

PHOIBE: It wasn't so bad. Last time, they put a cloth in my mouth so I'd stop biting.

ALEXIOS: Phoibe, just... be careful. You're alone now, since -

PHOIBE: Since my parents died? I'm OK, I've got you! And you've got me and Markos. We're your family, right?

[Alexios recalls a moment from his past. His father and unexpectedly his mother train in wrestling on sticks.]

NIKOLAOS: You'll have to be stronger than that!

MYRRINE: Don't give in! Let him have it! Got you!

NIKOLAOS: Again! Up!

YOUNG ALEXIOS: Yes, Pater. (father)

NIKOLAOS: A Spartan rises as soon as they've fallen. Ready your staff. Widen your stance. A soldier grounds themselves. Good, good. Approach me.

MYRRINE: That's enough, Nikolaos. The sun's going down. Time to eat - don't you think?

YOUNG ALEXIOS: What are we eating tonight?

NIKOLAOS: Tonight we are having baby Cassandra. And what a feast she will be!

YOUNG ALEXIOS: No, not her! Take me instead, I'm tasty!

MYRRINE: Yes, yes, you're all sweet as honey, now, come inside. The lamb's turning black!

NIKOLAOS: Here. Lay her in bed.

YOUNG ALEXIOS: Yes, Pater. (father)

NIKOLAOS: Alexios. You are my greatest pride. Remember that. You'll bring this family to glory. Go.

[The memory ends.]

PHOIBE: You worry too much.

ALEXIOS: You don't worry enough.

PHOIBE: We'll be all right if we watch out for each other. Which reminds me! The thugs said you should watch your back.

ALEXIOS: What'd they say?

PHOIBE: They said the Cyclops put a big bounty on you. Talos the Stone-Fist wants you dead.

ALEXIOS: Talos the mercenary? Am I ever not in trouble?

PHOIBE: Better get him before he gets you. I hear he's really mean I'll find my way back to town. Chaire!

ALEXIOS: Talos the Stone-Fist? That's just what I need today. Another broken nose. I'm going to have to take care of that.

[He rides to the coast of Koliadai to collect the debt.]

ALEXIOS: Hello, Duris. Business looks good.

DURIS: Tell Markos to come down here himself if he wants his money.

ALEXIOS: But I'm here now.

DURIS: Look, I was a little late paying. Now Markos says I owe him double because of interest. I don't have it to spare!

ALEXIOS: You should have thought of that when you borrowed the drachmae, Duris.

DURIS: But, my family -

ALEXIOS: It's hot. I'm in a bad mood, and you're going to pay. We both know it. The question is, what do I break first - you or your merchandise.

DURIS: You tell Markos I've paid enough already! I won't bow to - to - to a mercenary! Or to someone foolish enough to borrow money from the Cyclops.

ALEXIOS: From the Cyclops? That's how he bought his vineyard?

DURIS: Look, I know you'd be dead without Markos - what with him taking you off the street as a kid. But you know what he's doing is crazy!

ALEXIOS: Maláka! (Fucking cunt!) Still, that doesn't change the drachmae you owe.

DURIS: Face it - once the Cyclops gets hold of you, you'll both be dead!

[Alexios starts to break pots in Duris' store.]

DURIS: All right, all rights I'll pay you! Just stop! Fine! The money's yours. Just leave!

ALEXIOS: Pleasure doing business with you, Duris.

DURIS: Keep my name off your lips! I don't want the Cyclops coming after me for the debt you can't pay.

[Having taken the money Alexios goes back to Marcos. A pumped-up bully is talking to him.]

BRUTE: You're running out of time until the Cyclops comes for you, maláka (cunt). He wants his money!

MARKOS: Could I have an extension?

BRUTE: When he sails back to Kephallonia, he'll come and break you as soon as he docks. If you don't get it.

MARKOS: Now, let's be civil -

BRUTE: You can't hide behind your glorious misthios forever, Markos. Hell kill you, the mercenary, and that little runt girl that hangs around.

MARKOS: Of course! Not a problem!!-I'll get the drachmae!

BRUTE: Good. Or I'll come and watch the Cyclops feed you to his goats.

MARKOS: Ah, Alexios! I-I can tell from the smile on your face Duris has paid you your drachmae.

ALEXIOS: Who's smiling? I just heard where you got the drachmae for the vineyard. Are you out of your fucking mind?

MARKOS: We can get the money back! C-Can't we? I'm sure it's possible!

ALEXIOS: You've made an idiotic promise, Markos. One we can't keep.

MARKOS: I thought you were invincible.

ALEXIOS: Maybe I am. But you're not.

MARKOS: I long for the old days! Remember them? They were simple! You had nothing - young and alone - and I had everything. And I gave you the world! Kephallonia - in the palm of your hand!

[Alexios plunges back into memories.]

MYRRINE: ALEXIOS...!

YOUNG ALEXIOS: Ah! Kassandra!

[Something terrible is going on, but we are not shown what it is. The same hawk flies over to little Alexios. Alexios finds a piece of pilum lying in the mud. He grabs it and runs away to the forest. Having reached the coast, he sees an abandoned ship ready to sail. Alexios boards it and sails away. He hits the storm. When he is thrown ashore, young Marcos finds him.]

MARKOS: Don't see fishies like you everyday, eh? You hungry? How about we make a deal? I do something for you, you do a few things for me. Everybody wins. Best offer you're gonna get! Think about it!

YOUNG ALEXIOS: ...Wait!

[The memory ends.]

ALEXIOS: Kephallonia. Some gift.

MARKOS: You were nothing without Markos, and look how far we've come! From an orphan on the streets to a misthios with a hovel.

ALEXIOS: And now the Cyclops will take everything away. I can't protect you from him forever. He'll kill me too.

MARKOS: Oh, don't be scared of him! Look at you!

ALEXIOS: How could I go up against him? With what weapons? A rusty spear? A broken bow?

[An aging woman approaches them.]

DRUCILLA: There you are! Skulking around a temple won't save you from me, Markos.

MARKOS: Drucilla! I was just talking about you.

ALEXIOS: You were?

DRUCILLA: I need that wood, Markos. These new bows will be the talk of the island. I can't make anything with those bandit malákes stopping the wood shipments.

MARKOS: Of course you can't. Why I was just filling my friend Alexios in on the details. He already has a plan to deal with these bandits. He's the silent but deadly type!

DRUCILLA: I don't care who does it, but someone better gut those bandits. Today.

MARKOS: A wonderful idea. I for one, ah, need to rush home. Alexios, I've cooked up a plan for our Cyclops dilemma. See me when you have time

ALEXIOS: If you want your wood, you'll have to fix my broken bow first.

DRUCILLA: Hmm. I usually only pay when the deed is done, but shit's moving at a snail's pace. Follow me. These powsill make me rich as Kroisos.

ALEXIOS: They're that good are they?

DRUCILLA: War's a brewing. The Athenians need good how to hold off the Spartans.

ALEXIOS: Everybody benefits, I guess.

DRUCILLA: Who are you, Markos? You should be tired of this small time shit. You'd make a fortune in this war. Plus, I hear you're a secret Spartan.

ALEXIOS: That was a long time ago. I'm a Kephallonian.

DRUCILLA: Hand it over. There you go, good as new! That bow is as strong as Herakles himself. Give it a try. Shoot your arrow at those dummies!

[Alexios tries renovated onions. The mission "Debt Collector" is complete. Our hero return to Marcos.]

CHAPTER II - A Debt to Pay

An Eye for an Eye

MARKOS: Ah! Here you are, and not a moment too soon.

ALEXIOS: I've dealt with the bandits and gotten the wood for the bowyer.

MARKOS: I had every confidence in you, my friend.

ALEXIOS: Well? Your plan?

MARCOS: Right! The Cyclops and I have a score of drachmae to settle. The same score as you, my rough-and-tumble friend.

ALEXIOS: He wouldn't be after me if it wasn't for you, "my friend."

MARKOS: Heh, right. But - I swear - this will put an end to it! If he insists on sending his goons after us, we'll make sure his last good day was yesterday.

ALEXIOS: Let's hear it then. What do I have to do?

MARKOS: What will we do, you mean! As the brains to your brawn, consider it a joint effort.

ALEXIOS: Of course you do.

MARKOS: Think! What does the Cyclops value most? His men, his land, his ships? No. His obsidian eye.

ALEXIOS: Get to the point, Markos.

MARKOS: Oh, fine. We're going to steal it.

ALEXIOS: Are you crazy? You borrow his drachmae, then you steal his eye?

MARKOS: Having it means we win. Then, it goes to market. We kill two birds with one obsidian eye!

ALEXIOS: He'd better hold still, or he'll lose both eyes.

MARKOS: No, no! It has to be done without the Cyclops knowing. You cannot be seen!

ALEXIOS: Then my new bow will come in handy.

MARKOS: He keeps the eye in his house - it's too valuable to wear out. A wise choice, until you show him the error of his ways. Wait for the sun to set, sneak in, and then! Bring me the eye.

ALEXIOS: Better be worth something.

MARKOS: Do you know how much obsidian goes for on Kephallonia?

ALEXIOS: I've never seen it.

MARKOS: Exactly. And not only is it obsidian, it's veined with gold. Gold! It's no wonder he saves it for special occasions.

ALEXIOS: So we'll use the profits to pay him off?

MARKOS: It'll pay for the bulk of it - a vineyard's expensive, you know!

ALEXIOS: Fine. But you won't get away with being cheap.

MARKOS: Cheap? You wound me, Alexios!

ALEXIOS: It's your defining trait.

