

**1-PEÓNU-720 TERNUA, KALDOR**

4TH WATCH [WARM, PARTLY CLOUDY, SOUTHWEST GALE,  
LIGHT RAIN]

At the start of the fourth watch, the ship pulls up at the wharf of the village of Ternua. The captain says, "this is where we will be spending the night and, since tomorrow is all fools day, we will be here a couple of days. Once you find lodging send word to me at the Silver Mead club where I will stay until you are ready to leave."

Lady Amyleryn turns to Sir Terias and Sir Herot to say, "Shall we find out about the hospitality of the local manor lord?" winking at Lorard, Felada and Tarim, she adds, "for us and our retainers?"

"Aye m'lady, then come morning try and find this Evelice of Jarquane.", Terias says in response. He shifts his pack and smiles, looking around the vicinity of the village after stepping off the boat."

From the wharf, Terias can see a road that curves north to the left and the bend in the road blocks his view after four or five buildings. Another road branches off to the right just before the fifth house on the right. He can see a sign of an apothecary on the second house on the left and the sign of a metalsmith on the second house on the right."

Upon seeing the sign of the apothecary shop Lorard's face lights up and he says, "Terias, Please continue ahead without me for a space. I see a shop of an apothecary and I must go check out what supplies are available and also check with the local master for any local news. I will catch up with you in just a little bit." Lorard heads toward the shop and enters if it is open for business.

"Aye maybe he'll be able t'tell y'what those two mixtures I gave you are for.", the Matakea says with a grin as Lorard takes off.

Lorard finds the shop closed and nobody answers his knock. Checking his purse, he counts 132d. Looking around, he notices one or two of the villagers eyeing him greedily as he counts his money.

Herot says in a low voice, "When you travel, at night in your bedchamber before you sleep is the time to count your money or you may end up with a lot less to count."

casting a wary eye upon the watching men, Lorard says " Well said Sir Herot, I forgot that people from the countryside are really no different than city dwellers when it comes to someone flashing loose coin around"--

"Hopefully it is a lesson learned through forbearance rather than bad experience," Herot says with a smile, "although, it has been my experience that those in the country are more trusting of their fellowmen since they know everyone they come across. Granted those in the country are much less trusting of strangers."

"... And food, too," adds Tarim. "If there's good eating amongst all those crates," he points from shore back up to the ship, "the captain's been slow to unpack it. I'm as glad to be ashore for my belly as my feet." He springs forward to catch the others disembarked.

When Terias walks up the lane from the docks, Tarim studies the Matakea's shoes. Tarim hangs back a bit from the others and looks about for a cobbler as the group winds through the village.

Terias' shoes still look stiff from newness, after only being worn one or two days, Tarim can see the sign of a hideworker on the first building on the left, next to the wharf, but he can see no indication of specializing as a cobbler. He can see none other as they walk along the road.

When Terias is several paces ahead, Tarim ducks through the doorway of the hideworker. "Good day!" he calls out inside, and when answered, describes Terias' shoes with as much accuracy as he can muster.

"I'm looking to have a pair of them made." He selects a scrap from the counter. "They're this sort of color, and stiffness. They don't need to be fancy, but the thing is, I, er, need them by tonight, and er, both for the left foot."

Snatching the leather from Tarim's grasp, the hideworker says, "Get your paws off the goods. You can take your business elsewhere, I have no time for such jests. If you want shoes, I suggest you go to the cobbler which is north along Tashal road. Now be on your way."

"My apologies, and my good wishes for the day." Tarim bows slightly and heads out.

Tarim follows whichever direction Terias goes, once he discovers if the hideworker can make two left shoes by that evening.

The Matakea rubs the back of his neck glancing about then states, "I can't see any manner that stands out. I suggest we try left." He makes to move in that direction after speaking.

Following the road north, Terias passes another metalsmith, a tavern with the face of a smiling man on the sign, a small temple of Peoni, a Cartwright, a cooper, a stable, a Chandler, a tailor, a mason, a cobbler and as many unmarked buildings, at which point he reaches the end of the buildings with the road continuing past the village boundary marker, north through the countryside.

The leisurely stroll through the town seems to relax the newly knighted priest. Once he nears the end of the village, he turns to the others and remarks, "T'was a nice way to stretch ones legs. Being on the boat an' stuck in the Baron's manor was stilflin'. Suppose the sensible thing t'do would be t'ask someone." At that point he begins walking back and along the way he'll politely stop and ask someone, "Pardon me, would y'happen t'know where the local manor is?"

"Certainly Sir. My name is Mafiden of Pivimnon and I am a physician by training. I am headed that way myself to offer my services to this village. I can guide you but first I need to find someone willing to act as my second in a duel as this man," he points out a man armed with a shortsword, "has insulted my wife and I seek satisfaction. I am a stranger in town so I know no body. Would you be willing to act as a second? – you being of the gentry, I know you can be trusted to see it is a fair fight."

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Upon hearing the request the Laranian knight grows quiet serious. He glances at the other man with a curt nod and back to Mafiden, "Aye, I shall. The name is Terias of Forniad. What are the conditions of the duel? And where is the 'field of honor'?"

"As my second, you are to decide that with his second," he answers.

The other man, wails with a desperate look on his face, "if your second is gentry, mine has to be gentry as well." Turning to Herot, he asks, "Can you be my second, sir?"

With a broad smile, Herot says, "sure, why not. This could be fun."

For one of the first times in their many exchanges, Terias doesn't return the jest with his mercenary friend now knight, instead he states frankly, "This is a serious charge Herot. Our first task is t'get these two to settle their dispute civilly before allowing the duel t'start. My choice past that is t'end it on first blood with the victor taking an apology. What say you?"

"Oh, aye. Ending it without bloodshed is my choice as well. If I recall, I believe we were told that duels should be settled in the morning rather than in the heat of the night just to give the principles time to reflect on the value of settling it without anger. Especially where a lady's honor is involved and her feelings are not known. Else the winner may find he has lost the lady's favor anyways by being injured and not being able to attend to her pleasures," Herot says, At the stern look on Terias' face, he continues, "Aye, you are probably right in that I look too hard for pleasure and mirth but that is my lady's charge to me. Let us try to talk some sense into these knuckleheads."

"M'lords, forgive me for speaking here," says Tarim quietly, "but Herot's... sorry, Sir Herot's, I'm learning... Sir Herot's man looks altogether anxious to avoid a fight. Perhaps with a nudge, he'll explain the offense, and maybe even offer amends?"

The Matakea looks to his squire and nods curtly in response to his words.

Building on what Tarim and Herot just mentioned, Terias says in a lower voice, "Perhaps a dose of fear t'get them t'see sense eh?"

The Laranian Knight steps forward and says to the two men willing to duel, "It is settled then. Come rise of Nolomar you two will duel. We've decided the fairest measure is by first blood. T'is nay as simple as it sounds and could likely mean death. No matter how skilled a swordsman may be they can't control everything in battle. Tonight you will have the chance t'pray to whoever you worship, say goodbye to your loved ones and prepare for the next life. This will also give us time to gather three witnesses. You'll have two chances to settle this with words. Now while I speak with Herot and at the field tomorrow." His gaze shifts slowly over the men with a somber demeanor.

Terias then turns back to Herot, half listening to the two men as he mentions, "As Mafiden's second I will ensure he arrives on the morrow and does not break the accord. Herot I suggest you gather what information you can from your man to do the same."

Herot turns to the man and says, "Now who are you and what did you say that offended his wife."

Looking a bit pale, he answers, "My name is Eochofar of Ulmauldur and I heard in the Happy Man tavern that his wife was charged as a lierwife in the village they came from. I did not mean to offend. I just had a little extra money to spend so I asked her how much she charged for the night."

"Oh Ho," says Herot, "My advice to you is for you both to think over the consequences of you actions during the night and then show up in the morn and give him a sincere apology. Do not even think of running because then I would have to come after you and I am new to this dueling business. I would most likely kill you where you stand. Next time be more careful of what tavern rumors you believe and only proposition women working in the taverns. They can better handle such propositions or are at least more used to them."

The man nods silently and says, "Yes, Sir. I will do as you say."

"Right then," says Herot, "that settles that." Turning to Terias he continues, " Shall we off to find the manor and our dinner?"

