir!

(Exit Soldier)

Shiharam: To gain the trust of the king, we've become cruel and heartless.
First hunting and executing the laguz... And now flooding the lands
these people call home?

Haar: General Shiharam... If someone hears you use the word laguz in this
country, you'll be branded a traitor.

Shiharam: Hmm...you're right as always. To live in this land, where laguz
prejudice is so virulent, we've had to seal away everything we know
and teach our children to hate all sub-humans. All that just to
survive here.

Haar: It's Ashnard's fault this country has become what it is today. Ah, what
a terrible miscalculation we made... Even so, I... I hated the idea of
furthering the corruption of the imperial senate. I will continue to
support your reasons for leaving Begnion.

Shiharam: ...I wonder if Jill has distanced herself from the Crimean forces.

Haar: I did...give her warning.

Shiharam: Above all else, I would like to avoid meeting my daughter in combat.

Haar: I pray that she does not take to the field this day. Knowing her
temperament, talking with you would only increase both of your sorrows.

Shiharam: I have but one favor to ask of you.

Haar: Say it, and it will be done.

Shiharam: Do not fight today.

Haar: What?

Shiharam: Only one side can win a battle. If we are defeated in the end, I
want you to care for the survivors and their families.

Haar: ...Yes, sir... Commander Shiharam.

Shiharam: Commander... It's been many a long year since you last called me
that.

Haar: May the fortunes of war be with you. Through all that's...happened...
It's been an honor to serve with you.

Shiharam: Mmm...

(Haar leaves the battlefield)

-[North House]-

Grandmother: Hold on, youngster! Who do you think you are? You can't just come barging into people's homes! Let me tell you something! You can ransack my home all you want, but you'll find nothing of value here. All our young men have been dragged off to war, and all that's left are women and children. If it's gold you're after, take that scroll on the floor there. You may be able to sell it. It's just something I picked up, so I don't know if it has any value. But take it anyway, you dirty thief!

-Receive "Smite"-

-[South House]-

Grandfather: You! You filthy Crimean! Get out! Get out now! There's nothing in this shack that would make you happy!

Visitor: ...

Grandfather: Oh, so you won't leave till you get something, is that it? Here, take this old staff! Now hit the road! You've no need to steal anything else from us! Or will you take my life, as well?! In that last skirmish... My boy, my only son... You stole his life, curse you! I hope you're satisfied!

-Receive "Rescue"-

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Shiharam: ...Haar... The rest...is up...to you.....
...Ji...ll...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Soldier: General Ike, sir! The floodgates have been closed!

Ike: Soren, what's the damage to the surrounding area?

Soren: It's terrible. All of the fields and homes have been completely destroyed.

Ike: I see...

Titania: ...I don't think this is what the enemy general wanted, either. So why did this have to happen?

Elinacia: It's heartless... What will happen to those who've lost their homes? Can we do anything to help them?

Soren: You want to aid the people of our enemy? That is time and energy we cannot afford.

Ike: Soren. Take a portion of our supplies and distribute it among the locals.

Soren: What? Are you serious?

Ike: Our opponent is the Daein army. We've no quarrel with these people.

Soren: Ike, I know you feel for these people, but this is war! We don't have--

Ike: I don't know what it will accomplish, Soren. But, moving on without lifting a finger is something I cannot do.

(Exit Ike)

Titania: I understand. I'd rather regret something I had done than regret taking no action at all.

(Exit Titania)

Elincia: I would like to help, too. Perhaps I can aid the injured.

(Exit Elincia)

Soren: ...Idiocy...

Jill: Oh, Father...

Ike: Jill... No matter the reasons, I'm the one who took your father from you. I can't use this war as an excuse.

Jill: ...

Ike: If you want revenge on me for your father, I understand. You have...that right.

Jill: ...

Ike: Once you've had some time to think things through, let me know what you will do. I'd like to have you stay with us, but... It's really up to you. That's all I had to say.

Jill: ...Sniff. ...Sn...sniff.....

Haar: One, two, three... Five in all. We're lucky to have that many.

Soldier: Captain Haar... What are we supposed to do now? General Shiharam is dead, and our homes are gone. What are we to do with our families?

Haar: What do you want to do? We've lost any right we had to stay here. So that leaves Begnion or Crimea...

Soldier: General Shiharam was slain by Crimea... Joining with them now is not ... It's not possible.

Haar: Then all you can do is return to Begnion. I doubt you'll get a hero's welcome, but... I've an old friend in the pegasus knights. Shall I contact her?

Soldier: Sniff... Ah, gods. Eighteen long years... What does any of it mean now?

Haar: Don't say that! No matter what, I'm proud to have served under General Shiharam.

Soldier: You're right... It was an honor...

-[Daein Keep]-

Petrine: Well, that's that. We gained some time by flooding the river, but it won't hold them for long. I knew that foreign cur was useless... It looks like the decisive battle will be fought near the capital.

Ena: Preparations are complete, General Petrine. In order to ease command for you, Sir Bryan will serve as your deputy. Regarding strategy, it would be easiest if you spoke with him directly--

Petrine: Sorry to tell you this, Ena, but I'm not the one who'll be directing our forces in the capital.

Ena: Will it be the Black Knight then? Hmm...the plans must be adjusted slightly. I'll select someone else to act as deputy...

Petrine: No. Not him either. His Majesty wishes you to direct the defenses, Ena.

Ena: Me? I am to take command...of the army?

Petrine: That's right. You're moving up in the world, General Ena.

Ena: I...it's too much for me... I must confirm this with the king...

Petrine: Ha! What a rare sight this is. I've never seen you so flustered! Listen, if you wish to meet with His Majesty, you must fulfill your duties. He's ordered that there be no communications until that time.

Ena: ...

(Enter Black Knight)

Black Knight: I'm a bit late.

Petrine: Well, if it isn't the big Black Knight! It's been such a long time. You're always so very busy, aren't you? Here one day, there the next... Your secret maneuvers are--

Black Knight: They are proof of the trust His Majesty has placed in me. Ena, go to the east gate. You have a visitor.

Ena: Very well...

(Exit Ena)

Petrine: Is it the Worm? Did he bring it with him?

Black Knight: It appears so. He insists that he give it directly over to Ena,

though.

Petrine: Hmph! As long as it is ours, it makes no difference.

Black Knight: When Ena returns, you will be the one to take it directly to the king. Show care that it is not unwrapped on the way there. That could be...unfortunate.

Petrine: I don't need to be told that! More importantly, what will you do now?

Black Knight: Me? I will...

Unknown: Ena... Have you been well?

Ena: Where is Lehran's Medallion?

Unknown: Right here. Take it, please.

Ena: It feels so heavy...and it's not all the wrapping, either. Could this be the chaotic energy...of an evil god?

Unknown: So, you can now return to King Ashnard's side, can you not?

Ena: No. Not yet.

Unknown: What do you mean?

Ena: I've been entrusted with the defense of the capital. I...must face the Crimean army.

Unknown: No!

Ena: Thank you. You've done so much for me... But now, it's... It's enough. Please... Reclaim your freedom. There's no need for you to follow Daein's orders any longer.

Unknown: And you? Do you mean to die?

Ena: No... I cannot retreat. Even if I have to slaughter the entire Crimean army... I will return to him...

Unknown: Yet he thinks nothing of you...

Ena: That matters not. The only place I belong is at his side. I will most likely never see you again... I will pray for your eternal happiness.

Unknown: Ena! Wait!

Ena: Forget about me. That is my final request. Farewell...Nasir.

(Exit Ena)

Nasir: ...Ena...

Narration: During the battle for Talrega, Ike and the rest of his company come to a bleak realization. Wherever the Crimean army marches, the land becomes a battlefield. The damage is immense. Warfare and floodwaters claim homes, crops, and hope. Villagers seeking shelter and safety stumble blindly through the snow. To them, there is no doubt that the Crimeans are an invasion force. However, the Crimeans have their own homeland to save. Focused as they are on that overriding goal, they cannot stop even to help the innocent victims of war. The only way they can help the people of Daein is to keep marching. The faster they reach Daein's capital of Nevassa and put an end to the war, the better for everyone.

-[Daein Keep]-

Kasatai: What? Are you telling me that His Majesty has not yet returned?

Soldier: Yes, sir! We've sent many messengers, but we have yet to receive any sort of official response.

Kasatai: The Crimean army is on our doorstep... What is His Highness thinking? If we want to protect the capital, we need a leader equal to one of the Four Riders. Just in case...

(Enter Ena)

Ena: I'm sure the king has considered this.

Kasatai: Lady Ena! I don't understand how you're able to remain so calm!

Ena: Daein soldiers are the most elite warriors on the continent. In addition, our numbers are far superior to the Crimeans.

Kasatai: And, yet they march on Nevassa! This is the Daein capital! If there's any danger of it falling into enemy hands, we can let nothing stop us from protecting it! No offense, Lady Ena, but as a general, I do not feel you're ready for such a vital command.

Ena: I... I think you are exactly right.

Kasatai: Th-then... When this command was given to you, why did you not firmly refuse?

Ena: Do you really think that wise, General? Would you refuse a direct order from the king?

Kasatai: Um...

Ena: ...Let me tell you something that I've discovered. If we are...unable to hold the capital, I do not believe the king will be all that upset. Ashnard does not hold a strong attachment to the country of Daein.

Kasatai: What are you talking about? Do you... Do you understand exactly what it is you are saying?

Ena: Yes.

Kasatai: Ridiculous! There isn't a monarch in the world who would not be moved

by the loss of his own country! Such a preposterous notion is beyond comprehension!

Ena: General Kasatai. Do not avert your eyes from reality.

Kasatai: Reality? Ha! What reality is that? All I see is your guesswork.

Ena: Then tell me...why did the king suddenly order the invasion of Crimea?

Kasatai: As...as...sanctions for that nation choosing to ally itself with those evil and treacherous sub-humans.

Ena: On the surface, that would seem to be so. But doesn't the action strike you as odd? To apply sanctions properly, it would be necessary to speak with Begnion first. Begnion is the suzerain state, and Crimea answers to her. We needed Begnion's leave to make a formal declaration of war. Daein's disregard for that process made us a pariah in the eyes of our neighbors, and opened us to attack from all sides. And yet, not only did the king not do this, but he chose to invade without warning. It was the worst possible strategy. Furthermore, once the king conquered Crimea through strength of arms, he seized the castle and set up residence. And now he uses it as a stepping stone for an invasion of Gallia. Which means, the king's goal was never to apply sanctions, or even to defeat Crimea. If Ashnard moves against Gallia, it's easy to envision Phoenicis, Kilvas, and Goldoa joining the conflict. And if that happens, Begnion would be forced to ally itself with Daein rather than side with the sub-humans. Look where that leads us... A continent embroiled in war. Is that not the true desire of the king?

Kasatai: If... If you consider it in that way, your words do begin to make sense. Yet...to accomplish that, the citizens of Crimea would have to be sacrificed. That would be an act of madness!

Ena: Let's return to the topic at hand. The king has gained himself a new castle, and I believe he considers whatever land he occupies to be his kingdom. Daein and its people are already behind him. He need not look back.

Kasatai: Pah! If the king wished to rule the world, he would want as much military strength as possible! To forsake even a portion of the strength he currently possesses willingly, why, it would be sheer folly...

Ena: That doesn't matter. What's important is that we recognize the chance which Daein has been given. We must stop the Crimeans here. If we do not show the king our value, we are doomed. Make no mistake about it.

Kasatai: This is complete lunacy...

Ena: We will receive no reinforcements. We must hold nothing back. It is our only chance of survival.

Kasatai: This... I cannot... Why is this--

Ena: Be strong. The king has provided us, and the capital, with one final measure. We will use it to weather this storm. However, to use it, I need you, General Kasatai. Your cooperation is imperative. If you want to win, you must trust me.

Kasatai: ...Understood. In this time, let us cling to any hope we can find.

Lady... No... General Ena, I place my trust in you.

Ike: So this is the Daein capital, eh? If we can just defeat King Ashnard, this war will be over.

(Enter Nasir)

Nasir: Ike... Here you are.

Ike: What is it, Nasir?

Nasir: Are you sure that you have enough soldiers to lay siege to the capital? Your opponent is called "Mad King Ashnard", after all. Who knows what sort of traps he has in store for you?

Titania: He may indeed have something planned. Surely they've received reports of our advancement. Yet it's so quiet...

Soren: It looks like every able-bodied man has been conscripted into the army, while women and children have evacuated the area.

Ike: We're not invaders. We wouldn't lay a hand on the citizenry...

Soren: There's no way for them to know that. They do know what their army did to the people of Crimea, however. If they fear they will be punished for that, I'm sure they decided to err on the side of caution.

Elincia: What? What happened to the Crimean people? Surely only the soldiers were imprisoned or killed...

Soren: ...You truly have no idea how to rule a nation. Do you know what happens to a country that loses a war? Everything is destroyed. Homes, land, crops...everything. And the citizens... They're not even treated as human. Crimeans, especially those near the capital where Daein's presence is strongest, are treated worse than sub-hum...than laguz.

Elincia: That's... Why would they... That's horrible...

Soren: The people understand this, which is why they pay for protection in the form of taxes. For the royals and nobles who are charged with protecting the people, there is no greater sin than to be defeated in war. It is the ultimate betrayal of the people's trust.

Elincia: Sniff... Ah, by the goddess, I am a fool... ..Sniff...

Ike: Soren! Enough!

Soren: ...

Titania: Princess, be that as it may, the majority of people want to see the royal family restored to power. They believe that you will help them reclaim their old lives and restore peace.

Ike: Now it's time for us to throw down Ashnard and drive his army from Crimean soil. You're the only one who can do that. Do you understand?

Elincia: Yes...yes, I do. I... I will save the people of Crimea. This I swear.

Ike: As I've said before, I won't be turned away. If there are traps, we just fight our way through. This war ends here!

Titania: Yes! I'm with you all the way!

Soren: I hope it all goes as planned. I will do my best to make it so.

Nasir: ...

(Soren Report)

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Refugee *]-

Jill: Um, General? Thank you.

Ike: Hm?

Jill: The people of Talrega were the enemy, yet you treated them with kindness. I don't know how to thank you.

Ike: Oh, the provisions? It wasn't enough, but I wanted to do whatever I could. It's nothing for you to worry about, though.

Jill: General Ike...

Unknown: My, my lady! Is that you? Lady Fizzart?

Jill: Huh?

(Enter Woman)

Woman: Oh, it is you! Lord Shiharam's lovely daughter! Thank heavens you're still alive!

Jill: You're...from Talrega.

Woman: That's right. I'm Sophie, from the village of Luma! I can't live there anymore, so I brought my two sisters here to the capital. After that battle, I was sure that you'd been claimed by the Dark Angel, just like Lod Shiharam. But here you are!

Jill: ...

Ike: ...

Woman: Is this your bodyguard? Ooo, so strong! You watch out for milady, you hear? She's Lord Shiharam's precious little girl! You keep an eye on her, and don't let those nasty Crimeans get near her!

Ike: Um...

Jill: Actually... We're...

Woman: Please listen to me, milady! We understand all about those floodgates! Lord Shiharam would've never done such a thing if he had any other choice! We know it was those Crimeans that did it! Why, when he wasn't

on duty, Lord Shiharam and his men used to help us with the plowing and the planting. And once when my sister got sick, he loaded her up onto his own wyvern and brought her to the capital to see a doctor. He's the only one who ever cared about us country folk. He opened his heart to each and every one of us.

Jill: He... He was a good man...

Woman: Those dirty Crimeans are to blame! If they'd never come to Daein, that battle wouldn't have happened. And Lord Shiharam would still be with us.

(Enter Girl)

Girl: Sister... I'm hungry...

Woman: You're going to be all right. I'll find you something to eat in a little while. Just be patient.

Girl: That soldier over there have me this. Can I eat it?

Woman: Don't be stupid! Throw that away right now! We'll starve to death before we take charity from Crimean killers!

Girl: Waaaaaa... Waaaaaaaaaaaaa!

(Exit Girl)

Woman: Milady! The Crimean army is nearby! Run! You must escape and survive. We're gonna live. Even if we have to eat mud and weeds, we'll do it. And one day we'll have our revenge on those bloodthirsty Crimeans. If I can't do it, my children will... And if they can't, then my grandchildren will! We'll get them someday! I swear it! I have to go. Promise me, milady. You must go on for Lord Shiharam's sake. You mustn't get yourself killed!

(Exit Woman)

Jill: Um...

Ike: ...

Jill: ...S-sorry. ...Oh, I'm so sorry...

Ike: Don't be...

-[Mist *]-

Ike: Mist.

Mist: ...Ike.

Ike: ...Are you all right?

Mist: ...We've come a long way, haven't we? Do you think we can beat King Ashnard?

Ike: Of course we can! We have to. If we lose, Crimea may never be rebuilt.

Mist: ...What are we going to do, Brother? I'm...frightened... The medallion was my protection. Now that it's gone, my confidence has vanished.

Ike: Mist...

Mist: For as long as I can remember, I would talk to the medallion like I was talking to Mother. After Father died, I felt like I was talking to them both... Where could it have gone?

Ike: We'll find it. And even though it's gone, Father and Mother are looking down on us and protecting us.

Mist: ...You're right... I'm sorry. Father and Mother are in my heart, and I've got you and everyone else at my side. So even without the medallion, I'm all right. Everything's going to turn out fine. I know it.

Ike: That's the spirit.

(Enter Nasir)

Nasir: Ike, Mist, if you're going to chat, why not go inside? Even if the snows are beginning to melt, it's still cold out here.

Mist: Oh, hi, Nasir.

Ike: You're right. I do feel a bit cold. Shall we go back to the tent?

Mist: Uh-huh! Let's go, Ike! You, too, Nasir!

(Exit Ike/Mist)

Nasir: ...Forgive me.

(Mist returns for a minute)

Mist: Nasir? What's wrong? Hurry up!

Nasir: Oh... Of course.

(Exit Mist)

Nasir: ...

-----[Exit Base]-----

Soldier: General Ike! Sir, the castle gates are open!

Ike: That's not good. What are they planning?

Elincia: It must be a trap.

Soren: This is unexpected. Making us lay siege would be far and away to their advantage. I have no idea what they're playing at.

Titania: Even so, we will not back down. Right, Ike?

Ike: Right. If we can't tell what they're planning, it matters not how we proceed. Let's just fight as we go. Move out! Keep your guard up,

everyone!

Soldier: Enemy troops have entered the castle!

Kasatai: They're moving already? Such recklessness! Don't they suspect a trap?
I can't believe they've fallen for it.

Ena: Crimea follows a general named Ike. Perhaps he follows no procedure.
Perhaps he relies solely on instinct.

Kasatai: I don't know if he's brave or merely reckless. It's unbelievable...

Ena: Regardless, we continue as planned. Close the gates and seal off their
escape route. This contest will be decided here.

Kasatai: N-now then, it's time for the final measure you spoke of earlier.
Will you show us what His Majesty left for us? What could possibly
allow us to destroy an army in one fell swoop...provided we can herd
them here?

Ena: General Kasatai... No matter what I show you, do not be shocked. You must
continue to trust me without question.

Kasatai: I swear it. On my name as a royal knight of Daein, I will not betray
you, General Ena.

Ena: Thank you... ..

(Ena transforms into a dragon)

Kasatai: Ge-General Ena! You're...

Ena: ...

Kasatai: Aaaaaaaah!

Ena: General Kasatai! Have you forgotten your vow? No matter what happens, we
will protect the capital, yes?

Kasatai: Ah... Ah... Yes, of course... I...understand. This is His Majesty's--
Why he left you here...

Ena: Yes.

Kasatai: We will win this battle! A legendary dragon of Goldoa is on our side!
It is a powerful omen! Daein cannot lose! The Daein army is
indestructible! We will crush the dogs of Crimea and use their skulls
as goblets!

Soldier: Glory to Daein!

Soldier: Victory to Daein!

(Cheers)

Soldier: Sir! The gates have just closed behind us! Look out!

Soldier: We're trapped in this castle! Run! Ruuuun!

Soldier: Attack! We're under attack! They're going to kill us!

Ike: Stop, all of you! Get ahold of yourselves! You must not panic! No one has attacked!

(Enter Titania)

Titania: Ike!

Ike: Titania! Where is Princess Elincia?

Titania: She's fine. She's with the supply convoy. They're all under very close guard.

Ike: Soren, is this the enemy trap?

Soren: ...It could be...

Titania: If so, to what end?

Soren: Well, the goal obviously isn't to divide our troops and reduce our fighting strength. We're all packed in here together. Whatever they are planning, it appears that they want us all to experience it at the same time.

Titania: Daein must have something which they believe gives them an insurmountable advantage. Some kind of ultimate weapon.

Ike: So they're absolutely sure they'll win, is that it? King Ashnard of Daein ... You'll regret underestimating us.

Soren: No matter what, we must be cautious. We can spare no efforts to protect the princess. We should put together an elite team and head for the throne room. Choose the members of this team with care. Everything will rest on their shoulders.

Ike: Understood.

-[Daein Keep]-

-----[Battle Start]-----

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Kasatai: I cannot...stop your march... But...we are not yet defeated... General...Ena... Protect...the...capital...

(End boss fight)

Ike: Hyaaaa! Take this! ...What is it? Why are you staring at me like that?

Tauroneo: I am Tauroneo, a general of Daein. Young general of Crimea, I have but one question to ask you. Your swordsmanship is familiar... Who

taught you to fight in this way? To the best of my knowledge, that style was used by only one man-- an old friend of mine.

Ike: My father. He taught me to use a sword.

Tauroneo: Is that so? Then you are Gawain's son...

Ike: Wait! Are you a friend of my father's?

Tauroneo: We were good friends...long ago. How is the old goat?

Ike: ...My father no longer lives. He was defeated and slain by a Daein general.

Tauroneo: That can't be! For the Gawain I knew to be beaten... Who was it? Who took him down?

Ike: A knight encased in black armor.

Tauroneo: The Black Knight, eh? I did not know his strength had grown so much ... Interesting.

Ike: ...

Tauroneo: Do you have any brothers or sisters?

Ike: I have one sister.

Tauroneo: In that case, I will not fight you. The world must not lose Gawain's style of swordsmanship. I surrender. You may lock me away or execute me or what you will. I care not.

Ike: Are you sane?

Tauroneo: Very much so. I had already decided that I would die in this place. I have served this country for many years-- since the time of the previous king. But the current regent... He rules through fear and wants nothing but war. I can abide it no longer.

Ike: If you plan on dying anyway, join us. We have need of strength such as yours.

Tauroneo: You would take a former Daein general? I cannot. Your fellow Crimeans would resist. They would never accept it.

Ike: Our army does not have the luxury of being so picky. Please... Lend us your strength.

Tauroneo: ...As you will. I've already thrown my life away. If it can serve you somehow, you may use it as you see fit.

Ike: Ashnard! Show yourself!

Ena: ...

Ike: Huh? A Goldoan dragon?

Ena: I've been waiting for you. You are General Ike, are you not?

Ike: How did... Who are you?

Ena: My name is Ena. By the orders of the king, I am the protector of this capital.

Ike: Withdraw. I've no desire to fight a useless battle with you. It's Ashnard I'm after.

Ena: I regret to inform you that the king is not here.

Ike: What?

Ena: The king and the main body of the Daein army remain in Crimea, where they have been since it fell.

Ike: What are you saying? The king's abandoned the capital?

Ena: ...I share your desire to see this conflict end. So rather than see you travel to Crimea to fight Ashnard, I felt it would be much faster for me to defeat you and your army here. Don't you agree?

Ike: That's one way to look at it. The problem is that I'll never let you do as you please with Crimea!

Ena: We cannot have it both ways. We both want what is in our own interest, and that is why we have conflict. If neither one of us will yield, our conflict will continue until only the stronger of us remains. I have my own reasons for fighting... And I will see you fall.

Ike: Hi-yaaaah!

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Ena: ...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Ena: You are strong. I have lost.

Ike: Then calm yourself and surrender. There's no reason for you to die.

Ena: That I cannot do.

Ike: What?

Ena: I... I must go to him...

Ike: No! Wait!

(Ena runs off/Enter Nasir)

Ike: Nasir! Good timing. Grab her, will you?

Nasir: ...

(Nasir goes up to Ike)

Nasir: I'm sorry.

Ike: Nasir?

(Nasir hits Ike)

Ike: Urgh!

Soren: Ike!

Titania: Nasir! What are you doing?

Nasir: Go now. Hurry!

Ena: ...

(Exit Ena)

Ike: So you were the traitor?

Nasir: ...

Ike: Someone's been giving information to the enemy. Was that you, too? And...
Mist's medallion?

Nasir: ...

Ike: Are you telling me you've been working for Daein this whole time? But
you're a laguz! Why? Talk to me! Ah, this is useless. Get him out of
here! His traitorous face is making me ill!

Nasir: ...

Ike: Blast!

Nasir: ...

Ike: Until this has been cleared up, you'll be held in custody.

(Enter Soldier)

Ike: I won't question you anymore. When you decide to talk, let me know.

Nasir: ...

Ike: ...

(They start to walk away)

Nasir: ...Go to Palmeni Temple.

Ike: What did you say?

Nasir: ...

Ike: ...

-[Crimea Castle]-

Ashnard: So the capital's fallen, eh? Ha! I knew it would come to this! Still ...how disappointing. It doesn't matter how well you train an army-- if they don't fight, they become weak. What's the life of a soldier without a steady diet of war? Blood and pain are the foods of a true warrior!

Petrine: Suh-speaking of soldiers, Your Highness... The majority of our forces have been moved here--

Ashnard: I left more than enough soldiers! And yet they could not prevail... I may have overestimated Ena. Even if she is a dragon, I suppose that was the best she could do.

Petrine: I suppose...

Ashnard: But the important thing is the Black Knight. Where's he gotten to? Did you see him in the capital?

Petrine: I did. He bid me present this to Your Majesty...

Ashnard: Ah! It's found its way back to my hands at long last. Unwrap it! Quickly! Unwrap it and show it to me...

Petrine: V-very well--

Ashnard: Do be careful not to touch it, Petrine. It wouldn't do to have you go mad... I'd hate to have to kill you! Aha ha ha!

Petrine: H-here it is, Y-Your Majesty...

Ashnard: Behold... Ah, how wonderful! See how it reacts to the war I have brought to this pathetic land?

Petrine: Th-this is Lehran's Medallion?

Ashnard: Yes. And inside...inside is a dark god of immeasurable power and cruelty. It once caused a flood so great that all continents save Tellius were submerged in a watery tomb.

Petrine: That...blue light...

Ashnard: You... Me... Even this very castle itself... We all radiate various forms of chaotic energy, and the dark god is pure chaos! The light you see is that energy calling out to the chaos around us. That is why some scholars refer to it as the Fire Emblem.

Petrine: ...

Ashnard: Heee! Heee har har! Look how you tremble! This light has the power to bewitch the human soul, you know? It calls to our chaotic impulses-- like the urge to slaughter every living thing in sight... Do you feel its invitation? The permission to act on any base emotion that resides in your heart, no matter how unspeakable?