MARKOS: Bring me the eye, and I'll prove you wrong. Remember! Not a soul can see you!

ALEXIOS: Got it.

MARKOS: Pull this off, and our heads won't be the Cyclops's trophies when he comes back!

[Alexios is leaving.]

ALEXIOS: Now to find the eye. If it's as valuable as Markos says, it'll be hidden.

[He finds a way to get to the Cyclops camp.]

ALEXIOS: I need cover. If I'm quiet, I can hide in the bushes. Maláka! Must be some eye to have that much protection. I have to stay out of view.

[Having interrupted all the ogres in the camp, Alexios takes the eye and returns to Marcos. He throws the eye right into his hands.]

MARKOS: Ai! Be careful!

ALEXIOS: Do you know how many of his guards were there? All for a fucking rock...

MARKOS: This "rock" could buy a house, my friend!

ALEXIOS: And yet it's still not enough to pay back the Cyclops.

MARKOS: Oh, don't be upset! Think of all the fun we've had!

ALEXIOS: Right. Your fun, my blood. You can't keep dragging me into things, Markos.

MARKOS: This will work, I promise you! Would I lie to you?

ALEXIOS: Don't make me answer that.

MARKOS: Take the eye - but don't sell it yet! No vendor would believe we came by it lawfully. They know exactly who it belongs to!

ALEXIOS: Fine.

MARKOS: Better your pocket than his socket!

ALEXIOS: I think that's enough for one day. Chaire, Markos.

MARKOS: W-wait! I saw a boat! One I've never seen before!

ALEXIOS: So?

MARKOS: The vessel's too good for this dirty town. It must be the Cyclops - and he brought friends!

ALEXIOS: He's back? I can never catch a break, can I?

MARKOS: Take them out, and that's one less thing to deal with! Besides - these strangers look rich as Kroisos - the Cyclops pays them well! It's win-win, my friend.

ALEXIOS: It can't hurt. What do I have to lose?

MARKOS: You? You're a winner if I ever saw one.

ALEXIOS: Then where are they?

MARKOS: In an abandoned house on the eastern coast. Who knows what golden fortunes shine in their hideout? Send them to Hades, then loot them for all they have... We'll be rich!

ALEXIOS: So if these visitors aren't from Kephallonia, where did they come from?

MARKOS: All I know is Kephallonia will be the last place they'll ever see.

ALEXIOS: I'm keeping some of these "golden fortunes," though. No negotiations.

MARKOS: Not even a drachma for the man who sent you?

ALEXIOS: The rest goes to pay your debt. These are my terms.

MARKOS: Oh, fine, fine! Now, teach those strangers what it means to be Kephallonian: draw blood, or bleed.

[“An Eye for an Eye” quest completed.]

Fancy Guests

[The day turns into the night. Alexios comes back home.]

PHOIBE: How'd it go with Markos?

ALEXIOS: How it always goes. I didn't get my money, and I'm running another errand for him.

PHOIBE: Why do you let him boss you around?

ALEXIOS: He doesn't. He just gets me into situations I have to dig myself out of.

PHOIBE: Maybe you shouldn't let him do that.

ALEXIOS: Thanks for the advice.

PHOIBE: You're welcome!

ALEXIOS: What do you want, Phoibe?

PHOIBE: You know Kausos?

ALEXIOS: The town on the other side of the island? Why?

PHOIBE: People there are sick - and my friend Kynna is too. There's a blood fever. They say it's a curse and that they need help from the gods.

ALEXIOS: I told you. I'm not a god.

PHOIBE: But, Ikaros -

ALEXIOS: Is a bird.

PHOIBE: That doesn't mean you can't help!

ALEXIOS: All right, I'll look into it.

The Blood Fever

[Alexios arrives in the town. He is surrounded by sick citizens.]

PRIEST: If the gods won't help you, the sickness must be destroyed by our hands! We have no choice.

CHILD: Help us!

CIVILIAN: He won't let us go!

ALEXIOS: What's going on?

PRIEST: Kausos was consumed by plague... We couldn't keep up with the bodies. It was spreading - we had to intervene.

CIVILIAN: They killed our brothers! Our neighbors!

CIVILIAN: We survived the massacre, but he'll kill us now!

PRIEST: The gods have abandoned us. The sick must join the dead if we are to save the living!

ALEXIOS: Is there no hope for a cure?

PRIEST: Nothing has worked. Sacrifice, prayers...

CIVILIAN: Healers won't come near us, soldiers won't let us leave... The gods won't answer our prayers!

ALEXIOS: But I don't know anything about plague.

PRIEST: There's nothing you can do.

CIVILIAN: No!

PRIEST: If you intervene, I will be forced to defend the gods' wills.

CIVILIAN: Save us from him! Have pity!

CIVILIAN: We aren't even that sick! We'll get better!

PRIEST: Nobody gets better! This is the only way all of Kephallonia, will save itself from extermination!

CIVILIAN: Please!

CIVILIAN: We have children! Think of them!

PRIEST: Don't regret stopping here, misthios...

ALEXIOS: Let them go.

PRIEST: What?!

ALEXIOS: You're no god.

[He kills the priest and his accomplices.]

PHOIBE: You're a hero!

CIVILIAN: That priest came from the underworld. Some "man of the gods."

CIVILIAN: The real gods sent you. Time to go. We're well enough to travel, but need healing.

CIVILIAN: Before you go - take my drachmae. It can't pay for what you gave us, but it's all we have.

ALEXIOS: Forget about that. Just travel safely.

CIVILIAN: You're a gift from the gods, Eagle Bearer. I hope they bless you!

PHOIBE: Bye Kynna! Be safe!

["The Blood Fever" sidequest completed. Alexios returns to this main goan - to kill the newcomers. On the way he kills the bounty hunter, Talos.]

ALEXIOS: You should've turned down this bounty, Talos.

[After that, he finds a settlement of newcomers and kills everyone. When the chief of guards of the settlement lies in a pool of his blood, a man approaches him, takes his sword and slits his throat.]

ELPENOR: I normally have someone else do the field work. I don't suppose you know how to get this stain out.

ALEXIOS: There'll be more blood if you step closer.

ELPENOR: Perhaps. But then you won't hear my proposition, misthios. A clean slaughter. Very good work.

ALEXIOS: Not much sympathy for the men who work with you.

ELPENOR: Not with me, for me. Employees. Now ex-employees, suppose.

ALEXIOS: So, you don't work for the Cyclops.

ELPENOR: Your kind aren't usually believers of myth.

ALEXIOS: Not the monster, the man. You are an outsider. Why are you here?

ELPENOR: Indeed, I'm not from Kephallonia. I'm here because what I'm looking for is. If you'll follow me, Alexios.

ALEXIOS: Who are you? How do you know my name?

ELPENOR: I am Elpenor of Kirrha. How do I know your name? I did what you did. I asked, and people told me.

ALEXIOS: Tell me who sent you.

ELPENOR: An inquisitive nature - good. That will help.

ALEXIOS: You know more than you let on.

ELPENOR: Knowing you is in my best interest. And knowing me is in yours. My prized possession was stolen and brought to Ithaka. Penelope's woven shroud. I need you to steal it back.

ALEXIOS: The shroud of Penelope? The wife of Odysseus? You're joking.

ELPENOR: A piece of it, yes.

ALEXIOS: Impossible. If it existed, it would be priceless.

ELPENOR: Which is why I want it back.

ALEXIOS: Ithaka is not a small island. I need more information.

ELPENOR: I'd start at the home of Odysseus. Well, what's left of it. An inspiring tale. A reunion of past lovers.

ALEXIOS: All right, I'll do it.

ELPENOR: Don't expect it to be easy.

ALEXIOS: That's why it will cost you.

ELPENOR: Then it's agreed. There's a rowboat in the harbor. Use it. It's not meant for open water, so be wise. When you have the shroud, meet me in the temple of Zeus.

ALEXIOS: I will.

ELPENOR: Oh, and misthios... Don't fail.

[“Fancy Guests” mission completed.]

Penelope's Shroud

[Alexios gets on the boat and goes to the islands. He reflects on the way.]

ALEXIOS: Headed to the house of Odysseus on a tiny boat... Let's try not to piss off Poseidon, shall we?

[When he arrived at the island, he noticed that there's a lot of guards.]

ALEXIOS: The legendary shroud. Elpenor wasn't lying. All the years I lived on Kephallonia... I never realized the mighty Odysseus's palace was here. Penelope's shroud. In the flesh. I mean cloth.

[Having killed the guards, Alexios finds a girl in a wooden cage.]

ODESSA: Hey, get me out of here!

ALEXIOS: Let's get out of here. Can you fight?

ODESSA: I'd be happy to.

[They're leaving the camp.]

A Small Odyssey

ODESSA: My thanks. I can't believe I let those malákes sneak up on me.

ALEXIOS: Ithaka is a dangerous place to wander around on your own.

ODESSA: You're wandering around on your own. You're right. I can't fight a camp of bandits by myself. Could you help me get to Odysseus's palace? I can pay.

ALEXIOS: I'll help you get to the palace.

ODESSA: Well, I'm in luck then. What do I call you?

ALEXIOS: Alexios.

ODESSA: I'm Odessa. Named after the great Odysseus.

ALEXIOS: Why would you want to go up there?

ODESSA: I'm a descendant of Odysseus. I'm on a pilgrimage.

ALEXIOS: You're a descendant of the former king of Ithaka?

ODESSA: And the man who created the Trojan horse and defeated the Cyclops. The one who traveled to the land of the Lotus Eaters. The one the Odyssey is about? Yes. I am. Why?