"Indeed", Terias says as he motions to Mafiden, "Please goodman, if you would lead the way."

The physician leads the way back to the cross roads, turns left past a large red barn, a potter, a fishmonger, a boatwright, a silversmith, a rope maker, a tanner and inn with a silver mug on the sign. At the end of the row of houses towards the east, you come to a large manor. Lady Amyleryn approaches the gate keeper and says, "Good day, we are noble travelers and would like to inquire regarding your lord's hospitality."

"One moment, if you please," he says and ducks inside the building. A short time later he returns to say, "My lord welcomes you as his guests and bids you enter. Whom may I say is calling?"

"I am the Lady Amyleryn Odasart recently guest of the Earl of Balimshire."

After Amyleryn presents herself, Terias speaks up, "And I, Matakea Terias of Forniad - Ataken to the Order of the Lady of Paladins. Knight to the Earl, in service to Lady Odasart."

Herot says, "I am Herot of Falin also knight to the Ealr and in service to the Lady." Waving vaguely at Lorard and Tarim, he says, "These are Lorard of Bassill, journey apothecary, tasked by the Earl to tend to our medical needs. Tarim of Gidall, recently esquired to Sir Tarim. And, finally, Mafiden of Pivimnon, master physician who is seeking service to your liege."

"Very good," says the porter, "Lady and gentlemen, if you would be so good as to follow me." He leads the way into the great hall where places are being set for dinner to be served and there are several folks seated around the tables. The porter says, "May I present, Lady Amyleryn Odasart, Sir Terias Forniad, Sir Herot Falin, Lorard of Bassill, Tarim of Gidall and Mafiden of Pivimnon."

The man at the center of the head table stands and says, "Welcome folks, I am lord Klarben Verdreth, the man next to me is Sir Isild Verdreth my bailiff and brother, Sir Yarnuasid Glarovigal my squire, Lady Alease Verdreth my wife, and Welema of Cemaer priestess of Larani."

"Well met and my thanks having us in yer fine home Lord Verdreth.", Terias says with a precise bow to the nobles present.

To one of the servants he says, prepare a place next to my brother to share his cup with Lady Odasart, next to my wife to share her cup with Sir Forniad, Sir Falin can share his cup with the priestess, and ask Judaalice of Hem, our cook to share cup with Goodman Gidall, and Lena of Jykseballer, our alewife to share cup with Goodman Bassill, and Muen of Cadreess, our lady's physician, to share her cup with master Pivimnon."

The servant runs off and returns a short time later with three women in tow. A rather portly woman sits next to Tarim, a mature woman with a reddish nose sits next to Lorard and a very thin woman sits next to Mafiden.

The first course is served which is leeks with walnuts as an appetizer.

For those that know him, when the meal is served the Knight Cleric is stiff and trying his best to be formal around Alease when it comes to table manners. But he enjoys the first course all the same, munching down on the walnuts contently.

As the second course is being served, rota (a barley fruit soup) accompanied by cocket (cheap white bread) and beer (light amber color, enticing citric aroma, full texture, sweetish malty flavor, and nutty aftertaste), the Manor Lord says to a servant, "please have rooms prepared for our guests" and then he returns his attention to his conversation with his brother regarding the advantages of different types of lures when hawking.

Lady Verdreth says to Sir Terias, "If I may ask, what is the purpose of your journey through our fair town and how has your travel been so far?"

The bailiff says to Lady Odasart, "and how fairs the Earl? Well I hope."

Lady Odasart replies, "Yes, very well as it is. However, I hope you will understand when I say that we are not at liberty to speak of the Earl's business."

"Of course, that is only proper," answers Sir Isild.

Terias chews contently on the cocket and seems to enjoy the ale he was served. After the exchange on the groups business, the Matakea turns to Lady Verdreth, "Aye while we can't talk about specifics, there's no harm in mentioning why we're here. Especially if y'know of the person that we're looking to speak with. T'is Evelice of Jarquane."

"Evelice of Jarquane?" Lady Verdreth repeats, "I believe that is the apothecary whose shop is down by the river. Is that not right, cook? You buy cooking herbs from her do you not?"

"Yes, my lady. What is it you wish of her? Is someone in need of the physician? If so we have one right here." The cook answers nodding down the table.

Piping up, Terias mentions to the cook, "Nay, nay. We simply seek an audience with her before we continue on our way tomorrow.". He then dips his head to Alease, "My thanks for the information m'lady."

Matakea Welema says to Herot, "Have you and your companion been in service to the Earl for over long." At Herot's look of distress, she continues, "Oh, worry not I know you are also not allowed to tell tails."

With his ever ready smile, Herot says, "Not for long but it has been good service so far. And I am allowed to tell tails as long as they are not required to be the truth."

Judaalice asks Tarim, "How do you like the food? If you let me know of any preferences, I will see what I can do for you."

Tarim looks up, his mouth stuffed and cheeks full. "Er, if em.." He swallows with effort, and clears his throat. "Ah, wonderful, ma'am, just wonderful."

He takes a sip of beer and sighs with content. "I nearly lost my appetite on the boat - my first time on one, you know - and I'm ever grateful to have it back."

He sops the last bit of rota with a crust of bread, then pauses to see the Judaalice's reaction at his gesture. "You, er, wouldn't have any more good cooking that would stand the rigors of travel? To stave off hunger while on that ship? The food there's thin, and my master," he nods toward Terias, "all respect to him, eats like a bird. I could use any fortifying you can spare."

"Ah, there is the trick, is it not? In preserving food to stand the rigors of travel, as you say, it loses much of its taste. How soon do you plan on leaving? You have just arrived and, if your stay is for a while I may be able to put something together. Of course it will not be as good as a home cooked meal but it will sustain you," the cook answers.

Lena asks to Lorard, "is the beer to your liking? It is one of my better vintages."

Lorard says, "Aye, this good. I've not had one that tastes just like this though. It's different than the beers I'm used to, I could get to liking this a lot. It's to bad we can't take several small kegs with us. I would also like to compliment the cook on preparing this wonderful food. I wish I could take samples of everything with us when we leave, but know that is not possible and it would be a horrible imposition. Ah for some journey cakes to break up the monotony of salt pork and hard tack."

The alewife says, "I have some hogsheads set aside [ooc: 8 gallons] but I could not simply give them to you. They would have to be replaced at the inn in town. I could sell some to you for 72d each."

The cook says, "Thank you for your complements. By the Earl's leave I will make some journeycakes for you on the marrow once I can get the ingredients at the morning market."

Turning to address the alewife, Lorard says, " I would not think of abusing his lordships hospitality by asking for such for free. this beer is a heady brew and seems to have scramble my whits. I will take you up on your offer for 1 hogshead though. As soon as as we figure out how long we will be staying then you can arrange for delivery to our boat." turning to the cook, " And you madame please allow me to compensate you in some small measure for your offer of the journey cakes. Please let me know what I can do." Taking another swig of beer, " Oh dear me I

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seem to be in my cups this brew is a mighty one indeed." Starts singing lowly to himself " One misty moisty morning when cloudy was the weather...."--

The alewife replies, "remind me again when you are ready to leave and we will take care of it at that time."

The cook says with a pained look on her face apparently caused by Lorard's singing, "I will let you know once I find out what they cost and you can recompense my costs. How many do you think you will need?"

Lorard says, "three or four if it be not to much of burden, if it is then either one or two"

"Very well, I will plan on a cask, thirty two gallons, for 250d. You do like your beer do you not," the alewife says with a smile.

Lorard says, "no, no you misheard me or I misspoke, one or the other, I would like one small keg say 2 gallons and for the cook if possible to make 3 or 4 journey cakes. As much as I like my beer, my purse won't let me enjoy it much. It says I'm to much of a spendthrift and must curb my shopping habits"

"Like I said before, we can settle when you are ready to depart but I have no barrel smaller than a hogshead which is eight gallons," the alewife says, "If you want less than that you will have to take it by the bucketful and bring your own buckets."

The entrées are now served and a choice of roste (beef roast with crisps), pyke en doucette (smoked pike salad in pastry), and vyand de ciprys ryalles (spiced minced chicken relish) is placed before you with more bread and beer accompanied by vegetable: amyndoun seaw (a vegetable gruel).

Tarim says, "Ah, I believe we're on our way tomorrow, but you've done more this one night to sustain me than I'd get in a week on the boat. My many thanks to you, ma'am!"