Petrine: I... My report...is not...finished...

Ashnard: Heee har har! Ah, Petrine... Guard!

(Enter Soldier)

Soldier: Yes, Your Highness?

Ashnard: Wrap the medallion and place it in the vault.

Soldier: At once!

(Exit Soldier)

Ashnard: ...Go on. The report?

Petrine: O-of course... Yes... As Your Majesty ordered, the Black Knight moves to capture Princess Serenes. At last report, he was on his way to Phoenicis.

Ashnard: I see. So he's decided on the princess and not the prince, eh? Did he give any reasons?

Petrine: Yes, Your Highness. It was based on the findings of a group of scholars. Because the princess was isolated for over twenty years, they feel her magic will be stronger than her brother's.

Ashnard: Yet... Can the Black Knight outwit the hawk king of Phoenicis and steal her away?

Petrine: The hawk king is not always at her side. Plus, as you know, the Black Knight is in possession of warp powder. If someone of his might has the ability to appear and disappear at will, it may be that he is without equal... W-with the exception of Your Majesty, of course!! I ... I mean...

Ashnard: Ha ha. I will have to test that someday... But not today. It's not often that one finds a tool as useful as he is.

Petrine: Well spoken, Your Majesty.

Ashnard: Now then, Petrine. My dear Petrine... You have made one blunder after another. How will you prove your worth to me...? If you wish to remain in my service, you must show me results. Unless you, too, wish to become food for Rajaion here?

Petrine: Y-Your Majesty! I will redouble my efforts! I won't... I won't let you down again!

Ashnard: You can be a general or you can be dinner. I don't really care which ... But do try to show a little initiative, won't you?

Petrine: Yes, Your Highness... B-by your leave...

Ashnard: Hold. I forgot one thing. What happened to Ena when the capital fell?

Petrine: According to all reports, she escaped. Her current location is unknown. However... This is Ena we're speaking of. She will return to Your Majesty, will she not?

Ashnard: Kill her.

Petrine: What?

Ashnard: I've no further use for her. Oh, but if it's too much for you to kill her outright... Use her trust and stab her in the back.

Petrine: As...as you wish...

Chapter 22: Solo

[022]

Narration: Overcoming many hardships, Ike and company finally arrive in the Daein capital of Nevassa. However, much to their dismay, King Ashnard is nowhere to be found. According to intelligence reports, the king is in Crimea's capital of Melior, preparing to wage war against Gallia. In addition, at least half of the Daein army, including its most elite forces, remain unharmed and at his side. The Crimean army is again forced to march. This time, however, the battlefield will be their own homeland. Eagerly awaiting their arrival is a Daein army more powerful than anything they have faced so far. This fact, coupled with Nasir's act of betrayal, has filled Ike with apprehension and disappointment. Yet, it is then, when all hope seems faint, that unexpected good news arrives.

-[Daein Keep]-

Soldier: General Ike! Sir, reinforcements have arrived from Begnion!

Ike: Reinforcements? I haven't heard anything about this. Have you, Princess Elincia?

Elincia: No, not a word.

Ike: Are you sure they're Begnion troops?

Soldier: Yes, sir! They fly Begnion's insignia. There can be no doubt of their authenticity. And the man in command is one of Begnion's most beloved heroes, General Zelgius! There's no mistaking him, sir!

Ike: Allow me to meet with him first.

Zelgius: I beg your pardon. Are you General Ike?

Ike: I am. And you are?

Zelgius: I am Zelgius, earl of Kadohl. I've been dispatched from Begnion with a battalion to support your army.

Ike: Your assistance is much appreciated, but... This is very unexpected.

Zelgius: I understand your surprise. For Begnion's imperial senate, this decision was made with unusual haste.

Ike: I imagine so. It took forever just to get the soldiers I have now.

Zelgius: Well, there's a reason behind this expedited decision. Duke Persis has returned home.

Ike: Do you mean Sephiran?

Zelgius: Correct. Duke Persis is also senior statesman of the imperial senate. The duke returned from his travels and began working immediately to settle pressing affairs of state. First, he met with the apostle, and they exchanged reports on both foreign and domestic matters. Then they discussed Begnion's position in relation to the current conflict, and possible courses of action. In less than half a day, they brought the entire imperial senate into line and sent us here to you.

Ike: ...So you're saying that Begnion has allied itself with Crimea. Is that it?

Zelgius: That's it exactly. I am at your service, General Ike.

Ike: Oh... Um...wow. Thank you.

Zelgius: Now then, please tell me what you would have my men do. I'm ordered to help in any way possible.

Ike: Um... You've caught me off guard. I can't think of anything right now.

Zelgius: In that case, do I have permission to make camp around the palace and rest my troops?

Ike: Yes, please do. That's no problem.

Zelgius: Thank you. Please do not hesitate to call if you have need of us. We are at your disposal.

Titania: Begnion reinforcements... That was unexpected, wasn't it?

Ike: It certainly was! It seems the apostle and Sephiran did the impossible by getting them to us.

Elincia: All for our little army... It's hard to believe they would go to all this trouble.

Titania: First we take Daein's capital, and now this. Things are looking up.

Ike: You're right. Even if we don't receive help from Gallia, we still may be able to defeat Ashnard.

Elincia: That's true. It's...like a dream.

Soren: I have to disagree.

Titania: Oh, look. Soren is upset again. Who knew?! What is it this time?

Soren: If the Crimean army is not the crux of Daein's defeat, this war means nothing.

Titania: What does that have to do with the arrival of these reinforcements?

Soren: The battalion that just arrived is greater in numbers than the one we originally received. Not only that, but all of these soldiers are marching under Begnion's name.

Ike: So?

Soren: So... If those reinforcements are responsible for defeating King Daein, what do you think will happen? That achievement, the very victory itself, will belong to the Begnion Empire. Not to Crimea. If that happens, Crimea will be rebuilt however Begnion sees fit, and Princess Elincia will be a mere figurehead. And then, the deeds of an unknown mercenary company will be expertly covered up. We'll receive some paltry sum of money and be swept under a rug somewhere. Mark my words.

Elincia: Soren, you're being so rude! Surely the apostle, of all people, would never do such a thing!

Ike: And this General Zelgius seems sincere enough to me.

Titania: Come, Soren. I have heard of situations like that which you describe, but whether this is such a case... We've been fortunate to receive this good will. Must we always search for such ulterior motives?

Soren: Yes! We must! Have you forgotten Nasir?! It's that sort of naive attitude that allowed him to remain undetected for so long! You people don't seem to get it. We are at WAR! All doubts, no matter how small, must be extinguished. If they aren't, we could well be ignoring something that will lead to our defeat. Or to our death.

Titania: ...

Elincia: ...

Ike: Let's take Soren's comments under consideration and discuss this at length. We meet in one hour.

(Soren Report)

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Youth **]-

Jorge: Hey, Ike! Er... General Ike! Wait up! Say, if there's an enemy in my way, but I don't want to kill him, what do you think I should do?

Ike: ...Is this about that stupid game again?

Jorge: Well, it's all your fault! You had to go and tutor Daniel, and now I've been on this losing streak!

Ike: Tutor? You mean back when we were onboard the ship? It was just one hint!

Jorge: Daniel isn't like me! He's smart. I'm the one who thought up this game, but he's the one who's getting better and better. I hardly ever win anymore!

Ike: Instead of playing that game, why don't you try some real combat?

Jorge: Stop joking around. We're happy-go-lucky traveling merchants. We don't know anything about fighting.

Ike: Give me a break! It's nice you're having fun and all, but please... Can you save your stupid game for someone who's not fighting for their life day in and day out?

Jorge: Well, what do you expect? Everything's war, war, war, and there's no place for us. All we can do is play this game. Sorry... I'll just go lose again...

Ike: Oh, for heaven's sake... Look, if there's an opponent you don't want to kill, just shove him out of the way. Then you don't have to fight him.

Jorge: Huh? Oh, t-thanks. ...Um... You know, we are what we are, but we'll be with you till the end. I hope we can continue to be of service. All right?

Ike: Yeah, thanks. Sorry for being so irritable.

Jorge: That's all right. I know how much stress you've been under.

Ike: ...

-[Sothe *]-

Sothe: ...

Ike: Something on your mind?

Sothe: Oh, Commander Ike! Oops! I guess I'm supposed to call you General now, huh?

Ike: Commander's fine. So what's going on? Are you thinking about that person you were looking for?

Sothe: That's...all settled. Actually, no...it's not really settled. It's just ... I figured that worrying about it all the time wasn't doing me any good. I turned over every rock in Begnion during my search, but... It's just easier to assume that everything's going well...somewhere...

Ike: Well, as long as you're happy, I won't say a word. So...what were you thinking about then?

Sothe: I... I didn't say anything before, but Daein is my homeland.

Ike: Is that so?

Sothe: Yeah. Until a few years back, I lived in the slums of Nevassa and stole for a living.

Ike: ...

Sothe: So anyway, I went back to my old stomping grounds and saw some friends. The rest of the city's empty, but they're still here. They've got no other place to go, you know?

Ike: And what did they have to say?

Sothe: Every one was mad that Crimea had won. They said if the king had been here, there's no way they would've been defeated. It's so weird. Until now, all they had ever done was complain about this place.

Ike: I see.

Sothe: You know, Ashnard wasn't such a bad king. At least, as far as we could see. If you were strong enough, you could rise up and become a knight one day. You could escape the filthy slums. He was the only king who ever gave us that chance. That hope.

Ike: ...

Sothe: Don't get me wrong. I don't mind fighting with all of you. But still, seeing your homeland scarred and trampled like this is tough. I'm sorry. I know Crimea is suffering in the same way, but... I can't change how I feel.

(Exit Sothe)

Ike: ...

-----[Exit Base]-----

Zelgius: So you're going to lead a small unit out on a survey mission?

Ike: Yes, that's the plan. However... Though we've taken the castle, there are still pockets of Daein resistance. It's possible they may try to mount an attack and retake the palace. I want you to be in charge of the watch.

Zelgius: That is, of course, not a problem. However, you're taking the princess along. Don't you think it would be safer to take more troops? Even if we split our battalion, we have enough men to handle both tasks.

Ike: I'm just not used to moving around with such a large group. And for this mission... I'd like to keep the number of people involved as low as possible.

Zelgius: It's not that I don't understand how you feel, but...we will compromise.

Ike: You know, for someone from Begnion, you're pretty flexible. It speeds things up considerably.

Zelgius: To be a soldier, one must be able to quickly adapt to circumstances around him.

Ike: All right. We'll be back later.

Zelgius: Take care.

Ike: This is the place Nasir mentioned. Palmeni Temple. I hope whatever he was trying to tell me will become clear once we get inside and look around.

Elincia: I still can't believe Nasir was on Daein's side... I just can't. And

he let that dragon girl get away... Although I'm sure he had reasons for that, as well.

Mist: I wonder... Was it really Nasir? Although, besides my family, the only people I showed the medallion to were Titania, Princess Elinia, and Nasir... I thought I could trust him... I really did. Why? Why did he do it?

Elinia: Mist...

Ike: Thinking about the past isn't going to help. Let's take a look at this temple.

Schaeffer: What did you say? The Crimean army is here?

Tomenami: They want to investigate the temple. What should I tell them?

Schaeffer: Crud! This ain't good. I don't know what they're after, but if they find us mercenaries who sided with Daein, they'll wipe us out!

Tomenami: It is all the will of the goddess. Resign yourself to your fate... Accept it.

Schaeffer: Bat dung! No one's gonna roll over and die! Dying's for sissies! So tell me, how many are there?

Tomenami: There appears to be ten or so, including the women.

Schaeffer: Gahar har har! That's good news!

Tomenami: It is?

Schaeffer: If that's the lot of them, we can take care of this on our own. It'll be like stealin' a baby from the cradle! Right, then, here's the plan. Pretend like you wanna help 'em, then lead 'em inside. And listen good! You'd best not whisper a word about us being here! Or else... Kkkkccchhhh!

Tomenami: B-but I couldn't... What you ask is beyond me--

Schaeffer: KKKKCCCHHHHH!!! Don't forget, we've got all the other priests under our control. Unless you want 'em to meet the goddess early, do as you're told!

Tomenami: Oh dear...

-[Palmeni Shrine]-

Ike: All right, we'd like to take a look around. Please show us each room.

Tomenami: Um...very well... Th-th-this...is... Er... A v-very large room... Um...

Ike: Are you all right? Why are you shaking like that?

Tomenami: Oh, Goddess... Please...forgive me...

Ike: It's a trap!

(Enter Schaeffer/Mercenaries)

Schaeffer: Gahar har har har! You did it!

Tomenami: Please...forgive me...

Ike: I thought something like this might happen.

Schaeffer: I don't know how you got wind of us, but showing up in such a small group means you're outta luck! None of ya are gettin' outta here alive!

Ike: We've just fought our way to the Daein capital. You're not even going to slow us down!

Schaeffer: Cocky, ain't ya? But who said this was gonna be a fair fight?

Tomenami: Eh?

(Two mercenaries approach Tomenami)

Tomenami: What, what are you doing?

Schaeffer: Hey! Bring out the others!

(Enter Priests)

Schaeffer: You fools are gonna be our shields.

Tomenami: What?

Schaeffer: Gahar har har! Gahar har har har! See? You ain't so useless after all!

Ike: You filthy dogs! Those are innocent people! You can't...

Tomenami: Oh...mercy... Please help me...

Schaeffer: Hey! If ya don't want them perty robes of yours to turn red, you'll attack these scum! If ya even think about betraying us, I'll kill every one of ya!

Tomenami: B-but...you can't... ..Crimeans, please... Forgive us... We cannot allow our brothers to die.

Ike: This cowardice will not stand! These priests are being made to fight against their will. We've got to try and save as many of them as possible! Let's go!

-----[Battle Start]-----

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Schaeffer: ...Gwaar... Haaaarr... Haaaaaa... Shoulda brought... more priests... Or some...babies... Dang...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Tomenami: Thank you very much. I never imagined that we would be rescued by soldiers of an enemy nation.

Ike: There was no way we'd cut down innocent priests being forced to fight against their wills.

Elincia: Father, we bear no ill will toward the kingdom of Daein itself. We wish only to reclaim the homeland which was unjustly taken from us. That is the reason we fight. We had no desire to invade this land. If nothing else, please believe that.

Tomenami: I beg your pardon. May I have the favor of your name?

Elincia: Elincia Ridell Crimea. I'm the sole survivor of the Crimean royal family.

Tomenami: Oh! You... Let us give thanks that you are alive and well! And please, I beg your understanding as well. There are many Daeins who do not support the king's actions.

Elincia: I understand.

Ike: ...

Tomenami: My young general, this is for you.

Ike: Huh?

Tomenami: As thanks for saving our lives.

-Receive "Ashera Staff"-

Ike: Now it's time to search this place.

Elincia: My lord Ike. May I join you?

Ike: Sure, why not? Everyone's lending a--

Mist: Ike! Ike! Where are you?

Ike: Mist? I'm over here.

(Enter Mist)

Mist: Ike! This way! Quickly! Reyson's in trouble!

Ike: What?

Ike: Reyson? What is it?

Reyson: ...

Mist: He's been like this from the moment he set foot in this room. He's just

staring at the walls.

Ike: What is all this?

Elincia: Every wall has the same pattern on it.

Soren: It's not a pattern. It's an ancient language. All chants and spells in magic scrolls are written thusly.

Ike: Can you read it, Soren?

Soren: Some, but not all. Spells are simple, whereas this is a complex narrative. I think Prince Reyson could read it.

Ike: I bet this is the same language that Leanne was speaking.

Soren: It is. It's the Serenes' language... Their chants are all in this language, too.

Mist: So Reyson is reading what's written on the walls?

Titania: It appears that way...

Ike: Shall we leave him be? There's a lot of writing here. This could take hours.

Elincia: I think that's a good idea.

Soren: Ike!

Ike: What is it?

Soren: From what I could gather, I think a person was locked in this room sometime in the past.

Ike: ...You don't know who it was, do you?

Soren: I wasn't able to read enough of the writing, but... I found this under the bed.

Ike: Is this...?

Soren: I think it may have belonged to whoever was imprisoned in this room.

Ike: ...

Reyson: I apologize. I took up much of your time.

Ike: Reyson, you don't look so good. Why don't you rest for a bit?

Reyson: No, I'm fine. It's more important that we talk.

Ike: About the owner of this feather?

Reyson: ...Was it in that room?

Ike: Soren found it. Whose was it?

Reyson: Lillia... My older sister. The writing on the walls is hers.

Elincia: ...You have an older sister, too?

Ike: Will you tell us about it?

Reyson: She was kidnapped twenty years ago, on the night of the Serenes
Massacre. I... I thought that Lillia had been murdered along with my
other brothers and sisters. I believed that until today...

Ike: Who took her?

Reyson: The walls say only that he was a large human. She probably never knew
who it was. He thrust a clan treasure at her and demanded that she use
her magic to revive the thing sealed inside it. He exhorted her again
and again, but to no avail. Lillia refused his request every time...
because she did not possess that power.

Elincia: Someone wanted to revive the dark god...

Reyson: Shortly after she was brought here, Lillia fell ill and collapsed. I'm
not surprised...it was a terrible time... She was imprisoned in that
tiny room with no view of earth or sky...

Mist: Oh, that's awf...sniff..... ..sniff...

Titania: Mist...

Mist: I'm sorry... I just feel...so sad for Lillia...and for...for Reyson,
too...

Reyson: I beg your pardon. Let me continue. A young beorc began coming to the
room to care for Lillia. She had bluish hair and blue eyes... And her
heart was unusually pure for a beorc. In time, Lillia and she came to
be friends, and shared a mutual trust.

Mist: Ah!

Ike: ...

Reyson: Lillia decided to entrust her hopes to the woman. They shared no
common language, so it took some time. But eventually, the beorc woman
understood what it was Lillia wanted... Which was to take the treasure
and the song...and flee this temple.

Mist: B-Brother!

Ike: Was there anything else written about this beorc woman? A name,
perhaps...

Reyson: -Heron language- Translated into our language, it was probably Elena.

Mist: I knew it! Mother! It was our mother!

Reyson: What?

Elincia: Are, are you sure?

Ike: Our mother's name was Elena. Like me, her hair was blue...as were her eyes. Reyson, the object you refer to as your clan treasure was an aged, bronze medallion, wasn't it?

Reyson: How... How did you know that?

Ike: The medallion became my mother's keepsake. The song, too... My parents both gave their lives to protect it.

Reyson: Ike! You and Mist are Elena's children? Then Lehran's Medallion is here?

Mist: Um...

Ike: The medallion was stolen. Probably by Daein.

Reyson: It can't... This is...unbelievable. Can a thing like this be chance?

Ike: To be honest, I don't fully understand all that's happened. But...it all makes sense. It all comes together...

Reyson: Ah!

(Mist starts singing)

Elincia: Mist... That's the song that... But...the melody's a little different, isn't it?

Ike: It's similar to the song Reyson and Leanne sang in the forest. My mother used to sing it as a lullaby.

Reyson: It is the song of release. The one Lillia entrusted to Elena.

Mist: B-but... I wore the medallion and sang that song almost every single night! And nothing ever happened.

Reyson: The magical effect of the song is awakened by the power of the singer. ...It can't be unleashed by just anyone. The true song of release can only be sung by a girl named Altina... Lillia wanted your mother to take the melody to Altina and return the medallion to its rightful place in Serenes Forest.

(Mist stops singing)

Ike: The story's becoming clearer and clearer. My father fled Daein to protect my mother, who was carrying the amulet.

Titania: Ike? How did you know--

Ike: Volke told me. He told me about my father's past, and the amulet, and the dark god, too.

Titania: So you know everything...

Reyson: King Ashnard took Lillia, didn't he?

Ike: That would be the final piece of the puzzle. After all, the man who found my father was the king's henchman.

Titania: Ike! Are you saying you know who killed Commander Greil? You never

said anything about that! We all thought his murderer was unknown...
Why didn't you say anything?

Ike: ...I don't know. I never felt like talking about it.

Titania: He was a Daein soldier, wasn't he? Who was it? Who was the man who
killed Commander Greil?

Ike: ...

Titania: IKE!! TELL ME!!

Soren: Can we discuss this later?

Ike: ...

Titania: ...Oh... Yes... Yes. Of course.

Soren: Up to this point, we've all been fighting for the liberation of Crimea.
Even if we now add to that stopping the dark god from being released
and punishing Commander Greil's killer... Our enemy remains unchanged.
King Daein and his henchman are the ones we must defeat.

Elincia: It's mysterious, isn't it? I mean, Reyson said the same thing
earlier, but... Could all of this really be mere coincidence? The
fall of Crimea... Ike's parents... The death of Reyson's sister...
The fact that everything leads back to Daein...

Reyson: If true, it changes the meaning behind this war... The treatment of
Lillia is one thing but... The assassination of the former apostle?
The framing and destruction of my nation? If it was all part of
Daein's plan to steal the medallion and the song, then I... I... The
reason I fight...

Ike: ...

=====
Chapter 23: The Great Bridge

[023]
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Zelgius: If that's the decision you've reached, we'll respectfully comply.

Ike: If we can march quickly and know that someone's protecting our backs, it
would be a huge relief.

Zelgius: As you wish. May the fortunes of war be with the Crimean army. If you
have need of soldiers, send word. We'll move out at top speed.

Ike: I'll be counting on it.

Narration: The information gathered at Palmeni Temple leads Ike ever closer to
the hidden truths behind the war. The assassination of Begnion's
former apostle led to the massacre of Serenes. A Serenes princess
was kidnapped. The medallion is stolen. A complex skein seemed to
connect these events, and now those threads have become clearer and
cleaner. Ashnard's motives are still a mystery, but his silhouette
lurks in the shadows of all that happens. Ike returns from the

temple and renounces all rights to the rule of Daein. Those rights are then passed through General Zelgius of Begnion to the apostle herself. The Crimean army absorbs another troop from Begnion, and with its might increased, marches on the Daein/Crimean border. Its next goal is the Riven Bridge, a massive structure that connects the two countries.

Elincia: My lord Ike, may I have a moment?

Ike: Of course. What is it?

Elincia: The soldiers say that tomorrow we'll be able to see the great bridge. Once we cross it, we'll be in Crimea.

Ike: That's what I've been told.

Elincia: It feels like I've been away for many years. Crimea is the land where I was born and raised. To feel so removed from it... I feel now, at this late juncture, that I know almost nothing of my own country. It is an unreal experience.

Ike: I know what you mean. I don't have the sense that we're on the brink of being back in Crimea, either. I don't even remember this area at all. Maybe it's because I was born in Gallia and raised in the countryside. But countries are joined together like this all over the continent. I'm really in awe of it all.

Elincia: So am I! For one who knew nothing of life outside the royal villa... Everything...is... So very big.

Ike: Big? Hmm... Yeah, I guess you're right. When we left Crimea, it was spring... The snows were melting, the days were getting longer, and the weather was mild.

Elincia: It's been almost a year since we departed. Only a year, but the distance we've traveled to get here has been long and hard... It feels like many years have passed us by. Yet this is the land where I was born and raised... Ah, my dear, sweet Crimea... How is it that you feel so far away?

Ike: For me, too, Crimea is my homeland. We're almost there... Let's go home.

Elincia: It is as you say, my lord Ike. ...Let's go home.

Unknown: Oooh, what a romantic setting. Makes it hard to make an appearance! I guess I could just leave you two...

Ike: Huh? I know that voice...

(Enter Ranulf)

Ranulf: Hey there, Ike! Looks like we stayed alive long enough to be reunited! Aren't we the lucky ones?

Ike: Ranulf!

Elincia: My lord Ranulf! How nice to see you again!

Ranulf: My princess Elincia! Welcome home! I'd curtsy, but the tail makes it look silly.

Ike: What are you so darned chipper about?

Ranulf: Once I heard the news that the Crimean army had taken the Daein capital, I ran all this way to greet you.

Ike: How go things in Gallia? You're not engaged in open hostilities with Daein, are you?

Ranulf: Not yet.

Ike: What's that supposed to mean?

Ranulf: In light of your army's success, the elders have finally agreed on something. Gallia will lend its full support to Princess Crimea's efforts to liberate her homeland. It's a done deal!

Elincia: Really?

Ike: So, is the Gallian army going to--

Ranulf: We're going to establish communications with them and create a united front. That being said, Gallia is here to support you. The Crimean army will always be at the center of the effort. Don't forget that.

Ike: King Gallia is being most gracious. That posture will allow Crimea to lay claim to any victories we achieve.

Ranulf: Don't say things like that! I'm shocked that you would understand such subtleties. Who are you, and what have you done with Ike?

Ike: I don't believe you have the right to speak to me like that. Kidding. Actually, Soren just lectured me on the same situation when we received reinforcements from Begnion.

Ranulf: Of course. You were tutored by your nervous little staff officer. Now I get it... Has he snapped yet? He seems high-strung.

Elincia: King Caineghis is always thinking of Crimea, isn't he? How can I ever repay him?

Ranulf: Princess... Let's win your country back. When that's done, please rebuild the bonds of friendship between our nations. That would be the ultimate way to say thank you, wouldn't it?

Elincia: Yes! Yes, of course!

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Soren ***]-

Soren: Hmm...

Unknown: Soren! Are you in here?

Soren: Yes...

(Enter Ike)

Soren: Ike? It's late. What do you want?

Ike: Shhh!

Soren: Um... Ike?

Unknown: Oh, no... How strange. I was sure he'd come this way. Yooo-hooo?!

Soren: That voice... It's the woman from the item shop, isn't it?

Aimee: Commander! Ike? Where have you gone, handsome?

Ike: Crud.

Soren: ...Did you run in here to escape?

Ike: Look, whenever that woman corners me, it takes forever to get away. Let me hide in here until things simmer down.

Soren: We begin marching tomorrow morning... This is a waste of valuable time. I'll go and chase her away.

(Exit Soren)

Ike: Wait! Soren!

(Outside)

Aimee: Iiike! Ikey-poo! Where aaaaare you?

Soren: Aimee?

Aimee: Oh. Soren. Ew. I mean, um...hi. Why are you out so late?

Soren: Do you have some business with Ike?

Aimee: Well, yes I do. I found a special something that I'd like to give to him. Do you know where he is?

Soren: Ike is...in a war meeting. If you have something for him, I can hold on to it for you.

Aimee: Hmm... What should I do? You see, I have this new staff... The staff is VERY valuable. I'm not sure if I feel comfortable simply handing it over to someone who doesn't...understand that.

Soren: That's a Hammerne, is it not? A rare staff that can take any item, no matter how battered and worn, and repair it completely.

Aimee: Why...that's right. You're quite knowledgeable, aren't you?

Soren: If I may continue, I believe that there is only one of these in all the world. It truly is priceless. And you want to give this to Ike?

Aimee: Well, I do want to be helpful.

Soren: ...If you truly wish to capture Ike's attention, bringing him staves and whatnot will avail you nothing.