ALEXIOS: You're not the first who's said that, is all.

ODESSA: Well, I trust I don't need to prove my lineage to get up to the palace.

ALEXIOS: We should head to the palace while we have the chance.

[They enter the camp again and go to the palace.]

ODESSA: This... is it? It's just rubble.

ALEXIOS: What were you expecting?

ODESSA: I don't know. Something more grand. My parents named me Odessa... I'm Odysseus's namesake. I thought if I came here I might... understand him more.

ALEXIOS: Well, do you?

ODESSA: Not at all... Take me to my boat. I'll pay you there.

[Alexios helps Odessa safely return to her boat.]

ODESSA: Well, this is for you. Such a disappointment.

ALEXIOS: Why is that place so important to you?

ODESSA: Are you joking? Odysseus lived there. Ruled there. He ended the Trojan war. Eluded Skylla and Charybdis. He had everything. Loyalty. Love. Fighting spirit!

ALEXIOS: He had the attention of the gods, too. That caused him a lot of trouble.

ODESSA: And it made him a legend.

ALEXIOS: You look cute right now. As if nothing can get in your way.

ODESSA: I don't usually like being called cute.

ALEXIOS: In time you'll learn to love all the things I have to tell you.

ODESSA: You seem so certain.

ALEXIOS: I've had lots of success in the past.

ODESSA: I'm sure you have.

ALEXIOS: So what do you think?

ODESSA: I think I was in a much poorer mood before now. There's just so much I desire. To be as great as Odysseus... Where do I even begin?

ALEXIOS: Odysseus didn't want to go to war. And once it was over, it took him ten years to get home. He wasted years of his life, all because the gods interfered. Stay home. Spend time with your family. Live your own life.

ODESSA: But who will remember my story then?

ALEXIOS: Would you rather be remembered? Or happy?

ODESSA: Hmm. I'll have to give that some thought. Thank you!

[“A Small Odyssey” sidequest completed. Alexios returns to Elpenor.]

ELPENOR: Alexios. Good news, I hope.

ALEXIOS: Safe and sound.

ELPENOR: Well done. And now the shroud is yours.

ALEXIOS: You don't want it? After all that?

ELPENOR: I gained something more valuable today. For your troubles, misthios.

ALEXIOS: If I knew any better, I'd think you were testing me.

ELPENOR: Perhaps. You did well, misthios. Tell me, how do you feel about killing a general in Megaris? Do this for me and earn double what you earned today. Are you up to the task? It would take you far away from Kephallonia. So far away you might never return.

ALEXIOS: I'm not an assassin.

ELPENOR: There's a first time for everything. What do you say?

ALEXIOS: Who is this general?

ELPENOR: They call him "The Wolf."

ALEXIOS: He do something to offend you?

ELPENOR: Yes... He's costing me drachmae. He's not good for business.

ALEXIOS: Anything should I know about Megaris?

ELPENOR: Only that it's the most valuable land in the Greek world, from a military perspective of course. Unfortunately for Megarians, it has two very powerful neighbors who just can't seem to play nice. In the tug of war between Korinth and Athens, Megaris is the rope.

ALEXIOS: Why me?

ELPENOR: Because no one knows who you are. You're invisible.

ALEXIOS: I accept.

ELPENOR: Splendid. You'll need a boat. You have one, don't you?

ALEXIOS: Of course.

ELPENOR: Good. I hope it's sturdy.

ALEXIOS: And why is that?

ELPENOR: The seas are much more dangerous, I'm afraid. War is coming, and the Wolf is on the wrong side.

ALEXIOS: War? With who?

ELPENOR: The entire Greek world is at each other's throats. What rock have you been hiding under, exactly?

ALEXIOS: Kephallonia. And how do I know you're on the right side?

ELPENOR: Because I'm the one paying you.

ALEXIOS: You won't be disappointed.

ELPENOR: When your job in Megaris is done, come find me at Pilgrim's Landing in Phokis.

["Penelope's Shroud" mission completed.]

The Big Break

[Realizing that his shabby boat would not survive a long journey, Alexios headed for the shipbuilder.]

ALEXIOS: It's a fine ship. Telemenes.

TELEMENES: Alexios! She is that, ready to ride the waves for the right captain... and the right price.

ALEXIOS: I really need a boat, Telemenes.

TELEMENES: Everyone on Kephallonia needs a boat, or passage on one. You've seen this shit hole.

ALEXIOS: All my life.

TELEMENES: Even if I had a boat, who's going to row it? You? (laughs) I'd give my left grape to see that!

ALEXIOS: This is Kephallonia. I could always find someone down on their luck and willing to work for next to nothing to get off this island.

TELEMENES: The seas are treacherous now. Well, more than usual. It would be suicide.

ALEXIOS: You're not being very helpful, Telemenes.

TELEMENES: Not sure if this helps, but rumor has it the Cyclops is coming for you and Markos.

ALEXIOS: Maláka! How is that helpful?

TELEMENES: That monster's held Kephallonia captive for too long. I figured if anyone could finally rid us of his stench, it would be you.

ALEXIOS: Telemenes, what does this have to do with my need for a boat?

TELEMENES: Rumor also has it the Cyclops has docked his ship in Kleptous Bay.

ALEXIOS: His ship you say? I'll have to pay Kleptous Bay a visit.

TELEMENES: Be careful. That one-eyed brute has a nasty temper.

[Alexios leaves.]

ALEXIOS: So I can take his ship and deal with the Cyclops at the same time. Two birds, one stone.

[He finds the camp.]

ALEXIOS: The Cyclops. Time to have a little chat.

[He quietly sneaks around the camp. Cyclops torture some poor guy by dipping him in a huge jug of water (at least I hope it is water).]

BARNABAS: The gods as my witness! I swear!

THE CYCLOPS OF KEPHALLONIA: Which ones?

BARNABAS: What difference does it make - (Cyclops dips him) All of them! I swear! All of them!

THE CYCLOPS OF KEPHALLONIA: I've never heard so much fucking god talk from one man in all my days.

ALEXIOS: Let him go.

THE CYCLOPS OF KEPHALLONIA: No one on this island is allowed to say that word!

ALEXIOS: Did he say Cyclops? Did it hurt your feelings?

THE CYCLOPS OF KEPHALLONIA: I don't like it when people call me that!

BARNABAS: I didn't!!! I - (Cyclops dips him again)

ALEXIOS: But you're so fat - I mean big and strong and you really do only have one eye.

THE CYCLOPS OF KEPHALLONIA: My eye! Give it to me! Give it to me and I won't kill Markos for having you steal it. Give it to me!!!

ALEXIOS: You want it? Go get it.

[He sticks the eye up the goat's ass and the goat runs away. Cyclops becomes angry and attacks Alexios who kills him. Alexios frees Barnabas.]

ALEXIOS: We shouldn't delay here any further. Even rats like these have friends on Kephallonia.

BARNABAS: By Zeus, these Kephallonian bandits are no joke!

ALEXIOS: This used to be a nice village, but now it's just a nest of anarchy and crime.

BARNABAS: Good thing you're on my side! They really seem to fear you.

[They safely leave the camp.]

BARNABAS: I can't thank you enough. After spending most of my life at sea, it would have been absolutely shameful to drown in a pot! Ah, where are my manners? I am Barnabas, captain of the Adrestia.

ALEXIOS: Well, Barnabas. I am pleased to meet you. I'm Alexios, misthios by trade.

BARNABAS: Oh but you're much more than that, I'm sure!

ALEXIOS: What do you mean?

BARNABAS: When they forced my head under water, I prayed to the gods. And when they pulled it out, there you were!

ALEXIOS: All of Kephallonia heard your prayers. I just happened to be closest.

BARNABAS: And you just happen to fight like Achilles while Zeus's eagle flies around your head!

ALEXIOS: So, why were those men attacking you?

BARNABAS: Oh, you know the people here... No offense. I tell them a tale of my last voyage, and the next thing I know they're acting like a bunch of savages!

ALEXIOS: What tale could you tell that would make them so angry?

BARNABAS: My last voyage. We found a man floating alone on a raft... Before he passed, he told us a tale to make your blood run cold. Something about a horrifying creature, ugly beyond description. I mentioned the words "one-eyed monster". Next thing I know, I'm drowning in a clay pot!

ALEXIOS: Yes, the Cyclops tends to take that personally. Where do you come from?

BARNABAS: Everywhere, nowhere. The Adrestia is my home, but I was born in an olive grove in Mykonos. I haven't stepped foot there since I left for the military.

ALEXIOS: So you're a soldier?

BARNABAS: I was. My brothers and I were captains in the Athenian fleet... until one night during a siege, Poseidon's fury destroyed our ships. That was the night I saw it.

ALEXIOS: It? What did you see?

BARNABAS: The sea god commands more than just the winds and the waves when he truly unleashes his temper. I saw his beast, his murderous pet. Few believe me, but this dead eye is a permanent reminder. Punishment for looking on Poseidon's forbidden creature and living to tell the tale.

ALEXIOS: So... you have a ship.

BARNABAS: Of course! Gods forbid I'd end up stuck in this place.

ALEXIOS: Where is it now?

BARNABAS: Thanks to you, it's still in Sami Harbor where I left it.

ALEXIOS: Perhaps the fates brought us together after all. I'm in need of a ship and a crew.

BARNABAS: You saved my life! It would disgust the gods to not offer it in return.

ALEXIOS: So, that's a yes?

BARNABAS: My ship, my crew, and my services are yours!

ALEXIOS: You truly aren't from around here.

BARNABAS: Gods, no! And I thank them for that. Come now and see the Adrestia.