The Earl pauses in his conversation with his brother to say, "Would anyone care to entertain us with a song?"

As the choices are listed, the Matakea mulls them over before deciding on the beef for his main course. After the Earl asks the table for music, says, "I've my lute with me if you would like to hear that m'lord. The song I know best is one I wrote myself. It comes in part from a Laranian hymn - it's rather somber, but I find it uplifting."

He first strums the lute to give a quick tuning, then begins. The tempo is slow and smooth and the sound resonates throughout the room. Terias' own voice laces the melody with his own humming, but never quite sings.

Tarim closes his eyes to listen, and stops chewing. He sways slightly, as if praying.

After Terias' feeble attempt at singing and lute playing, The Earl clears his throat and says, "Erm, yes, thank you for your effort on our behalf but with all due respect I would suggest you get more practice in private."

Terias simply nods in acceptance and immediately ceases his playing, laying his lute back by his pack.

Finally, the dessert is served, faun tempere (gilli flower pudding) and a final round of beer.

Lady Amyleryn says, "I am afraid my companions speak without thinking. Our business here may require us to impose upon your hospitality for a few days if we are unable to find the apothecary on the marrow. That is, of course, by your leave."

"Certainly," says the Earl, "stay as long as you need."

To Sir Terias, Lady Verdreth says, "Your song was a bold display of your courage. I am sure that, like my husband says, with sufficient practice you will get better."

"My thanks m'lady. The lute t'was a gift from my parents just before their death. And I strum and fiddle with it to remember them. I know I am by no means an accomplished bard. T'is only my second time playing to public, so I'll take his words to mind. But when hospitality and kindness are granted by someone such as your husband and yourself and entertainment is called for, t'would have been rude to ignore it .. especially with the instrument laid out in plain sight.", Terias says softly and with a smile.

"By all means, you should continue to practice as that is the only way to get better at it," she says, "and if you do not feel up to a public performance, you can decline with an apology without being thought rude."

As he's nodding in response to the Lord's wife, Terias winces upon hearing Lorard singing and mentions, "Seeing what I've inspired and having a taste of it - I'd be saving those around me their ears too." A sheepish grin escapes the Matakea's lips.

Once the dessert is finished, Terias looks over to Welema and inquires with a look of hope etched in his face, " Matakea, is there a chapel in town or do you serve here at the manor? Come morning I would like to attend prayer."

"No, I serve here at the manor," the Matakea answers, "There is a chapel in the manor which you are free to use when you are ready as long as you respect other worshipers and disturb them not. I will tend to their needs when they are ready."

After dinner and drinks are finished, you are shown to your rooms where you will sleeping tonight.

After removing his leathers and settling into bed, Terias takes out his sketchbook and a quill. First he begins to quickly jot down the days events, but ends up spending more time sketching in the margins Josriath's boat and Lady Alease.

### **2-PEÓNU-720 TERNUA, KALDOR**

2ND WATCH [COOL, CLOUDY, NORTHWEST STORM, LIGHT RAIN]  
You awaken the next day to the sound of the howling wind and the light pattering of rain.

Terias' dreams of Lorard's nausea from being too far into his cups on the night before and Terias feels nausea as well, even though he had less to drink.

"Dekejis' balls", Terias groans as he leans over his bed side clasp his head. He slowly his limber frame from the mattress and dressed himself while gazing outside. True to form, the Matakea made his way to the chapel to sit in prayer, and help ease the nausea of the morning.

Tarim folds his shirt and pants with care, and places his shoes against the wall, toes aligned. He leans his sack against the post and gets into bed.

Tarim dreams of Lorard's nausea from being too far into his cups on the night before and Terias feels nausea as well, even though he had less to drink.

When you are ready to come to the common room, you find kippers, quail eggs, soft cheese, blackberries, rice and hard apple cider being served to break your fast.

Tarim walks slowly into the common room, and seats himself even more gently. He takes a bit of each food, glances at the cider, and turns to eating without filling his cup.

Focusing solely on the cheese, blackberries and rice, Terias washes it down with a few light sips of the cider. Then when he's finished with the food the Matakea says, "Another grand meal, m'lord."

Lorard has a hangover, as he expected, but it very quickly clears up and he is feeling very well this morning.

Lady Amyleryn enters the great hall, as ever followed by her servant Felada. At the strong odor of the soft cheese (OCC: think limburger), her complexion turns a bit purple and she says, "What is that awful stench? First an undeserved hangover and now this. Sir Herot is this one of your overripe fish you were telling about? Let us be on our way post haste to find the apothecary. I think I will soon need her services."

With a pained smile, Sir Herot says, "No, milady, it was only a minstrel's tale and meant for naught."

The comment from Amyleryn about the hangover reaches Terias' ear and he perks up. First he stands and offers her a proper bow, then mentions "M'lady, Herot and I have the duel t'oversee first thing, if y'remember. And we need witnesses t'oversee it. Nay t'mention if the two go through with it they'll probably be in need of healing if they're nay dead. Might we visit the apothecary right after?"

"Yes, certainly," she says, "duties of the gentry come first."

Coming down to the common room Lorard grabs a trencher and puts some kippers, eggs, cheese on it and takes a goblet to cider. "good morrow to you all"

"You are entirely too cheerful for such an ugly morning," says Lady Amyleryn, "Leave it to an apothecary to have a hangover cure and then keep it to himself."

In response to Amyleryn, Terias mentions, "Aye well from the sounds of it, he's found a way t'share in his misery. I had a dream 'bout Lorard in his cups and woke up worse fer wear, same as yourself Lady Odasart."

Lorard, looking at Terias and Lady Amylern strangely, says " Dream, hangover cure, I'm afraid I don't know what you are referring to. I don't remember having a dream with either of you present, nor did I take any cure this morning. If you needed one you should have sent some one to fetch me and I would gladly make one for you"

There's no hint of joking in his voice when the Laranian Knight turns to Mafiden and asks, "Have had a change of heart or y'made peace with yer god, wife and affairs?"

"I have not," he says forcefully, "I still demand satisfaction from that cur. Although I will accept an apology if it is offered."

At that moment the chamberlain answers a knock at the door and returns to say, "My lord, there is a man at the door claiming to be Eochofar of Ulmauldur and asking to speak with the physician, Mafiden of Pivimnon."

"Show him in," says the manor lord.

Eochofar comes in and says, "I offer my heartfelt apology and claim it was all due to a misunderstanding. If you can see yourself to forgiving me, I can assure you it will not happen again."

Mafiden says, "Nicely said. If my second has no objection, I think we can consider this concluded and be on our way. Sir Terias?"

"Some people oft think The Lady of Paladins and Her follows are eager for battle to resolve problems, but they forget her title is that of 'The Unwilling Warrior'. Disputes are best handled through words. And today you both showed great courage and restraint in that regard. Aye the matter's concluded." Terias pronounces formally. He then adds, "If either of you are interested in joining the faith please feel free to speak with me this eve."

Turning on his heel, the Matakea turns to Amyleryn, "We are ready to depart m'lady."

You leave the manor and go through the village back to the wharf. Just before you get there, on the right hand side you see a diamond-shaped green sign with the pomegranate of the apothecary. Approaching the shop you see a smashed window and looking inside there are signs of a commotion.

Tarim lifts his hand to feel the hilt of his sword, then lets it fall back by his side. Turning to Terias, he says, "Sire, I don't know what's what, but it's calling for our help."

"Aye t'is.", Terias says grimly, his hand instinctively reaching for the hilt of his sword. He turns his head towards Lorard speaking quickly, "Let up a hue and cry fer the town guard." As the Laranian Knight begins to move for the door, he says to Amyleryn, "I'll nay stop you from attending t'this m'lady, but if your hip's nay back t'full health it may be wise t'remain with the alchemist. The rest of us will try t'stop or contain it. Herot move 'round back t'make sure they don't rush out any doors on the other side."

Lorard, looking around for something to bang on to create a loud noise, says, "Huzzah, Huzzah, call for the beadle as there is foul play afoot, Huzzah, Huzzah" Lorard shouts this while running towards the nearest buildings

"Aye," Sir Herot says as he readies his own weapons and looks to either side of the building. There is enough room that he can squeeze by – just – so he moves around the right side to this back.

