Samuel and company rode through the forest. They watched the woods around them for anything that could pose a threat. They ride forward. The snow dries up as the seasons begin to warm. Samuel fixed his posture for what was the hundredth time, not being used to riding a horse. Abigail rode up next to him and offered him a snack. He smiled and took it. It's been days but felt like weeks since they saw human life. It's been just nature from this point. Traveling from Mythrall to the Forbidden Forest is longer than anyone wants to do. Samuel took the snack into his mouth, he looked back at the others, and they were enjoying a snack as well. Without a warning, Samuel's horse began to thrash about, neighing as it went into a fit. Samuel tried to calm it but it didn't want to settle. Cassidy walked up next to them.

"Calm!" With a sway of her palm and a palm-sized magic circle, Samuel's horse finally relaxed. Samuel petted the horse and then looked over.

"Thank you… Cassidy."

She nods at him, "What spooked him?"

"This…" Abigail responded in a grave tone. She held up in her hand the arm of a person. Cassidy and Samuel got off their respective horses and helped Abigail investigate. It is a human body, however from the sight, its body was torn apart until he bled out, and a singular arrow is lodged into the man's back. Abigail looked up and began to follow the path the person seemed to come from. Cassidy looked over to Samuel, but he had already begun to follow her. Cassidy took the chance to tie the horse down and set a spell around them, to protect them, she grabbed her staff and Samuel's shield then she proceeded to rush after her friends. They reached a decently sized village, upon reaching

said village they see nothing of the sort was amiss. It looked like no one has been in the village for a while.

"There was no trail of blood…" Abigail said running her eye back and forth over the path they arrived on.

"Which means?" Cassidy asks.

"Who or whatever killed him, killed him on the spot he laid not in the village," Abigail responded, there was some regret in her voice. The world is a harsh and scary place, sometimes scarier than the books she had read, but never did she imagine running into a scene like this.

"So what? Do you want to leave or examine this place?"

"What if it's a Remnant, it's our job to kill it right?" Cassidy said holding tight to her staff, her bunny ears perking up just a bit.

"But…" Samuel said with an emphasis on his breath. "This doesn't look like a normal Remnant attack, Remnants they destroy, decimate if this was any of Remnants. This village wouldn't be standing."

"So, you're saying someone did this? A human?" Cassidy says as her ears lowered.

"Yes, it's very possible," Samuel said standing up. "Abigail?"

"I want to look around. At the very least, understand what went on around here."

Abigail walked forward. They began to search the village. They check around the outside of the houses. Checked what doors were open and what doors weren't and if they were still locked. Samuel came up to one of the larger houses, once he put his hand on the door a jolt hit him. He felt something inside, something powerful. He turns the nob to find the door unlocked. He pushes himself inside the house, the eerie atmosphere and the sense of darkness filled the area. He summoned his magic into his eyes giving him a better vision in the dark. He kept his hand on his weapon and his shield up as he looked around. Everything looked clear and normal. No signs of attack or struggle. No signs of Remnants. Samuel couldn't shake the feeling that something was there. There is a basement to this place. A cellar was used while it was cold out for extra food. Samuel finds the way down and steps down the stairs. The feeling he felt before becomes stronger and more intense. He kept his shield up, wanting to call for backup but couldn't. Something drew him down here.

Samuel walked to the door and put his hand on it. He could feel it on the other side. It was like it stared back at him through the door. He moved the doorknob and pushed open the door. He kept his shield up, it focused on the darkness in the room. He enters just enough to get his body into the doorway, He lowers his shield. Realizing there is nothing in the room.

"Samuel, is everything alright in there?" Abigail yelled from the house's entryway.

"Yeah… There is nothing here…" Samuel responds. He puts his shield down and turns to leave back up the stairs.

"Samuel…?" A hissy voice came from the darkness. Samuel turned quickly, he looked around quickly, and then up to the ceiling. Up there was a woman, hanging from the ceiling. Her body contorted. "Samuel… it's the vessel!" Her body morphed and changed as it manipulated the magic around her, she came at him fast and threw Samuel out of the house Abigail catches him in the process. Cassidy rushed over. The woman in the cellar crawled her way back up. Out in the daylight, her body looked normal, even though it was turning itself inside out. The mana around her swirled until it mutated her body, giving off a more devilish look as her eyes rolled back into her skull.

"Remnant?" Cassidy asked getting her stuff ready.

"No, just some poor soul that played god," Abigail said as she drew her sword from her side. Samuel pulled up his mace and shield, everyone is prepared for a fight. Two Knights that have fought their share of Remnants can easily defeat a stray magister. Abigail attacked, keeping its attention as Samuel went in to end her quickly. As he was about to stab her in the heart, a face appeared on the other side. "Please… Help me." It said with compassion in its voice, Samuel hesitated and was slapped away by the mutant. Cassidy ran forward and stabbed the woman in the heart with the spear end of her staff. The woman froze for a second. Then fell to the ground with a thump. The Acrium, the crystal, at the top of Cassidy's stave began to glow as it absorbed the mana from inside the corpse. Normally for a Remnant, this would dissipate the body and turn it back into what it once was since it was only using the mana to move the body. But in this case, it did nothing for the soul that was trapped inside. Her body stayed deformed. As Samuel and Abigail cleaned up, Cassidy sat back cleaning her weapon. She stared endlessly at it since she has never killed another person before.

Abigail walked over with a canteen of water. "Drink, you'll need it to keep yourself calm." Cassidy nods with a soft smile, she took a swig from the canteen.

"Does it get easier? Killing?" Cassidy said as she tries to swallow the lump in her throat.

"No, not unless you're like them, a monster. Listen," Abigail said as she kneels in front of her. "Things like that, they shouldn't be considered human anymore, they go off on their own to find out how to make life better, and even if they mean well at first, it always turns sour. You can never play God and expect there to be no consequences." Abigail smiles, and her golden hair falls out of the place of her bun. She picked herself up. "Come, we should help Samuel before it gets later, we will still need to find a place to rest before night falls."

Cassidy nodded and proceeded to walk with Abigail. Samuel is getting the body ready to be set on fire. "Any last words?" Samuel said as finished placing the magister's corpse on the pyre.

"Really? It's a stray magister." Abigail scoffed.

"Respect the dead, or the dead won't respect you," Samuel said looking forward to the pyre.

Cassidy walked in between them and took a deep breath. "It never seems easier, knowing at the end of the day that this is what you could end up becoming with one bad turn of life."

"You won't become this, this thing," Abigail said. "Do we know why she did this?"

Samuel handed her a dairy, "Her baby died, Knights apparently mishandled her while she was pregnant… she wanted revenge."

Abigail looked at it and tossed the book onto the pyre. "Damn Knights, think they can do whatever the hell they want and get away with it."

"You're a Knight too."

"Yeah, but I don't abuse my power…" Abigail grew more frustrated. Samuel smiled with a short release of breath. Of all the Knights he knew, Abigail is one of the best without a doubt. Cassidy lifted her hand and spoke a different language. A red magic circle appeared in her palm and the pyre is lit ablaze. "I'll find whoever did this and make them pay." Abigail said as the fire and smoke grew higher. The group turned away to find a place to rest for the night.