Aimee: What? Really? Oh, dear... I was so hoping he would like it.

Soren: Food, however, would be much more effective than a staff. He's particularly fond of spicy meat dishes.

Aimee: Is that so? Cooking is not something that I'm skilled at, but... Oh, I've got it! I know the perfect dish!

Soren: Ah, good! He will be very pleased! Um...what about the staff?

Aimee: Hee hee! You can keep it as payment for the cooking tip! Take good care of it.

(Exit Aimee)

Soren: ...Well, she's unexpectedly generous. I received something quite nice from your admirer, Ikey-poo! Thank you so much!

Ike: Hey, wait a minute!

-[Shinon *]-

Ike: Understood. Proceed as ordered.

Soldier: Sir, yes, sir!

(Exit Soldier)

Ike: What's next... Huh? Who's there?

(Enter Shinon)

Shinon: Sir, yes, sir... Hey, it's General Ike the Great! I heard all about it, you know? Those guys went and made you...a NOBLE!

Ike: Shinon?

Shinon: Good for you, huh? Har har! ...Hic! You're in love with a pwetty wittle princess, you're fighting side-by-side with yer sub-human pals. Yes! Yer moving up! Oooo, look at you! It's big mister Ike! Leading the good life!

Ike: They're not sub-humans. They're laguz.

Shinon: ...Yeah, whatever. Here's the deal... Now that yer a high-class noble, you can't be running around with a...buncha broke mercenaries. All the other nobles...are gonna LAUGH at you! So...give it up! I'll do you a favor and take over.

Ike: I don't think so. I'm going to continue as commander of the Greil Mercenaries.

Shinon: Screw you! You always get everything! Don't you ever want to give up anything? Nooooo! Not big important mister Ike! You've always been like this! You act like you're not interested in something, then you swoop in and...STEAL IT AWAY!

Ike: Hey! Shinon?

Shinon:Wh-what? WHAT?! And watch how you say my name, boy! Boy, boy, boy... Wittle boy Ike... Wittle Ikey...

Ike: ...Shinon, what's wrong with you? Are you feeling all right?

Shinon: What do you care, you snotty whelp?! It's none of yer business! AND another thing! About the command of the company. If you refuse to give it up...at least change the name! Yer NOT...Commander Greil! Just because you're his son... That doesn't...give you the right...to use his name...

Ike: Shinon, are you sure you're all right?

Shinon: ...YEAH! I'm fine! I'll be fine... Fine, fine... Ugh... I don't feel so good. Ooh... BLAARRRGGGHHHH!

(Exit Shinon)

Ike: It was never about the commandership... It was about my father. ...

-----[Exit Base]-----

Petrine: So they're finally here, are they? Has the work on the bridge been finished? And your answer had better be yes!

Soldier: Y-yes, General! Do you think it will work?

Petrine: Sometimes the simplest of traps offer up the best results. Lure the enemy in, and then finish them off one by one. Got it?

(Exit Soldier)

Petrine: Listen up, dogs! There will be no retreating today! We stop Crimea's advance here! We will not allow them to gain the comforts of their homeland! Any who do not fight to the death will face my lance!

Ike: There's the bridge... Wow, it's huge... I doubt if Daein's going to let us cross over without objection.

Ranulf: Yeah, I think that's highly unlikely.

Ike: Titania! It's time to march! Make sure the troops stay alert and move with caution!

Titania: Understood, Commander!

(Exit Titania)

Ranulf: Say, Ike. There's one thing I've been meaning to ask you.

Ike: What is it?

Ranulf: I haven't seen Nasir around. What's happened to him?

Ike: He was declared an enemy combatant and locked up.

Ranulf: What? Hey, I understand you being irked that he didn't mention testing

you and all, but treating him like a criminal is too--

Ike: Testing me? What are you talking about?

Ranulf: Huh? Oh, um... Nice weather, eh?

Ike: We're going to talk. Now.

Ranulf: Nasir is a Daein spy? No way! That's not possible! He was our spy!

Ike: You're telling me he was a Gallian spy? None of this makes sense to me...

Ranulf: He worked for us on behalf of the king. But...Daein? As a laguz, he would have absolutely no reason to work for them.

Ike: But there was a Goldoan named Ena who was working as a general for Daein.

Ranulf: ...Are you serious?

Ike: Yes, we were forced to fight her in the Daein capital. When we attempted to capture her, Nasir intervened and allowed her to escape. He betrayed us.

Ranulf: What? Hold on a minute... Maybe that was... If that's the case, then I can see why... No, even so, teaming up with Daein is just too much...
hmm.....

Ike: I hate to interrupt whatever it is you're doing, but we've arrived at the bridge.

Ranulf: Let me speak to Nasir. Please!

Ike: Once we've finished this battle, we can go together. All right?

Ranulf: Of course.

Petrine: All right, Haar! Time for you to go to work.

Haar: Zzzzz... No, Mom, five more minutes... Zzzzzzzzzzz...

Petrine: Dozing off on the battlefield... You've got a lot of nerve, don't you? Hey! Wake up or I'll burn you to a crisp!

Haar: Zzzzz... Snort! Huh? Wha--? Uh... Right! Has the enemy arrived?

Petrine: Yes, they just got here. Now get out there and do your job.

Haar: Oh, I'm all over it. Yaaaawwwnnn...

(Exit Haar)

Petrine: What an absolute fool.

-[Riven Bridge]-

Ranulf: Well, here we are! And there's the Daein army on the other side as expected! They're already in battle formation and waiting to give us a worm welcome. Aw, that's charming!

Ike: That's just what I want.

Ranulf: Oh ho! Well said. And by the way, I thought I'd join you today.

Ike: Not as a Gallian, but as part of our army, right?

Ranulf: If it's a problem, I can always sit this one out.

Ike: Of course not! Thanks for your continued support, Ranulf!

Ranulf: Ha! The pleasure's all mine! Let's go carve us some Daeins!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Haar: Attention... Let's...yaaawwnn...go. Hmm...maybe I can catch a nap while we fly...

(Haar/Wyverns leave the battlefield)

(Enter Haar/Wyverns)

Haar: ...Now then... Let's see how things look.

Jill: Captain Haar?

Haar: Greetings, Jill. So you're still alive, eh? Good to see.

Jill: That's what I was going to say to you! You survived! I'm very pleased.

Haar: General Shiharam left me in charge. I'm supposed to get our survivors and their families to Begnion. I can't die until that's done.

Jill: Oh, I see... But then... Captain, why are you still in Daein?

Haar: I... Believe it or not, I'm a vindictive man. Revenge for the general is something I couldn't let go.

Jill: Oh! But...that...

Haar: Don't get the wrong idea. You're not the enemy I'm seeking.

Jill: Huh? But...

Haar: The ones responsible for General Shiharam's death, are the Daeins. I pretended to return to the fold so I could get close to General Petrine ... I'm just waiting for my chance. But I think they may be on to me. My unit's a bunch of tough guys who serve as Petrine's watchdogs. Plus, I've been ordered to charge the Crimeans head-on. It's Daein's way of killing two birds with one stone.

Jill: Don't do it! Come fight by our sides! If you're looking to kill Daeins,

then we share the same goal!

Haar: Jill... I, um... I don't trust Crimea anymore than I do Daein. I'm sick to death of serving countries.

Jill: Captain...

Haar: Still... I can't abandon the daughter of the man to whom I owe so much ... Guess I'm changing sides again.

Jill: Really? Oh, thank you, Captain!

Haar: No, you've got that backwards.

Jill: Pardon?

Haar: I'm a new recruit... So I'm under you. Thanks in advance, Captain.

Jill: What? Don't be silly! Wait... Ah, Captain!!!

Lucia: Is that the Crimean army?

Bastian: What ho! It is the army come again! I see the Crimean flag in the rear... But lo! Who do I spy in the distance? Green hair...orange dress...and eyes bewitching fair... Elinia comes! Let us to her aid ride!

Lucia: The princess has returned! Count Bastian, return to the castle and inform Geoffrey at once. I will move ahead and inform the princess that her retainers are here to meet her.

Bastian: Lady Lucia, keep your wits about you. That we are excited is fair to say... But show the enemy no weaknesses, lest he does cut us down like autumn's wheat.

Lucia: Good advice. And you watch that you aren't waylaid on the way back to the castle.

Bastian: Even if Daein unleashes on myself the full force of their army's wrath... They are no match for clever Bastian! I'll meet you at the castle gate anon.

Lucia: Right!

Lucia: Are you ready to fight?! Are you ready to die?! We must give our all to protect Princess Elinia!

Soldier: My fellow Crimeans! Now is the time we stand and fight for the life of our homeland!

(Enter Crimeans)

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Petrine: Y-Your... Your Majesty... Forgive me...please... Oh, I don't want to die... So...scared...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Lucia: Princess Elincia! Welcome home! It's so good to see you safe!

Elincia: Lucia? Lucia! Is it really you?

Lucia: I am no spirit. See? Flesh and bone, through and through.

Elincia: Ah, Lucia! You have no idea how I've longed to see you.

Lucia: And I you, Princess Elincia. When my brother Geoffrey told me you had been lost, my world went dark. When I learned you were still alive... I was...so...

Elincia: Then Geoffrey is safe as well? Happy day! Are there others? How many Crimean retainers have survived?

Lucia: Well, there's Count Bastian. That silver-tongued rascal is as loquacious as ever. Also, General Tagio, Marquis Katol's orphan, Silok, and Marquis Mitnala are all with us. The soldiers we have contacted so far do not even number one hundred. But if they know you've returned, retainers hiding throughout the land will surely come pouring in.

Elincia: Yet, my existence... It is not known to the general populace...

Lucia: There's no need to worry about that! Tales of your exploits in Daein have reached every corner of Crimea. In every village, in every town, the people are talking. "Our fair king had a hidden child". they say. "The secret princess of Crimea is fighting to save us all!" In additon, Daein soldiers have been frantically searching for a mysterious and elusive "Princess Crimea". All they've succeeded in doing is convincing the people that you truly are their princess. All of Crimea has been anxiously awaiting your return.

Elincia: Oh, Lucia, do you speak truly? They have...acknowledged my existence? ...I never...expected this day...

Ranulf: News of your actions in Daein reached the ears of King Gallia through Nasir. I then told Lucia, who passed it to the citizenry. ...You know, the thought that Nasir is a traitor just doesn't feel right to me. I can't believe it.

Ike: You think I don't see that? Look at what we know about the medallion. We discovered it thanks to his hints. He's helped us throughout our entire journey. In that, at least, he was not false. Yet, if he will not speak, there is nothing I can do to save him.

Ranulf: Let's go see him. One way or another, I will loosen his tongue.

Ike: This way.

Ike: He's being kept in this supply tent. We wanted to keep him away from the other soldiers. Huh?

Ranulf: What is it?

Ike: He's... He's gone! I brought him breakfast this morning! He was here...

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Chapter 24: Battle Reunion

[024]
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Narration: The Crimean army defeats General Petrine, one of King Ashnard's feared Four Riders, and finally arrives home. The princess's return is met with the jubilation and tears of the retainers who have managed to survive. "As long as we have Princess Elincia, Crimea will be liberated." These are the words that gave the people hope as they endured the harsh rule of a conquering country. The silent masses, who long for the restoration of their homeland, slowly begin to give voice to their dream. Surely, they think, this chance to see Crimea freed will not be wasted.

-[Delbray Castle]-

Geoffrey: Can it be?

Bastian: There is no mistake in my words. The princess has returned to Crimea! Lady Lucia serves as her guide. They should be on their way here as we speak.

Geoffrey: How long it's been since we've seen the princess... We have been living for the day where we steal the eyes from Daein's army and bring her home. And now it has come.

Bastian: Indeed. For His Majesty, for the Queen, and...for Crown Prince Renning as well... We must act as one and support our beloved Princess Elincia.

Geoffrey: Yes. If all goes well...our dearest wish will soon come to fulfillment.

Bastian: There's no time to wait. If we wish to properly greet the princess and her retinue, there is much to be done.

Geoffrey: Right! Let's let everyone know! We must divide the tasks and begin preparations for a feast at once!

Bastian: And flowers must be prepared for the princess's chamber! Oh, we mustn't forget music and entertainment, either.

Geoffrey: I suppose I shall have to polish the silver tableware I was hiding, too.

Bastian: You? You possess such refined things? I figured a rustic boor like you would have sold them for a lamb shank.

Geoffrey: I received the silver from His Majesty when I was awarded my knighthood... I have been saving it for just such an occasion.

Bastian: Well done! Get ready! We are going to be very, very busy! Ha ha! What a fantastic day this will be!

Ike: The Crimean retainers are waiting for us at this Castle Delbray?

Lucia: Yes. In your absence, Princess, we used the cellars beneath the castle as a secret meeting place. It is from there that we contacted other retainers who were hiding throughout the land.

Ike: And no one was discovered?

Lucia: We disguised ourselves as merchants or peasants, and Daein looked right past us. Their arrogance is without equal... However, now that we've heard of your return, we are bringing out our hidden Crimean armor and polishing away!

(Exit Ike)

Elincia: Merchants? Ha! Geoffrey is one thing, but I cannot imagine Bastian as a shopkeeper.

Lucia: No one could. That's why he dressed as a street performer.

Elincia: Now that, I can see! I'm sure it suited him perfectly. Did he juggle and gambol about? Hee hee!!

Lucia: And Geoffrey... Never have you seen a merchant with such perfect posture!

Elincia: Hee hee hee! That sounds just like him.

Mist: Princess Elincia seems to be having a wonderful time. She's been smiling and laughing for hours.

Ranulf: It seems she and Lucia grew up together. She feels completely at ease around her.

Ike: The princess seemed to be of good cheer when she was with us as well, but ... I suppose she was putting on a brave face.

Titania: When I see her in this light, I'm reminded that she's still only a young woman. What we see now is the princess as she was before Daein's attack. That is the true Princess Elincia.

Ranulf: It's good to be home, isn't it? We've still many battles ahead, but for tonight, we should relax and let ourselves forget our cares. No one can continue under this much stress forever, right?

Ike: I suppose you're right.

(Soren Report)

-[Friend *]-

Marcia: Ah! Ike! There, hiding in the shadows of that tent! Grab him!

Ike: Huh? What?

(Enter Makalov)

Makalov: Hey! Ouch! Come on, you gotta let me go!

Marcia: Stop whining you little baby! Get over here! You spineless sop! You never learn, do you?

Ike: What's going on?

Marcia: Listen to this, Ike! While I was changing my clothes, my dear brother here tried stealing from my purse again!

Makalov: Don't do this here! You don't need to tell the whole camp about it, do you?

Marcia: Who's created this situation in the first place! And here I was thinking that you'd finally turned yourself around... Even as we speak, Mother is at home weeping in her soup! You chowderhead!

Makalov: Don't worry about Mom! Dad's there to take care of her.

Marcia: You brainless eunuch! Gaaaaaaa!!!

Makalov: M-Marcia! Ow! Ow! My foot! You're crushing it! I heard something crunch! Help! I'm being crippled!

Marcia: And no one cares!

Ike: All right, all right. I think that's enough.

Marcia: Hmph! It's one thing that you're a guppy-brained lout... But it's worse that you never, ever change! You're ALWAYS being chased by thugs, and I ALWAYS have to go looking for you. Do you have any idea how much I worry? Would it hurt you to think of others once in a while? You're my OLDER brother, remember?

Makalov: Marcia...

Ike: ...

Makalov: I'm sorry! I'll give up gambling. I'll work hard and repay all of my debts! Please, you've gotta believe me!

Marcia: ...

Ike: Why not forgive him? He's the only brother you've got, right?

Marcia: ...Well, if Ike insists...

Makalov: R-really? Do you forgive me?

Marcia: Only if you keep your word! This is the absolute last time!

Makalov: I swear! I swear on Dad's grave.

Marcia: Heh... That's not going to work, you twit! Dad's still alive.

Makalov: Made you laugh! 'Bout time, too.

Ike: Straighten up and don't trouble your sister anymore.

(Exit Ike)

Makalov: Say, Marcia?

Marcia: What is it, Makalov?

Makalov: You want to bet on how long I can keep my promise? I'll give you
four-to-one odds!

Marcia: AAAHHH!!!

-----[Exit Base]-----

-[Delbray Castle]-

Geoffrey: Today's the happy day the princess returns, yet the goddess sees fit
to bring rain...

Bastian: Calm rain is like a kiss upon the face. A scent and feel unparalleled
in kind. Reunions in the rain are most heartfelt.

Geoffrey: Say, Bastian... How far do you suppose the princess and her escort
have come? Why aren't they here yet?

Bastian: ...Sigh. Listen, friend. You have asked me that same question fifty-
eight times. And I have responded fifty-seven times. But now, fifty-
eight comes anon... You. Need. To. Calm. Yourself.

Geoffrey: I know, but--

Bastian: It's only a little while longer. Make no mistake, our princess will
arrive today. I understand your impatience, I really do. But you're
the general of our little army. If you act so, then men will react in
kind.

Geoffrey: You, you're right...

Bastian: A true knight is the essence of composure. Take a deep breath.
Breathe in...and out...

Geoffrey: ...Sigh... ...Woooooo...! ...Whew...

Bastian: See? Don't you feel better?

Geoffrey: ...Hmmm... Ah, blast! It's no good! I'm going to go...uh... Check on
...stuff!

(Exit Geoffrey)

Bastian: What am I supposed to do with him?

Geoffrey: They're here! I see them!

Bastian: What? Really?

Geoffrey: That's them, isn't it? The princess's army?

Bastian: Where? Show me where you're looking. Geoffrey, that's not the princess... Those are... Daein troops!

Geoffrey: What? No! Please tell me you're joking...

(Soldiers are shown surrounding the fort)

Lucia: Once we cross the hills, we'll be in Delbray territory. Count Bastian went ahead of us, so they should know of your return by now. Speaking of which...here he comes now! I suppose he couldn't wait any longer and came riding to meet you. How sweet.

Unknown: Princess Elincia! Lady Lucia!

Elincia: Bastian! There's no need for you to rush so! I'm coming in your direction anyway--

(Enter Bastian)

Bastian: We've been attacked! Castle Delbray is surrounded by enemy troops!

Elincia: No!

Lucia: It can't be...

Bastian: Geoffrey's acting as a decoy. You must continue on this road to the southwest.

Lucia: So the enemy's found us, eh? Nothing to do about it but change course. I'll lead you to another hiding place.

Elincia: Wh-what are you saying, Lucia? We must help Geoffrey! Bastian?

Lucia: Luck was not with us, Princess. We have no choice. We'll have to abandon our companions in Castle Delbray.

Elincia: No!! We will not!! Geoffrey and the others have survived so much already... I will not abandon them!

Lucia: Princess, please understand. If we could do so without danger to you, we would gladly risk our lives to go back.

Elincia: We cannot do this! Please, Lucia! We must go to the castle! ...Bastian! You must not do this thing!

Bastian: Geoffrey is a knight. In the name of our friend's honor, Princess, you must escape.

Elincia: No... No! They've survived this long! They're alive! NO!!!

Lucia: General Ike... We don't have much time. While we stand here squabbling,

Daein scouts may spot our position. Please move the army southwest on this road.

Ike: No.

Lucia: Pardon? What did you say?

Ike: We're going to the castle. If it's surrounded by Daein troops, we cut our way through and join the other knights. Understood?

Lucia: Weren't you listening? I said we had no choice but to leave them behind! They were lost to us the moment the enemy discovered and surrounded them!

Ike: They're not so lost that we can't take them back.

Lucia: You are the general of Crimea's army, are you not? ...Even if only for the moment? I would hope that you would act more in accordance with your responsibilities.

Ike: I didn't choose or ask to be general. I was put here by matters of time and circumstance. But, as a mercenary, I have a contract with Princess Elincia that's still in effect. That means she's my employer. And right now, my employer says she wants to go and save the people stuck in that castle. Is that correct, Elincia?

Elincia: Yes. I don't want... I don't want anyone else to be sacrificed.

Ike: So...we're going to help them. If you're so worried about the princess, I'll leave her here with you, and you can keep her safe.

Elincia: My lord Ike...

Geoffrey: Until the princess's army is out of sight, we must not let the enemy spot them! Do what you must to draw their attention!

Soldier: Yes, sir!

Ike: They're coming into view! Combat formations!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Rikard: These Crimean refugees are no easy meat. And there are more of them than I expected. Hmm...

Soldier: G-General Rikard! Enemy Reinforcements are approaching from the east!

Rikard: What?

Soldier: It appears to be troops from Princess Crimea's army!

Rikard: The army that brushed aside our troops in Daein and defeated General Petrine at the Riven Bridge? They're marching towards us? Fantastic! I was getting bored hunting stragglers. Let's smash all of these curs and wrap ourselves in glory.

Soldier: G-General Geoffrey! It's the Crimean army! Princess Elincia's army is headed this way!

Geoffrey: Fools! What are thinking, Bastian? Oh, Princess... It's not too late. Please take wing and flee!

Ike: Our goal is to rescue those knights near the castle! Attack!

Elincia: Lucia, Bastian... Are you sure you want to do this?

Bastian: The words of Ike ring yet on in my ears...

Lucia: We were so trapped by our own ideas that we were unable to sympathize with your feelings. I'm terribly sorry.

Elincia: Because the two of you think to put me above all else, you say you will sacrifice your lives for me. Yet... Even if I'm able to borrow of Ike's strength and win back Crimea... If the cost of that victory is the lives of the two of you, I shall never smile again. And joy? Never again would that emotion fill my heart...

Lucia: Princess Elincia...

Elincia: Please aid Ike and rescue Geoffrey and the others. Then return to me. Come back alive.

Bastian: For you, we would the world itself depart.

Lucia: We'll be back.

(Lucia/Bastian enter the battlefield)

-[North House]-

Woman: Oh, thank the goddess! The Crimean army has arrived. We who have suffered so much under Daein's rule will finally be free! We can put our faith in that, can't we? If there's anything we can do to help, we'll do it. Please, rescue our beloved Crimea.

-Receive "Savior"-

-[South House]-

Youth: You're part of the army that brought the princess, aren't you? Oh, you've done a great thing! I've been hiding this scroll so I could give it to you. Use it to drive Daein out of our homeland! You can do it!

-Receive "Nihil"-

(Enter Black Knight)

Black Knight: Is that the Crimean army? ...Where is Gawain's son? ...Ah...
He's much improved... He is his father's son after all. Contrary
to my initial estimation, he may prove to be worthy.

Ike: What? Him... It's him!

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Rikard: No matter one's proven deeds, ...one defeat unmans us all
... And so...it ends...

(End boss fight)

Black Knight: And yet another general of Daein is defeated... I wonder how
powerful you will become, army of Crimea. I look forward to our
next meeting...

-----[Battle End]-----

Elincia: My lord Ike!

Ike: Princess Elincia! So you came after all.

Elincia: Thanks to your words, both of my friends came to understand how vital
it was.

Ike: I don't understand the feelings of knights. But, I do understand how
important your former retainers are to you. And I also understand the
strong support with which they provide you. I'm happy we were able to
save them.

Elincia: As am I!

Ike: All right, shall we return? If I'm going to be fighting with them, I
should probably introduce myself.

Elincia: Wait, my lord Ike.

Ike: Yes?

Elincia: As you said, Lucia and the others are very important to me. They are
family. I may presume too much, but...well... My lord Ike, you and
the others are also irreplaceable to me, so... I ask for your
continued support!

Ike: Of course. It's an honor.

Geoffrey: Princess!

Elincia: Geoffrey!

Geoffrey: Princess... Ah, to behold you again... It's... It's...

Elincia: If you had lost your life today, this reunion would not be taking place. Geoffrey, do you hear me? Be careful!

Geoffrey: Yes, Princess. Lucia...told me of what occurred. Our country and princess now exist as one. It was never our intent to sacrifice your feelings for the sake of the nation. Please forgive us.

Bastian: But soft! What luck that we do feel fate's kiss? Anon, the clouds do part, the rains do stop. Heaven itself does sing and thus rejoice. At the return of our one true ruler! Oh, Princess... Until world's end, do you we vow to follow! We are planets of your fair blazing sun!

Lucia: No longer will we think of honor and dying in so cavalier a fashion. No matter the difficulties we face, we will choose the road that allows us to continue living at your side.

Elincia: Geoffrey, Bastian, Lucia... Thank you. Thank you. I am...so very happy. With you at my side, I want to retake the kingdom of Crimea. Please, lend me your strength.

Geoffrey: Of course!

Bastian: For our fair sun, we would this life forswear.

Lucia: To you, Princess Elincia, we three pledge our eternal loyalty.

Ike: Why appear now? Do you mean to tell me you purposely waited until the battle was over?

Black Knight: Hmph. I know how your mind works. I assumed you would attack the moment you saw me. But perhaps you've learned to judge the importance of time and place.

Ike: To a mercenary, nothing's more important than the contract between him and his employer.

Black Knight: Shall we call off our contest then? When you die here, you'll be in breach of contact after all.

Ike: That's not a problem. All I have to do is win... Ready yourself!

Black Knight: Hmph.

(Ike/Black Knight fight)

Black Knight: You're not as overly clumsy as I had feared. It is regrettable that your weapon is so poorly made.

Ike: Why do my attacks have no effect?

Black Knight: My armor is blessed by the goddess. Only weapons that are also blessed can so much as scratch it.

Ike: Grrr... So common weaponry is useless? Is that it?

Black Knight: You should not worry about such trivialities. You possess the sacred blade Ragnell, do you not?

Ike: Ah!

Black Knight: It is the counterpart to my blade, Alondite. Tell me you were not idiot enough to leave it in that place. You took it with you, did you not? Along with your father's corpse?

Ike: That...that sword? The one you threw to my father like an act of charity? The one he refused? That's Ragnell?

Black Knight: I claim victory today. When next we meet, bring Ragnell. Without the proper weapon, I grow bored.

Ike: ...

(Exit Black Knight)

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Chapter 25: Strange Lands
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[025]

Narration: Ike and company break the siege of Delbray Castle and join ranks with the Crimean retainers therein. The army grows to its largest size yet, and with the addition of the retainers, truly becomes the armed force of its name. In addition, their recent heroic acts finally move the conservative Gallians to dispatch much-needed reinforcements. The long-awaited warriors of Gallia march through the treacherous Marhaut mountain range, a series of jagged peaks that spread across southern Crimea. They then slip through the gaps in the Daein forces and move toward Crimea's army. "Gallia rises." This information emboldens Ike, and he marches the army at top speed to join their new allies.

-[Phoenicis Hall]-

Unknown: Leanne! I'm coming in.

Leanne: -Heron language-

(Enter Tibarn)

Tibarn: How are you feeling?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Tibarn: Ah, it is good to hear that you are well. Not surprising-- it is a beautiful day!

Leanne: -Heron language-

Tibarn: Yes, we hawks enjoy the smell of the sea as well. Then you are starting to feel more at home here? Good, good. And how is Lord

Lorazieh?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Tibarn: Hm... I had thought his condition might have improved. Well, let's hope for a brighter tomorrow.