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Lady Amyleryn says, "I am fine." As she readies her mace and roundshield and positions herself to protect Sir Terias' back.

A number of people gather about mostly armed with shortswords, clubs and various tools. One of them says, "Etes! Fetch the beadle." And "Etes" runs off down the road in the direction of the manor. The speaker continues, "What is all this ruckus and who the blazes are you people?"

Lorard says, "I and my companions are guests of his lordship and have just come from the manor to do some shopping in your fine town. As we approached the apothecary shop we noticed that its door was askew and the windows broken. My companions being knights went to investigate while I was tasked with getting help and for calling the beadle."

"He has been sent for and will arrive shortly," one of the crowd says.

Once at the door, he holds up his left hand in a fist, then listens for a moment trying to ascertain what's going on, how many people are inside and where they are positioned. Once he's done that he'll try to open the door and step inside.

He hears nothing inside and the door opens easily – the latch or lock appears to be smashed. Just as he steps inside he can see someone or something in the shadows rush off into the second room. He cannot tell who or what it is but it was approximately three feet tall. The room is in disarray with herbs, smashed potion bottles and papers scattered over the floor. One of the papers looks more rumpled and aged than the others.

Tarim pulls the shield from around his back and draws his sword. He crouches as he moves forward with Terias and Lady Amyleryn.

The disarray sends Terias eyes scanning the room, when he spots the short shadow dash off, he calls out in a booming voice, "Halt!" and chases off after it drawing his sword in the process. On his way into the other room he orders, "Tarim make sure no ones injured. Then get the alchemist in quickly t'see nothing explodes from this mess".

Sir Terias reaches the door just in time to see the figure enter a dark doorway across the room which appears to be the entrance to a cellar.

The Laranian Knight continues to the pursuit, looking for a torch just as he steps to the cellar door. "We'll probably need a light. If there's a nay torch here, Lady Odasart would y'be willing to provide one like last time?", Terias asks without looking back, his attention focused down the stairs as he moves.

Lady Amyleryn lays her mace and shield on the floor long enough to light her lantern with flint and steel and to speak a strange sort of gibberish and make hand gestures. A minute later, her lantern suddenly begins glowing brightly. Lady Amyleryn recovers her weapons and, juggling weapons and lantern, carefully steps toward the cellar entrance.

The sudden light as Sir Terias rushes down the cellar steps causes him to trip over a broken step and fall six feet to the cellar floor. He bruises his right elbow but, in spite of the pain, he maintains his grip on his weapon and does not cause further damage. He looks up from his prone position into the terrified face of a young girl of about ten summers.

"Please, do not kell me, gaffer. E have doane naun wroang," she wails.

A groan escapes Terias lips as he moves to sit up, but not stand. He says in response to the scared child, "We're here t'help lass, nay harm ye. Are ye alright? Nay harms fallen on you?"

In a sobbing voice she says, "E am unharmed. E hed untel the bad men went away."

Immediately he interrupts himself and calls over shoulder, "Lady Odasart, watch the steps, one of them is in ill repair." The Matakea's blue eyes glance back to the girl and he smiles reaching his left hand to her.

"Are you injured or in danger?" Lady Amyleryn asks.

"Just a bruise on my elbow and ego for tripping down the stairs. I'm with a brave little girl. We'll be up in a moment", Terias says in kind to Amyleryn.

The Laranian Knight mentions to the little girl, "From outside we heard sounds of a scuffle, saw the broken window and the damage done in the shop. Why'd you run when we called out t'halt? What was going on in here?"

"Two men came yesterday and yelled eat my aunt. Den dey started drowing denges around and den took aunt Evelece away. E hed en de cellar and just came aout to-di to si ef E caould fend some food. E am deat lear."

Tarim says, "M'lord, you've found the only injured party still here. And Lorard has quickly sorted the mess of potions and herbs." He pauses to admire the glowing lantern Amyleryn set alight. "But now I'm confused about what's what. When was the poor girl's aunt taken? If it was yesterday, what scuffling did we hear? And if it was now, is there a chance we might find her aunt still underway, close by the shop?"

Sir Forniad nods as he listens, "You did right t'hide little one. But what do you mean 'deat lear'?"

Rubbing her stomach she says with a frown, "Yaou kner E have not had anydeng to eeat fa two whole days."

Terias stands to full height and rotates out his right arm gingerly, then introduces himself in a kind voice, "My name is Terias Forniad - I'm a knight and priest in service to Larani. We'll get you fed and cleaned. Then see to helping yer aunt."

"Dank yaou kindly, gaffer," she says.

Not wanting to worry the girl further he sheathes his sword and kneels down offering, "Let me help you up the stairs. In the mean time is there anything more y'can tell me? What the men looked like, or dressed like, what they were after or maybe where they were taking your aunt?"

"My name es lynefe. Dey looked leke any oder folks except kend of feign. Dressed leke dose deat are wed yaou. E kner not wheat dey were arter a where dey went to. E was too afeard to tend dem oll oane dey left. Ef dey saw me dere was no telling wheat dey waould have doane," she answers wide eyed.

.With the girl in his arms the Matakea carefully heads back to the top of the stairs, nodding to Amyleryn and saying, "M'lady, if Lorard's done his duty they'll be a crowd outside. We should

go an' let'em know what happened before they make up their own mind, aye?"

\* \* \*

Upon entering the shop Lorard scans the mess with a look of shock upon his face "Ye gods what a mess, It will take at least 2 candle marks to straighten this up. Someone should send word the Guild master in Kaldor about this" He then proceeds to picking up the various papers and putting them in some semblance of order as well trying to separate the various herbs and powders that have not been to well mixed together. He glanced at the brownish colored paper briefly and sets it aside as it appears to be something other than normal shop and guild business records.

Among the herbs he finds, 6 doses each of Adder's Tongue, All-Heal, Crowfoot, Guardrobe, Hazel, Quessel, Rosemary, Sarajin's Nuts, and Tirageyth; and 5 doses each of, Agrik's Eye, Earth Smoke, Garlic, Habsulara, Marjoram, Nightshade, Old Lady, Sage, Sorrel, and Violet.

Among the already mixed potions he finds colorless threads #42, milky granules #43, a black liquid #44, a brown liquid #45, a colourless oil #46, white crystals #47, a brown liquid #48, and a gray oil #49.

Among the written material he finds three of parchment and ink #50, #51, #52, and one of vellum & ink #53. The rumpled brown parchment and ink reads "This is your final warning. Deliver the goods to the red barn by sunset tonight" written in Lakise and Harnic.

Lorard looks around for some pieces of cloth to tie up the doses of herbs, He sets the other things in a separate pile. Looking up to see who is in the shop with him he picks up the brown parchment and says "Sir Herot this may be of some interest and some help" handing the parchment to him.

The only one in the same room as him is Tarim so thinking it is Herot, he hands the parchment to Tarim.

Tarim studies the parchment to make out what he can. When he overhears Terias and the beadle, he hops forward.

"Ah, sire, as you recall, you'd instructed Lorard to clear the floor of anything that might catch flames or waft noxious fumes when mixed in a puddle."

Tarim turns to Lorard, "I'm sure grateful we have someone who can look at these things to tell what's still safe." He turns back to Terias and hands him the parchment, "And I thought this was best seen by you, or Lady Amyleryn, sire."

Lorard then continues to go through the papers looking for record as to who the master is and how much if any coin was kept here and if it is missing.

The other items I will place on the side and if given the chance later will try to determine what they are ( items #42-49). It is more important at this time to get as much information about who runs the shop and making a report to the Guild at Kiban.]

Quickly reading through the reading material, Lorard learns that #50 appears to be a philosophical treatise on ethics and

medicine, #51 are military orders to a Serasis of Jarquane, #52 is a recipe for roast chicken with sage dressing and #53 is a folk tale of how the herb Sarajin's nuts got its name. There is no indication of the owner of the shop or of how much money was present and Lorard can see no cash box.

Outside the window, Lorard and Tarim can hear:

"Ah, here comes the beadle."

"What is going on here."

"Hello, beadle. There's a man in there who raised the hue and cry saying the apothecary shop had been broken into and he now looks like he is robbing the place. The noble woman inside appears to be a witch and I saw her raise the balefire."

"Very well, let me by and the rest of you prepare to defend yourselves."