[They're riding to the ship.]

BARNABAS: We're ready when you are, captain.

PHOIBE: Wait! Wait for me, Alexios! I'm all packed and everything!

ALEXIOS: You're coming, are you?

PHOIBE: If you're going. I'm going.

ALEXIOS: Phoibe, you're not old enough. I can't look after you all the time.

PHOIBE: I can look after myself. I don't need anyone to help me!

ALEXIOS: Even if that were true, it's not your time.

PHOIBE: But I wouldn't be any trouble. Promise! If I can't come, then take Chara.

ALEXIOS: Chara?

PHOIBE: My pet eagle. She's my friend. Mater gave her to me. But she'll be your friend now, and it'll be like I'm there with you. You know, to remind you of me.

ALEXIOS: Thanks, Phoibe.

PHOIBE: Besides, I'll have Kynna to play with since you saved her!

ALEXIOS: Go easy on her. She may still be shaky with the fever.

PHOIBE: But you have to promise we'll see each other again.

ALEXIOS: It's up to the Fates, but I'd like to.

PHOIBE: The Fates know we're best friends, Alexios. They'll make sure we meet again.

ALEXIOS: If you say so.

PHOIBE: I say so!

MARKOS: Alexios! Leaving Kephalaria without saying goodbye to your dear Markos? Tell me it isn't true!

ALEXIOS: Well, you're here now, so it won't be true. Goodbye, Markos.

MARKOS: All these years as a dynamic duo. I'll never replace you! Well, I may need another assistant someday. But it won't be easy!

MARKOS: Come now, give me a hug!

ALEXIOS: All right, come here.

MARKOS: Yes, bring it in! Oh will I ever miss you, Alexios.

ALEXIOS: Thanks, Markos. I'll miss you too. And what does the future hold for you?

MARKOS: Wine, of course! Though, you never know when the vines will wither. I'm always ready for another adventure! Speaking of adventure, I have a task for you, dear Phoibe.

PHOIBE: An adventure? Yes!

MARKOS: Already following in your footsteps, isn't she, my friend?

[They both leave.]

BARNABAS: Ready to set sail?

ALEXIOS: Prepare to cast off. It's time to leave.

BARNABAS: Good. The tides wait for neither man nor woman.

ALEXIOS: Time to go...

[They board the ship.]

BARNABAS: So, what course do we set? Where in this big, beautiful world does the mighty Alexios want to go?

ALEXIOS: Megaris.

BARNABAS: Megaris! But we'll be sailing into war.

ALEXIOS: I got a contract for some general's head.

BARNABAS: Whose head?

ALEXIOS: They call him "The Wolf."

BARNABAS: The Wolf! Who wants Nikolaos of Sparta dead?

ALEXIOS: Nikolaos of Sparta?

[Hearing the name of his father, our hero somehow is not much surprised and yet he has a flashback.]

CIVILIAN: The oracle has spoken! To prevent Sparta's fall, the child must fall first.

MYRRINE: (crying) You can't let this happen! Please! She'll do no harm - she'll help us! She will lead us!

CIVILIAN: Silence!

MYRRINE: Sto-- You can't! Nooo! No, no.

[The priest is going to throw the child. Alexios runs up to him and accidentally slips the priest with little Cassandra off the cliff.]

CIVILIAN: Murderer! He has killed him! Toss him over!

CIVILIAN: Pay for his dishonor! For the life he has snuffed! He's not Spartan, Nikolaos!

MYRRINE: Look at me Nikolaos! Don't! Don't listen! Nikolaos! Don't listen! No! Don't listen! Nikolaos! Why?

YOUNG ALEXIOS: ...Pater.

[He hugs his father, who is preparing to throw him off the cliff.]

MYRRINE: Nikolaos! Stop! Nikolaos! No! Nikolaos! Nikolaos! Look at me! Look at me, Nikolaos! Don't! Don't to listen!

[Nikolaos grabs his son's hand and holds him over the cliff.]

CIVILIAN: Your blood is tainted! Rid yourself of this poison! For Sparta!

YOUNG ALEXIOS: Pater?

MYRRINE: No, oh my baby...

YOUNG ALEXIOS: Pater!

MYRRINE: Alexios! ALEXIOS!

[Nikolaos drops Alexios. The memory ends.]

ALEXIOS: Get me to Megaris. Now.

BARNABAS: But I don't understand. Of all the places under Helios, why risk our necks to go there?

ALEXIOS: The Wolf of Sparta is my father.

[“The Big Break” mission completed.]

UBISOFT PRESENTS
ASSASSIN’S CREED ODYSSEY

CHAPTER III - The Wolf Hunt
Learning the Ropes

BARNABAS: Nothing like a sea breeze!

ALEXIOS: Does the deck always feel like it's moving?

BARNABAS: I've got the perfect opportunity for you to get your sea legs.

ALEXIOS: Oh, what would that be?

BARNABAS: Well, when the Cyclops was giving me a drumming, his pirates took my cargo. I know their ship, and I know where they're heading. What say we get it back?

ALEXIOS: Sure. It'll be a good opportunity to see how your ship and crew perform.

[He gets the opportunity to control the ship. Together they attack the ship that stole Barnabas' cargo.]

BARNABAS: Let's see how the sails have held up. There she is! Ram them from the other side and cleave that ship in two! A good catch! That cargo's ours now.

ALEXIOS: I think I'm getting the hang of this.

Equal Employment Opportunity Program

BARNABAS: I lost a couple good men in the scrap with those pirates. The seas are more dangerous now that Sparta and Athens are at each other's throats.

ALEXIOS: We need new recruits to better our crew...

BARNABAS: I know where to start - the best archer I know, he'd be a valuable asset.

ALEXIOS: When can we meet him?

BARNABAS: Well... You're going to have to persuade him.

ALEXIOS: What do you mean?

BARNABAS: You get him aboard, and I'll talk him into it... A little drachmae should sweeten the deal.

ALEXIOS: So, you want me to... knock him out.

BARNABAS: No, no. Well, maybe just pacify him a little. Then get him to the ship, so we can have a little talk. Everything will be fine, I promise you.

[Alexios goes down to the shore and catches an archer.]

ALEXIOS: He'll make a worthy addition to the crew.

[He comes back on board with him.]

ALEXIOS: I got him.

BARNABAS: Good, he'll be a valuable asset to the crew.

ALEXIOS: Will he be enough?

BARNABAS: Don't worry, there'll be plenty of opportunities to recruit more people as we go.

ALEXIOS: Something tells me we're going to need them.

A Journey Into War

[They float on.]

BARNABAS: The Athenians have blocked the entrance to the bay!

[Alexios destroys the ships.]

BARNABAS: You did it. We're through! From what I've heard, Megaris is home to the fiercest fighting so far. The Spartans are preparing for a final push to rid the region of Athenians.

[Meanwhile there is a real massacre in the port. Spartans are killing some soldiers.]

STENTOR: The Wolf takes no prisoners!

[Nikolaos himself also joins the massacre. Having finished killing soldiers, he turns to his soldiers.]

NIKOLAOS: See how the Athenian dog Perikles fears you! He cowers in his Parthenon, surrounded by playwrights and sophists. He dares not face you with honor on the battlefield. He knows you are too strong. He knows Athens's days in Megaris are numbered. And he knows Athens is next!

[Alexios comes down to the shore and sees his father. He already goes to him with the intention to kill, but he is stopped by Stentor.]

STENTOR: You. You destroyed the Athenian blockade?

ALEXIOS: They were in my way.

STENTOR: Sparta owes you thanks. Tyche has blessed you, my friend. You arrived in time to watch my pater achieve a glorious victory.

ALEXIOS: You can't be his son. I heard his children died in Sparta many years ago.

STENTOR: He adopted me into his household after his previous family failed him. I would never bring dishonor to him.

ALEXIOS: Sometimes things happen in a way that you don't plan or expect. History has a way of remembering things strangely.

STENTOR: You talk as if you were there.

ALEXIOS: Maybe I was.

STENTOR: Nonsense. You're too young to have witnessed such things. But enough of the past, let's discuss the future. What is a mercenary doing sailing into a war they aren't being paid to fight in? Tell me why you're really here before I cut you down for wasting my time.

ALEXIOS: It's my honor to serve Sparta. I've come to pledge my sword to the Wolf of Sparta.

STENTOR: If you wish to pledge your services to my pater, you can do so by helping me. The fleet might be destroyed, but Megaris is firmly in Athenian control. We need to weaken their position if we are to take to the field and drive them back to Athens

ALEXIOS: How goes the war effort?

STENTOR: The Athenian blockade was a desperate attempt to stop our advance through Megaris. Now, we can prepare to drive them from this region once and for all. Our forward scouts are identifying key targets in preparation for our assault. Under the Wolf's command, we shall be victorious.

ALEXIOS: Your father. Who is he exactly?

STENTOR: Nikolaos, the Wolf of Sparta. He was impressed with my skill when I was a boy and took me under his wing. He trained me himself and eventually adopted me into his house. He is my father and mentor. I live to make him proud. Surely you've heard of him?

ALEXIOS: Just rumors really.

STENTOR: I doubt they do him justice. He is a great warrior and a greater general. I'd follow him to the gates of the underworld.

ALEXIOS: Why do you need a mercenary to do that? You seem to have plenty of soldiers at your disposal.

STENTOR: It's not a question of manpower. The Megarians are our allies. We do not want to commit troops until we know victory is assured. My scouts are already locating key targets that we can hit.

ALEXIOS: I'm ready to serve. Together we will ensure that Sparta is victorious.