Leanne: -Heron language-

Lotz: You can understand what the heron princess is saying, can't you, Your Majesty?

Tibarn: Hm? Yes. Well, some of it, at least. Oh, you weren't around when Reyson first got here, were you, Lotz? When he arrived, he was just like this. You'd never know it by how fluently he speaks our modern tongue, would you?

Lotz: Now that you mention it, he does use some funny words when he gets angry. But, the letter that just arrived is written in standard script, isn't it?

Tibarn: Over these twenty years, he's gained total mastery of... You...you read the letter, didn't you?!

Lotz: N-no, I just caught a glimpse of it in your hand. That's all. I'm sorry! Er... Your Majesty...

Tibarn: You little scamp...

Leanne: -Heron language-

Tibarn: Hm? Yes, that's right. It's a letter from Reyson. It appears the Crimean army has passed safely through Daein and is on its way to the homeland.

Leanne: -Heron language-

Tibarn: Yes, Reyson is fine, but... I wonder what happened. He doesn't give details, but he asks Phoenicis to send reinforcements.

Lotz: If Prince Reyson is asking for help, things must be fairly serious.

Tibarn: I'd like nothing better than to take wing immediately, but I can't leave Lord Lorazieh and Leanne here alone...

Leanne: -Heron language-

Tibarn: No, that won't work.

Leanne: -Heron language-

Tibarn: Don't try that look on me. There's no way I'm taking you with me.

Lotz: Yeah, that's crazy talk!

Leanne: -Heron language-

Tibarn: I suppose it's time to put my plan into action.

Lotz: What is it?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Tibarn: All right, I'm off to Gallia to get things settled. Lotz, I want you to watch over Leanne and help her pack.

Lotz: Yes, sir!

Leanne: -Heron language-

Lotz: Um, I... I don't have any idea what you're trying to say. Maybe I should talk louder...

Leanne: -Heron language-

Lotz: Um, DO YOU WANT ME... TO PUT THIS... IN THAT BAG??

Leanne: -Heron language-

Lotz: Got it! In it goes! I'm getting the hang of this. I'M PUTTING IT IN THE BAG!

Leanne: -Heron language-

Lotz: What? Is something wrong?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Lotz: What are you...? Over there? Behind me? WHAT? SOMEONE IS BEHIND ME??

(Lotz is hit by something)

Lotz: Gwaaaaa!!!

Leanne: -Heron language-

(Enter Black Knight)

Black Knight: If you want your father to be killed, then by all means keep screaming.

Leanne: -Heron language-

-[Crimea Castle]-

Ashnard: Ah! The prodigal son returns!

Black Knight: I have gained that which you requested.

Ashnard: Show me.

Black Knight: This way.

Ashnard: These heron royals all look alike, don't they? Perhaps it proves their bloodline, but it's unsettling how similar they are.

Black Knight: I believe you had one in your possession previously.

Ashnard: Yes, I tried to get her to free the dark god from the medallion, but all she did was get sick and die. Pah! They're ridiculously frail creatures. I should have just killed her in the first place and saved some time.

Black Knight: Might I suggest this one be treated with more care? Capturing her was not an easy task.

Ashnard: For you, it did take quite a long time... Didn't it?

Black Knight: Diverting the sharp eyes of the hawk king proved to be quite difficult. It required much planning and care.

Ashnard: Ha! Don't tell me it was difficult! I know you! I know you use that arcane powder to travel about at will.

Black Knight: The powder drains my strength. For that reason, I would rather not use it unless absolutely necessary.

Ashnard: You are an enigma, dark one. Everything you possess is fey and of unknown origin.

Black Knight: The armor I presented to you... Did you find it dissatisfactory?

Ashnard: No, it has my approval. My wyvern Rajaion, and this armor which renders any enemy attack impotent... Both are well suited to me. They both shine because they are mine! And now the medallion, and that galdr as well, both belong in my hands!

Black Knight: Will the revival of the dark god take place soon?

Ashnard: Let me see... The conditions aren't bad. But, how long will they continue... Har! It is no matter. As long as all my chess pieces are on the board, things will work out. Soon every knee will bow to Ashnard!

Tibarn: ...What is going on? What's happened here?

Lotz: M-my...king...

Tibarn: Lotz! Hold on!

Lotz: I'm...so...sorry.....the...princess.....

Tibarn: Who did this? Who was the craven dastard that did this to you?

Lotz: ...Knight...in...black armor... Gwaa...urrk!

Tibarn: Lotz! No! Curse you, Daein! This was evilly done! Well, if you think to play such a game, you'll not find me an easy mark!

(Soren Report)

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Boy **]-

Boy: Mister! 'Scuse me, mister! Are you guys gonna go into these mountains? There are lots of soldiers wearing black up there. Those guys...they killed my poppa and burned our village. That's why we went to the mountains in the first place. You're gonna go up there and take care of 'em, aren't you? Gonna make 'em pay? Please, mister, say that you are! My momma and my sister and me don't have anywhere else to go, and I wanna go back to the cabin my poppa built.

Ike: I understand. We're going to take care of those guys. You just stay here a bit longer. All right?

Boy: Yay! Go give 'em heck, mister! Oh, wait! Wait! I heard those guys talking about something, too! They said if anyone comes up the mountain single file, they'd get 'em all at once. It was something like that anyway.

Ike: Really? That's a lot of help. Thanks.

Boy: Good luck, mister!! Kill 'em all! Do it for my poppa!

-[Bastian *]-

Ike: Excuse me, do you have a moment?

Bastian: Forsooth! What ho! My eyes behold Sir Ike! Pray tell, what would you ask of me, good sir?

Ike: Um...well... I just wanted to chat. I try to speak with all the members of the army when I have a minute.

Bastian: I see! A fine idea that is, good sir. Some generals hope their soldiers all to be aloof, and ready always for the fight. If all goes well, sweet happiness abounds. But if the tides do turn, then anger grows. One wonders if he can lead men at all... I, too, am often plagued by such grim thoughts.

Ike: Uh...yeah. Listen, I--

Bastian: Yet you walk out among your men-at-arms; spin tales, tell jokes, and lead a willing ear. Huzzah, dear sir! Huzzah until the end! In truth, I did much fear your name at first. I swore to find the mettle of the man, and studied you with cautious, steady eye. I thought to find yourself a brutish rogue. A villain crafty in his fiendish plans! With status and great wealth his only goals. Had such been your own ethic and deceit, I would have taken measures sure and swift to see your person vanished in the night. Yet lo! What do I find before mine eyes? A man so noble, true, and without peer, as would beset the moon herself with lust!

Ike: ...

Bastian: General?

Ike: Zzz... Wha--? Huh? ...Er... Sorry about that. Must have dozed off. What were you saying? Something about the moon or...something?

Bastian: Commander, you are tired and unaware of how your body doth cry out for rest. If it would please you, I was of a mind to partake in a sweet and soothing draught. A beverage warm, and pleasant to the lips.

Ike: ...Um, if you're offering me a cup of tea in your tent, I'll accept. ...That IS what you're offering... Right? Oh, and I apologize in advance if I fall asleep again. I'm really tired.

Bastian: Your words do make my ears alive with joy! I shall regale you with a tale of two, and poems to ease the savage toll of war.

-[Man ***]-

Largo: Hey there, little man! I've got serious business with the general of this army. Take a message, will ya?

Ike: And you would be...?

Largo: The name's Largo, and I'm a world-class berserker!

Ike: World-class berserker... That's a rather dubious title.

Largo: What's this? You doubting my strength? I can pin a tiger with my bare hands! That's not just hot air either!

Ike: Dubious.

Largo: You think I'm fooling with you? Have your general hire me and then see for yourself! You can decide how much I'm worth after you see me in action. But let me tell you, if the gold's not good enough, pffft! I'm gone!

Ike: Huh? All of this sounds vaguely familiar... But at least you're confident.

Largo: Like I said. World-class berserker. Here, watch me bend this lance.
Rrrrrrrrrr!!!

Ike: ...

(Agree to hire him)

Ike: All right. You're in.

Largo: Yes! So, uh, how about taking me to meet the general?

Ike: I'm the general.

Largo: Wah? Bwaa ha ha ha ha haaaaa! That's good! You're a funny little guy! Bwaa ha ha ha haaaaa!! So, seriously. Where's the general's tent? Must be that big one there.

Ike: ...

Unknown: Largo?

(Enter Calill)

Largo: Hey! I thought I'd find you here, Calill! You're looking hot! Almost as hot as me! Bwaaa ha ha ha haaaaaa!

Calill: Did you come looking for little old me? Oh, how sad for you. My contract with this army isn't up for quite some time.

Largo: Yeah, I thought you'd say that. That's why I'm joining up, too!

Calill: What? Are you really going to hire Largo, General Ike?

Ike: That's the plan.

Largo: Huh? This little guy really is the general? Bwa ha ha ha! Don't I look like the biggest fool around? And I mean big! Rrrrrrr! Sorry if I offended you, little guy!

Calill: Oh... He's such a clown. But you made a good hire. After all, he's a world-class--

Ike: Berserker. Yeah, I heard.

Calill: He pinned a tiger with his bare hands! Two of them, actually. At the same time.

Largo: Bwa ha ha ha haaaaa! Yeah, that was awesome!

Ike: ...Definitely dubious...

-----[Exit Base]-----

Ike: Ranulf! Whereabouts if the Gallian army encamped?

Ranulf: Just over those mountains.

Ike: So we're finally going to join forces...

Ranulf: Reports say that King Ashnard is gathering his forces in the capital. The time to work together is certainly upon us.

(Enter Soren)

Soren: Ike! There's an enemy ambush waiting for us on that mountain.

Ike: Mmm... If we go around that mountain and avoid it, how much time will we lose?

Soren: A couple of days, at least.

Ike: In that case, we've no choice but to go through them, right?

Soren: Agreed.

Ranulf: Um, wait a second... Isn't this where there's usually some sort of discussion? Hello?

Soldier: The enemy approaches, sir.

Gromell: Listen up, men! Let them get as close as possible before pushing the rocks over the cliff. We must not let Crimea join forces with those sub-humans!

-[Marhaut Range]-

Titania: Commander, the foes are encamped on top of the rise. I wonder what sort of trap they have this time.

Ike: Those boulders didn't get up there all by themselves... Are they seriously going to roll them down on us?

Soren: At first glance, it seems a simplistic trap, but these narrow paths make avoiding the rocks impossible. I think they may be surprisingly effective.

Ike: So...

Ranulf: "We run up the mountain as quickly as possible and smash the enemy commander!" Right?

Ike: Right... How did you--

Ranulf: I know...genius.

Soren: Actually, that is the best plan. Try to avoid the boulders and reach the top as quickly as possible. Once there, defeat the general.

Ike: Right. Move out!

-----[Battle Start]-----

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Gromell: Heh heh...ha ha ha... Gather as many fools as you like ...your weakness cannot survive... No one on this earth can withstand the might...of our king... Ggghhhaaaa...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Ike: Is this the lot of them?

Ranulf: It looked like there were more of them from down there.

Soldier: Now we've got you! Eat rock! Heh...eat rock... I'm pretty clever...

Elincia: Eeeek!

Ike: Above us! Look out!

(Tibarn enters and kills the soldiers)

Tibarn: Need a hand?

Reyson: Tibarn! You came!

Tibarn: Well met, Reyson. And well met to the rest of you as well, warriors of Crimea.

Ike: How did you come to be here?

Tibarn: I thought I'd help you wipe out Daein.

Ike: That's good news for us, but has something happened? Why did you suddenly decide to help?

Reyson: I asked for his aid. We must defeat King Daein. To that end, the more powerful we are, the better. Yes?

Ike: So that's the story, is it?

Tibarn: It's true that Reyson requested my aid. However, that's not the only reason that I'm here.

Reyson: Hm? What is it?

Tibarn: In a moment. First, let us meet with the king of lions. He waits for us at the foot of the mountain.

Ike: Understood. Come on, everyone! Let's get off this peak and take a rest at the bottom.

Elincia: King Caineghis! It's an honor to see you again.

Caineghis: First, let me offer you my congratulations. You've made quite the triumphant return, Princess Elincia.

Elincia: Thank you. And allow me to express my gratitude for having the kingdom of Gallia fighting at our side. Your presence fills me with strength.

Caineghis: During this short interim, you've managed to turn the tide of the war. To be honest, I'm quite surprised.

Elincia: I didn't... I didn't come this far on my own. My lord Ike and his brave companions were with me. It was only with the support of many that I was able to return home.

Caineghis: Yes, my reports cover most of that. Everything that happened in Begnion, and in Daein as well.

Elincia: As to that... About Nasi--

(Enter Tibarn)

Tibarn: King Gallia! Princess Crimea! I apologize for interrupting the festivities, but there's something I must discuss with you. Would you gather over there?

Caineghis: This group contains the people who were at the heart of that last battle, correct?

Elincia: Yes, it is.

Tibarn: What about those two children? Surely they weren't involved.

Soren: ...Children?

Mist: Um...

Ike: This is Soren. He's my tactician. And this is my sister, Mist. Before we begin this war council, there's something I need to share with all of you ... It's a story that involves my parents as well. I've kept most of it from my sister, but I felt this would be a good chance for her to hear it, so I asked her to join us.

Tibarn: Understood. Go on.

Ike: It all begins when we meet Princess Elincia and escorted her into the forests of Gallia...

Ike: And that is everything I know.

Mist: F-Father...he... Is that how... Mom? That's...not true, is it?

Titania: Mist... Do you want to leave?

Mist: Um... No... I'm all right. I'm all right... I'm just a little confused.

Titania: Mist...

Ike: ...

Caineghis: That's the whole of it, eh?

Tibarn: So this wasn't ever just a dispute between Crimea and Daein... There was something else at play the entire time.

Elincia: What could King Ashnard's ultimate goal possibly be? He has risked everything, even surrendering his own country...

Caineghis: Twenty years ago, even before he became king, he tried to release the dark god from within the medallion. However, he was thwarted by the actions of Greil and Elena.

Ike: What manner of being is this dark god? What would happen if it were freed from its prison?

Caineghis: I fear the world would once again be beset by natural calamity-- much like it was 800 years ago. At that time, all the world, save Tellius, was drowned beneath the seas.

Elincia: That is a true story? I thought it nothing more than a fable...

Caineghis: We have living proof: Goldoa's King Deghinsea. He and two other heroes fought alongside the goddess herself to defeat the dark one.

Elincia: King Goldoa was one of the legendary heroes? But he's...still alive...

Tibarn: The Black Dragon King is a living fossil, and as stubborn as anything alive. He's been trying to control the rest of us for years, and he always says the same thing. "Do not fan the flames of strife." "As long as Lehran's medallion exists, you must never begin a war that engulfs the entire continent."

Soren: ..."Never begin a war"? It's possible... Perhaps there is more than one way for the dark god to gain its freedom.

Tibarn: Oh ho! Aren't you the clever one? That's just what the Black Dragon King says. Yet, the truth of that is unknown. There's a war going on right now, but the dark god's nowhere in sight, is it?

Soren: ...Could it be...? I think I may finally know Ashnard's intentions.

Ike: Really?

Soren: King Goldoa said that a conflict which engulfs the entire continent would free the dark god from the medallion. Let us assume that the war would have such an effect on the medallion no matter where it was...or who possessed it. And let's also assume that the king of Daein thinks this as well. I can hear him now... "Where is the tinder for the blaze I need?" The answer to this question proved to be an easy one. Yet he had to find a way to test his theory... So, he attacked neighboring Crimea. It had to be Crimea. Begnion was too big, too powerful. Daein would have lost. Crimea, however, is a country known more for its scholarship than its military strength. Daein probably felt that a surprise invasion would let them win while taking minimal casualties themselves. And they were right. Crimea was easy prey.

Elincia: ...

Soren: King Ramon was also friendly toward laguz... I imagine that this, too, influenced Daein's decision. If things went well, the conflict would be enough to engulf Crimea's ally, Gallia, and the fires would spread. First Crimea, then Gallia... And eventually Begnion as well. Daein's power would increase, and strife and discord would spread across the land, eventually reaching the lost medallion.

Ike: So you believe King Daein's goal is to awaken the dark god after all?

Soren: At the very least, it is one of his ambitions. There can be no mistaking that.

Caineghis: Which means that our plan to attack him at the capital fits right into his strategy, doesn't it? It's the trigger he needs to break the dark god's bonds.

Tibarn: Even if that's true, we can't stop now. This war's gone too far for that.

Ike: We have to smash Daein to end its menace once and for all. We bury every one of them and finish it.

Caineghis: Mmm... Agreed. That's the only plan that makes any sense.

Reyson: If only we had the medallion with us...

Titania: What is it, Reyson? Is there a way to avoid all of this?

Reyson: We, that is, the descendants of Lehran, we have a gift... Through the power of the slumber galdr, we have the ability to suppress the chaotic energies of the dark god in the medallion. So even if a massive battle occurred, if it were in my possession, I might be able to...

Mist: I'm so sorry! It's because of my carelessness that the medallion was lost in the first place!

Ike: Mist! I told you that it wasn't your fault, didn't I?

Mist: But--

Elincia: You were never careless, Mist. I know. You kept the medallion next to you at all times. You told me it was a keepsake of your mother's, and you always, always took good care of it. Didn't you? That's why it's not your fault. So please don't punish yourself anymore. All right?

Mist: Princess Elincia...

Ranulf: She's right. And besides, the dark god could be released no matter where the medallion is. So it's nothing to worry about.

Mist: Thank you, Ranulf.

Tibarn: All right... It's about time for you to hear what I have to say. Reyson!

Reyson: Yes?

Tibarn: I'm sorry.

Reyson: Huh? F-for what?

Tibarn: Leanne's been kidnapped. It may have been by Daein's hand.

Reyson: That...can't be...

Ike: Why would Leanne be taken? The release galdr can only be sung by the girl Altina. Right?

Reyson: But Ashnard doesn't know that.

Ike: Oh no...

Ranulf: What a mess... Nothing can ever be clear and simple, can it?

Tibarn: ...

Ike: ...

Narration: In a valley amidst the Marhaut Range, Ike and company are reunited with King Caineghis of Gallia. King Tibarn of Phoenicis also arrives, and brings with him a disturbing tale... His words serve notice: There is no time to waste. The final showdown with Ashnard is coming. Between the forces King Caineghis grants them before returning home and the soldiers King Tibarn brings, the Crimean army possesses three times the fighting power that it did when it left Begnion. Even so, the Daein forces encamped in the capital are strong, rested, and comparable in number. In addition, the road to the final confrontation is blocked by two formidable obstacles-- Fort Pinell and Nados Castle. How these two tests are faced will mightily affect the course of the war.

-[Crimea Castle]-

Ashnard: I see. So Crimea and Gallia have finally joined forces, have they? Half-breeds and humans fighting side by side... How sweet!

Black Knight: In addition, it seems the incident with the heron princess has brought more Phoenicians to the struggle as well.

Ashnard: Oh, the hawk king is getting involved, eh?

Black Knight: Which means that the Crimean army's strength of arms is all but equal to our own...and growing daily. Of course, this pathetic, ragged band is still no match for our superior leadership and skill.

Ashnard: Heh heh heh... Heeee hee hee hee! Things are getting interesting, are they not? But I am still unsatisfied. Divide our army into two battalions, and send one to meet the Crimeans.

Black Knight: And who...will be in charge of that battalion?

Ashnard: Bertram.

Black Knight: Bertram?

Ashnard: Does that bother you? Well then... Perhaps I should leave it to you and see what happens! Heee heee heee!

Black Knight: Do you believe I would betray you?

Ashnard: I believe your heart has considered it.

Black Knight: Surely you jest... I will divide our forces and see that they march to meet Crimea under Bertram's command. Is this satisfactory?

Ashnard: I leave it to you, good sir knight.

Black Knight: One other thing, Your Majesty. In my absence, did you order the death of Ena?

Ashnard: Ena? Ena...? Oh, yes, her. I'd forgotten about that one. I lost all interest in her when she failed to hold Daein's capital, you know?

I've no use for failures... Yes, yes, I remember it now. I ordered General Petrine to take care of her... Ha! Another failure under my command... I told Petrine that if the task was beyond her, capturing Ena would be enough.

Black Knight: I see.

Ashnard: Why do you ask?

Black Knight: According to one of General Petrine's men, they have indeed captured Ena. But, with the general's death, they're unsure what to do with her.

Ashnard: Heh heh. That was one of Petrine's better qualities. She always did follow orders. Well, what do you intend to do?

Black Knight: I wish to receive your instructions. Do you still wish to see her killed, or have you changed your mind?

Ashnard: Mmm. Do as you will. I care not. However! Do not bring her into my presence! When that one is near, Rajaion seems to grow restless.

Black Knight: As you wish.

Ike: Everyone seems to be here. Go ahead, Soren. You can begin now.

Soren: Very well.

-----[Map scene]-----

Soren: Please look at this map. The current position of our army is here in the Marhaut Range. Between us and the capital there are two large outposts of enemy troops-- Fort Pinell and Nados Castle.

Bastian: Both holds were built to guardian our fair land. But now Daein rules them both, and knows of us. With rations set, they could hold out a year. Say what you will of Daein and her foul plans. One must admire her skill in things of war.

Geoffrey: Come now, Bastian! Why would you praise our foe?

Bastian: I do but speak the mean of it, good sir. The truth is harsh, but lies would be worse still.

Lucia: Will you two please shut up? Please? Sheesh!

Geoffrey: ...

Ike: Pinell and Nados are fairly close to one another. I doubt they would expect us to attack both at once, but...

Titania: That seems to be a waste of our strength. And we don't want to get ambushed from the rear while attacking.

Soren: We cannot divide our army, but we could send a small force to attack the base with weaker defenses and keep it occupied. At the same time, the main army can focus on the other one and conquer it.

-----[Exit map scene]-----

Ike: I see... So which one has more soldiers?

Soren: That would be Fort Pinell.

Tibarn: Very well. Then the main army will lead an assault on Fort Pinell. Meanwhile, I'll take my army and a unit or so of Gallians and set out for Castle Nados. We'll launch an attack, and when they come out to meet us, we'll retreat. Then we'll attack again! It will keep them busy.

Ike: That should give us the time we need. We'll take care of our front by day's end... Let's go capture a fort!

Tibarn: It's settled then.

(Soren Report)

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Soldier **]-

Soldier: General, may I have a moment of your time?

Ike: Yes? What is it?

Soldier: I'd like your advice on something, sir. Let's say I was faced with an undefeatable enemy. In that case, what should I, as the weaker fighter, do? Should I try to avoid slowing down other better fighters and retreat? Or do I sacrifice myself and try to at least land a single blow on the opponent?

Ike: If it's an enemy general, or just someone that's far too strong for you, there's no need to get yourself killed. But I don't want you to simply run away, either. Study the enemy first, and see if retreating is your only option. I'd like you to do that much, at least.

Soldier: Study the enemy?

Ike: That's right. What type of fighter is he? What kind of weapon is he using? Things like that. If you can learn to do that, you can determine how best to engage your opponent.

Soldier: Those are the very core of combat fundamentals, aren't they? Oh, I'm a danged fool! It could be... I think all my troubles started because I wasn't paying enough attention to the basics! You've given me something to think about. And some hope, too. Thank you, sir! You're the smartest general ever!

Ike: Huh... What a brave little fella'.

-[Tibarn *]-

Ike: Are you leaving now?

Tibarn: Yep. We're going to do some reconnaissance and tease those Daeins a bit.

Ike: Good luck.

Tibarn: Pah! You don't need luck when you're as tough as me!

Reyson: Tibarn, about--

Tibarn: Reyson, no. I truly am sorry. Leanne's kidnapping is completely my fault.

Reyson: It's not your fault. Please don't apologize. I know Leanne is alive. These battlefields are filled with chaotic energy, but I can still sense her... It's faint, but I know it's Leanne.

Tibarn: Which is all the more reason for us to hurry. There may be other ways to finish this, but crushing Daein is the surest.

Reyson: Agreed.

Ike: Reyson, is this mysterious power that you use to sense Leanne something only herons possess?

Tibarn: It's not something any of the hawk clans have! That is a certainty!

Reyson: That's not true, Tibarn. The power may differ in potency between us, but all laguz possess it to some degree.

Tibarn: Ah, so it's just that my sense isn't developed, is that it?

Reyson: The power is distributed something like this... Among the bird tribes, it's very strong in the heron clan. Among the beast tribes, I've heard it's most developed in the cat clan, though not as strongly as in the herons. As for the dragon tribes... It's said they may be equal to, or even surpass, the strength of the herons.

Ike: Even though I knew that all laguz were not alike, there are even more differences than I'd imagined.

Tibarn: Your eyes should have told you that. Once we change, we don't look alike do we?

Ike: Good point.

Tibarn: Enough pleasantries. It's time for me and my men to take wing.

Ike: Right. See you later then.

Reyson: Tibarn, may the fortunes of war be with you.

Tibarn: And you as well. Don't try anything too dangerous.

(Exit Tibarn)

Reyson: ...

Ike: ...Reyson?

Reyson: My apologies, Ike. Though I knew this was coming... It's still...

difficult.

Ike: Don't apologize. You've nothing left to prove to me.

Reyson: ...Ah... ...

Ike: ...

-----[Exit Base]-----

Elincia: My lord Ike.

Ike: Princess Elincia... Huh? What's going on? Why are you dressed like that?

Elincia: I though to join you on the battle lines--

Ike: Is that a pegasus?! Where did you get that?

Elincia: He belonged to my great-grandmother. I'm a bit nervous about riding him, but I'm going to try nevertheless.

Ike: I appreciate your desire, but your retainers will never allow it. Will they?

Elincia: As for that...

Ike: Did you agree to this, Geoffrey?

Geoffrey: No, personally, I'm against it, but... She is the princess, and it is her wish. I can do nothing.

Lucia: The princess's great-grandmother was a Begnion pegasus knight of some renown before marrying into House Crimea. Princess Elincia herself is skilled at both riding and swordsmanship. As a child, she was granted permission to train in case the need for her to fight ever arose.

Bastian: Behold the pegasus and uniform! All treasures of our House Crimea fair. We did fear much that we would never see a chance to use them in their proper stead. Oh, muse of fire! I cannot find the words! Behold a light that dares to shame the sun! Our princess clad in raiments fair and fine, gives courage, love, and vigor to our cause.

Ike: I'm surprised you were able to hide armor and a flying horse from the Daein army.

Bastian: Ahem... Prince Renning foresaw a time when the princess would need them, and bade us convey them from the palace. Prince Renning's thoughts were always of the princess, even as his life abandoned him. "Be true to your heart, and live life as it dictates." Those were his final words to her.

Elincia: My lord uncle was always the one person who understood me best... Even though I'm dressed like this, I have no experience, and do not expect to fight as well as the rest of you. But...this constant waiting behind and doing nothing...it sets my heart beating with such unease I fear it may burst. Even if I cannot fight, I could use a staff to heal the wounded. If I could save just one soldier, it would mean so much to me. Please, my lord Ike. I promise to obey orders and stay out of harm's way as best I can.