Terias arrives into the main room of the shop. He sees Lorard organizing the items and nods curtly. The Matakea then walks to the doorway to meet beadle, while still carrying the little girl. "Good day good man. I am Matakea Terias of Forniad, Knight to the Earl.", the blue eyed brown haired warrior-priest says confidently. He then continues, "To answer what's surely on yer mind - I asked one in our group to let up the hue and cry on account of what we saw and heard inside. Not wantin' t'leave someone to an ill fate we went inside t'help. All we found was her." Terias shrugs his shoulders to indicate the girl he is holding and continues on, "Her aunt was taken by some men and she's been in hiding since. I'll have others come out t'show we mean may harm. I had our alchemist go inside and organize the mess t'make sure nothing exploded or caught fire doing more damage." With that the Matakea turns and calls out for the others to join him. Finally stating to the beadle, "I'll leave the rest in yer capable hands and gladly answer any other questions on yer mind."

"If I may ask, sir," the beadle says, "did you also tell your man to stuff his pack full of the apothecary's belongings as he is most evidently doing?"

Terias does a double take over his shoulder appearing confused after hearing the beadle. Stammering, the Laranian Cleric responds, "Whu-eh.. Nay sure." He then does an about face to look at Lorard and asks, "Why're y'pack'n those things away lad?"

Looking up from his reading and addressing the beadle " I am not stuffing my pack, what I'm doing is trying to separate out the useful herbs that can be salvaged" Pointing to the individual wrapped dosages of herbs preserved, "and going through the papers strewn about to see which are personal and which pertain to the running of the shop and guild business. What you perceive as stuffing my pack is my attempt to keep those items I have salvaged from being further disturbed or contaminated. As the place is a mess there is no better place to temporarily store them until a better place to store them can be seen to. If you could direct some of the younems to help me sweep the floor clean and find some pots with lids then we can get this shop restored to some semblance of order. In cleaning up so far I have come across some items that I can't as yet identify and as

## ACT 3 SCENE 2 PAGE 8

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soon as a space can be cleaned up and some basic equipment can be found in this mess I will attempt to identify them and determine if they are harmful or not. Please feel free to leave someone you trust to oversee what I'm doing if you must, but I think the more important thing is to find this girls missing aunt"

"You certainly are stuffing your pack," the beadle replies, "whether is temporary or not is yet to be determined. There is no one else in town who knows the apothecary business to tell what it is you are taking or what it is worth and I have no way of knowing what was yours already and what you have 'temporarily' placed in your safe keeping. I will let you get on with it only if the gentleman here will vouch for your character and make a pledge against the value of anything that turns up missing when the apothecary is found. Otherwise, you will have to come with me to answer to the manor lord and I think that some passing vagabond has not the right of telling me how to do my job. I can have you stay in the goal to answer to disturbing the peace and showing disrespect to a village officer, if that is what you please." Turning to Sir Terias, he says, "Sir?"

As the beadle speaks, Terias reads over the note himself, then looks up when the conversation is directed to him. "Aye, I vouch for him. T'was my own words he was following - though overly much I'd say.", Terias informs with a mild smile. He then hands the parchment over to the beadle while mentioning, "This looks like it may be a clue t'what happened here goodman. Would you mind some aid in finding Evelice? Though I'd understand if y'want us t'stay our hand being outsiders and all."

"As to what I am stuffing in my pack I will make a list and give it his lordship when I make my report. As to that may I have your name sir and the name of the master of this shop" Lorard rumages through his pack for quill, ink and a piece of parchment. "I will also need o report this to the guild masters in Kiban as soon as possible and it needs to be as complete report as possible. As I seem to be the only representative of the guild here, until you find the current master of this shop it is my duty to make this report both to the guild and his lordship." Looking expectedly at the beadle "Please don't dawdle on my account, don't you have some vandals to uncover and a missing apothecary to find. Don't let me keep you here, just leave someone you trust to watch what I'm doing and go do whatever it is you are supposed to do in such situations"

Lorard finds no quill and ink and the only parchment he has is the three sheets he picked up off the floor.

"Watch your mouth boy," the beadle says, "You have not the right to tell me how to do my job and I have seen nothing to indicate the apothecary has not just taken her leave to visit her clan or move to another town. She is not a serf bound to the land you know. The gentleman here has said he will investigate your leads and that is good enough for me. The apothecary's name is Evelice of Jarquane and I am Hakinn of Verdreth. You will be wasting your time reporting to Kiban as the craftsmen here mostly report to the guildmasters in Tashal which is closer. And in my report to the liege lord, the only thing I have seen so far is an arrogant stranger trying to rob the apothecary."

Terias nods curtly at the Hakinn's words and then, glances to Lorard stating rather firmly, "Aye let's be off and leave these fine folk be."

"I would not think of meddling in the affairs of the gentry and I must report this to my liege," says the beadle, "If you care to follow this lead, feel free and I would direct your notice to that red barn across the street. It is the only one such in the village. By your leave, I would ask you to report what you discover to the liege lord but, for now, I must bid you good day and disburse this crowd before I leave so they will get not in your way." And he goes to talk to the crowd.

"Aye, much appreciated and we'll do just that. If there's no one in town to claim Lynefe, I'll take her to the Lord's manor and see she's looked after" Terias informs the beadle.

Once the matter with the child is settled, the Matakea then looks to the others and says, "If there's nothing further let's head back and inform our host of what's transpired then prepare fer sunset."

Lady Amyleryn says some words and her lantern stops glowing.

The beadle pauses in thought then turns to Sir Terias to say, "Ah yes, and what is this that I heard about the lady practicing witchcraft and calling forth balefire. You are a priest and you allow this? From what I hear you were even encouraging her?"

Mustering his words carefully at first, Terias settles into a speech just loud enough for those gathered to hear, "Yer right t'speak such, but I assure ye t'is nay baelfire. As a Laranian, I'd be obligated t'do something. I thought the same myself when I first bore witness t'it. So I know what races through others minds.

T'was on me, in the heat of the chase I asked fer a light. I should have put more thought t'the matter of what others would think. Now, I don't give my word lightly, nor do I want ye think I give it freely, but again I shall - I vouch fer her. Once the matter's settled with Evelice we'll be on our way from Ternua and your village will hopefully see more peace and safety then even before we arrived. Larani shield."

The beadle says, "by your leave." And with a shallow bow, he leaves.

The beadle pauses again in his departure to say to one of the villagers, "Cudago of Cosurien, you are a member of the watch now. Go with these folks and watch them so you can report to me later. And none of your tom-foolery now. Do as the gentleman says but do not interfere." Over his shoulder to Sir Terias, he says, "Cudago is a rough sort who likes a good tavern brawl but he is good at heart and he is a skilled hideworker and, even though he likes to act simple, he is more intelligent then he lets on."

Lorard says, "Yes lets be off, I'm sure these folks can finish cleaning up this mess"

Lady Amyleryn turns to Sir Terias and says quietly, so as not to be heard by the crowd, "before you agree to the crowd 'cleaning up', please consider, if they steal anything, you by your pledge will be responsible."

"Well handled, sire," says Tarim as he leans in close to Terias. "Will we be leaving care of the child to the beadle, then, before we investigate the barn?"

Terias nods curtly in response to Amyleryn and turns to Hakinn mentioning, "Beadle Verdreth, Lorard's on the right track, but I think it best t'leave the shop as it is fer the Master's return. Still

you probably already had this in mind t'either board up the window and have the door locked up as well or perhaps have a guard posted t'prevent further loss."

The beadle looks a bit impatient with being called back once again. He says, "Oh very well, Lebebral of Lerildy hurry next door to close your shop and then return here to make sure nobody takes anything from here until I return. That is other than what they have already taken and the gentleman has pledged to pay for." To Sir Terias he says, "and by your leave, I really must report to my liege without any more delay."