STENTOR: You're a different kind of misthios, aren't you? You're just what we need to help deal with that meddling Athenian mercenary. If we can draw the leader out and eliminate him, we will crush the Athenians on the battlefield and drive their forces all the way back to Athens. Destroying their supplies, stealing their war chest, and killing their elite troops should leave him vulnerable. Take this and present it to my scouts. If you find them in the field be sure to check for new information. They might also have need of your skills.

ALEXIOS: This chest you want me to steal, why is it so important?

STENTOR: An army is made of men that need paying. Take away their drachmae and they lose all the will to die for other men's ambitions. The Athenians keep their treasure well guarded in the fort at the foot of Mount Geraneia.

ALEXIOS: Where is the Athenian leader?

STENTOR: He is in Megara, hiding behind stone walls and a full garrison of troops. But if you kill his troops, destroy his supplies, and steal his riches, then he'll be open to attack.

ALEXIOS: What supplies should I destroy?

STENTOR: Anything the Athenians need. Look for crates of supplies, and weapons. The Port of Nisaia in the Valley of King Lelex would be a good place to start. It's where their supplies come into the region.

ALEXIOS: I think I know what must be done.

STENTOR: Remember, every Athenian soldier you eliminate will also help us achieve victory.

ALEXIOS: And once live brought the Athenians to their knees for Sparta, I'll get that meeting with Nikolaos. Or you'll be next.

STENTOR: Send those Athenian dogs to Hades, misthios. Do this and the Wolf will personally see to it that you are rewarded.

[After Alexios steals the chest of gold from the Athenians, he heads for the occupied forest.]

The Missing Map

SPARTAN HOPLITE: Don't come back until you have the tablet.

SPARTAN LIGHT SOLDIER: Yes, Polemarch.

ALEXIOS: Lost something?

SPARTAN HOPLITE: Not lost, stolen.

ALEXIOS: Stentor sent me, said you've been having trouble with spies.

SPARTAN HOPLITE: I'd take an Athenian spy over a Spartan traitor. Either way he must be found. He took a tablet with vital intelligence.

ALEXIOS: Where's your spy? Is he still in the camp?

SPARTAN HOPLITE: Wouldn't need you if I knew. I doubt he's still here. Can't have gone far though, he was injured when he took out the guard.

ALEXIOS: This doesn't sound like something a Spartan would do?

SPARTAN HOPLITE: He could be an imposter, we've had raids on our supplies recently... And Megaris has more mercenaries than a goat has ticks. And what man would turn their back on Sparta?

ALEXIOS: I'll get him and your tablet. Anything you can tell me that might help?

SPARTAN HOPLITE: The area is hotly contested, but Sparta is winning. We're pushing the Athenians back, but due to the war the forests and mountains have become a hive for bandits and mercenaries.

ALEXIOS: I mean about where your spy might have gone.

SPARTAN HOPLITE: He's injured, and there's a spring up there in the forest. If it was me I would have headed there.

ALEXIOS: I'll be back soon with your tablet.

SPARTAN HOPLITE: The mountains and forest of Megaris are dangerous, and he surely didn't work alone.

ALEXIOS: I'm more than capable of handling your spy. Chaire.

[Alexios sneaks into the spy camp.]

MERCENARY: So, you got it then.

ATHENIAN LIGHT SOLDIER: Of course I got it, but the bastards stabbed me while I was getting out.

MERCENARY: That's a shame, we can't have you slowing us down. But the upside is less people to split the drachmae with.

ATHENIAN LIGHT SOLDIER: Wait, please, we don't have to do this.

MERCENARY: Sorry, but there ain't no we anymore.

[Alexios kills the mercenary from behind.]

ATHENIAN LIGHT SOLDIER: Wha... What do you want? Who are you?

ALEXIOS: I'm the one who's going to return the tablet you stole. Why did you steal the tablet?

ATHENIAN LIGHT SOLDIER: Because I was paid to.

ALEXIOS: Who paid you?

ATHENIAN LIGHT SOLDIER: A mercenary. Hyrkanos, all right? Gave me the Spartan uniform, told me where to look. Easy drachmae.

ALEXIOS: How did you get into the camp?

ATHENIAN LIGHT SOLDIER: (laughs) Spartans never suspect their own... Too busy looking down on the rest of us. Malákes!

ALEXIOS: Give it to me, I'm not leaving without it.

ATHENIAN LIGHT SOLDIER: There's no winners in this war, but there are opportunities. Perhaps we could come to an arrangement?

ALEXIOS: What arrangement would that be?

ATHENIAN LIGHT SOLDIER: Here, take the tablet... and this for your troubles! No one knows who I am. Nobody else needs to die here.

ALEXIOS: Go... Make sure I never see your face again. (the spy runs away) I should get this tablet back to the commander.

SPARTAN HOPLITE: So, did you find the traitor?

ALEXIOS: It's not traitors you need to worry about. He was a spy working for the mercenary Hyrkanos.

SPARTAN HOPLITE: Hyrkanos. How many times must I hear that name? His palms must be overflowing with Athenian gold by now. Did you get the tablet?

[“The Missing Map” sidequest completed.]

Portion Control

ALEXIOS: Could be one of Stentor's scouts. Looks like he's run into some problems.

DOLIOS: I'll gut every last Athenian responsible for this. Fucking cowards. Once they're dead, Stentor will know I'm worthy of fighting by his side.

ALEXIOS: What happened here?

DOLIOS: What business is it of yours, misthios? Do you know anything about this?

ALEXIOS: I'm a professional and a friend.

DOLIOS: What's that supposed to mean?

ALEXIOS: It had been me, I'd have been smart enough to try and hide the evidence.

DOLIOS: (laughs) Fair point. Whoever did this was brazen and foolish... Leaving it to be so easily discovered.

ALEXIOS: Or they wanted to send a message. Stentor sent me. I'm here to help wherever I can.

DOLIOS: Stentor sent you?

ALEXIOS: Sparta doesn't fully control Megaris... yet. It's easier for me to move freely in certain areas of Megaris than a Spartan.

DOLIOS: The Athenians have proven more resilient here than expected, but they will not stand...

ALEXIOS: ...Before Sparta, yes - I've heard the speeches. But until that glorious day comes, we should find out what happened here.

DOLIOS: Do you have any ideas?

ALEXIOS: Not yet, but I will. I should get a closer look to figure out what happened here. These were professional soldiers, slaughtered to a man. I don't think bandits could have done this. The supplies are missing. They can't have gone far though... they use the carts. Looks like they went this way into the forest. I don't think I'll find anything else. I should report back.

DOLIOS: So was it the Athenians?

ALEXIOS: I found some fragments of green crystal...

DOLIOS: Bandits then! The mountains here are riddled with caves, and the war has made them brazen.

ALEXIOS: Nothing about this adds up...

DOLIOS: In what way?

ALEXIOS: There's no bodies, at least not any assailants. Athenians would have taken the carts and their dead, but bandits would have left their fallen in the dust.

DOLIOS: Then who did it?

ALEXIOS: I'm not sure. Whoever did this went into the forest... So I'll start by looking there. There they are! There's food being cooked near here...

[The hawk leads Alexios to a small cave, where frightened people are hiding.]

ALEXIOS: Is this a private gathering, or can anyone join?

NEAERA: Wha... What are y... Please, please just leave.

ALEXIOS: So, I followed a trail that started with slaughtered Spartans and stolen goods and ends with you... And the supplies... All hiding quietly in a cave.

NEAERA: We just took the food. We didn't hurt anyone.

ALEXIOS: You'd better tell me why I shouldn't just kill you and return the goods.

NEAERA: Please, I'll tell you anything you want to know.

ALEXIOS: You're the sorriest band of thieves I've ever seen.

NEAERA: By the gods no! We're citizens of Megara. Please, show mercy. This war has already cost us dearly.

ALEXIOS: Like the mercy you showed those Spartan soldiers?

NEAERA: I, we... We just took some food. Hyrkanos told us to take it, said he'd make it easy for us.

ALEXIOS: Hyrkanos?

NEAERA: Yes, the mercenary. He said he'd provide food, told us the Athenians would never let their people go hungry.

ALEXIOS: Explain yourselves! It's not wise to anger the Spartans,

NEAERA: Please, we're not thieves. This is our food, our crops. They took it, left us with nothing! Our children are starving...

ALEXIOS: So you repay theft with murder? A fine lesson for your children.

NEAERA: Murder, no. Please, we never harmed anyone.

CIVILIAN: A misthios told us where to find the food. Everyone was already dead!

ALEXIOS: Enough, I didn't come here for a debate. It's too late for talk now. I came to find who's behind this crime against Sparta. Stand aside, you don't need to die today. I'm returning the supplies to the Spartans.

NEAERA: Then you will do so over our dead bodies!

ALEXIOS: Don't be stupid. Take some of the food, enough to get by. I'll say I killed you and claimed what was left. They will be satisfied.

NEAERA: But the food, what of our families?!

ALEXIOS: Your families will not benefit from your death. Accept my offer and don't steal again. It won't be me who comes for you next time.

NEAERA: Yes, misthios... Thank you. Hurry! Take what you can carry and go. Quick.

[Alexios returns to Dolios.]

DOLIOS: Did you find the ones responsible?

ALEXIOS: I found your supplies with a bunch of hungry Megarians.

DOLIOS: And?

ALEXIOS: You stole that food from them. They were starving.

DOLIOS: The supplies were essential for the war and ridding Megara of the Athenians.

ALEXIOS: Hungry Megarians are the least of your worries, but there's something else. Have you heard of a mercenary called Hyrkanos?