Geoffrey: Lord Ike, we will take responsibility and guard the princess.

Lucia: It is her heartfelt wish...

Ike: This is not something that I can allow or disallow. She is my employer.
If this is what the princess wants, all I can do is comply. Be careful,
will you?

Elincia: Oh, thank you so much!

Bastian: Let us go forth like sunlight to the dawn. Elincia fights, and Crimea
wins the day!

Bertram: ...

-[Fort Pinell]-

Titania: Ike, there are more enemy soldiers than we expected. Just from what I
can see now, they are double our numbers.

Soren: And we must assume that the fort houses many more troops. This may
prove to be a long battle.

Ike: Even if they have twenty times our numbers, we must overcome them. In
this war, there can be no retreat!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Soldier: General Bertram! The Crimean army has risen to the bait! Orders, sir?

Bertram: ...

Soldier: ...Your orders, sir?

Bertram: ...

Soldier: General? Um... How shall we make answer?

Bertram: Turn the ground...sssoft with blood. Make a graveyard...of thissss
place. Bury them all.

Soldier: Y-yes, sir!

Ike: Soren, do you have any information on the enemy general?

Soren: Our intelligence reports say the commander of this army is Bertram, one
of Daein's Four Riders.

Ike: One of the Four Riders? So he's on par with that woman we fought earlier,
General Petrine?

Soren: ...That's not necessarily so. The name Four Riders is given to the four
persons of highest ability among the king's advisors.

Titania: So the members can change, is that it? Who are the current Four Riders?

Soren: First, there was General Petrine, whom we defeated at Riven Bridge. Then the man we face today, General Bertram. Next is General Bryce, who served the previous king. And finally, the enigmatic general known as the Black Knight. Those are the four.

Titania: This is the same Black Knight who murdered Commander Greil?

Soren: Of that, there appears to be little doubt.

Ike: ...

Titania: Tell us, Soren, do you have any more information on General Bertram?

Soren: I know not where he hails from. He appeared after the fall of Crimea and has quickly gained Ashnard's favor.

Titania: So he's a man of no mean ability.

Soren: Like the Black Knight, he always wears his armor and never shows his face unhelmed. Some say he's not even in his armor, but that it's inhabited by an ancient spectre or a demonic creature. It's all just superstition and rumor designed to heighten fear of the man.

Ike: It's not important. Once we cross swords, we'll know the truth. Then we can discover for ourselves if he's just a loudmouthed braggart or truly a monster. As long as our blades can wound him, I care not either way. Let's go!

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Bertram: ...Ga...aaa... Releasssse...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

(Enter Soldier)

Soldier: Sir, the enemy troops are fleeing! Shall we give chase?

Ike: No, let them run. We fought enough today. Get our men inside the fort and give everyone a break.

Soldier: Yes, sir!

-[Crimea Castle]-

Ashnard: I see. So Crimea's won another victory, have they? Heh heh heh. Heeeee heee heee! Well then, send the rest of our troops to Castle Nados as reinforcements. Put General Hafedd in charge and let him exchange blows with them.

Bryce: Yet, that would leave the capital protected by only the Imperial Guard.

Ashnard: You forget yourself, knight. I will be here as well. If they defeat Hafedd and make it all the way here, then they are worthy to cross swords with me.

Bryce: I would beg a question, Your Highness. Why do you divide our troops and give the enemy the advantage? It's as if you were--

Ashnard: As if I were...? What? Go on.

Bryce: It's as if you desire the Crimean army to continue winning and make its way here to you.

Ashnard: I'll not deny it.

Bryce: Are you saying...that you desire Daein's defeat?

Ashnard: No, I am not. If you think through it clearly, Daein will not lose. We had many plans when we started this war. We went through many scenarios, many predictions... But, as you know, our predictions have been completely overturned by this gang of rabble. Was that luck? Or was it the gap in skill between the individual soldiers? And if it is, aren't you interested in seeing how far they can come?

Bryce: I...do not understand.

(Exit Bryce)

Ashnard: Heh heh heh. Heeee heeee heee! Perfect!! Nothing raises my spirits like war! Come, Crimea! Let me be the one to consume your noble hearts!

=====
Chapter 27: Moment of Fate
=====

-----Part 1----- [271]-----

Narration: Of all the battles in the war so far, the contest for Fort Pinell is the fiercest to date. And from this horrific clash of weapons and wills, the Crimean army emerges bloodied and exhausted, yet victorious. The prize of Fort Pinell is no small thing, but it is the promise of additional reinforcements from Gallia-- and the large Begnion army encamped in Castle Daein-- that keeps the breath of hope alive in the soldiers' hearts. There is one other pivotal piece in Daein's defense of the former Crimean capital-- the severely undermanned Castle Nados. As the day's end draws near, Tibarn's small force of hawks and Gallians cease their attacks and return to camp headquarters.

Tibarn: Ah, well met. From the looks of things, the battle ended in our favor.

Ike: We claimed victory. Yet Daein had more troops than we expected, and it was a hard-fought battle.

Tibarn: I don't have the best news to report, either.

Ike: What is it?

Tibarn: As the day ended, we withdrew as planned. But as we were leaving, reinforcements began flooding in from the capital.

Ike: Mmm... That's a piece of ill news.

Tibarn: The men that were originally guarding the castle were nothing special, but... There was one who appeared mid battle and crushed an entire unit by himself. He was so much stronger than the others, it was as if a wolf had appeared in a kennel of blind, newborn pups.

Ike: What did he look like?

Tibarn: He was covered from toe to tip in black armor. That made it difficult to judge his size, but I think he was bigger than me. If my intuition's right, he is the villain you've all been talking about.

Ike: The Black Knight... He's in that castle!

(Soren Report)

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Titania **]-

Titania: Commander, can I speak to you for a moment?

Ike: What is it, Titania?

Titania: I have...something important to ask of you.

Ike: All right, what is it?

Titania: I want you to tell me...about the night Commander Greil was killed. I understand that it's difficult for you. However, I need to know. I have to. Just tell it once... It's all I ask. If you can't, I... His death will be something I'll never be able to face.

Ike: I feel I've done you a terrible disservice by not telling you earlier. It's just that... There was a lot I had to get clear in my own mind. I know I've kept you waiting.

Titania: So you'll tell me?

Ike: Yes. I think I've finally come to a point where I can face it.

Titania: All right. Whenever you're ready.

Ike: That night... I've already told you everything up to where I was on my way into the forest, right? At the head of the path, Father had told me to go back to the fort-- but I had a bad feeling and followed him anyway. When I entered the clearing, he and the Black Knight were already fighting. They seemed to be evenly matched at first. Then they exchanged a few more blows, and suddenly Father was sent flying. The spoke to each other for a moment, but... I was so far away, I couldn't hear what they said. Then the Black Knight threw a sword at Father's feet. I think he wanted Father to pick it up and use it.

Titania: ...

Ike: But Father didn't touch the sword. He just readied his axe again and charged.It was over in an instant. I... I couldn't believe my own eyes. They...they looked like they were embracing... Just... Standing there. Frozen. But, I saw the Black Knight's blade... It was protruding from Father's back, and shining in the moonlight.

Titania: Oh, Greil...

Ike: When the knight pulled his sword out, Father sagged and fell backwards... I ran and tried to catch him, but I couldn't hold him, and we both fell to the ground. The wound Father had taken was terrible, but at that point, he was still alive.

Titania: ...

Ike: The Black Knight approached and said, "Give it to me." I had no idea what he was talking about. I do now, though. He had been sent by King Ashnard to retrieve the medallion. Father told him he'd thrown the medallion away, but the knight didn't believe him. Then he tried to get Father to talk by threatening to kill me...and Mist. I was so angry, I leapt up and attacked him, but it was useless. I didn't give up, though. I didn't care what happened to me, and I attacked again.

Titania: Of all the stubbornness...

Ike: If King Gallia hadn't been nearby, I probably would have died that night, too.

Titania: ...

Ike: After the Black Knight vanished, I simply... All I could think was that I didn't want Father to die. He... He was still alive. I thought if I could just get him back to the fort, we could save him. I clung to that...false hope...and started walking toward the light of the fort... I just kept walking...

Titania: ...Thank you, Ike. It must have been so hard for you.

Ike: Titania...

Titania: Commander Greil died on your back. His last moments must have been... much happier than I had imagined... ..Thank you... Now I can finally ...move past my grief...

Ike: ...Titania.

Titania: Yes?

Ike: I, um... There's something else I haven't told you about.

Titania: ...

Ike: I...met him... I met the Black Knight again.

Titania: What?

Ike: We fought.

Titania: You did well to keep your life.

Ike: I'm not the same boy I was on that night. I've grown a lot. I've worked hard. Yet, even so, I wasn't able to defeat him.

Titania: There's nothing you can do about that. Not even Commander Greil could defeat him. You're not ready to--

Ike: It's not that. It's not that my blade work wasn't good enough.

Titania: Then, what do you mean?

Ike: Titania, it's his armor. It's impervious to damage.

Titania: What? That's not possible. Even the strongest--

Ike: He said his armor had been blessed by the goddess. He said only weapons that were also blessed could hurt him.

Titania: Where are we supposed to get something like that?

Ike: I have one here.

Titania: Ah! Ike! That sword... Where...

Ike: The night after Father died, I went back to that clearing by myself. I'd hoped to... I'd hoped to find some clues that might help me hunt down the knight. The sword was still there. I brought it back with me, and I've been hiding it ever since. I wasn't thinking about using it. I believed that if I just carried the sword with me, I'd meet the Black Knight again. And it worked.

Titania: So this sword will work against him?

Ike: It's supposed to. It was made to contest Alondite, which is the sword wielded by the Black Knight.

Titania: Do you think you have a chance?

Ike: ...I'll win.

Titania: All right. I won't stop you. Use that sword to avenge Commander Greil. But listen, Ike... You must promise me one thing.

Ike: What is it?

Titania: When you meet him, you'll exchange blows. If, at that moment, you don't feel you stand a chance...you must flee. There are times when running away is not the same as losing.

Ike: Don't you believe in me, Titania?

Titania: Of course I do. One day, you will defeat the Black Knight. I'm sure of it. That's why I don't want you to lose your life on the first go-around. When the time comes, I promise not to interfere. And I won't let anyone else interfere, either. I want you to face him, one-on-one. And I want you to be calm and use your own best judgment. At times, withdrawing can be the key that unlocks a future victory. Don't forget that.

Ike: ...Understood.

-----[Exit Base]-----

Bastian: General Ike! Please come with me. We're getting ready to have a war council and discuss tomorrow's battle.

Titania: So the Black Knight's in that castle, is he?

Ike: There's little doubt of it.

Ranulf: That beorc's a real handful. Even when I attacked him in cat form, I barely scratched him!

Ike: It's his armor. It's apparently blessed by the goddess. Ordinary weapons, natural or no, can't damage it.

Ranulf: Oh, that's just swell. So how are we supposed to defeat him? Angry looks?

Ike: Leave that to me. I've got a sword that should be effective against him...

Tibarn: I don't like it, but I suppose there's no choice. We don't use weapons or shields. Those are beorc tools for beorc alone.

Bastian: Very well, if the villain in question appears, we'll leave him to General Ike. Now then, shall we determine who among us storms the castle?

(Enter Mist)

Mist: Ike... Can I talk to you?

Ike: Now right now, Mist. We're discussing battle strategy.

Mist: I know that. Even so... Please? It'll only take a moment.

Ike: Mist... I promise I'll make time later. Be patient and wait quietly.

Elincia: ...Ah...um...

Bastian: What is it, O beauteous one?

Elincia: I feel...a bit dizzy. May I rest a moment?

Bastian: Oh, what foul deed is this that rears its head? The gods of war do charge a heavy toll. Bewitch us, and attack our very minds! The princess, she is faint and o'er tired. Forgive your humble servant this trespass. Hark, my dear, and bless me with your arm. Good folk, we shall retire for a spell.

Geoffrey: Of course. Princess, please rest and allow us to proceed with these preparations.

Elincia: Th-thank you. I'm sorry.

Ike: What is it?

Mist: ...Mmm...

Ike: Come on, Mist. You realize the princess was making time for you to talk with me, don't you?

Mist: ...Well, um... I thought I could talk to you later, but then I changed my mind and wanted to talk to you now.

Ike: I've been hoping to talk to you, too. I haven't heard very much from you since the other day.

Mist: Yeah... I'm sorry. When you told us that story... I was so shocked... That's why.

Ike: The part about Mother's death...and about Father, right?

Mist: Uh-huh.

Ike: That's only natural. So, you have come to some kind of understanding with it all? Is that it?

Mist: At first, I couldn't believe it. The stuff about the medallion and the revival of the dark god and all of that? None of it... None of it sounded real. And everything about Father... That was even more unbelievable. It was all I could think about. But... But I didn't want to think about it anymore. It made my head hurt. I didn't know what to do. I couldn't even sleep. I would just lie awake at night and stare at the tent walls.

Ike: Yeah, I was the same way.

Mist: I guess my body finally reached its limit. Last night, I fell asleep. And when I woke up this morning... I don't know. It was all gone. I only had one emotion left.

Ike: One emotion? What was it?

Mist: It's hard to say... Sympathy, I suppose.

Ike: For Mother?

Mist: Uh-huh. And for Father. I think more for him than anyone else... Father and Mother were in love, weren't they? And then the medallion, it made Father go...what did you say? Berserk? When he returned to himself, he found Mother... When, when Father died, it hurt so much... I thought I was going to die. Father must have felt the same. No, he must have felt even worse.

Ike: I think you're right. And Father kept it all to himself, too. Mother, the medallion, being hunted... He never said a word to us. It was his burden alone.

Mist: The man who killed Father was that knight we saw in Port Toha. Right? The one in the black armor?

Ike: Yes.

Mist: You're going to fight him, aren't you. For Father.

Ike: Yes, I am. That's one thing I won't let anyone else do in my stead.

Mist: Trying to stop you is pointless. I know. If I were stronger, if I were a swordfighter, I'd be doing the same thing.

Ike: Mist...

Mist: But...you must keep your promise. You promised to lead the company in Father's place, and to protect me. If you go and get yourself killed, I'll never forgive you.

Ike: I understand. That's why I'm not going to lose!

Mist: ...I know!

Bastian: How are you feeling, Princess?

Elincia: Um... It was a lie. I'm not feeling unwell at all. I'm sorry I fooled you.

Bastian: Ah, I knew it all along. It was all for Ike and Mist, was it not? It would appear, my dear Princess, that you care for them greatly.

Elincia: I witnessed the death of both my father and mother... Soldiers fell one after the other... And then I... I was separated from Geoffrey... It was Ike and his friends who rescued me. If not for them, I... I'm sure I would be dead now. My lord Ike and Mist, too, know the pain that I carry with me. The pain of losing one's parents in war. That may account for why the two of them, right from the beginning, were so warm and friendly. They gave me the support I needed to survive. Mist and I have continuously encouraged each other to go on. So...

Bastian: They rescued you and are your patrons. There are those among the soldiers who complain in jealousy of Ike's station, but... It is a trivial matter. We, the retainers of House Crimea, find this general very much to our liking.

Elincia: ...Ah, Bastian. I'm pleased to hear it.

Bastian: Enough plain speaking! I must ready my silver tongue anew! Shall we return to the council?

Elincia: Yes.

-[Nados Castle]-

Hafedd: Sir Knight. The Crimean army will renew their assault of the castle momentarily. The troops we face are not the half-breeds we fought yesterday. It is the army that bested General Bertram. They are not what one would call an easy opponent.

Black Knight: Hmph. Resolve it.

Hafedd: I beg your pardon?

Black Knight: Hafedd, you are in command. The castle defenses are on your shoulders. I have business with General Ena.

Hafedd: Understood.

(Exit Black Knight)

Ike: Is everyone ready? The castle's strength has been bolstered with reinforcements from the capital. We must strike now, before any more can arrive. If the Black Knight appears, don't try to engage him. He is mine. I will take care of him!

-----[Battle Start]-----

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Hafedd: It appears...this is the end... Gwaaa... Hurrrkkk...
Aaahhhh...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Ike: The one I seek is behind these doors. Don't follow me. I'm going in alone.

(Exit Ike)

Soren: Ike! Wait! I'm going with--

Titania: No, Soren. We have to let Ike go alone. The Black Knight is his. Defeating him is a crucial step that Ike must take in order to truly get over the death of his father.

Soren: Idiocy! I'll hear no more of this naive nonsense! What if something happens to him? What then?

Titania: I think Ike has gained the composure to keep calm and judge whether or not he can match an opponent. If, in fact, he can't...it means he's reached his full potential, and that's all there is to him. We just have to accept that. But I believe in Ike. I trust him. His life is not his alone any longer. I don't believe he's so irresponsible as to leave his companions behind by choosing to engage in a contest he cannot win. Please, Soren, you must feel the same way. Don't you?

Soren: ...I don't like it. Sometimes, bravery and good judgment aren't enough.

Titania: Commander Greil... Watch over your son.

-----Part 2[a]-----[27a]-----

-[Throne Room]-

Black Knight: Why did you return to Crimea? You had the perfect opportunity to escape.

Ena: ...I'm going to the capital.

Black Knight: No. You are not. The king has ordered me to put an end to you.

Ena: I thought as much... So be it. I am prepared.

Black Knight: Will you not resist?

Ena: I do not believe I could prevail against one of your power.

Black Knight: How extremely frank.

Ena: My only wish was to be beside the one I love. If that is not to be, then it matters not what happens to me.

Black Knight: As my last act of compassion, I shall make your end a swift and merciful one. Do you have any final words?

Ena: ...If you see Nasir, tell him that Ena was sorry.

Black Knight: If I have the opportunity, I will so tell him. Rest in peace.

(Ena is hit/Ike enters)

Ena: ...My...love...

(Ena collapses)

Ike: Turn and face me, Black Knight!

Black Knight: Hmph. I've been waiting for you, child.

Ike: Ah! Did you kill that girl?

Black Knight: Despite my promise, the blow was not clean. She breathes still.

Ike: I'll take her.

Black Knight: You'll have to do so by force. You brought the sacred sword Ragnell, did you not?

Ike: It's right here. If using it is the only condition I need fulfill to defeat you, I will not hesitate!

Black Knight: It appears you've grown smarter. Good. There is no challenge in killing a fool. Shall we begin?

(Enter Mist)

Mist: Brother!

Ike: Mist? No! Stay back!

Mist: I... I will fight you! I'll never let you kill my brother!

Ike: Mist, you--

Black Knight: Gawain's daughter, eh? Good. Now I can pull out the entire family tree by the root.

Ike: You're not to interfere, Mist! This craven wretch is mine!

Black Knight: Hmph! Do as you will. This time, we begin in earnest!

-----[Battle Start]-----

-[Boss fight]-

Black Knight: What an odd fate. This will be the third time I have defeated you. The first was in the forest of Gallia. The second at Delbray in Crimea.

Ike: We've met twice, and I've lost twice. But the third time will be different.

Black Knight: Oh?

Ike: My sword-fighting skills were given to me by my father. If I stay true to them, I cannot lose.

Black Knight: Did you never think that using your father's techniques on the man who killed him would be futile?

Ike: My father robbed himself of using his stronger arm. If he had, he would not have lost to the likes of you.

Black Knight: Hah... You think so? Let us test your stronger arm then. Come, son of Gawain... Show me your strength.

(End boss fight)

(Enter Soldiers)

Soldier: Protect the Black Knight!

Black Knight: Do not interfere! This man is my prey! I need no assistance.

Soldier: Oh! Then...uh... Hey, get that girl! Kill her before she flees!

Ike: Get out of here, Mist!

Mist: No!! I'm not leaving you! I can protect myself. I won't run away!

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Black Knight: You've grown stronger... I...commend you...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Ike: Haaaah... Haaaaa...

Soldier: Th-the Black Knight's fallen! How can this be? D-don't... Don't think you're going to walk out of here, though! Now! Activate the traps

now!

(The room starts to shake)

Ike: What's going on? This rumbling...

(Enter Nasir)

Nasir: Ike! The castle's collapsing!! Get out now!

(Ena gets up)

Ena:Nasir?

Nasir: Ena!

Ike: Mist, we have to go!

Mist: A-all right...

Ike: Hurry!

(The four of them exit the castle)

Ike: ...Father... ..I...finally... I stopped him...Father...

Mist: B-Brother! Thank goodness... I'm so happy you're alive!

Ike: Mist... I avenged Father.

Mist: I know.

Ike: Even now, though, I'm not as good as Father was. There's no way I could ever defeat him... Defeating the Black Knight was my way... I wanted to show him how strong Father really was.

Mist: I know, Ike. I know.

Ike: Our Father was the best in the world... A great man.

Mist: That's right! Dad was great...and so was Mom... And so are you, Brother. I love you all! I'm so proud of my fantastic, wonderful family!

Titania: Ike! Mist! Both of you... You did so well...

Soren: ...

Ike: I really had you worried, didn't I? But now it's--

Titania: Don't say anything. I understand.

Ike: Let's get back to the others... I can't do anything else today.

Mist: Right!

Ike: How's she doing?

Titania: She's going to be all right. She's sleeping in the back.

Ike: And Nasir?

Titania: He's there with her. He's been taking care of her the entire time.

Ike: I see.

Ike: Nasir.

Nasir: Ike. I am sorry for escaping and...causing all the problems I did. When we arrived in Crimea, I sensed Ena... I had to go and look for her.

Ike: Is that so?

Nasir: You...you saved her, didn't you? I don't know how to thank you.

Ike: I'm not worried about it. I just want you to talk to me. What's the connection between you and Ena?

Nasir: Ena...is my only granddaughter.

Ike: Your granddaughter? That can't be. You're not old enough to...

Nasir: It may be difficult for you beorc to believe, but... We of the dragon tribe live for a very, very long time. When we reach a certain maturity, we stop showing almost all signs of further aging. For example, do you remember Prince Kurthnaga whom you met in Goldoa?

Ike: Yeah, he was a nice kid.

Nasir: The prince is the youngest in all of Goldoa, yet for all his apparent youth, he's at least a hundred years old.

Ike: A hundred...

Nasir: Ike...

Ike: Yes?

Nasir: Why did you save Ena? She was your foe, after all...

Ike: You were willing to put yourself in danger so she could escape. I assumed she must be dear to you.

Nasir: You did that for a dirty traitor? Under the guise of providing information to Gallia, I gave the same information to Daein. I also took Mist's medallion and gave it to King Ashnard... And even so, you...

Ike: You helped us many times over. If there are reasons for all this, would you tell me about them? I'd like to help.

Nasir: I cannot. At least not yet...

Ike: That's not the answer I wanted, Nasir.

Nasir: Please. I want you to believe me. I am not your enemy. King Daein had Ena with him. For her sake, there was nothing else I could do. Forgive me.

Ike: Tell me, are you willing to display your loyalty?

Nasir: What do you mean?

Ike: Ashnard is in the Crimean capital. If we hope to defeat him, it would help to have the cooperation of one who's been close to him. If you're not our enemy, then prove it by aiding us.

Nasir: All right, I understand. On the strength of your belief in me, I swear I will not betray you again.

Ike: There's one other thing I need to hear. How much do you know about the medallion? Did you realize what it was when you gave it to Ashnard?

Nasir: I'm fairly sure that I know more about it than you do. I can't go into details, but... Merely gaining possession of the idol does not allow King Daein to release the dark god. The reason for that is--

Ike: The only one who can sing the galdr of release is a girl named Altina. Right?

Nasir: That's correct. I, too, investigated Palmeni Temple.

Ike: Yet King Daein doesn't know that, and he's kidnapped Leanne. Based on what happened in the past, who knows what he may do...

Nasir: Earlier, I was able to speak briefly with Ena. It sounded like she knew where the heron princess is being held. When she awakes, we shall ask her about it.

-----Part 2[b]-----[27b]-----

-[Throne Room]-

Black Knight: Why did you return to Crimea? You had the perfect opportunity to escape.

Ena: ...I'm going to the capital.

Black Knight: No. You are not. The king has ordered me to put an end to you.

Ena: I thought as much... So be it. I am prepared.

Black Knight: Will you not resist?

Ena: I do not believe I could prevail against one of your power.

Black Knight: How extremely frank.

Ena: My only wish was to be beside the one I love. If that is not to be, then it matters not what happens to me.

Black Knight: As my last act of compassion, I shall make your end a swift and

merciful one. Do you have any final words?

Ena: ...If you see Nasir, tell him that Ena was sorry.

Black Knight: If I have the opportunity, I will so tell him. Rest in peace.

(Ena is hit/Ike enters)

Ena: ...My...love...

(Ena collapses)

Ike: Turn and face me, Black Knight!

Black Knight: Hmph. I've been waiting for you, child.

Ike: Ah! Did you kill that girl?

Black Knight: Despite my promise, the blow was not clean. She breathes still.

Ike: I'll take her.

Black Knight: You'll have to do so by force. You brought the sacred sword Ragnell, did you not?

Ike: It's right here. If using it is the only condition I need fulfill to defeat you, I will not hesitate!

Black Knight: It appears you've grown smarter. Good. There is no challenge in killing a fool. Shall we begin?

(Enter Mist)

Mist: Brother!

Ike: Mist? No! Stay back!

Mist: I... I will fight you! I'll never let you kill my brother!

Ike: Mist, you--

Black Knight: Gawain's daughter, eh? Good. Now I can pull out the entire family tree by the root.

Ike: You're not to interfere, Mist! This craven wretch is mine!

Black Knight: Hmph! Do as you will. This time, we begin in earnest!

-----[Battle Start]-----

-[Boss fight]-

Black Knight: What an odd fate. This will be the third time I have defeated you. The first was in the forest of Gallia. The second at Delbray in Crimea.

Ike: We've met twice, and I've lost twice. But the third time will be different.

Black Knight: Oh?

Ike: My sword-fighting skills were given to me by my father. If I stay true to them, I cannot lose.

Black Knight: Did you never think that using your father's techniques on the man who killed him would be futile?

Ike: My father robbed himself of using his stronger arm. If he had, he would not have lost to the likes of you.

Black Knight: Hah... You think so? Let us test your stronger arm then. Come, son of Gawain... Show me your strength.

(End boss fight)

(Enter Soldiers)

Soldier: Protect the Black Knight!

Black Knight: Do not interfere! This man is my prey! I need no assistance.

Soldier: Oh! Then...uh... Hey, get that girl! Kill her before she flees!

Ike: Get out of here, Mist!

Mist: No!! I'm not leaving you! I can protect myself. I won't run away!

-----[Battle End]-----

(Enter Nasir)

Nasir: Ike!

Ike: Is that you, Nasir? What are you doing here?

Nasir: Ike, I'll take over from here. Hurry and leave this place.

Ike: You know I can't do that. Besides, the Black Knight can't be defeated-- not without this blade.

Nasir: Ike, I cannot allow you to die here. Please...take care of the girl, Ena.

Black Knight: Nasir... I didn't expect to see you here. What a fool.