**2-PEÓNU-720 TERNUA, KALDOR**

3RD WATCH [COOL, CLOUDY, NORTHWEST STORM, LIGHT RAIN]  
Lady Amyleryn says, "Sir Terias, consider your actions if you please. I have been thinking of what would happen if this was in Hesby and my father was liege. First, we as strangers in town have called the hue-and cry. The hue-and-cry is traditionally called to deal with an impending threat to the community. I think it is exemplary that these people have come forth for strangers but as there is no impending threat, they may not be so forthcoming in the future. Next, as to immediately going before the liege. We, as strangers, whether his guests or no, do not have immediate access to the liege lord. As he is no doubt a busy man it may be hours before he will even grant us an audience, hours that I think we can ill afford, and at the moment we have little information to draw forth any aid from him. Then there is your pledge for the apothecary among us. Any shopkeeper can have considerable inventory and this apothecary is no exception. I have no knowledge of the value of the herbs and other items that Lorard has placed in his pack but, by your pledge, you can also be held accountable for any items taken by the apothecary's abductors. If you have not that amount and have no frankpledge or clan here, we would be held accountable for the outstanding amount. If we are unable to raise the amount we could then be arrested until our families can ransom us. Even putting the items back would not be sufficient and your soldier's privilege of booty is only valid if we are attacked. Finally, as to the girl, a liege lord cannot afford to take under his roof every clanless street urchin in the town, we would do better to deliver her to the temple of Peoni that I saw that is up the north road."

Terias says, "You're more then right Lady Odasart. My first intention was to get us away from the mob of people as quick as possible so I spoke quick t'quell'em without much forethought. The more one walks the more likely they are t'step in dung and the same's true fer talking I find. I wanted the hue-and-cry up so we wouldn't be blamed for the crime - like you said we're strangers so we needed witnesses. And I put the pledge forth because I didn't want t'put Lorard in the gaol based on my own words. He may've been overzealous in his approach, but t'is nay reason t'leave him t'hang alone. I'm hope'n when we find Evelice she'll vouch fer us based on the rescue. Nay t'mention the word of young Lynefe here."

Lady Amyleryn says, "We are all new to each other's company and I suppose we will learn as time goes on how well we can trust each other."

The Matakea looks over to Lorard and grins, continuing on, "Lorard, when the situation's calmed over it doesn't help t'stoke the fire by proding the beadle. Especially when I just put my

name t'yers. If y'plan t'do that sort of thing in the future let me know and I won't put up a pledge."

Shifting the girl to his left arm, Terias tells the others, "On Lady Odasart's recommendation let's take our little companion to the Peonian temple for care, then prepare fer this eve."

Light rain falls from the sky pattering down on the Laranian Knight as he leads the others northwards to the temple. As the group walks, Terias asks Tarim, "I know your skilled with a bow, being a hunter, but do you have much experience in hand to hand combat?"

Tarim says, "Nay, sire. I've slain wild boar with both both spear and sword, when things got closer than I'd like. And I've been in a brawl or two - none I started, as Larani is my witness - but as for fighting in earnest, I can't say I have much experience."

Tarim extends his hand to Cudago. "Well met, and welcome! You'll find this group to be a good sort, though how they find their way to such strange events, I don't know."

Cudago shakes Tarim's hand with a firm grip (Tarim finds Cudago is the stronger of the two) and says, "Good to hear, things have been altogether too quite around here."

"My plan for this eve is t'have Lady Odasart and myself approach the barn with Herot and Tarim on the parameter bows readied t'ensure we don't get ambushed and t'hold threat against any we face.", explains Terias to the others, his eyes seem focused as he speaks about military formation. There is a moment of ponderance before the Ataken in the Order of the Lady of Paladin asks, "What say you all on the idea?"

Lady Amyleryn says, "Yes, where is Herot. We have not heard from him since you sent him to watch the back. I suppose he cannot hear us from back there unless we shout. Herot!"

Sir Herot comes running around the building and says, "Coming my lady. There was nobody who escaped out the back." Looking at Lynefe in Sir Terias' arms and Cudago following along behind, he continues, "Hello there. Making new friends are we?"

There is a sheepish grin forming on Terias' face when he replies, "Aye I suspect you two may be distant cousins. Sir Herot of Falen, this is Cudago of Cosurien. He's been assigned by the beadle of the town to watch us. And the little one is Lynefe, niece to Evelice."

Terias fills Herot in on what happened and his current plan of action, inquiring if the man-at-arms has any thoughts.

"Nay, it sounds well thought out," Herot says.

"Lorard, do you have any martial skill and experience? I'm loathe t'have a Peonian nay t'mention a healer enter danger and potential combat."

Lorard says, "Your right Sir Terias it is not right to anger such people, it's that I've never had my honesty questioned before and it just doesn't sit right with me. As to my martial skill I can use this staff as well as any apprentice knows how and can hold my own with anyone in the same situation but no real combat knowledge. And by the the way who is the Peonian?"

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"Apologies, I thought y'made mention of Peoni at some point, but now that I think of it t'was Herot makin' a quip.", Terias answers.

You arrive at the temple of Peoni and the priest inside overhears your remark and thinks it is addressed at him. He answers, "I am Cudyrik of Urdoborma. How can I help you folks?"

Gently placing the young girl on the ground to stand on her own two feet, Terias straightens himself up and lets the priest know, "Good day, I am Matakea Terias of Forniad a knight in service to the Earl. Our group happened upon a scene of a break-in and kidnapping of one of your town's own - Evelice of Jarquane." Carefully stroking the young girls head, Terias offers a soft smile as he continues on, "Her niece here, the brave Lynefe was left t'her own devices and has not seen sleep or food fer a while. We were hope'n the kindness and grace of Peoni would care fer her while we look into the matter of returning her aunt to her."

"Certainly," says the priest, "you may leave her in my charge without concern. Come this way child." And he leads her further into the temple.

"My thanks", adds Terias as the priest leaves. He then turns to the others and asks, "Well we've some time till night fall when we're t'meet. Does anyone have an errands in town t'do? Or shall we just head to the barn and prepare ourselves?"

Tarim shakes his head. "I'm well fed, sire, and ready when you are. If there's a good place to watch the barn as the sun sets, we might see who is coming and going, to get an idea of what's what before we approach."

Lorard says, "If it is all the same to you Sir Terias, I think that any business I have in town can wait the return of mistress Jacelyn. I think I have worn any welcome quite thin, so with your permission I'll head over to the barn and find a good spot to observe it unobtrusively"

Once input from Tarim and Lorard is received, Terias nods slightly and says to the others, "If there is no dissent let us head to the barn now and whittle away the remaining hours while we establish ourselves."

Straight over to Lorard, Terias answers, "Unless you have some skill at stealth and combat, I would prefer you with Lady Odasart and myself. You're likely to either get yourself found or hurt. Not to mention if combat should erupt I shall do my best to keep you safe."

From the apothecary shop you can see the red barn and inside the open doors. Inside you can see one person standing watch, but as he is not moving much, he may be dozing. You can also see dust and bits of straw floating down from the loft, which indicates there may be one or more people moving around up there.

<http://www.duttond.topcities.com/Harn/RedBarn.jpg>

"Cudago", Terias says getting the mans attention, "Do y'know if the barn's owned by anyone? Should there be folks inside? If so do y'know them t'all?"

"No, sir, I know not," Cudago answers.

Tarim says, "Sir Terias, with your leave, I'd like to see the back of the barn, to know if the doors there are open or if there's a

window up top. I'll give it a wide berth as I go. I just want to know where anyone can exit or look out."

After hearing Cudago reply, Terias nods his ascent to Tarim and adds, "If y'come 'cross any troubles run back here. Also be mindful folk're likely watch'n us."

Tarim nods and moves to the door used by Herot. "I'll see what I can see, sire."

Tarim walks up the north road and as he passes the road headed east to the manor he notices an inn about five paces from the right side of the barn in that direction with a couple of by-standers in front watching him. He continues north to the back of the barn around the left side (the front of the barn is on the south side). Once in back he can see there is gap of only three paces in the back to the next building. This building appears to be a potter's shop that is closed for the night. There are doors in the barn but no windows and the doors are closed.

One of the by-standers says to the other, "what is that foreigner doing skulking around the barn?"

"I know not," says the other, "these strangers certainly have strange ways. Who knows what they are about."

Tarim returns to the apothecary shop and the group. "Well, there's a closed set of doors and no windows at the back. I don't think anyone at the barn made note of me, but I can't say the same for those outside the shop here. Strangers seem to catch the eye of everyone."

"I don't know if it matters m'lords, m'lady," he nods to Amyleryn, "but if we go straight to the barn, folk in the street may take an interest."

