Crusade (Current Timeline)

It’s a quiet night on a small beachfront villa, the far east seas whispered and flowed just loud enough to be heard by those inside. A small brigade of lightly armed men gently open the gate to the front yard of the villa and knock on the heavy wooden door. A shorter elezen with an uneven shave and unkempt hair stepped to the front of the pack. He lights a small pipe and leans against the frame of the door until someone answers, a pale Miqote woman with crimson streaks in her raven black hair. She nervously covers herself with her robe and politely nods to the men. “C-can I help you?” she awkwardly yawns. The grungy man in front blows a cloud of smoke over her head into the house and pulls a crumpled piece of paper from his pocket, it is a silver haired Au Ra with heterochromatic eyes. “We’re looking for this woman, she’s contracted an aetherial disease, and may have given refuge to voidlings of some kind. Have you seen her?” he inquires. “It’s n—… I haven’t seen her around here.” she replies as she shuffles into the yard. She locks the door behind her and steps into the pathway outside the villa. “Where have you seen her?” The woman looks out for any patrols, but the area is oddly unguarded. Men from the group chuckle and murmur amongst one another as the rugged man begins inspecting the miqote. He moves a lock of hair from her face as she tries to look down at the ground. “Pale skin, dark circles around the eyes, skin cold to the touch… and red irises?” he chuckles, and the men in the yard immediately stop their banter, “you didn’t get scared when I showed you the picture of the woman —even though she does live here with you— but when I spout off what she was accused of, you go looking for the authorities. Or no…” He blows another cloud of smoke in her direction and she backs away. The men adjust their armor and check their weapons and slowly inch towards the girl. And she finally tosses her robe into the largest group of guards and strikes them with a lightning spell. The rugged man spins behind the gate as the rest of the other men get struck down. “I know the other spawn are in here too, it’d be pretty good idea to pay them a visit when I’m done here. Nip the problem before it starts and all that…” The miqote snaps around and burst back through the gate of the yard, stepping over the fallen men. She lunges at the rugged man and claws off some of his armor, he narrowly dodges and buries a small knife into her stomach. She scoffs and quickly overpowers the man, slamming him into the ground and nearly knocking him unconscious. The man weakly chuckles as he uses the last of his energy to motion more men into the yard. The miqote bounds over the fence back onto the pathway outside the villa as a chorus of armored footsteps sound off behind her. Her blood splatters across the sun bleached sand along the hingan beach. The miqote woman sprawls along the ground until she reaches one of the torches spread across the beachfront. She casts a quick healing spell on her wounds, but they coagulate and convulse as if rejecting the spell. A barrage of arrows scream past her, plunging into the sand. The girl noted a faint trail of faintly green liquid on the tips of the arrows before scrambling to the gazebo at the other end of the beach. A duet of assailants emerged from beneath the furniture with daggers dipped in the same fluid. She loses her balance upon dodging the flurry of slashes and she falls to the ground. Her fingers go numb as she flings blasts of aether at the melee assailants and rolls on her back. The bowmen finally reach the gazebo and draw more poison soaked blades. The miqote sighs in resignation as a sword descends upon her, but plunges into the tatami beside her. She looks up to see a viera digging a set of extended canines into the neck of one of the attackers. He violently rips a chuck of his flesh before tossing him towards the other ambushers. “Star, what are

you doing here!?” the miqote coughs. The viera drags her behind another set of furniture, he tries to cast a healing spell and like the miqote’s last attempt, her body seemingly rejects it. He dispatches another duet of men as they crash into the furniture around them, then the other assailants disperse. “W-what happened?!” Star stammers, making another futile attempt to heal the woman’s wound, “Rowan, tell me how to fix this!” She nods. “I don’t know…” she smears some of the liquid from her wound on her fingertips. “I’ll go get Gabbie!” Rowan grabs the viera’s wrist in protest and holds out her bloodied hand. “What does this smell like?!” Star confusedly sniffs the liquid and frowns. “I-I can’t smell it, actually, I can’t smell anything…” They both clutch at their head as if waking up from a bad hangover. “Then we need someone who can…”

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