DOLIOS: Hyrkanos... Yes, he is working for the Athenians, so the rumors go.

ALEXIOS: This is all his doing.

DOLIOS: These mercenaries are persistent, I'll give them that. You've done well here, but if you really want to help Sparta, I have a task for you.

ALEXIOS: What do you have in mind?

DOLIOS: Hunt him down! Show him that no mercenary dog will interfere with Sparta's plans.

ALEXIOS: Since you have such a high opinion of mercenaries, why even send me?

DOLIOS: I'm sorry. It's just this man Hyrkanos is like a thorn in our foot. He's a menace to all Spartans here. Please, will you help us?

ALEXIOS: I'll do it. If he's this much trouble, I take it there's a sizeable reward?

DOLIOS: Of course! Just think of how much he'll have on him with all the drachmae Athens has given him to thwart our plans.

ALEXIOS: I suppose you're right... Any idea where to start looking?

DOLIOS: He could be anywhere. Most likely, he's nestled up close to the Athenians. We've sent out a couple of patrols, but they never returned, and we can't spare any more men at this time.

ALEXIOS: Fortunately, I'm not just any man.

[“Portion Control” sidequest completed.]

ALEXIOS: This must be Hyrkanos's camp...

[He finds and slay Hyrkanos.]

ALEXIOS: Hmm, this has been quite profitable. Maybe I should hunt down more mercenaries.

[Filled with joy, Alexios returns for the reward.]

ALEXIOS: The mercenary Hyrkanos is dead.

DOLIOS: Sparta thanks you, misthios.

ALEXIOS: What about my reward?

DOLIOS: We never entered into a contract. This is something you did yourself... But be assured Sparta is grateful.

ALEXIOS: Great...

A Family Ordeal

[Traveling through the Valley of King Lelex, Alexios meets Odessa again. She's arguing with someone.]

ODESSA: If I hope to be remembered, I can stay in one place like this. Stop standing around, and do what I've told you. Stop - Alexios! I haven't seen you since you took me to the ruins of Odysseus.

ALEXIOS: Odessa. You remember.

ODESSA: Of course I do. You told me to stay home with my family

ALEXIOS: Seems like you're doing that.

ODESSA: Not by choice. You asked if I wanted to be remembered or to be happy. Well, taking care of my sick father does not make me happy.

ALEXIOS: I've seen a lot of people, but you're one of the most beautiful I've ever met.

ODESSA: Is that so? You're a welcome distraction from my problems.

ALEXIOS: I've been told I'm great at being a distraction. I'm sure you have a bed inside we could use.

ODESSA: (laughs) You get straight to the point, don't you?

ALEXIOS: I'll show you how to the point I can get.

ODESSA: I'm sure you will.

ALEXIOS: So, how about it?

ODESSA: You know. I'd love to, but I have a couple of things I need to pick up for my father first. If you helped me, then we could maybe continue our conversation.

ALEXIOS: Don't worry, I'm here to help. What do you need?

ODESSA: A few herbs from the Valley of King Lelex nearby. I also need a mixture from the market to combine with the herbs. There's a merchant there holding onto it for me.

ALEXIOS: Is your father really so sick you can't get them yourself?

ODESSA: I'm his only child. I'd rather be close by in case he gets worse.

ALEXIOS: Do you know what's wrong with him?

ODESSA: No, only that he's not getting better. The mixture and herbs I need may help the pain at least.

ALEXIOS: If he dies, all his land will be yours, right?

ODESSA: Yes, but I'd sell it anyway. What better reason to leave everything behind and truly begin my quest like Odysseus?

ALEXIOS: Stay by your father. I'll be back with the herbs and the mixture.

[He collects herbs and fights with wolves. Soon he returns to the settlement again.]

ALEXIOS: That merchant should be the one Odessa mentioned.

STREET VENDOR: Tell your friends, tell your family! The best wares drachmae can buy! Even mercenaries like you can find something.

ALEXIOS: Odessa sent me.

STREET VENDOR: Ah, of course! Sweet girl. Wish she had stopped by herself. This is for her father, I imagine. I'll take the payment, and you can be on your way.

ALEXIOS: Here, take it.

STREET VENDOR: Quick sales are my favorites. I hope this helps Odessa.

[When Alexios comes to Odessa, he sees that she was attacked. He kills the attackers.]

ALEXIOS: These men work for the leader of Megaris... Seems like Odessa's been causing some problems for them, and they're also after her father's estate.

ODESSA: Are the herbs and mixture okay? You did get them, didn't you?

ALEXIOS: That's what you're worried about? We were just attacked.

ODESSA: Surely you should be used to that by now. Random bandits litter these lands. What did that letter you were reading say?

ALEXIOS: That they were after you and only you. Not me.

ODESSA: I can't believe it!

ALEXIOS: Looks like it deals with your father's estate. They probably want you and him both gone so they can take it.

ODESSA: I could have died. Without making a name for myself. I'd never be worth anything at all.

ALEXIOS: I won't let anyone hurt that face.

ODESSA: No pain, no glory.

ALEXIOS: How about you take me inside and show me a little pain?

ODESSA: Oh, how I would love to do so, but this news... someone aims to kill me! How could we possibly ignore such a thing for pleasure?

ALEXIOS: Then where does that leave us?

ODESSA: With a task at hand, clearly! Think what you must, but I can prove the truth to you. I just need your help.

ALEXIOS: I'm not surprised. I'll let you know if you can have it.

[“A Family Ordeal” sidequest completed. After a while, Alexios comes back to Odessa, which takes care of her sick father.]

The True Story

ODESSA'S FATHER: I was so happy when. Odessa came home to me.

ODESSA: Are you ready to find the whole truth of what's going on?

ALEXIOS: Always.

ODESSA: I knew you would. You already believe they're after me and you're right. I want to have proof in my hand saying why.

ALEXIOS: The truth always comes out.

ODESSA: It will. And then I can finally follow in the footsteps of Odysseus.

ALEXIOS: Don't the stories of Odysseus mention how great of a lover he was?

ODESSA: Do they? I must have missed those.

ALEXIOS: You said you want to be like Odysseus. We could do better than that.

ODESSA: We will talk more about... us once this is all done. First, the note you found was from the leader of Megaris... There has to be proof of what he's up to.

ALEXIOS: If there is, it would be at his home.

ODESSA: Then go there.

ALEXIOS: I'll find the proof you need.

ODESSA: Good. I want this whole thing to be over.

ALEXIOS: Let's say I do find the truth you're looking for. What next?

ODESSA: Then I tell everyone who would listen. The leader wouldn't dare kill me or my father once everyone knows their plans.

ALEXIOS: Do you have any idea what I'm looking for?

ODESSA: The leader is the most powerful man in Megaris - I can't accuse him of anything unless I have proof that he's after I'll be back with proof. Whatever it may be. (to himself) I should head to the leader's house to find out what's going on.

[Alexios infiltrates the palace of the leader of Megaris. He finds several letters that are evidence against him.]

ALEXIOS: One of Odessa's suitors died mysteriously shortly after meeting her. This letter mentions Odessa's estate, and how crucial it is that they get it. "By any means necessary"... The leader of Megaris tried arranging a marriage for Odessa. Sounds like an easy way to get her

father's estate. This letter claims that Odessa hired other mercenaries. I wonder why... I think I have enough to go on. I should return to Odessa.

ODESSA: You've returned. I hope with good news.

ALEXIOS: I'm not sure if it's good or not yet. There were two pieces of proof I found that they're after you.

ODESSA: Perfect! What were the reasons?

ALEXIOS: One was due to your family's wealth. The other had to do with an arranged marriage.

ODESSA: That's plenty of proof showing I'm the victim here!

ALEXIOS: You've hired other mercenaries?

ODESSA: Oh... Just for odd jobs here and there. There's always something to be done that could use one.

ALEXIOS: A man you were meant to marry was killed suddenly.

ODESSA: I... He was probably killed by the same people who want to kill me!

ALEXIOS: After everything I found, I know what's going on.

ODESSA: And what's that?

ALEXIOS: You don't deserve any of this. You're only trying to live your life.

ODESSA: Of course I am! I've done nothing wrong. I just want to have a healthy father and to start my journey.

ALEXIOS: You can start that after we have a little fun.

ODESSA: I do enjoy your attempts. Tell me, what is it that's meant to make me swoon this time?

ALEXIOS: Uh... if I'm being honest, I didn't think about what to say next.

ODESSA: That's a first! You always seem to know exactly what you want to say. It's impressive, really.

ALEXIOS: First time for everything.

ODESSA: Let's not talk, then.

[They kiss and enter the house. In ten seconds they go back out on the street.]

ODESSA: Funny, it seems words escape me now, too.

ALEXIOS: Always a good sign.

ODESSA: So that's it then. I guess there's nothing else to do.

ALEXIOS: It doesn't have to be goodbye. Why not join my crew?

ODESSA: Hmm... Well, you were always on my side. Plus, getting away from here would be nice.

ALEXIOS: Great. What about your father?

ODESSA: He's been feeling a lot better thanks to you.

ALEXIOS: You aren't worried someone will come after him?

ODESSA: I'll be sure to share the information you found with a few people. They won't touch him so long as we have it.

ALEXIOS: Then I'm happy to have you aboard.

["The True Story" sidequest completed. Alexios returns to his main objective - to kill the Athenian leader of Megaris. Technically, this is the main mission, but there are no dialogs in it.]

ALEXIOS: Now the Athenian leader is dead, I should return to Stentor.

The Final Push

STENTOR: I hear good things from my commanders, mercenary. What news do you have?