(Ena gets up)

Ena: ...Aahh... ...Ah! Nasir!

(Nasir/Black Knight fight)

Black Knight: Uargh... Yet, that's not nearly enough...

(The room starts to shake)

Black Knight: What's this? It can't be...this entire castle... I... Ungh! I-I can't move! This c-can't be...happening...

Nasir: ...Ike. Now's your chance... Take...Ena. Take care of Ena!

Ike: Nasir!

Ena: Nasir...

Titania: Ike. She's awake.

Ike: Good.

(Enter Ena)

Ike: How are you feeling?

Ena: Where am I?

Ike: In our camp.

Ena: ...You saved me, didn't you? Why?

Ike: Because Nasir asked me to.

Ena: What? Where is he? I... I must speak to him!

Ike: Nasir is dead...

Ena: What?

Ike: He protected me and engaged the Black Knight. The castle fell around them both...

Ena: Is that...so... So, it wasn't a dream... ...

Ike: Just who...who were you to him? Why were you serving King Daein?

Ena: I am Ena... He... Nasir was my grandfather.

Ike: You're Nasir's granddaughter?

Ena: It seems impossible for beorc to believe it, but we of the dragon tribe live for thousands of years. Once we reach a certain maturity, we show no further outward signs of aging.

Ike: A thousand years... I can't begin to imagine.

Ena: And...um...about Nasir... You must be aware that he betrayed you. And yet you saved me. I, who had once been your enemy. Why?

Ike: Nasir helped us time and time again. No matter what, I couldn't see him as a true enemy. If there are reasons for all this, would you tell me about them? I'd like to help. In Nasir's stead.

Ena: I... I can't tell you now.

Ike: That's not the answer I was hoping for.

Ena: However, in payment of my debt to you, I can provide information. I will tell you where the heron princess is being held.

Ike: Ah. That's a good start.

Chapter 28: Twisted Tower[a]

[28a]

Narration: Ike has avenged his father by defeating the Black Knight in single combat. That night, he sleeps until well past dawn. It is the first time since Greil's death that he has done so. The Crimean army and its laguz allies have passed the trial of Nados Castle. At last, they've arrived at their final destination: the Crimean capital. Yet the opponent that awaits them is none other than Ashnard, king of Daein. If they lose here, all of their hardships will have been for naught. Preparations for the attack proceed with the utmost care. The final battle is approaching. An air of exaltation pervades the camp, but Ike remains focused on the road ahead, readying himself for what is to come.

Nasir: It appears that Leanne is being held in Gritnea Tower, to the south.
That's right, isn't it, Ena?

Ena: Yes. That is correct.

Ike: How do you know that?

Ena: I was searching for information, and that search led me to a troop of Daein soldiers that had been assigned to the tower. It was the extra knowledge I needed.

Ike: You won't tell me any more than that, will you? No matter how important it might be to our upcoming fight.

Ena: ...

Nasir: ...I beg your pardon.

Ike: I figured as much. I've already decided to trust you, so all that's left to do is move out.

Ike: Titania! Soren! At daybreak, I'll be taking a small force south to Gritnea Tower.

Titania: For what purpose?

Ike: That's where they're holding Leanne.

Reyson: Are you certain?

Ike: Fairly certain, yes.

Tibarn: All right, then I'll go with you.

Reyson: As will I.

Ike: Of course.

Soren: And the main army? Have you thought about what it will do?

Ike: Yes, I have. Princess Elincia, may I count on you?

Elincia: Naturally. I will remain here and see to it that preparations for storming the capital continue as planned. However, you must promise to return. And to bring my lady Leanne with you.

Ike: I hear you.

(Soren Report)

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Holy Knight ***]-

Tanith: Well done! You've improved dramatically in a very short period of time.

Elincia: Do you think so?

Tanith: I do not know how to lie or offer false praise. I am deputy commander of the apostle's bodyguards. If you were not destined for greater things, I would petition the apostle herself for your enlistment.

Elincia: Oh, thank you! I can't believe it myself. If not for your instruction, Tanith... This would not be possible.

Tanith: Training new recruits has long been my duty. And yet... I believe this is the first time anyone has been so appreciative. My other pupils commonly referred to me as the Great Demon. Isn't that so, Marcia?

Marcia: Great Demon? Mutton chops, no! D-don't be silly! We all adored our sincere and devoted deputy commander. Great Demon. Pfff! More like Great...uh...Angel...Lady...

Tanith: Ha! Sure. Seriously though, you've improved so much, Princess... Perhaps we should try something special...

Marcia: What? N-not that! She's not ready for that! You're crazy!

Elincia: Tanith, I... I'm not sure that I'm ready...

Tanith: Listen to me, Princess. The foes we are facing are Daein's elite troops, led by King Ashnard himself. How do you expect to fight them without at least one killing attack under your belt?

Elincia: ...

Marcia: You do it, Deputy Commander, and we'll keep practicing. Right, Princess Elincia?

Elincia: I... I will try it.

Marcia: Whaaaaat?!

Elincia: I want...to grow stronger. To reach that goal, I will do whatever it takes.

Tanith: Well spoken! Now then...to match your desire, I will fall back on the methods I used while training the apostle's bodyguards.

Elincia: All...right...

Marcia: Oh, horsemeat...

Tanith: Come, we have little time for niceties. Both of you, follow me! Now!!!
Come on, maggots, do you want to live forever?!!!

Elincia: Y-yes, ma'am!

Marcia: Ugh... She really is a demon.

(Ike is listening off to the side)

Ike: Hmm... The three of them look...busy... I think I'll wait until later to talk to them.

-----[Exit Base]-----

-[Gritnea Tower]-

Leanne: -Heron language-

Izuka: Whee hee hee! It appears that she's finally coming around! We brought this girl here on direct orders from His Majesty. Simple stuff, yes? Very easy, very nice. Then he gives all these special commands! Don't let her escape. Don't let her get sick. Don't let people kill her... More than anyone else, His Highness should know how hard it is to keep one of these birdies healthy...

(Enter Soldier)

Soldier: Is there a problem?

Izuka: Eh? Who do you think you are? Why is it you disturb my meditations! I'm thinking here!

Soldier: Um... I'm here to relieve you on guard duty.

Izuka: Standing guard, eh? Don't see much reason for a guard in this place. But armies always have all their rules and regulations and appearances and hullabaloo... Ah, no way around it, I suppose.

Soldier: I believe that guards and watches are important.

Izuka: Wheee! In other places, yes. But Gritnea Tower is currently overflowing with veteran soldiers. Not to mention those repulsive beats... Those Feral Ones, you know? Trying to escape from this place is the same as committing suicide! Not that I've tried, mind you.

Soldier: So a watch is necessary.

Izuka: Hmmm? Wheee! What's that now? Who said that?! Oh, it's you. Important, eh? Why's that?

Soldier: Weeell...if the girl were to leave her room, we would be unable to stop her from getting killed.

Izuka: Ooo! You found a blind spot! That's the problem with us scholars! We concentrate on one thing and miss something as fundamental as--

(A screech is heard)

Izuka: Blast! They're getting riled up again... Listen, you! You stay right here and stand guard. Don't let that heron girl take one step outside this room! Do you understand me? Wheee! I told you we needed guards!

Soldier: ...Sigh... Don't worry. I'll take care of everything.

Izuka: Bah! Always when I'm in the middle of something... Snaggle-toothed, cheese-stealing...

(Exit Izuka)

Soldier: Finally! Methinks that guy fell a little far from the nest... Hello, little heron girl. There's nothing to be afraid of. I won't hurt you. Just sit there and be quiet, all right?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Ike: So that's Gritnea Tower, is it?

Nasir: I believe so.

Ranulf: Say, Ike... There's something...really odd about that tower... Sniff ... I mean REALLY odd...

Ike: What is it?

Ranulf: I sense several of the beast tribe... But...what is that? ...Sniff... Ugh! Something smells terrible!

Ena: The tower holds laguz who have been given medicine... These drugs warp their true shape.

Ike: Are you talking about the laguz that can't change forms? Like the ones we fought in Begnion?

Ena: ...Yes.

Ranulf: Do you know how many and what type are in there?

Ena: As far as numbers...a conservative estimate would be thirty. Types? There are tigers and cats from the beast tribes, hawks and ravens from the bird tribes, and...dragons...

Ranulf: There are some from the dragon tribes as well?

Ena: No more than ten. Er... Probably no more than ten...

Ike: We have to fight ten dragons like you?

Ena: They are not like me, Master Ike. They are much stronger.

Ike: ...That's hardly encouraging...

Tibarn: Regardless, we must hurry. It's going to be dark soon. It's rather embarrassing, but we of the bird tribes don't move well in the dark.

Reyson: Sad but true. Of course, the same can be said for those on the enemy side as well.

Ranulf: On the other hand, darkness means next to nothing for my kind. Depending on who we face, it could prove to be a significant--

Ena: There are more of the beast tribe than any other. It is because we are close to Gallia.

Ranulf: Listen, are you sure you want to be on our side?

Ena: ...Hm? Yes, of course. That is why I provide accurate infor--

Ranulf: Nasir!

Nasir: What do you think, Ranulf? My grandchild is impressive, is she not?

Ranulf: That's not what I was going to say, Grandpa--

Ike: So once it gets dark, we're going to be at a disadvantage. Right? All right, as long as we know that, we can plan for it.

Ranulf: You're too calm about this for my tastes. This is going to be a--

Ike: Enough, Ranulf! We don't have time for complaints. We need to find the entrance to the tower.

Ranulf: Yeah, yeah. I'm coming.

Izuka: That took longer than I'd expected. Cursed sub-humans...flea-bitten wretches... Huh? Where's the heron girl? And the...guard? Helloooo? Guard? Bird girl? Wheeeeeee? This can't... NO! I've been had! Noooooooooooo! What do I do? If this is discovered, His Majesty will... He'll hang me up by my thumbs! Oh, no... Ooooooh noooo...! No, no, no! I will not report this! Um... Uh... Think, Izuka, think! Hmmm... If I can somehow divert attention from myself...

Unknown: Master Izuka!

Izuka: Gyaaaaa!

(Enter Soldier)

Soldier: Master Izuka! We've got trouble! A strange group of insurgents approaches the tower! They are well armed, sir! ...Master Izuka?

Izuka: Eh? Insurgents? Wheeee-- Um... Ahem! Did you say insurgents have appeared?

Soldier: Yes, sir! A mixed group of sub-humans and humans.

Izuka: Ah... I see, I see. Then we must give them a warm reception, no?

Soldier: General Heddwyn's mages have engaged them, but they're not nearly enough. We must apply to the capital for more reinforcements to--

Izuka: Release the Feral Ones.

Soldier: Th-those monsters? But...

Izuka: No need to worry. I have just given them their medication. They've all been trained not to attack any Daein soldiers.

Soldier: V-very well, I--

Izuka: Do it now! The enemy must not be allowed inside the tower.

Soldier: Y-yes, sir!

(Exit Soldier)

Izuka: ...Feh feh feh! Wheeeeeeeee!!! What fortuitous timing. Now then, I will take this moment and prepare to make my escape.

Tibarn: Look at this, will you? What a glorious mix of birds, beasts, and dragons we have to greet us.

Ranulf: King of hawks! This is no joking matter! They--

Tibarn: Hold on, my brothers. Just a little longer. Soon, I will grant you all release.

Ranulf: Oh...

Reyson: Tibarn is not the only one who is filled with rage. To warp the gift that the goddess has granted us... This crime shall not go unpunished! Yaaaaa!!

Ranulf: Prince Reyson...

Ike: Come, Ranulf, let's join them. We must rescue Leanne as soon as possible ...for Reyson's sake as much as anything else.

Ranulf: Those poor laguz... Someone will die for this today!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Soldier: ...Whew. I thought as much when I first snuck in here, but this really is an unbelievable place. What in Ashera's name is going on? Why are all these crazed laguz creeping about?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Soldier: Hm? Oh, you don't like this, eh? Neither do I. This helmet and armor are horribly restrictive, you know?

(The soldier changes into Naesala)

Naesala: How's that, Leanne? It's been twenty years, but I'm still quite an eyeful. Don't you agree?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Naesala: Yeah, I haven't changed much, eh? And you knew it was me back there right away, didn't you? Ah, I'm glad you survived. It's very good to see you again.

Leanne: -Heron language-

Naesala: Now, on to the problem at hand. We went to the trouble of escaping that tower, so I'd hate to end up a meal for one of our insane cousins. Our objective is to rendezvous with Nealuchi. Here we go, Leanne. Hold on tight.

Leanne: -Heron language-

Naesala: What's going on? They're all looking the same direction.

Leanne: -Heron language-

Naesala: Tibarn and friends, eh? Oh, very good. This will work out nicely...

(Enter Nealuchi)

Nealuchi: Ne-nestling!! We've found you at last!

Naesala: Nealuchi! You're here sooner than expected. You pushed your old wings to the limit, didn't you?

Nealuchi: I couldn't be late to the rescue of the dear lady Leanne, now could I?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Nealuchi: Oh! What a glorious sight... You look so much like your dear, departed mother... Sniff...

Leanne: -Heron language-

Naesala: Hey, save your tears for later. While Tibarn and the others take care of the enemy, we must escape.

Nealuchi: Y-yes, of course! This way!

(Exit Naesala/Nealuchi/Leanne)

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Heddwyn: Master Izuka... Call...him...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Ranulf: Ike! Any sign of her?

Ike: No, I don't see her anywhere.

Reyson: Leanne... Where have you gone?

(Enter Naesala)

Naesala: Hello, everyone. Are you having some sort of problem?

Reyson: Naesala!

Ike: Oh. King Kilvas. How nice.

Naesala: I believe I have what you seek right here.

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: Leanne! You're safe!

Leanne: -Heron language-

Ike: ...You? You rescued her?

Naesala: Listen, and listen good. I don't want there to be any misunderstandings here. It was Tibarn! He forced me to do this. It wasn't any sense of charity or anything. It was a sort of...payment for the debt I had incurred.

Tibarn: I knew choosing you would pay off. Excellently done.

Naesala: Flatter me all you like, hawk king. You'll get nothing in return. As promised, the Duke Tanas account has been completely settled.

Tibarn: Yes, as agreed.

Naesala: Well then, I take my leave of you.

Tibarn: There's no need to rush off. Is there? Since you've come all this way, why not stay and help us with King Daein?

Ike: What a splendid idea.

Naesala: What? Enough of your nonsense. I prefer to keep my life intact, thank you.

Leanne: -Heron language-

Naesala: Listen to me, Leanne. I have no good reason to fight the king of Daein.

Reyson: No good reason? And what about your fellow Kilvans? King Daein has taken their natural identity and warped it beyond repair!

Naesala: They left Kilvas of their own accord. How far should my responsibility for them extend?

Reyson: You...

(Enter Nasir)

Nasir: I hate to interrupt, but...

Ike: What is it, Nasir?

Nasir: I have something I want to show you all. Will you please come below?

Tibarn: This tower has a basement?

Nasir: We just discovered a hidden staircase.

Ike: Let's go.

Ike: What is that smell?

Nasir: ...It is...corruption.

Ike: It's too dark to see anything. We need light...

Ranulf: ...What, what is this? Oh, by the goddess...

Nasir: ...

Ranulf: W-what is this...?! Nasir! Answer me!

Ike: Ranulf?

Ena: Laguz... At one time, they were...laguz...

Ike: Oh, this is...so horrible.

Elincia: I hope Ranulf and the others are all right. They behaved as if nothing had happened, but... I could sense they were in pain.

Ike: That dungeon was the most vile thing I have ever seen. I'm glad you weren't there.

Elincia: Was it that bad?

Ike: It was barbaric beyond description... There were more laguz corpses than we could count... They had been tortured... Twisted and warped beyond recognition.

Elincia: ...

Ike: Why would Ashnard do such things? What could be his purpose here?

Nasir: Ena.

Ena: ...The king called powerful beorc to his cause. But he had to see if they were worthy. He would test them by pitting them against those laguz. Ashnard considers laguz to be tools in service to his own mad ends. Nothing more. They are instruments to be used as he sees fit. I heard that he ordered his scholars to perform all kinds of experiments... They used elixirs to drive them mad and keep them locked in their changed states... Their life spans were much shortened, but for a brief time, they became extremely powerful...they...

Elincia: ...

Ike: ...Thank you for telling us. Thanks to you, we found Leanne. You're free now. You can do whatever you like.

Ena: ...I will go to the capital. Please accept me into your army.

Ike: You don't have to do that. Fighting against your former companions could prove difficult.

Ena: Take me with you. There is something that I have to do. Please, Master Ike.

Nasir: I ask it of you as well. Please.

Ike: ...I understand. Let's fight together.

Soldier: General Ike, the army has arrived at the outskirts of Melior. We await your deployment orders, sir.

Ike: Very well. Tell the men to stand down and await my command.

Soldier: ...At last, we face the king of Daein.

Ike: Yes... The war is coming to an end.

Soldier: It appears so.

Ike: Hm? Is there something bothering you?

Soldier: No, of course not. It's nothing like that. But...

Ike: But what?

Soldier: Some... Some of the soldiers are saying that when the war's over, their chances for promotion will dry up.

Ike: They want to continue fighting? Even though Crimea-- and Daein, too-- have suffered so much?

Soldier: No, that's not what I mean... I apologize. I will go inform the men.

(Exit Soldier)

Ike: ...

=====
Chapter 28: Twisted Tower[b]

[28b]
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Narration: The Black Knight, cold-blooded murderer of Ike's father, has disappeared within the collapsed castle. However, Nasir has been lost with him. In the end, he did not reveal the contents of his heart, but instead left another mystery with his enigmatic parting words. What was he trying to tell Ike? What did he hope to gain in this war? What was he searching for? With yet another memory to shoulder, Ike must fight on. The Crimean army and its laguz allies

have passed the trial of Nados Castle. At last, they've arrived at their final destination: the Crimean capital. Yet the opponent that awaits them is none other than Ashnard, king of Daein. If they lose here, all of their hardships will have been for naught. Preparations for the attack proceed with the utmost care. The final battle is approaching. An air of exaltation pervades the camp, but Ike remains focused on the road ahead, readying himself for what is to come.

Ena: Master Ike. The heron princess is being kept a little ways south of here, in a place called Gritnea Tower.

Ike: How do you know that?

Ena: I was searching for information, and that search led me to a troop of Daein soldiers that had been assigned to the tower. It was the extra knowledge I needed.

Ike: You won't tell me any more than that, will you? No matter how important it might be to our upcoming fight.

Ena: ...I'm sorry.

Ike: I figured as much. I've already decided to trust you, so all that's left to do is move out.

Ena: ...

Ike: Titania! Soren! At daybreak, I'll be taking a small force south to Gritnea Tower.

Titania: For what purpose?

Ike: That's where they're holding Leanne.

Reyson: Are you certain?

Ike: Fairly certain, yes.

Tibarn: All right, then I'll go with you.

Reyson: As will I.

Ike: Of course.

Soren: And the main army? Have you thought about what it will do?

Ike: Yes, I have. Princess Elincia, may I count on you?

Elincia: Naturally. I will remain here and see to it that preparations for storming the capital continue as planned. However, you must promise to return. And to bring my lady Leanne with you.

Ike: I hear you.

(Soren Report)

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Holy Knight ***]-

Tanith: Well done! You've improved dramatically in a very short period of time.

Elincia: Do you think so?

Tanith: I do not know how to lie or offer false praise. I am deputy commander of the apostle's bodyguards. If you were not destined for greater things, I would petition the apostle herself for your enlistment.

Elincia: Oh, thank you! I can't believe it myself. If not for your instruction, Tanith... This would not be possible.

Tanith: Training new recruits has long been my duty. And yet... I believe this is the first time anyone has been so appreciative. My other pupils commonly referred to me as the Great Demon. Isn't that so, Marcia?

Marcia: Great Demon? Mutton chops, no! D-don't be silly! We all adored our sincere and devoted deputy commander. Great Demon. Pfff! More like Great...uh...Angel...Lady...

Tanith: Ha! Sure. Seriously though, you've improved so much, Princess... Perhaps we should try something special...

Marcia: What? N-not that! She's not ready for that! You're crazy!

Elincia: Tanith, I... I'm not sure that I'm ready...

Tanith: Listen to me, Princess. The foes we are facing are Daein's elite troops, led by King Ashnard himself. How do you expect to fight them without at least one killing attack under your belt?

Elincia: ...

Marcia: You do it, Deputy Commander, and we'll keep practicing. Right, Princess Elincia?

Elincia: I... I will try it.

Marcia: Whaaaaaat?!

Elincia: I want...to grow stronger. To reach that goal, I will do whatever it takes.

Tanith: Well spoken! Now then...to match your desire, I will fall back on the methods I used while training the apostle's bodyguards.

Elincia: All...right...

Marcia: Oh, horsemeat...

Tanith: Come, we have little time for niceties. Both of you, follow me! Now!!! Come on, maggots, do you want to live forever?!!!

Elincia: Y-yes, ma'am!

Marcia: Ugh... She really is a demon.

(Ike is listening off to the side)

Ike: Hmm... The three of them look...busy... I think I'll wait until later to talk to them.

-----[Exit Base]-----

-[Gritnea Tower]-

Leanne: -Heron language-

Izuka: Whee hee hee! It appears that she's finally coming around! We brought this girl here on direct orders from His Majesty. Simple stuff, yes? Very easy, very nice. Then he gives all these special commands! Don't let her escape. Don't let her get sick. Don't let people kill her... More than anyone else, His Highness should know how hard it is to keep one of these birdies healthy...

(Enter Soldier)

Soldier: Is there a problem?

Izuka: Eh? Who do you think you are? Why is it you disturb my meditations! I'm thinking here!

Soldier: Um... I'm here to relieve you on guard duty.

Izuka: Standing guard, eh? Don't see much reason for a guard in this place. But armies always have all their rules and regulations and appearances and hullabaloo... Ah, no way around it, I suppose.

Soldier: I believe that guards and watches are important.

Izuka: Wheee! In other places, yes. But Gritnea Tower is currently overflowing with veteran soldiers. Not to mention those repulsive beats... Those Feral Ones, you know? Trying to escape from this place is the same as committing suicide! Not that I've tried, mind you.

Soldier: So a watch is necessary.

Izuka: Hmmm? Wheee! What's that now? Who said that?! Oh, it's you. Important, eh? Why's that?

Soldier: Weeell...if the girl were to leave her room, we would be unable to stop her from getting killed.

Izuka: Ooo! You found a blind spot! That's the problem with us scholars! We concentrate on one thing and miss something as fundamental as--

(A screech is heard)

Izuka: Blast! They're getting riled up again... Listen, you! You stay right here and stand guard. Don't let that heron girl take one step outside this room! Do you understand me? Wheee! I told you we needed guards!

Soldier: ...Sigh... Don't worry. I'll take care of everything.

Izuka: Bah! Always when I'm in the middle of something... Snaggle-toothed, cheese-stealing...

(Exit Izuka)

Soldier: Finally! Methinks that guy fell a little far from the nest... Hello, little heron girl. There's nothing to be afraid of. I won't hurt you. Just sit there and be quiet, all right?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Ike: That's Gritnea Tower, right?

Ena: It is.

Ranulf: Say, Ike... There's something...really odd about that tower... Sniff ... I mean REALLY odd...

Ike: What is it?

Ranulf: I sense several of the beast tribe... But...what is that? ...Sniff... Ugh! Something smells terrible!

Ena: The tower holds laguz who have been given toxins, foul potions that warp their true shape.

Ike: Are you talking about the laguz that can't change forms? Like the ones we fought in Bagnion?

Ena: ...Yes.

Ranulf: Do you know how many and what type are in there?

Ena: As far as numbers...a conservative estimate would be thirty. Types? There are tigers and cats from the beast tribes, hawks and ravens from the bird tribes, and...dragons...

Ranulf: There are some from the dragon tribes as well?

Ena: No more than ten. Er... Probably no more than ten...

Ike: We have to fight ten dragons like you?

Ena: They are not like me, Master Ike. They are much stronger.

Ike: ...That's hardly encouraging...

Tibarn: Regardless, we must hurry. It's going to be dark soon. It's rather embarrassing, but we of the bird tribes don't move well in the dark.

Reyson: Sad but true. Of course, the same can be said for those on the enemy side as well.

Ranulf: On the other hand, darkness means next to nothing for my kind. Depending on who we face, it could prove to be a significant--

Ena: There are more of the beast tribe than any other. It is because we are

close to Gallia.

Ranulf: Listen, you... Are you sure you want to be on our side?

Ena: ...Hm? Yes, of course. That is why I provide accurate information.

Ike: So once it gets dark, we're going to be at a disadvantage. Right? All right, as long as we know that, we can plan for it.

Ranulf: You're too calm about this for my tastes. This is going to be a--

Ike: Enough, Ranulf! We don't have time for complaints. We need to find the entrance to the tower.

Ranulf: Yeah, yeah. I'm coming.

Izuka: That took longer than I'd expected. Cursed sub-humans...flea-bitten wretches... Huh? Where's the heron girl? And the...guard? Helloooo? Guard? Bird girl? Wheeeeeee? This can't... NO! I've been had! Nooooooooooo! What do I do? If this is discovered, His Majesty will... He'll hang me up by my thumbs! Oh, no... Ooooooh noooo...! No, no, no! I will not report this! Um... Uh... Think, Izuka, think! Hmmm... If I can somehow divert attention from myself...

Unknown: Master Izuka!

Izuka: Gyaaaaa!

(Enter Soldier)

Soldier: Master Izuka! We've got trouble! A strange group of insurgents approaches the tower! They are well armed, sir! ...Master Izuka?

Izuka: Eh? Insurgents? Wheeee-- Um... Ahem! Did you say insurgents have appeared?

Soldier: Yes, sir! A mixed group of sub-humans and humans.

Izuka: Ah... I see, I see. Then we must give them a warm reception, no?

Soldier: General Heddwyn's mages have engaged them, but they're not nearly enough. We must apply to the capital for more reinforcements to--

Izuka: Release the Feral Ones.

Soldier: Th-those monsters? But...

Izuka: No need to worry. I have just given them their medication. They've all been trained not to attack any Daein soldiers.

Soldier: V-very well, I--

Izuka: Do it now! The enemy must not be allowed inside the tower.

Soldier: Y-yes, sir!

(Exit Soldier)

Izuka: ...Feh feh feh! Wheeeeeeee!!! What fortuitous timing. Now then, I will take this moment and prepare to make my escape.

Tibarn: Look at this, will you? What a glorious mix of birds, beasts, and dragons we have to greet us.

Ranulf: King of hawks! This is no joking matter! They--

Tibarn: Hold on, my brothers. Just a little longer. Soon, I will grant you all release.

Ranulf: Oh...

Reyson: Tibarn is not the only one who is filled with rage. To warp the gift that the goddess has granted us... This crime shall not go unpunished! Yaaaaa!!

Ranulf: Prince Reyson...