"Since that 'shop' is an inn, I think if you can manage what is in the barn without my help, at least at first, I can distract those on-lookers by offering to buy then a drink inside," says Herot with a bit of a grin, "How long do you think you will need for them to be distracted before I have to come to your aid?"

A mischievous chuckle escapes Terias' lips, before stating, "Great idea Herot. In terms of time just order them a round. Give the barkeep the coin and when they're crowding the bar t'order - slip out. Though if they look like quick drinkers and there's nay many inside maybe get them two. No need t'enjoy a pint yerself though."

With a snort, Sir Herot says, "Where is the fun in that? I thought to buy a drink for those two in front, not the whole common room. Very well I will be off and return anon so the rest of you should step lively so the time is not wasted." And he strolls off towards the inn.

"Aye, aye. I'll trust ye t'do yer best in there.", Terias replies with a grin.

While Herot is walking away he looks to the others and mentions, "We'll take the direct approach goin' in. We're nay go'n in look'n fer a fight so keep things civil. First thing is t'find out if Evelice is in there. Tarim if there were no other people watch'n ye last time, head around the other side like before and see if y'can go in the back way. Plan is we'll distract them and give you time t'nose about. If the door's locked then just come back right quick and join us."

Once Herot and the stragglers are inside the inn, Terias makes a break straight for the barns main doors.

Tarim says, "Here I am, trying not to attract attention, and Herot - Sir Herot, sorry - goes off a' seekin' it. It's a strange world, that's for sure." Tarim shakes his head.

"Opportunity favors the bold, I have always heard," Sir Herot says, "and watch the title. I like you but if someone catches you acting disrespectful, I would be forced to have you whipped and I think neither of us would like that."

Sir Herot walks up to the inn and says, "Well met folks, I am new in town and I would like to catch up on the local gossip. Can I buy you a drink for a moment of your time."

"That is right neighborly of you," one of them says as they follow Sir Herot inside.

When Sir Terias reaches the door, the man inside who was slightly dozing, notices him and says, "Who goes there? There is nothing of interest to you here and you should not be here. Tharo! Gwyn! There are some folks snooping around down here." Turning back towards the front door, he gives a loud sneeze and says, "Be on your way before I have to show you the way out."

Tarim says, "All right, 'round the back, then. I took the notice of a pair on the street, but no one in the barn, as far as I can tell. I'll try the back door, as you've said." He heads off in that direction.

He finds the door barred and it doesn't budge when he pushes it.

Terias turns his head down and to the side quickly to Cudago and says in a quiet voice, "Do you recognize him or those names?"

"I am sorry, Sir, but I know them not," Cudago answers, "The beadle asked me to watch you folks because he trusts me to give him a full and honest report of your activities. Not because I know of every building and every stranger in town and which you should know of being strangers yourselves."

"T'is fine, that means they're nay local.", Terias grunts.

He then immediately responds in a clear commanding voice, "I am Sir Terias of Forniad - Knight to the Earl, Matakea of Larani, and Ataken in the Order of the Lady of Paladins. I am here on behalf of Evelice of Jarquane." The cleric-warrior pauses here, not for effect, but to gauge the reaction of the man before him.

Catching a motion in the loft out of the corner of his eye, Terias ducks back barely in time to have the arrow miss him, which lodges itself in the door. Cudago steps back a few paces and says, "by your leave, I think I will watch from a safer distance."

"Aye, just keep in mind who started this.", the Matakea says in response to the groups 'watcher'. At the same time he readies his knights shield and charges into the barn with his spear aimed towards the foe on the ground level. He calls out to his comrades, "Seek shelter under the loft!"

Sir Terias and his foe engage in battle but his foe dodges the spear to avoid any injury. He swings a falchion but Sir Terias blocks the blow with his shield.

From behind, Sir Terias hears Cudago grumble, "first nothing but fool questions and now he wants to tell me what to report when I am asked - I guess arrogance comes with being gentry."

The Laranian Knights focus is solely on the his opponent before him as he states rather loudly, "I see yer tongue likes t'run as much as yer legs Cudago. I suggest y'hold both firm and just watch. What I said before was in jest as t'was plain t'see and I'll take what you said t'be the same." Suddenly he strikes out at the falchion wielder with a quick lunge of his spear.

The Matakea asks more questioningly then concerned, "Lady Odasart how many are atop, do y'need aid up there?"

Sir Terias can see Lady Amyleryn ready her mace and shield while racing across the barn towards the lofts. A man quickly climbs down from the loft, looks toward Lady Amyleryn then sprints out the front door saying, "I will not be sent to the gibbet for attacking a noble woman. I am not such a coward as that."

Tarim begins to walk back the way he came but pauses on hearing Terias' clear voice from the other end of the barn. Tarim then crouches down and moves along the side to get a clear view of those standing before his companions.

Through the cracks of the wall boards, Tarim can only see the one person on the ground floor as that person draws a shortsword and charges toward the door. In the shadows of the loft, he can see movement but cannot make out any details.

Tarim unslings his bow from his shoulder, readies an arrow, and hurries along the edge of the barn toward the front.

Lorard watches as Herot races out of the inn and readies his bow. Just moments before Tarim comes racing around the corner of the barn, Herot pushes in front of Lorard, dodges the man running out the door and down the street, then looses an arrow into the loft to no apparent effect. The archer in the loft looses an arrow towards Lady Amyleryn but misses - the arrow sticking into the dirt floor.

As Tarim arrives he can easily tell that Herot is in great pain from an injured shoulder and that is the probable reason for spoiling his aim.

\* \* \*

The Laranian Knight's focus is solely on the his opponent before him as he states rather loudly, "I see yer tongue likes t'run as much as yer legs Cudago. I suggest y'hold both firm and just watch. What I said before was in jest as t'was plain t'see and I'll take what you said t'be the same."

"As you wish, sir," says Cudago, "and if you care for some advice from a lowly commoner, you need not look for a job at the manor as court jester since you are not very good at jesting, if you permit, sir."

"Aye, I'd never dream of step'n on yer own aspirations.", the Knight retorts with a grin, his focus fully on the foe, but clearly enjoying the verbal sparring during intense combat.

Suddenly he strikes out at the falchion wielder with a quick lunge of his spear.

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His opponent dodges the spear and strikes out with his falchion. Terias blocks the weapon with his shield and finds he can make a second attempt but his opponent dodges that blow as well.

The Matakea asks more questioningly than concerned, "Lady Odasart how many are atop, do y'need aid up there?"

"Up there?" she asks, "I am down here under the loft as you directed and cannot see atop. Thank you for asking but I am fine for right now. Do you need my help? Your foe seems very light on his feet."

Surprised by hearing Amyleryn behind him, Terias exclaims, just as he blocks the incoming strike, "Oh, when I heard that other one dash off I thought you may've made your way up. Glad yer nay another foe or you'd have had me blind." He sees an opening for a second strike and tries for it, but misses, "As for quick yer right. Time fer a change of tactics."

With those words the Laranian Knight drops his spear and draws his broadsword. The weapon slashes diagonally through the air in attempt to make contact with his opponent.

Sir Terias once again misses his foe due to lingering aches in his shoulder an elbow.

Lady Amyleryn attacks Sir Terias' opponent but she too misses as he dodges his second attacker.

On seeing Herot's injury across the way, Tarim races into the barn. He runs wide of the path taken by Lady Amyleryn, eyes scanning for a line of sight to the archer in the loft.

Tarim can see two shadowy figures in the loft and the left one is moving more than the right one. Herot says, "mark your target well as there may be innocents up there."

"Aye," says Tarim, quietly. "I'd bet a round that the one moving back and forth is no innocent, but I'm not sure enough to loose an arrow."

He looks at Herot and the wound to his arm. "Are ye well enough to stay put a moment, Sir Herot? I've an idea."

"Aye, I'll stay here and help Lorard," says Sir Herot.

Tarim shoots an arrow into the rafters above the loft, then studies the shapes of the figures above them as they respond to the shot.

Just as his arrow sticks into the rafters, his opponent fires another arrow at him – it is clearly from the shadow on the left. The arrow strikes Tarim in the chest and bounces off with not enough speed to penetrate through his vest.

"Impressive," Sir Herot says, "arrows just bounce off him."

"I'm a dolt," says Tarim. "Too impressed with my own cleverness to stop being a fool in the open." He darts for cover, then fixes aim on his target and fires.