ALEXIOS: The Athenian commander is dead. Megaris is ready to fall.

STENTOR: Good. The Wolf has ordered the attack. I'm glad you're here to join us in our march to glory.

ALEXIOS: It's about time we took the fight to the Athenians.

STENTOR:: Yes, it's time they felt the wrath of Sparta! Come, kleos (glory) awaits.

ALEXIOS: It's what I was born to do...

STENTOR: We will win the day for Sparta and the Wolf. Come, we must reach the forward camp.

ALEXIOS: I am ready.

STENTOR: Follow me. We must prepare for the battle ahead.

ALEXIOS: So, tell me about the Wolf.

STENTOR: He is a great man. He will lead Sparta to victory against the -

ALEXIOS: No, no! What is he like as a man, as a father?

STENTOR: He... he is to be admired, strong, caring in his way. But sometimes, I -

ALEXIOS: Yes?

STENTOR: Nothing. Just, he gets this faraway look in his eyes, and I sense a sadness there. He is Sparta's general, but he is also made of flesh and blood. Life cannot be lived without some regrets.

ALEXIOS: This won't be like any other battle I've been a part of.

STENTOR: Are you ready to crush the Athenians?

ALEXIOS: I'm ready for war.

[A large-scale battle is about to begin. Athens against Sparta. Many soldiers are fighting and dying around. Our hero attacks who he can, trying to survive in this madness. Finally, the battle ends. Alexios returns to Stentor. He is grateful to Alexios for his help. A Spartan warrior approaches them.]

SPARTAN LIGHT SOLDIER: The Wolf requests the presence of the mercenary.

STENTOR: We shall be up to him in a moment.

SPARTAN LIGHT SOLDIER: With respect, he wishes to see the mercenary alone.

STENTOR: What?!

SPARTAN LIGHT SOLDIER: I said the Commander wishes...

STENTOR: I heard what you said, I just don't understand why.

SPARTAN LIGHT SOLDIER: Those were his orders, sir.

STENTOR: Very well. It appears I have other matters to attend to.

[“The Final Push” mission completed.]

The Wolf of Sparta

SPARTAN HEAVY SOLDIER: The Wolf awaits you.

SPARTAN HEAVY SOLDIER: You fought well today for a mercenary.

SPARTAN HEAVY SOLDIER: Don't keep the Wolf waiting.

ALEXIOS: This is it... What do I even say...

[He is visited by a short memory of his childhood... and the betrayal of his father.]

CIVILIAN: Murderer! He has killed him!

MYRRINE: ALEXIOS!

[He comes up to his father, standing on perhaps the same spot where he dropped little Alexios.]

NIKOLAOS: So you are the champion who won us the day. Tell me your name, here, so that I may greet you as a true warrior.

ALEXIOS: Chaire, pater. It's been a long time.

NIKOLAOS: Impossible. I saw you fall.

ALEXIOS: I didn't fall, you fucking threw me to my death.

NIKOLAOS: I did what was required of me as a Spartan. I've made my peace with that. You need to as well.

ALEXIOS: You were my father. You were supposed to protect me.

NIKOLAOS: You were reckless. You forced my hand.

ALEXIOS: WWW.I was protecting my sister because you wouldn't.

NIKOLAOS: The Oracle decreed that Cassandra had to die. Her word is absolute. You know that.

ALEXIOS: You can't cower behind your sense of duty anymore...

NIKOLAOS: Enough! I can't change the past, Alexios... I will live and die a Spartan.

ALEXIOS: There's a large reward for the mercenary who can collect the Wolf's head.

NIKOLAOS: Is that why you're here?

ALEXIOS: You've avoided the past long enough. Now you will answer to me. (grabs him) Though you deserve death, there is no honor in vengeance. You must face the ghosts of your past, pater. And that is a fate worse than death.

NIKOLAOS: I have failed in my duty. I failed to protect you... to protect both of you. I loved you - and your sister as if you were truly my own. But you were never mine.

ALEXIOS: What do you mean?

NIKOLAOS: That is a question you should ask your mother.

ALEXIOS: Wait -

NIKOLAOS: Find your mother.

ALEXIOS: Find her?

NIKOLAOS: Wherever Myrrine is, she knows far more than I do.

ALEXIOS: Where will you go?

NIKOLAOS: To find my honor.

NIKOLAOS: Beware the snakes in the grass, Alexios.

ALEXIOS: I need to get out of here. I should head back to Barnabas.

[“The Wolf of Sparta” mission completed.]

CHAPTER IV - The Wolf and Snake

Onward to Phokis

BARNABAS: So, did you kill your father?

ALEXIOS: Stepfather.

BARNABAS: I suppose the gods won't judge you too harshly for a “step-patricide.”

ALEXIOS: Nikolaos raised me. Trained me. He was my father, even if he did try to kill me.

BARNABAS: Is that better or worse? No matter. Yours isn't the only complicated family in the world.

ALEXIOS: Thanks. I'm glad to have you around, Barnabas.

BARNABAS: I'm happy to be here. Would anything else help?

ALEXIOS: Finding my mater. She's alive Barnabas! At least, Nikolaos thought so.

BARNABAS: Some good news, praise Hera. What's your plan? What course should I set, captain?

ALEXIOS: For now, we go to Phokis. Elpenor said he'd meet me there. He owes me money and an explanation.

BARNABAS: Aye, Alexios. And let's seek the wisdom of the Pythia while we're there. If anyone has answers for you, it's the Oracle of Delphi.

ALEXIOS: The Oracle's predictions destroyed my family.

BARNABAS: The Pythia has the wisdom of Apollo himself! Now I'll admit, if people choose to ignore her, they might court disaster -

ALEXIOS: If we'd ignored the Pythia, my sister would still be alive and our mother would be safe at home.

BARNABAS: Back to business. You know where to meet Elpenor, I suppose?

ALEXIOS: His home is in Pilgrim's Landing. But... Nikolaos's last words to me were a warning of snakes in the grass.

BARNABAS: Sounds like you should make extra preparations.

ALEXIOS: Elpenor is the one who should prepare.

BARNABAS: Meet me at Apollo's temple in Delphi when you're done dealing with the snakes. Oh, and Alexios, in all the excitement I nearly forgot. Terrible things have happened to your home.

ALEXIOS: That old house? It was barely standing to begin with.

BARNABAS: I meant Kephallonia. A sickness has spread across the island. They say it started in Kausos. There doesn't seem to be a cure... many have died.

ALEXIOS: Maláka. That priest was right.

BARNABAS: Just say the word. We can return to Kephallonia whenever you wish.

ALEXIOS: Thanks, Barnabas. I'll keep that in mind. Let's go.

[He decides to go to Elpenor and report on the death of the Wolf.]

The Wolf's Fate

ELPENOR: Ah, misthios. How was Megaris?

[He puts Nikolaos' helmet on the table.]

ALEXIOS: The Wolf is dead.

ELPENOR: Excellent. The full amount, as promised. You expected me to haggle? Come now, Alexios. It isn't every day I have someone kill their own father. But he wasn't your real father was he?

ALEXIOS: How did you know Nikolaos was my stepfather?

ELPENOR: I love theater. All of the arts, really. A great general throws his own children off a cliff on the say-so of the Oracle... It is a tragedy for the ages.

ALEXIOS: You think my life is entertainment?

ELPENOR: Oh no, my friend. It is art. I know, I know. It's a lot to take in all at once. Come. Tell me misthios, did you learn anything worthwhile in your dealings with the Wolf?

ALEXIOS: I'm done talking. I should kill you where you stand.

ELPENOR: Temper, temper. And they said you'd be different. But blood is blood, I suppose.

ALEXIOS: They? What blood?

ELPENOR: You really are more brawn than brains, aren't you? A shame, I could have used you for more of my... errands.

ALEXIOS: Maláka! You think you can play with me? I'll cut out your tongue!

ELPENOR: So disappointing.

[Two soldiers in silver masks approach him. Alexios has to fight for his life. He wins.]

ALEXIOS: Elpenor snuck away like a coward. I should investigate his house. Elpenor's looking for a woman. I wonder who he wants in his slimy grasp now. This is a ship manifest. Elpenor's selling weapons to both Athens and Sparta. He wants this war to go on forever. A letter to Elpenor. Oh Phoibe, you led him right to me. I have met some treacherous people. None of them compare to Elpenor. I'm going to look under every rock, find and kill this vile serpent.

CHAPTER V - Of Visions and Visionaries

Consulting a Ghost

[Alexios and Barnabas sail to the Oracle temple.]

BARNABAS: Alexios, isn't this remarkable? We're so close to the gods, I can feel Apollo all around me. How did it go with Elpenor?

ALEXIOS: (whispers) We can talk later, in private. Who is this?

HERODOTOS: Just a simple pilgrim.

BARNABAS: He just saw the Oracle. I couldn't help but ask if she's as glorious as they say.

ALEXIOS: Well, is she?

HERODOTOS: She left me with more questions than answers.

BARNABAS: That's the Oracle for you!

HERODOTOS: You weren't lying. It really is the spear of Leonidas.

BARNABAS: I may have mentioned you.

ALEXIOS: I would appreciate you showing a bit more... secrecy.

BARNABAS: Well, it's just he seemed interested in legends - like you. I thought you might get along.

[Herodotus pulls his hand to the piece of the pilum as if he wanted to steal it.]

HERODOTOS: How...

ALEXIOS: You know my spear just by looking at it? You're more than some simple pilgrim.

HERODOTOS: All things in Delphi are more than they appear. Even I. My name is Herodotos. I'm a story teller, or I was. This war is forcing us all to new extremes.