Ike: Come, Ranulf, let's join them. We must rescue Leanne as soon as possible ...for Reyson's sake as much as anything else.

Ranulf: Those poor laguz... Someone will die for this today!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Soldier: ...Whew. I thought as much when I first snuck in here, but this really is an unbelievable place. What in Ashera's name is going on? Why are all these crazed laguz creeping about?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Soldier: Hm? Oh, you don't like this, eh? Neither do I. This helmet and armor are horribly restrictive, you know?

(The soldier changes into Naesala)

Naesala: How's that, Leanne? It's been twenty years, but I'm still quite an eyeful. Don't you agree?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Naesala: Yeah, I haven't changed much, eh? And you knew it was me back there right away, didn't you? Ah, I'm glad you survived. It's very good to see you again.

Leanne: -Heron language-

Naesala: Now, on to the problem at hand. We went to the trouble of escaping that tower, so I'd hate to end up a meal for one of our insane cousins. Our objective is to rendezvous with Nealuchi. Here we go, Leanne. Hold on tight.

Leanne: -Heron language-

Naesala: What's going on? They're all looking the same direction.

Leanne: -Heron language-

Naesala: Tibarn and friends, eh? Oh, very good. This will work out nicely...

(Enter Nealuchi)

Nealuchi: Ne-nestling!! We've found you at last!

Naesala: Nealuchi! You're here sooner than expected. You pushed your old wings to the limit, didn't you?

Nealuchi: I couldn't be late to the rescue of the dear lady Leanne, now could I?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Nealuchi: Oh! What a glorious sight... You look so much like your dear, departed mother... Sniff...

Leanne: -Heron language-

Naesala: Hey, save your tears for later. While Tibarn and the others take care of the enemy, we must escape.

Nealuchi: Y-yes, of course! This way!

(Exit Naesala/Nealuchi/Leanne)

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Heddwyn: Master Izuka... Call...him...

(End boss fight)

-----[Battle End]-----

Ranulf: Ike! Any sign of her?

Ike: No, I don't see her anywhere.

Reyson: Leanne... Where have you gone?

(Enter Naesala)

Naesala: Hello, everyone. Are you having some sort of problem?

Reyson: Naesala!

Ike: Oh. King Kilvas. How nice.

Naesala: I believe I have what you seek right here.

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: Leanne! You're safe!

Leanne: -Heron language-

Ike: ...You? You rescued her?

Naesala: Listen, and listen good. I don't want there to be any misunderstandings here. It was Tibarn! He forced me to do this. It wasn't any sense of charity or anything. It was a sort of...payment for the debt I had incurred.

Tibarn: I knew choosing you would pay off. Excellently done.

Naesala: Flatter me all you like, hawk king. You'll get nothing in return. As promised, the Duke Tanas account has been completely settled.

Tibarn: Yes, as agreed.

Naesala: Well then, I take my leave of you.

Tibarn: There's no need to rush off. Is there? Since you've come all this way, why not stay and help us with King Daein?

Ike: What a splendid idea.

Naesala: What? Enough of your nonsense. I prefer to keep my life intact, thank you.

Leanne: -Heron language-

Naesala: Listen to me, Leanne. I have no good reason to fight the king of Daein.

Reyson: No good reason? And what about your fellow Kilvans? King Daein has taken their natural identity and warped it beyond repair!

Naesala: They left Kilvas of their own accord. How far should my responsibility for them extend?

Reyson: You...

(Enter Ena)

Ena: Master Ike, I am sorry to interrupt, but...

Ike: What is it, Ena?

Ena: I have something I need to show you. Will you please come to the basement?

Tibarn: This tower has a basement?

Ena: We have discovered a hidden staircase. What lies below is...unsettling.

Ike: Let's go.

Ike: What is that smell?

Ena: ...It is...corruption.

Ike: It's too dark to see anything. We need light...

Ranulf: ...What, what is this?

Ena: ...

Ranulf: W-what is this...?! Answer me!

Ike: Ranulf?

Ena: Laguz... At one time, they were...laguz...

Ike: Oh, this is...so horrible.

Elincia: I hope Ranulf and the others are all right. They behaved as if nothing had happened, but... I could sense they were in pain.

Ike: That dungeon was the most vile thing I have ever seen. I'm glad you weren't there.

Elincia: Was it that bad?

Ike: It was barbaric beyond description... There were more laguz corpses than we could count... They had been tortured. Twisted and warped beyond recognition.

Elincia: Ah...such horrors...

Ike: Why would Ashnard do such things? What could be his purpose here?

Ena: ...The king called powerful beorc to his cause. But he had to see if they were worthy. He would test them by pitting them against those laguz. Ashnard considers laguz to be tools in service to his own mad ends. Nothing more. They are instruments to be used as he sees fit. I heard that he ordered his scholars to perform all kinds of experiments... They used elixirs to drive them mad and keep them locked in their changed states... Their life spans were much shortened, but for a brief time, they became extremely powerful...they...

Elincia: ...

Ike: ...Thank you for telling us. Thanks to you, we found Leanne. You're free now. You can do whatever you like.

Ena: ...I will go to the capital. Please accept me into your army.

Ike: You don't have to do that. Fighting against your former companions could prove difficult.

Ena: Take me with you. There is something that I have to do. Please, Master Ike.

Ike: ...Very well. Let's fight together.

Soldier: General Ike, the army has arrived at the outskirts of Melior. We await your deployment orders, sir.

Ike: Very well. Tell the men to stand down and await my command.

Soldier: ...At last, we face the king of Daein.

Ike: Yes... The war is coming to an end.

Soldier: It appears so.

Ike: Hm? Is there something bothering you?

Soldier: No, of course not. It's nothing like that. But...

Ike: But what?

Soldier: Some... Some of the soldiers are saying that when the war's over, their chances for promotion will dry up.

Ike: They want to continue fighting? Even though Crimea-- and Daein, too-- have suffered so much?

Soldier: No, that's not what I mean... I apologize. I will go inform the men.

(Exit Soldier)

Ike: ...

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Endgame: Repatriation[a] [29a]
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Narration: The Crimean royal palace, located in the center of Melior, is famed for its beautiful gardens where the world seems at peace. But times have changed. Countless battles have raged in these idyllic confines, and a new dark lord now sits upon the throne. The palace itself has not suffered-- it remains a study in dignity and elegance. Yet there is no peace on this day. A grim tension fills the air, engulfing all it touches in deafening silence. Within the heart of the palace sits the author of this war: Ashnard, king of Daein. Ike, supreme commander of the Crimean army, and Elincia, princess of Crimea, have completed their battle preparations. Now, they spend a tense morning waiting for the decisive battle that will conclude their yearlong odyssey. They wait for the beginning of the end.

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Friend *]-

Ike: I've brought her, Nasir.

(Enter Mist)

Mist: ...

Nasir: ...I'm sorry, Mist.

Mist: ...

Nasir: I knew how much the medallion meant to you, and I stole it

nevertheless. No matter the words I use to apologize, I did something unforgivable. I gained your trust-- and Ike's-- and betrayed it. Then I compounded my dishonor by fleeing. ...I am so very sorry...

Mist: ...Thanks for coming back, Nasir. I... I wanted to see you again. And I'm glad I did. Welcome back.

Nasir: ...Ah, Mist. I do not deserve your kindness...

Ena: ...Mist, please allow me to apologize as well. I am the one who is truly at fault here. What Nasir did, he did for me.

Mist: I'm sure there's some very important reason for all of this. And it's probably still unresolved. I'm honestly quite curious. Plus, I want to help! But... But I doubt that I can. So, I'm going to wait. I've decided to wait until the two of you can tell me about whatever it is. So...you don't need to worry about it anymore. All right?

Nasir: ...Thank you, Mist.

Ena: Thank you.

Ike: ...

-[Friend *]-

Janaff: Har! So tomorrow's the day we take on the capital. I'm ready! Whooooo! It doesn't matter how hard the fight you're facing might be, I always feel excited the night before!

Ulki: I'd like to tell you how wrong that is, but I can't. I...can't seem to calm my nerves, either.

Janaff: We're going to win, you know? King Daein won't survive the day.

Ulki: Mmm... I wonder.

(Enter Ike)

Ike: Are you two on guard duty?

Janaff: Oh, it's you. Heya, Ike.

Ulki: Do you have some need of the king?

Ike: Yeah, will you tell him I'm here?

Ulki: We will. Wait here.

(Exit Janaff/Ulki)

Ike: ...

(Enter Tibarn/Reyson)

Tibarn: So, tomorrow it is. Did you come by to check on our preparations?

Ike: You know me too well. You're going to circle the capital and ensure that

no airborne enemies escape. That's clear, isn't it?

Tibarn: Yes. I think encircling the capital's a good idea. We'll guard the west and take care of airborne combat as well. The Phoenicis and Kilvas armies are unbeatable in that regard.

Ike: Kilvas is going to help out?

Reyson: Of course.

Tibarn: After what we saw in the dungeons of Gritnea Tower, we all agreed that King Ashnard must pay. Reyson and Leanne helped to sway certain opinions. It was tough, but in the end, we understood what needs to happen. That having been said, the crows are traitorous by nature. If worse comes to worst, it may be just us hawks out there.

Ike: That will be enough. At least I know I can rely on you.

Tibarn: Well, to be perfectly honest... I wouldn't mind a chance to remove Ashnard's head from his shoulders.

Ike: It's just like the time I fought the Black Knight... You're being kept away from the main fight. My apologies, hawk king.

Tibarn: That's all right. But if you find yourself overwhelmed, give me a call.

Ike: Understood.

Tibarn: And as for you, Reyson. I'm sure you're tired of hearing this, but--

Reyson: I know, I know. Be careful. Don't die. Don't worry, I won't die. I'm not going to leave Leanne and my father all alone.

(Naesala and Nealuchi are talking off to the side)

Nealuchi: Nestling. It appears they're discussing tomorrow's battle. Shouldn't you join them?

Naesala: ...No, I think not. It's just Tibarn after all. He doesn't really want help from Kilvas anyway.

Nealuchi: The hawk king may not care, but... Prince Reyson would surely feel that you had betrayed him yet again, Nestling.

Naesala: What?

Nealuchi: Oh, and dear lady Leanne as well. If you were to flee in the face of the enemy, it would break her heart. Hah..... It would be so sad... HAAAHH... Heeee!

(Exit Nealuchi)

Naesala: Senile old crow. You think if you bring those two into it, I'll do as I've been told and fight... Curse you!

Ranulf: This war has been waged for over a year... But it could all be over by midday tomorrow. How do you feel, Ike? Think we'll win?

Ike: We'll win.

Ranulf: I knew you'd say that! Ha! You don't fool me anymore. But even so... I appreciate your bravado tonight.

(Enter Giffca)

Giffca: Without such courage, it would be impossible to face King Daein.

Ranulf: Master Giffca! What are you doing here?

Giffca: The king felt uneasy knowing you were here on your own. I come in his name.

Ranulf: So, are you going to fight with us?

Giffca: That is my purpose. That is, if Lord Ike grants his permission.

Ike: Of course. The Daein army is large, so we're going to be attacking them from the front and holding the two eastern gates. I'd be very appreciative if you would agree to take command of that front.

Giffca: If that is your wish, I can but agree.

Ranulf: What's this now? You weren't satisfied with the work I was doing? I mean, I know that I'm no Master Giffca, but please...

Ike: Ranulf, I want you to be with me. Is that all right?

Ranulf: Oh, now I see. Sure, that would be fine! Getting to be part of the main pack is the highest of honors.

(Elsewhere)

Mordecai: Master Giffca!

Lethe: It's been a long time. How is the king?

Giffca: He's in good health. The king...has given me a message for you two.

Lethe: A message? Not orders?

Giffca: That's right. He said to be sure you make it home alive. And then he said that your work in the past year has been most satisfactory and that he's sincerely grateful to you both.

Lethe: ...That's...such an honor!

Mordecai: We have fought hard. But...it wasn't a bother. Ike and the others are good beorc... We are happy to fight with them.

Giffca: I see.

-----[Exit Base]-----

Bastian: Princess? It's time.

Elincia: It's right there... I can see the capital... Father, Mother, my lord Uncle... Your Elincia has returned...

Lucia: Our soldiers are in formation and awaiting your word, Princess. For good or ill, this will be our final battle. Before they march, would you...speak to them?

Elincia: What? Y-y-you want me to...address the troops?

Geoffrey: This fight will determine if Ashnard falls and if we can all return to our beloved homeland. Today, Princess, we risk all. Giving men the courage to fight is the duty of a leader.

Elincia: I... I don't know how well I'll do, but... I will try.

Elincia: ...Ahem! ...Hear me! Brave fighting men of Crimea! Much have you lost in service to your land. Hear me! Beloved friends of the laguz! You, too, have given all for our fair cause. Hear me! My trusted company of old! You men of Greil did see me to this day. I stand before you made of flesh and bone, alive because you risked your lives for me. A word cannot my thanks express in kind... We march today into the jaws of fate; our enemy lies in wait o'er this hill. If on the 'morrow, Ashnard lives no more, my fondest dream is to among you walk and give you each my heartfelt thanks anew. Let not this dream dissolve into despair! We will defeat the dreaded king of Daein! We will reclaim this land we hold so dear. Lend me your strength! Lend me your weary hearts! Today we make our fate for good and all. One life can make a mark upon this world. One life can move the wheel of history. Be that one life! Fight well! Fight brave! Fight true.

(Cheers)

Ranulf: ...Where did that come from?! That was magnificent! It seems the princess, too, has grown stronger.

Ike: It's said we grow into the roles we're given, isn't it? Elincia will make a splendid queen.

Ranulf: ...

Ike: That's... That's just what Nasir said! What? It's true! Stop it! Don't give me that I-can't-believe-what-I-just-heard look.

Ranulf: Nasir said it, right? Whew! That's a relief! I thought the world had gone mad.

Ike: ...Stupid cat.

Ike: All right, let's go! This ends today!

Titania: I'm ready.

Soren: I have everything I need.

Ike: Very well, we're ready--

Titania: Say, Ike! This is the end of the end, you know? So...rather than just giving orders... Why don't you say a word, too?

Ike: I think Princess Elincia said enough!

Mist: I want to hear what you have to say, Brother! Father always did it, didn't he?

Ike: You want me to say something...like Father would have done?

Mist: Uh-huh!

(Agree to speak to the army)

Ike: Um...hey there... Before this final battle, there's only one thing I want to tell all of you... I don't want any of you dying on me! Remember-- you only have one life! At a time like this, it doesn't matter what our blood ties are. We are family. That's what my father always used to say. And today...for the first time... I understand why he said it... Because we are a family. So if you don't want to cause your family any grief, then live! Don't drop your guard! Don't turn your back! Use every drop of your strength! Our road has been long, but it ends today! Let's liberate Crimea and free our friends...and our families...from Daein's tyranny! Men of Crimea... Laguz of Tellius... Greil Mercenaries... MOVE OUT!!

(Cheers)

-[Crimea Castle]-

Unknown: Attack! We're being attacked!

Soldier: The castle gate has fallen! The Crimean army cannot be stopped!

(Exit Soldier)

Bryce: ...It appears the end is near. Your Majesty, please use the rear gate and withdraw. We will cover your retreat.

Ashnard: I am not leaving.

Bryce: But if... If we lose Your Majesty, the Daein royal bloodline itself will be lost!

Ashnard: Are you saying I will lose? Hm? Is that what you wish to say?

Bryce: ...Of course not! However, our army is in dire straits. It is merely an act of prudence, Your Majesty. I humbly ask that you consider the continuance of the bloodline above all else. Of course, your judgment--

Ashnard: The value of the thirteenth generation of Daein's royal family is not so high as to warrant your pathetic display. I AM Daein. If I am to be destroyed, then let Daein be destroyed with me.

Bryce: Your... Your Majesty... That is--

Ashnard: I have no need of inconstant retainers. You are an obstacle. Away with you.

Bryce: ...B-but, Your Majesty...

Ashnard: My sole desire is to rule through strength. The weak perish, and the strong live on... This is the law of nature. It is the law the goddess herself created when she forged this world.

Bryce: ...It appears that further conversation would only be a waste of time. Though even if His Majesty desires it not, I will remain and protect him. I cannot allow the legacy of Daein to end here!

Ashnard: Tell me, Bryce... You were my father's retainer, were you not?

Bryce: ...From the fifteenth year of my life...and for twenty more years until his death... I did serve him faithfully.

Ashnard: The thing that killed my father was not plague, nor was it another illness. It was me.

Bryce: Wh-what?

Ashnard: Oh, but it doesn't end there. There was my stepmother, too. And every brother who stood to be a legitimate heir... All of them died by my hand.

Bryce: ...

Ashnard: Are you still determined to protect me? Knowing this truth?

Bryce: ...I am... Even knowing now as I do...you are still your father's son. The blood of Daein's kings flows in you. You are all that remains. ...By your leave.

(Exit Bryce)

Ashnard: Such loyalty to a corpse... In truth, there is nothing in this world more humorous than a knight.

-[Crimea Castle]-

Ike: Hey! Look out!

Elincia: Is... Is that...

(Elincia flies up to Ashnard)

Elincia: ...

Ike: Elincia, what are you doing?! Get back!

Elincia: ...Ashnard...

Ike: Wh-what did you say? THAT is the king of Daein?!

Ashnard: Heh heh heh heh... It's been a long time, Princess Crimea.

Elincia: ...

Ashnard: You look quite different than you did the day that I cut your father and mother down like cattle... I can hardly believe you're the same little girl who did nothing but tremble and stare at me.

Elincia: You... You craven-- I've returned to see you defeated! I will no longer allow you to treat Crimea any way you please!

Ashnard: Haaa haa haa! How brave and noble of you. However, you are not the one I seek.

(Elincia is hit)

Elincia: Aaah!

Ike: Elincia!

Ashnard: Are you the one they claim is the son of Gawain?

Ike: King Ashnard of Daein! Your treachery dies on my blade!

Ashnard: Oh ho? Ah ha ha ha haaaa! I see that blade in your hand... It is a sacred blade, is it not? The only type of blade that can pierce my armor. Hm. It matters not how famous that blade. If the wielder lacks skill, the greatest sword is nothing but blunted steel.

Ike: Don't worry. You will see for yourself how blunt it is.

Ashnard: I expect good things from you, son of Gawain. What you see before you are my elite, handpicked soldiers. How will you deal with them? I'm looking forward to watching you. Don't disappoint me!

Ike: Hold!

(Exit Ashnard)

Ike: Any of you whose arms remember what it is like to battle, step forth! I would take of your strength now!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Elincia: My lord Ike! I will go and command our forces battling Daein in the city streets... I will...see you once all is done.

Ike: Very well. Leave King Ashnard to me!

Elincia: Understood.

(Elincia leaves the battlefield)

Nasir: ...Ike! I don't like these odds! I think it likely that we may take a lot of casualties. What do you think of pulling in one of the other commanders to lend us a hand?

(Select either Tibarn/Giffca/Naesala/None)

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Bryce: ...My strength...was not enough... I could not...protect
...my homeland... Forgive me...Daein...

(End boss fight)

Ashnard: Heh heh heh heh. You've done well to have grown so strong. At last, I
have gained a foe worthy enough to test my sword. Excellent! Enjoy my
might to your heart's content!

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Ashnard: Heh heh...excellent... Excellent! So good! More...more,
I say! At this time of ascension, it's not enough...not
enough...

(End boss fight)

Ike: Now...it is truly over.

-----[Battle End]-----

Ike: Ena, stay back! The king's mount is still alive!

Ena: ...

Ike: Stay back!

(Screen goes black)

Ike: Ena!

Elincia: No!

(End black screen)

Ike: What's going on? His mount is so calm...

Nasir: Ike... Let them be.

Ike: Nasir, what's this all about?

Nasir: That...is her mate. As death nears, he has regained his sanity.

Ike: King Daein's mount is Ena's...mate?

Ena: ...Rajaion...

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: Leanne? What is it?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: A laguz... No, it can't be. Ashnard's mount was a wyvern... Wasn't it?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: -Heron language-

Leanne: -Heron language-

Ike: What are you doing?

Reyson: Be patient, please. There's something we want to try.

Ike: Huh?

Nasir: ...

(Reyson/Leanne sing)

Rajaion: ...

Ike: Reyson...that's...

Reyson: Leanne told me that dragon's true form had been warped. So we sang the
galdr of rebirth...

Ena: Ra...Rajai...on...

Rajaion: Err...aah...

Ena: ...Rajaion? D-do you know who I am?

Rajaion: ...E... Ena?

Ena: Yes... Yes! You recognize me!

Rajaion: You were made...to suffer...because of me... I'm sorry.

Ena: ...Sniff... Rajaion! Rajaion! Oh, Rajaion...

Rajaion: ...Ena... Let's return to Goldoa. The two of us...together.

Ena: I will go anywhere, my love, as long as it is with you.

Rajaion: Ena...from this day forward... Forever... ...

Ena: ...Sniff... ...sniff... Ah, Rajaion...

Nasir: ...

Ike: He was one of the dragon tribe?

Nasir: That's right. He and Ena were engaged to be married... And then, he was
driven mad by King Daein, and his form warped.

Ike: ...I see.

Mist: Hmm...

Mist: Hmmm...

Mist: Aha! Is that... Nope! Dang...

Mist: Hmm... Ah! Here it is!

Ike: What is it, Mist? Did you find something?

Mist: The medallion, Ike! The medallion! I finally...have it back...

Ike: Mist, that medallion is--

Mist: Yeah... I know. Reyson! Leanne!

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: What?

Mist: Here.

Reyson: ...Oh!

Leanne: -Heron language-

Mist: The medallion belongs in Serenes Forest. My mother...was only holding it for Lillia.

Reyson: ...Leanne, you take it.

Leanne: -Heron language-

Mist: ...

Ike: ...

Reyson: Thank you, daughter of Elena. In the memory of my departed sister... I accept the medallion from you.

=====
Endgame: Repatriation[b]

[29b]
=====

Narration: The Crimean royal palace, located in the center of Melior, is famed for its beautiful gardens where the world seems at peace. But times have changed. Countless battles have raged in these idyllic confines, and a new dark lord now sits upon the throne. The palace itself has not suffered-- it remains a study in dignity and elegance. Yet there is no peace on this day. A grim tension fills the air, engulfing all it touches in deafening silence. Within the heart of the palace sits the author of this war: Ashnard, king of Daein. Ike, supreme commander of the Crimean army, and Elinicia, princess of Crimea, have completed their battle preparations. Now, they spend a tense morning waiting for the decisive battle that will conclude their yearlong odyssey. They wait for the beginning

of the end.

-----[Base]-----[Info Conversations]-----

-[Friend *]-

Janaff: Har! So tomorrow's the day we take on the capital. I'm ready! Whooooo!
It doesn't matter how hard the fight you're facing might be, I always
feel excited the night before!

Ulki: I'd like to tell you how wrong that is, but I can't. I...can't seem to
calm my nerves, either.

Janaff: We're going to win, you know? King Daein won't survive the day.

Ulki: Mmm... I wonder.

(Enter Ike)

Ike: Are you two on guard duty?

Janaff: Oh, it's you. Heya, Ike.

Ulki: Do you have some need of the king?

Ike: Yeah, will you tell him I'm here?

Ulki: We will. Wait here.

(Exit Janaff/Ulki)

Ike: ...

(Enter Tibarn/Reyson)

Tibarn: So, tomorrow it is. Did you come by to check on our preparations?

Ike: You know me too well. You're going to circle the capital and ensure that
no airborne enemies escape. That's clear, isn't it?

Tibarn: Yes. I think encircling the capital's a good idea. We'll guard the
west and take care of airborne combat as well. The Phoenicis and
Kilvas armies are unbeatable in that regard.

Ike: Kilvas is going to help out?

Reyson: Of course.

Tibarn: After what we saw in the dungeons of Gritnea Tower, we all agreed that
King Ashnard must pay. Reyson and Leanne helped to sway certain
opinions. It was tough, but in the end, we understood what needs to
happen. That having been said, the crows are traitorous by nature. If
worse comes to worst, it may be just us hawks out there.

Ike: That will be enough. At least I know I can rely on you.

Tibarn: Well, to be perfectly honest... I wouldn't mind a chance to remove
Ashnard's head from his shoulders.

Ike: It's just like the time I fought the Black Knight... You're being kept

away from the main fight. My apologies, hawk king.

Tibarn: That's all right. But if you find yourself overwhelmed, give me a call.

Ike: Understood.

Tibarn: And as for you, Reyson. I'm sure you're tired of hearing this, but--

Reyson: I know, I know. Be careful. Don't die. Don't worry, I won't die. I'm not going to leave Leanne and my father all alone.

(Naesala and Nealuchi are talking off to the side)

Nealuchi: Nestling. It appears they're discussing tomorrow's battle. Shouldn't you join them?

Naesala: ...No, I think not. It's just Tibarn after all. He doesn't really want help from Kilvas anyway.

Nealuchi: The hawk king may not care, but... Prince Reyson would surely feel that you had betrayed him yet again, Nestling.

Naesala: What?

Nealuchi: Oh, and dear lady Leanne as well. If you were to flee in the face of the enemy, it would break her heart. Hah..... It would be so sad... HAAAAH... Heeee!

(Exit Nealuchi)

Naesala: Senile old crow. You think if you bring those two into it, I'll do as I've been told and fight... Curse you!

-[Friend *]-

Ranulf: This war has been waged for over a year... But it could all be over by midday tomorrow. How do you feel, Ike? Think we'll win?

Ike: We'll win.

Ranulf: I knew you'd say that! Ha! You don't fool me anymore. But even so... I appreciate your bravado tonight.

(Enter Giffca)

Giffca: Without such courage, it would be impossible to face King Daein.

Ranulf: Master Giffca! What are you doing here?

Giffca: The king felt uneasy knowing you were here on your own. I come in his name.

Ranulf: So, are you going to fight with us?

Giffca: That is my purpose. That is, if Lord Ike grants his permission.

Ike: Of course. The Daein army is large, so we're going to be attacking them

from the front and holding the two eastern gates. I'd be very appreciative if you would agree to take command of that front.

Giffca: If that is your wish, I can but agree.

Ranulf: What's this now? You weren't satisfied with the work I was doing? I mean, I know that I'm no Master Giffca, but please...

Ike: Ranulf, I want you to be with me. Is that all right?

Ranulf: Oh, now I see. Sure, that would be fine! Getting to be part of the main pack is the highest of honors.

(Elsewhere)

Mordecai: Master Giffca!

Lethe: It's been a long time. How is the king?

Giffca: He's in good health. The king...has given me a message for you two.

Lethe: A message? Not orders?

Giffca: That's right. He said to be sure you make it home alive. And then he said that your work in the past year has been most satisfactory and that he's sincerely grateful to you both.

Lethe: ...That's...such an honor!

Mordecai: We have fought hard. But...it wasn't a bother. Ike and the others are good beorc... We are happy to fight with them.

Giffca: I see.

-----[Exit Base]-----

Bastian: Princess? It's time.