Lorard attempts to stop the man running out of the bar by swinging his staff at the man's feet hoping to trip him up. If successful, the he will attempt to sit on him.

Lorard strikes the man soundly on his right thigh. The man stumbles but maintains his feet. "So you want a piece of me, eh?"

You being a commoner, I can defend myself," and he draws a shortsword, keeping all his weight on his left leg now.

"Oh don't let me being a commoner hold you back. If you want a piece of me come and get it. Besides you'll be dead bt nightfall anyway if I read your complexion right. Lorard holds his staff horizontally with two hands and will parry and attempt to counterstrike, again going for the legs.

While dodging his attack, Lorard's opponent strikes a mighty blow and hit's Lorard's right shoulder – almost striking his arm off. Lorard passes out from the pain and blood lose, falling to the ground unconscious.

Sir Herot sets his bow aside, draws his broad sword and swings at Lorard's attacker. He misses his target but in dodging the blow, Lorard's foe stumbles and falls to the ground.

"Men down!" yells Sir Herot. Sheathing his sword, Sir Herot goes to Lorard's aid, trying to stop the bleeding.

\* \* \*

Upon hearing Herot call out, Terias expression grows serious. He doesn't take his eyes off his opponent to see who was felled, instead he drives forward with a lunge of his sword in an effort to minimize the amount of strain on his shoulder and elbow.

Sir Terias still misses his target. His foe, on the other hand slashes across Sir Terias' cuirass and scratches it but does not penetrate.

Lady Amyleryn says, "I will see to those outside and leave this one to your capable hands." Whereupon she goes out front and smashes the prone foe in the chest with her mace and kills him.

Sir Herot stops the bleeding of Lorard's shoulder and bandages the wound. Lorard regains consciousness.

Tarim starts toward Lorard, then stops himself. He tightens his jaw and returns his attention to the figure in the loft.

Tarim fires an arrow into the loft but in the darkness he cannot tell if he hit or not. The return arrow thunks soundly into the support pillar.

\* \* \*

All that is offered in response to Amyleryn is a curt nod, as Terias keeps his focus on his wily target. The Matakea repeats the same strike as before, but aims lower, probably in an effort to take away the one thing causing him so much trouble - the mans legs.

Sir Terias once again misses his target but his foe doesn't miss. The falchion slashes through Sir Terias clothes and armor and cuts into flesh. The pain in addition to his other injuries causes Sir Terias to go into shock and he passes out, falling to the ground.

Lady Amyleryn returns to attack the swordsman but she too misses. She takes up a stance to guard Sir Terias' prone body from further injuries.

Tarim shoots again toward the silhouette in the loft, watching for any further movement.

Tarim's shot appears to miss as the shadow dodges out of harm's way. The arrow shot from above hits Tarim in his left hip,

penetrates his hose and lodges in his flesh. Sir Herot once again switches from broadsword to longbow, fires into the loft and, from the sound, definitely hits something, although he cannot determine what he hit.

Lorard regaining consciousness and groaning " Well that didn't go as planed did it? I guess I should have ducked or something. Next time I'll know better. Now will someone please fetch a physician."

Sir Herot says to his companions, "If you folks can handle this, I will fetch to the physician at the manor," and he waits for their answer

\* \* \*

Tarim winces as he reaches down to pull the arrow from his hip. Tarim then sets down his bow in favor of his sword, and he races to ascend the ladder to the loft.

While guarding the fallen Sir Terias, Lady Amyleryn attacks his foe but again he dodges her attack. His counterattack catches her shield arm and cuts her left forearm. Sir Terias regains consciousness.

The archer in the loft does not attack at this time apparently waiting for an available target. Herot also withholds his attack. Tarim gains the top of the ladder and, when his eyes adjust to the darkness he can make out a woman tied to a support post and unmoving with an arrow in her chest. Behind the pile of hay he can just make out another shadowy form which he assumes to be the archer.

The Matakea struggles to his feet, looking pained as he does. "By the Lady..." he says with a groan. With sword still in hand, Terias tells Herot, "Back up the lady if y'would. We'll have two on one fer each. Hopefully they see some sense and surrender." Then he moves around the combatant to climb the ladder following after his squire. At the top rather than attacking however he utters a prayer to his Goddess for "Larani's Shield"

*[OOO: add 5pp for bonus please]*

Sir Terias finds he is too weak to climb the ladder and its difficult to concentrate on the proper ritual for the invocation so he is sure that too has failed.

In the center of the room the sword wielder slices through Sir Herot's codpiece but does him no harm.

"My Codpiece!" Sir Herot yells, "Why you dirty scoundrel. That was an ignoble blow."

Lady Amyleryn hits their foe, also in the codpiece, with her mace." The man yells in pain and is unable to dodge Sir Herot's broadsword as it slices across his face. The man's eyes cross and he falls, unmoving, to the floor.

Tarim yells down, "We have wounded here, too!" He clutches his sword and leaps toward the shadow behind the hay.

As Tarim charges the hidden archer, the archer stands and fires. The arrow whizzes past Tarim's ear and lodges in the wall at the top of the ladder where Tarim was just moments before. Reaching the archer, Tarim attacks but the archer dodges out of harm's way.

\* \* \*

"By Larani's might!" Tarim grimaces then yells at the archer, "Put up your hands and ye'll not be hurt!" He swings again at his foe.

As the archer dodges the blow, lays his bow aside and draws a dagger, he says, "your actions belie your words. Put up your arms and I will yield."

Terias would have most likely laughed at Herot's comment if he wasn't so focused on climbing the ladder. Tarim's comment about someone being injured had his devout attention. With all the strength he could muster, the Laranian Knight tries again to climb atop the loft.

Once again Sir Terias finds he is too weak to climb.

Meanwhile, Lady Amyleryn finishes off her opponent with a blow to his hip as he lies on the ground. Sir Herot says once again, "If everything is under control now, I will fetch the physician from the manor to see to Lorard and our other injuries. Are there any objections?"

The stubborn Laranian knight seems intent on making it up the ladder despite his gnawing wounds. When Herot mentions getting a physician, Terias breaks from his efforts a moment and regards him, after glancing to the downed foe, "Aye.. aye. Y'managed that one right quick."

"Actually it was as much the Lady's doings as mine," Sir Herot says, "She can be quite fierce when riled, can she not? I am off then." He turns and rushes out the door.

He then resumes his near futile attempt, determined to make it to the top of the loft.

Just as he grabs hold of the rungs, the Matakea looks back to Amyleryn, "Lady Odasart, would y'mind terribly giving me a bit of a push? Tarim's up there alone and he called out someone was injured. I'm worried t'is the one we came to aid."

With Lady Amyleryn's help, Sir Terias finally makes it to the top of the ladder. When his eyes adjust to the darkness he can see a woman tied to one of the support pillars with an arrow in her chest and Tarim standing face to face with another man, both with weapons drawn, Tarim apparently lost in thought as to what to do next.

Tarim attacks again with his sword, trying to keep the distance close enough to trouble his archer foe. In his lunge to close the gap on his dagger wielding foe, Tarim trips, hits his head on a rafter and knocks himself out.

Immediately after gauging the situation, Terias, who is clearly in pain and breathing heavily from exerting himself in the climb dashes towards the bound woman. Under his breath the Matakea mutters, "No.. no..", as he looks her over for signs of life.

Regardless of his findings the Matakea begins to pray, drowning out everything around him, his face clearly flushed with concern. He gently lays a hand on the woman's cheek and closes his eyes. Soft words of prayer to Larani escape his lips as he starts on a focused chant [OOO: spending 50pp] beseeching Larani to save her life.

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In his pain and anguish, Sir Terias passes out and falls to the floor of the loft. At the same moment Lorard and Lady Amyleryn pass out and fall to the ground. Sir Terias dreams he is visited by the Lady of Paladins herself. She tells him, "In return for this favor I am granting you, I command you to take a more active role in the protection of innocents. To that end you are to offer your services to the captain of the riverboat that brought you here as a marine in training at least until you reach Olokand. During that time, learn from your friend Herot, the seamanship necessary to join the seaman's guild as a marine commander. In this do not fail me."

Throughout Larani's speech, Terias nods reverently, his eyes always cast to the floor. When She finishes, the humbled Matakaea in a firm voice looks up and says resolutely, "Aye M'Lady."