Elincia: It's right there... I can see the capital... Father, Mother, my lord Uncle... Your Elincia has returned...

Lucia: Our soldiers are in formation and awaiting your word, Princess. For good or ill, this will be our final battle. Before they march, would you...speak to them?

Elincia: What? Y-y-you want me to...address the troops?

Geoffrey: This fight will determine if Ashnard falls and if we can all return to our beloved homeland. Today, Princess, we risk all. Giving men the courage to fight is the duty of a leader.

Elincia: I... I don't know how well I'll do, but... I will try.

Elincia: ...Ahem! ...Hear me! Brave fighting men of Crimea! Much have you lost in service to your land. Hear me! Beloved friends of the laguz! You, too, have given all for our fair cause. Hear me! My trusted company of old! You men of Greil did see me to this day. I stand before you made of flesh and bone, alive because you risked your lives for me. A

word cannot my thanks express in kind... We march today into the jaws of fate; our enemy lies in wait o'er this hill. If on the 'morrow, Ashnard lives no more, my fondest dream is to among you walk and give you each my heartfelt thanks anew. Let not this dream dissolve into despair! We will defeat the dreaded king of Daein! We will reclaim this land we hold so dear. Lend me your strength! Lend me your weary hearts! Today we make our fate for good and all. One life can make a mark upon this world. One life can move the wheel of history. Be that one life! Fight well! Fight brave! Fight true.

(Cheers)

Ranulf: ...Where did that come from?! That was magnificent! It seems the princess, too, has grown stronger.

Ike: It's said we grow into the roles we're given, isn't it? Elincia will make a splendid queen.

Ranulf: ...

Ike: That's... That's just what Nasir said! What? It's true! Stop it! Don't give me that I-can't-believe-what-I-just-heard look.

Ranulf: Nasir said it, right? Whew! That's a relief! I thought the world had gone mad.

Ike: ...Stupid cat.

Ike: All right, let's go! This ends today!

Titania: I'm ready.

Soren: I have everything I need.

Ike: Very well, we're ready--

Titania: Say, Ike! This is the end of the end, you know? So...rather than just giving orders... Why don't you say a word, too?

Ike: I think Princess Elincia said enough!

Mist: I want to hear what you have to say, Brother! Father always did it, didn't he?

Ike: You want me to say something...like Father would have done?

Mist: Uh-huh!

(Agree to speak to the army)

Ike: Um...hey there... Before this final battle, there's only one thing I want to tell all of you... I don't want any of you dying on me! Remember-- you only have one life! At a time like this, it doesn't matter what our blood ties are. We are family. That's what my father always used to say. And

today...for the first time... I understand why he said it... Because we are a family. So if you don't want to cause your family any grief, then live! Don't drop your guard! Don't turn your back! Use every drop of your strength! Our road has been long, but it ends today! Let's liberate Crimea and free our friends...and our families...from Daein's tyranny! Men of Crimea... Laguz of Tellius... Greil Mercenaries... MOVE OUT!!

(Cheers)

-[Crimea Castle]-

Unknown: Attack! We're being attacked!

Soldier: The castle gate has fallen! The Crimean army cannot be stopped!

(Exit Soldier)

Bryce: ...It appears the end is near. Your Majesty, please use the rear gate and withdraw. We will cover your retreat.

Ashnard: I am not leaving.

Bryce: But if... If we lose Your Majesty, the Daein royal bloodline itself will be lost!

Ashnard: Are you saying I will lose? Hm? Is that what you wish to say?

Bryce: ...Of course not! However, our army is in dire straits. It is merely an act of prudence, Your Majesty. I humbly ask that you consider the continuance of the bloodline above all else. Of course, your judgment--

Ashnard: The value of the thirteenth generation of Daein's royal family is not so high as to warrant your pathetic display. I AM Daein. If I am to be destroyed, then let Daein be destroyed with me.

Bryce: Your... Your Majesty... That is--

Ashnard: I have no need of inconstant retainers. You are an obstacle. Away with you.

Bryce: ...B-but, Your Majesty...

Ashnard: My sole desire is to rule through strength. The weak perish, and the strong live on... This is the law of nature. It is the law the goddess herself created when she forged this world.

Bryce: ...It appears that further conversation would only be a waste of time. Though even if His Majesty desires it not, I will remain and protect him. I cannot allow the legacy of Daein to end here!

Ashnard: Tell me, Bryce... You were my father's retainer, were you not?

Bryce: ...From the fifteenth year of my life...and for twenty more years until his death... I did serve him faithfully.

Ashnard: The thing that killed my father was not plague, nor was it another illness. It was me.

Bryce: Wh-what?

Ashnard: Oh, but it doesn't end there. There was my stepmother, too. And every brother who stood to be a legitimate heir... All of them died by my hand.

Bryce: ...

Ashnard: Are you still determined to protect me? Knowing this truth?

Bryce: ...I am... Even knowing now as I do...you are still your father's son. The blood of Daein's kings flows in you. You are all that remains. ...By your leave.

(Exit Bryce)

Ashnard: Such loyalty to a corpse... In truth, there is nothing in this world more humorous than a knight.

-[Crimea Castle]-

Ike: Hey! Look out!

Elinzia: Is... Is that...

(Elinzia flies up to Ashnard)

Elinzia: ...

Ike: Elinzia, what are you doing?! Get back!

Elinzia: ...Ashnard...

Ike: Wh-what did you say? THAT is the king of Daein?!

Ashnard: Heh heh heh heh... It's been a long time, Princess Crimea.

Elinzia: ...

Ashnard: You look quite different than you did the day that I cut your father and mother down like cattle... I can hardly believe you're the same little girl who did nothing but tremble and stare at me.

Elinzia: You... You craven-- I've returned to see you defeated! I will no longer allow you to treat Crimea any way you please!

Ashnard: Haaa haa haa! How brave and noble of you. However, you are not the one I seek.

(Elinzia is hit)

Elinzia: Aaah!

Ike: Elinzia!

Ashnard: Are you the one they claim is the son of Gawain?

Ike: King Ashnard of Daein! Your treachery dies on my blade!

Ashnard: Oh ho? Ah ha ha ha haaaa! I see that blade in your hand... It is a sacred blade, is it not? The only type of blade that can pierce my armor. Hm. It matters not how famous that blade. If the wielder lacks skill, the greatest sword is nothing but blunted steel.

Ike: Don't worry. You will see for yourself how blunt it is.

Ashnard: I expect good things from you, son of Gawain. What you see before you are my elite, handpicked soldiers. How will you deal with them? I'm looking forward to watching you. Don't disappoint me!

Ike: Hold!

(Exit Ashnard)

Ike: Any of you whose arms remember what it is like to battle, step forth! I would take of your strength now!

-----[Battle Start]-----

Elincia: My lord Ike! I will go and command our forces battling Daein in the city streets... I will...see you once all is done.

Ike: Very well. Leave King Ashnard to me!

Elincia: Understood.

(Elincia leaves the battlefield)

Ena: Master Ike. In surveying the field, I believe it likely that we may incur a high rate of casualties. May I suggest calling in aid from one of the other battalions? A single warrior could make all the difference.

(Select either Tibarn/Giffca/Naesala/None)

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Bryce: ...My strength...was not enough... I could not...protect ...my homeland... Forgive me...Daein...

(End boss fight)

Ashnard: Heh heh heh heh. You've done well to have grown so strong. At last, I have gained a foe worthy enough to test my sword. Excellent! Enjoy my might to your heart's content!

-[Boss fight]-

Death Quote- Ashnard: Heh heh...excellent... Excellent! So good! More...more,

I say! At this time of ascension, it's not enough...not
enough...

(End boss fight)

Ike: Now...it is truly over.

-----[Battle End]-----

Ike: Ena, stay back! The king's mount is still alive!

Ena: ...

Ike: Stay back!

(Screen goes black)

Ike: Ena!

Elincia: No!

(End black screen)

Ike: Huh?

Ena: ...Rajaion...

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: Leanne? What is it?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: A laguz... No, it can't be. Ashnard's mount was a wyvern... Wasn't it?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: -Heron language-

Leanne: -Heron language-

Ike: What are you doing?

Reyson: Be patient, please. There's something we want to try.

Ike: Huh?

(Reyson/Leanne sing)

Rajaion: ...

Ike: Reyson...that's...

Reyson: Leanne told me that dragon's true form had been warped. So we sang the
galdr of rebirth...

Ena: Ra...Rajai...on...

Rajaion: Err...aah...

Ena: ...Rajaion? D-do you know who I am?

Rajaion: ...E... Ena?

Ena: Yes... Yes! You recognize me!

Rajaion: You were made...to suffer...because of me... I'm sorry.

Ena: ...Sniff... Rajaion! Rajaion! Oh, Rajaion...

Rajaion: ...Ena... Let's return to Goldoa. The two of us...together.

Ena: I will go anywhere, my love, as long as it is with you.

Rajaion: Ena...from this day forward... Forever... ...

Ena: ...Sniff... ...sniff... Ah, Rajaion...

Ike: He was one of the dragon tribe?

Reyson: Yes.

Leanne: -Heron language-

Mist: Hmm...

Mist: Hmmm...

Mist: Aha! Is that... Nope! Dang...

Mist: Hmm... Ah! Here it is!

Ike: What is it, Mist? Did you find something?

Mist: The medallion, Ike! The medallion! I finally...have it back...

Ike: Mist, that medallion is--

Mist: Yeah... I know. Reyson! Leanne!

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: What?

Mist: Here.

Reyson: ...Oh!

Leanne: -Heron language-

Mist: The medallion belongs in Serenes Forest. My mother...was only holding it for Lillia.

Reyson: ...Leanne, you take it.

Leanne: -Heron language-

Mist: ...

Ike: ...

Reyson: Thank you, daughter of Elena. In the memory of my departed sister... I accept the medallion from you.

Epilogue

[030]

-[Crimea Castle]-

Ike: For the past year, I've been focused on winning this war. I stand here today as a testament to your fortitude and commitment. I understand this will never suffice, but I wanted to take a moment to say something to you all. Thank you. I hope I may continue to rely on you.

Soren: Of course. I hope that I may continue to be of service.

Titania: You've grown so much... I would like nothing better than if Commander Greil and Elena could see you now...

Oscar: What a long road we've traveled! And yet, in many ways, it seemed to pass so quickly. I'm glad it's finally over.

Mist: We did well, didn't we? I'm sure Mom and Dad would be proud of us.

Boyd: Great job, Ike! Of course, if I hadn't been by your side the whole time, victory might have slipped away...

Rolf: Ike! Ike! Er... I mean, Commander Ike! I'm going to keep practicing so I can be better than ever! Thanks for having faith in me!

Rhys: Finally...it's finally over. At long last, we can return to a life without war. Praise the goddess.

Gatrie: Ike! Are we going to go back to being mercenaries? I'm a great soldier and all, but... The easygoing life of a mercenary is the only life for me. Tee hee! Now let's go find some good-looking lasses!

Shinon: ...Bah. I suppose you want some kind of congratulations now, right? Well, too bad. You're a snot-nosed whelp, and I'm still better than you. Don't ever forget that.

Mia: Heya, Boss! We did it! Whooo-hooo! You know, I am completely in love with your fighting style. If I could train under you, it would be great! So let me stick around for a while. All right?

Volke: I've no more work here. I will be leaving you shortly. If you have need of my services, you know how to reach me.

Ike: Elincia. You've had to wait a long time, but I finally fulfilled my contract. The mission is complete.

Elincia: My lord Ike... On behalf of all Crimea and my departed father,

mother, and uncle, I thank you once again...

Ike: Oh, stop! Come on, will you please stop doing that?

Elincia: Pardon?

Ike: I think I've gotten used to a few of these noble customs and whatnot, but I still can't handle the bowing. It makes me antsy...and itchy, too.

Elincia: Oh, my lord Ike... Hee hee!

Bastian: Oh, glorious day of sweet victory! Praises upon the day the goddess did see fit to send Sir Ike to save our land.

Lucia: Thank you, General Ike. Because of you, I believe we better understand how best to serve Princess Elincia.

Geoffrey: Through your strength, the dark clouds that blanketed Crimea have been dispelled. From this day forth, we will give our all to see the restoration of this land and its people.

Kieran: General, you are Crimea's savior! For your meritorious service, I salute you! Huzzah! Nay, a thousand huzzahs!

Brom: Whew! Am I glad that's over! When I saw King Daein, I was sure I was done for! Or that he'd torture me... But you were a bull! Thank you! Now I can go home and see my family once more!

Nephenee: When I get back to the countryside, I'm gonna boast to all my family and friends that I fought under you.

Calill: Largo and I are going to stay here and open up a shop.

Largo: With Crimea undergoing reconstruction, there are going to be a lot of people moving about. We'll open an inn with good food and drink. And free butter on every table! We'll be rich in no time!

Calill: We'll let you know when everything's all set up. You can drop in anytime.

Largo: We'll even give you special rates! Hmm... Maybe we should call it General Ike's Inn!

Tanith: General Ike, I will be taking my leave of you for the time being. I must return to Begnion and present a report on the war's outcome.

Ike: Aren't you going to take Begnion's soldiers with you? You lent us quite a few.

Tanith: Though the war may be over, it will take many weeks to see the country secure. I spoke with the princess earlier, and she asked that we help if possible. So I'll leave them in your care a while longer.

Ike: We really do owe Begnion a lot, don't we? In the end, we got not only you, but a whole battalion of reinforcements. General Zelgius and his troops are the reason we were able to minimize casualties during the final battle. He and his men took care of the retreating Daeins and allowed us to focus on the enemies before us.

Tanith: No matter the assistance you had, the victory itself is a result of your strength and leadership. I know two people who will be very pleased to learn of your triumph.

Ike: Please give my thanks to both the apostle and Saphiran. I plan to go and thank them myself someday, but...

Tanith: Understood. Fare well, General Ike. I look forward to seeing you again.

Ike: Fare well.

Marcia: Ike! Hey, handsome! I've decided to return to service in the Begnion pegasus knights! Cool beans, huh?! Oh, I owe so much to you, Ike. Thank you so very much! I'll see 'ya around!

Makalov: I think I may try to start over in Begnion. Maybe it's too much, too soon... But I just want to live a more responsible life. Plus I'm tired of men threatening to break my knees... Good-bye, Ike!

Astrid: Good-bye, General Ike. This war has given me the confidence to enter the service of the Begnion knights. Thank you so much!

Devdan: Devdan is glad all the fighting stopped. Devdan prefers the peace and quiet. War is not good for anything.

Tormod: ...Well, we're going home. All of our desert friends are waiting for us. And wow, do we have some stories to share with them!

Muarim: Laguz and beorc... Perhaps the gap between us has narrowed. War is horrible. Yet, maybe we've gained something of value, after all.

Stefan: Find me when you come to the dunes. We can sit and talk, with no fighting.

Ike: Are you leaving already?

Ranulf: Yep! I'm outta here. I've got some important guests to convey to the king.

Ike: Guests?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: He's talking about us. We're taking my father to visit Gallia for a while. We herons should live somewhere near a forest, after all. Tibarn spoke with King Caineghis on our behalf.

Ike: You're not returning to Serenes?

Reyson: While we made our peace with the apostle, we're not ready to live there again.

Ike: I see. You'll be able to return someday. Beorc and laguz will come to understand and respect each other.

Reyson: You may be right. I hope you are.

Giffca: Are you ready? We should be leaving soon.

Ike: Giffca, I'm in your debt as well. Gallia's a very special place to me...
I'd like to visit again someday, if I may.

Giffca: Come whenever you are able. The king will be pleased to see you. And one more thing... Gallia will not spare any effort in aiding Crimea's reconstruction. We will be sending supplies and workers to you shortly.

Ike: That is much appreciated.

Mist: Oh, wait! Reyson! Leanne!

Reyson: What is it?

Mist: Um...do you think...I could touch the medallion one last time? For my mom...and dad?

Leanne: -Heron language-

Reyson: Of course. Go ahead, put out your hand.

Mist: All right. ...Thank you very much.

Reyson: Is that enough?

Mist: Yes. I just wanted to...say good-bye.

Reyson: Thank you.

Mist: Hm?

Reyson: And you, too, Ike.

Ike: What?

Reyson: And I'd also like to give our heartfelt thanks to your parents as well. For fulfilling the hopes of our sister... Thank you.

Leanne: -Heron language-

Mist: Mmm...yes!

Mordecai: Ike! I will help rebuild Crimea, too. I will lend you much strength!

Lethe: I can't believe I'm doing this, but... I must admit that you've done well. You were a good fighter. Too good to leave with these beorc.
We'll meet again.

Tibarn: Well, it's about time for us to take wing.

Ike: We've built quite a close bond, haven't we?

Tibarn: This is true. We're especially grateful for your help in Serenes Forest. The next time you're visiting the southern coast, come to Phoenicis. The entire country will celebrate your arrival.

Ike: The country of the hawk tribe, eh? That would be fun. I'm interested in what kinds of food you eat.

Tibarn: We collect berries from trees on peaks that no beorc could climb. The juices and desserts made from it are beyond compare. We have ocean delicacies, mountain treats... We have everything.

Ike: I'll pass on the desserts... But I'll take extra helpings of meat!

Tibarn: Ha ha! Leave it to me.

Naesala: I hate to interrupt your gleeful chat, but I thought I should tell you... You don't have to visit Kilvas. It's our policy not to invite beorc into our home. Unless they pay well...

Ike: Ah, King Kilvas... Despite all of your posturing, you came to our aid in the end! You turned out to be a better ally than I dared hope for.

Naesala: Pah! Keep your foolish tongue inside your foolish head! ...And don't tell anyone! I have a reputation to think of.

Tibarn: Fare well. And I'm serious about Phoenicis, too. Come anytime!

Ulki: General, the bird tribes are in your debt. ...We are grateful. Please take care.

Janaff: If you ever have need of the king's eyes, fire a flaming arrow from a high place. I'll see it and come flying! Um, that is, if I'm not busy on an errand for the king.

Ike: ...

Jill: ...General Ike. I, I will never, ever forget you. Thank you for showing me the error of my ways.

Haar: I'm just glad that it's finally over. Maybe now, I can get some sleep. Yaaawwwnn... Zzzzzzz...

Sothe: Things are going to be rough in Daein, too. I don't know what the future holds, but I'm heading back. It's my homeland, after all.

Tauroneo: ...I have played my part. All that remains is for me to take my leave of this place. History will judge my actions...

Ilyana: Muston and the others are going to Daein, and I think I'm going to go with them. Thank you for everything, General Ike. Hmm... I hope they packed enough food... I'm pretty hungry...

Zihark: Crimea's an interesting place, but I've decided to travel to Daein. Perhaps fate will bring us together again.

-----[a]-----
Ike: How odd, Ena. We've been both enemies and allies.

Ena: Thanks to you, Rajaion was saved. And...so was I... Thank you.

Ike: So, you were with King Daein because you were trying to save Rajaion?

Ena: Yes.

Nasir: Ena's fiance went missing many years ago. After Ena finally found him, she came to me for help. She told me that Rajaion was with King Daein, and that he had been warped almost beyond recognition. Long ago, Ena's parents died, and I was unable to do anything for her. Even so, she still came to me for help. No matter what, I had to help her... It was to that end that I used you..... I am so sorry.

Ike: It's all in the past now. There's nothing for you to worry about any longer.

Nasir: Thank you, Ike.

Ike: Will Ena return to Goldoa?

Ena: Yes. We must take Rajaion back to his hometown.

Ike: We? Are you going, too, Nasir?

Nasir: Yes, I am. For the first time in decades, I will walk on Goldoan soil.

Ike: That'll be nice. Take care of yourself. And give my regards to Kurthnaga.

Ena: I will. Until we meet again.

Ike: Nasir!

Nasir: Hm?

Ike: I don't know what you thought, but I... I always trusted you. Except for that one moment when I learned of your deception, I never thought of you as an enemy.

Nasir: Huh. Even now you defy my prediction.

Ike: Prediction?

Nasir: When we were sailing off the coast of Phoenicis, remember? I said that war would change how you look at things. And yet... Through all that's happened, you've remained the same.

Ike: I just can't pretend to be anything I'm not. I've never been any good at that.

Nasir: Please stay that way, Ike. Don't change for anyone.

Ike: I'll see you again, won't I?

Nasir: Yes, I'm sure of it.

-----[b]-----

Ike: How odd, Ena. We've been both enemies and allies.

Ena: Thanks to you, Rajaion was saved. And...so was I... Thank you.

Ike: So, you were with King Daein because you were trying to save Rajaion?

Ena: Yes. Rajaion is the most important thing in my...life... Some nineteen years ago, he said he wanted to broaden his knowledge and left Goldoa. He ...never...returned... When I finally found him, it was too late. He had been so twisted that he was no longer able to recognize me. And yet... I wanted to be near him... With Nasir's help, I, too, came to Daein...
...Oh, Grandfather...

Ike: Maybe it's because I never saw his body, but...it doesn't feel like Nasir's really dead. It's like he's out there somewhere.

Ena: Have you forgiven him?

Ike: He does not need my forgiveness. Except for that one moment when I learned of his deception... I never thought of him as an enemy.

Ena: That's good.

Ike: Are you returning to Goldoa, Ena?

Ena: Yes. I must help Rajaion return to his hometown.

Ike: Take care. Give my regards to Kurthnaga.

Ena: Thank you. I will.

Narration: The war is over. The Crimean people, who suffered gravely during the harsh Daein occupation, have at last regained their freedom. These same Crimeans have a saying: "No matter how harsh the winter, spring will ever follow." This popular proverb proves true as the warm winds of change begin to blow across the countryside. The war has left the country in ruins, but the people rise from the ashes and take the first steps towards rebuilding their nation. Though once scorned and despised as sub-humans, the laguz put aside past enmity and come to the aid of their neighbours. And the Crimeans never forget it was Gallia that fought beside them and helped free them from the yoke of Daein oppression. Led by the examples of Elincia and her retainers, Crimea begins transforming into the land its king had dreamed of. A land where beorc and laguz live together in harmony and equality. As the reconstruction efforts progress, the administrative government announces the enthronement of Elincia as the new queen. And now, the day of her crowning arrives.

-[Crimea Castle]-

Mist: Hah... I'm so tired I could fall over! Peace is all well and good, but it sure is busy.

Ike: We're rebuilding a country that was completely devastated by war. It's bound to be tough.

Mist: You're right. I bet Princess Elincia and the people in the palace are twice as busy.

Ike: Speaking of Elincia, what's she doing?

Mist: She's in that room over there, surrounded by court officials. They seem really busy. I feel so sorry for her.

Ike: As long as she's getting at least a little bit of rest, I'm not worried. But she probably isn't...

Mist: Maybe if I sang her a lullaby... Ah! Oh, no! I forgot!

Ike: You forgot what?

Mist: I gave the medallion to Reyson, but I forgot all about the galdr! Ike, what should we do?!

Ike: Hey, yeah... We never did find out who Altina is, did we? She was the only one who could sing the galdr... Well, when things calm down, we'll have to head out and search for her.

Unknown: Is that Altina you speak of? One of the three who defeated the dark god?

(Enter Sephiran)

Mist: Hey!

Ike: Sephiran! So you made it, did you?

Sephiran: I arrived mere moments ago. Let me congratulate you on a successful end to your journey.

Ike: Thank you. Please tell me, do you know who Altina is?

Sephiran: Of course. Altina founded my homeland of Begnion.

Ike: Oh, then it was a mistake... We can't give a song to someone who died so long ago...

Sephiran: There is one who yet shares both bloodline and name-- the true heir of Altina.

Ike: Who is it?

Sephiran: Sanaki Kirsch Altina... None other than the apostle herself.

Ike: The apostle? Is this something that everyone in Begnion would be aware of?

Sephiran: No, there are very few who know that name. Why do you ask?

Ike: The apostle is Altina...

Mist: Oh, I'm so relieved! And exhausted, too! Ike, I'm going back to my room. See you later, Sephiran.

(Exit Mist)

Sephiran: That was rather sudden. Did I say something to cause her distress?

Ike: ...No, nothing like that. It's just that so much has happened between Begnion and Serenes...

Sephiran: Would you tell me about it? I would hear what you have to say on this matter.

Ike: Sure. To tell the truth...

Sephiran: I see... The assassination of the apostle, the Serenes massacre, the use of the medallion to revive the dark god... All of it was part of Ashnard's grand scheme.

Ike: That's the conclusion we came to.

Sephiran: ...You have me at a loss.

Ike: Why is that?

Sephiran: For many years, I have walked these lands. Watching... Listening... And never did I uncover what you have found. Now that you have presented me with this information, I don't know what to say.

Ike: I merely fulfilled the hopes of my father and mother.

Sephiran: Now you speak from hindsight. Rescuing Princess Crimea, winning the apostle's trust, and defeating King Daein... With laguz at your side, no less! You have accomplished all of these miraculous things.

Ike: I had trusted and valiant companions at my side. It was only through their support that I was able to do these things.

Sephiran: Ever the humble one, eh? Now then, before I return home, may I hear the galdr of release? I must convey it to the apostle.

Ike: You would do that?

Sephiran: None of you can leave Crimea. The new queen will need your strength.

Ike: ...I suppose that will be the case for a little while, won't it?

Sephiran: ...A little while? You are the hero of Crimea, General Ike. If you wish it, no post will be beyond your reach.

Ike: I don't care about any of that. It's more trouble than it's worth. And I don't see the value in being some fancy lord. When the country's safe, I'm giving up that title and everything and going back to being a simple mercenary.

Sephiran: Ha ha... T-truly...you are a... Wha ha ha ha ha!

Ike: Is something strange?

Sephiran: Yes. It's very... Haaaa ha ha haaaa!

Ike: Um, I think that's enough.

Sephiran: I'm... I'm s-s-sorry. ...Hee! Hee... Ahem...

Ike: Unbelievable. Despite all appearances, you're really quite rude.

(Enter Titania)

Titania: Commander? May I have a minute?

Ike: Sure. What is it, Titania?

Titania: Princess Elincia... Oops! It's Queen Elincia, isn't it? The court ministers want Queen Elincia and you to come out onto the balcony and greet the people.

Ike: What? Greet the people? ...Me?

Titania: Yes, you. I've done what I was asked to do! Now hurry up and get going!

(Exit Titania)

Ike: H-hey! Titania! Ah, nuts! Why do I... What's going on?

Sephiran: The people of Crimea wish to see their hero and to sing his praises -- even if the hero himself protests.

Ike: If they want a greeting, surely their new queen, Elincia, would suffice. I'll go speak to her.

(Exit Ike)

Sephiran: ...Thus do heroes give birth to new chapters in history... Ike, I doubt if you've even noticed... Your story, the everyday mercenary who becomes a hero will awake ugly appetite and ambition in many. It will be the cause of strife and discord throughout the land. I'm certain Ashnard saw the truth in this. In a way, Ashnard's dream may have been fulfilled. The seeds of war have indeed been sewn across the continent. It appears your trials are just beginning, my gallant, young hero... May the goddess ride with you.

(Cut Scene -> "United")

===== [Fin] =====