ALEXIOS: That much is true. Why are you hiding your identity?

HERODOTOS: I'm here on behalf of a man in Athens. A very powerful man. We intend to finally end this war.

BARNABAS: You told me you came to ask the Oracle a personal question.

HERODOTOS: War is personal, Barnabas.

ALEXIOS: So you came to seek the Pythia's guidance on how to end the war?

HERODOTOS: I did, though something is wrong in Delphi. Guards at every turn, people being turned away...

ALEXIOS: You don't seem convinced the Pythia can be believed. What did she tell you?

HERODOTOS: I asked her to show the path to the war's end. She said, "Spring should not wish for winter, as it brings death with it."

BARNABAS: Such wisdom... I don't understand a word of it, but that's why she's in there and we're out here.

ALEXIOS: I know a threat when I hear one.

BARNABAS: You were on Kephallonia for too long.

ALEXIOS: This line is ridiculous! Are there always this many people to see the Pythia?

BARNABAS: These are more than just people! Every city sends a theoroi, or sacred ambassadors, to seek guidance on behalf of their people. The Pythia not only shapes the destinies of individuals, but of the entire Greek world.

HERODOTOS: Imagine what power one would have if they controlled what came out of her mouth.

BARNABAS: Apollo controls this!

HERODOTOS: (facepalm) Of course he does.

ALEXIOS: Delphi is nothing like they say. Has it always been like this?

BARNABAS: No. This was once an open and welcoming place. But war changes things. People seek out the Pythia for more political reasons. Prophecies in times of war often stir... violent emotions.

HERODOTOS: It's wise to keep your blades sheathed. Drawing blood in Delphi is considered an insult to Apollo. Punishment is severe.

ALEXIOS: I have my own questions for the Pythia. But this line! I'll be an old man by the time I see her.

BARNABAS: (laughs) You're joking! You carry more blades than a field of grass!

ALEXIOS: I didn't come here to start trouble.

BARNABAS: Trouble? Just walk in! Who's going to stop you? The priest? (laughs)

ALEXIOS: All right, but if things get out of hand, I'm blaming you, Barnabas.

BARNABAS: Is he not every bit as great as I said?

[He comes to the priest at the entrance.]

ALEXIOS: I'm here to see the Pythia.

PRIEST: Only those chosen by the light of Apollo may enter.

ALEXIOS: How does one get chosen?

PRIEST: One goes to the back of the line.

ALEXIOS: (shows his armor) Do I look like someone who waits in line?

[Alexios enters the temple.]

PYTHIA: Enter into the light of Apollo, the light that illuminates shadow. Choose your question wisely, mortal. For you have but one. Speak truth seeker!

ALEXIOS: I lost my mother when I was young. I have to find her. Where is she?

PYTHIA: It's you! From the visions! The child on the mountain.

ALEXIOS: How could you know that?

PYTHIA: You need to leave. Now.

ALEXIOS: Leave? Do you have any idea what I've been through to get here?

PYTHIA: Oh, but I do. While in Kausos, you didn't cower in the face of the priest. A child and her family still live thanks to you.

ALEXIOS: But how?

PYTHIA: No one can hide from the light.

ALEXIOS: Please, I've come this far. You must have the answers I seek.

PYTHIA: Child of the Mountain, the Cult of Kosmos have eyes everywhere. They will kill you.

ALEXIOS: Cult of Kosmos?

[Several soldiers come to her and take her away.]

PYTHIA: The Oracle has spoken. The prophecy is yours.

ALEXIOS: You never answered my question!

CULT GUARDIAN: The Pythia is done for the day.

ALEXIOS: I'm not leaving until I get answers.

[And yet they throw him out.]

ALEXIOS: Herodotos, you're still here. Where's Barnabas?

HERODOTOS: He's gone back to your ship. You don't look happy with your prophecy.

ALEXIOS: She... knew who I was.

HERODOTOS: She's the Pythia, it's her business to act like she knows you.

ALEXIOS: That was no act. She said she had visions of me as a child on a mountain.

HERODOTOS: What child hasn't stood on a mountain?

ALEXIOS: I was thrown from that mountain. My life started and ended on that mountain. I'm telling you, she knew who I was. What I'd done. Tried to warn me...

HERODOTOS: Warn you? About what?

ALEXIOS: Never mind, it's nothing.

HERODOTOS: There are people in Phokis who can't be trusted, Alexios. But I'm not one of them. If you know something, you must act quickly. The Pythia's words control all our fates.

ALEXIOS: She mentioned the Cult of Kosmos. Does this mean anything to you?

HERODOTOS: I'd heard whispers. A cult, unlike any other, coming to Delphi. But I paid them no mind.

ALEXIOS: The Pythia seemed afraid of them. Guards took her away.

HERODOTOS: Took her away? Then the whispers were true! If this Cult has corrupted the Pythia... This is devastating news. Do you understand what this means? Through her, the Cult controls the world.

ALEXIOS: I need to speak with her when she's not so well... protected.

HERODOTOS: That would require a miracle from the gods. She is always protected.

ALEXIOS: You know more about the Pythia than I do. Where would she be?

HERODOTOS: When she's not in the Temple of Apollo, she's at her home in the Chora of Delphi.

ALEXIOS: I'll find where the Pythia lives. And I will get answers.

HERODOTOS: Alexios, don't forget: brute force is useless when finesse is required.

[“Consulting a Ghost” mission completed.]

The Truth Will Out

ALEXIOS: That's a lot of protection for the Pythia. So much for using finesse.

[He kills all the guards and kicks the door to the Pythia room.]

PYTHIA: No! Guards!

ALEXIOS: I'm not here to hurt you. I just want answers.

PYTHIA: The Pythia is a sacred vessel of the gods. People travel the world for my answers. But none of them would dare break into my home! Apollo's wrath will be cruel and swift. Guards!

ALEXIOS: I'm looking for my family, and everywhere I go people are either lying or trying to kill me. You're the first person who might have some answers.

PYTHIA: But they'll kill me if I tell you.

ALEXIOS: Not if I get to them first. Help me and no harm will come to you, I promise.

PYTHIA: All right, but ask your questions quickly. The longer you're here, the more at risk we both are.

ALEXIOS: You said you saw me in your visions, what did you see?

PYTHIA: There is an artifact under the temple of Apollo. It reveals what only the gods should know.

ALEXIOS: You called me the child on the mountain.

PYTHIA: The Cult hunts a Spartan child who survived a terrible fall from Mount Taygetos. The artifact revealed that child to be you.

ALEXIOS: Why would you work for the Cult?

PYTHIA: I have no choice.

ALEXIOS: So all those prophecies from the gods, all those people, you're paid to deceive them all?

PYTHIA: Most want to know about love or death. I tell them what they want to hear. But when people want to know about war or politics, I'm paid very well to tell them what the cult wants them to hear.

ALEXIOS: What is this Cult of Kosmos?

PYTHIA: They are the eyes that see, but go unseen.

ALEXIOS: Enough with the riddles. I want names!

PYTHIA: I don't know! I swear. They hide behind masks and shrouds.

ALEXIOS: You have an opportunity to do the right thing. Tell me where to find the Cult. Tell me where they are, or we'll go find them together.

PYTHIA: Beneath the temple of Apollo there's an ancient chamber. I think they meet there. But without one of their cloaks and masks, you won't make it more than two steps inside.

ALEXIOS: Where can I find one of these cloaks and masks?

PYTHIA: There is a man, he visits me from time to time. Makes sure I'm well taken care of. I have the biggest house in the Chora of Delphi, yet he still offers drachmae for my troubles. Gives me the creeps.

ALEXIOS: What's his name?

PYTHIA: Elpenor.

ALEXIOS: Elpenor! He's with the Cult?

PYTHIA: I can't be sure, but if he is, he would definitely have what you require.

ALEXIOS: Any idea where I can find him?UDNO

PYTHIA: Unan There is a fort just south of the Valley of the Nymph. He's been known to conduct business there.

ALEXIOS: You've been helpful.

PYTHIA: May the light of Apollo guide you to your family.

ALEXIOS: I should tell Herodotos what the Pythia told me about the Cult. Maybe he'll have some insight.

HERODOTOS: Well? What did the Pythia tell you?

ALEXIOS: The Cult of Kosmos is hunting me. But I'm going to hunt them first. She told me they meet in a secret chamber under the Temple of Apollo.

HERODOTOS: So it's all true. If the Cult has done anything, it's fool this old man.

ALEXIOS: I can't get in without a mask and cloak. It's how the Cultists identify each other.

HERODOTOS: The Temple of Apollo is by the Cave of Gaia - simple enough to find. But a Cultist's mask and cloak? How will you accomplish that?

ALEXIOS: The Pythia gave me the only clue I need. When I'm ready. I'll meet you at the temple. For now, I'm going to kill Elpenor... malákas liar.

[“The Truth Will Out” mission completed.]

CHAPTER VI - Beware the Snakes

Snake in the Grass

[Alexios rides in Phokis to kill Elpenor.]

ALEXIOS: There he is, hiding in plain sight.

[He investigates the fort and kills a man who pretended to be Elpenor.]

ALEXIOS: A decoy. Why am I not surprised? (screams) Elpenor, you coward! Elpenor knew I would come for him. Used that imposter to lure me into a trap. Your plan failed, Elpenor. Soon you will join your imposter. I can smell that malákas's stench.

ELPENOR: What a shame. We would have made you rich. Before we killed you. Don't take this personally, misthios. Your mother's the one we really want. Don't fight it. The Cult always gets what it wants. We already have Deimos. We'll find your mother, and you'll be dead.

[Elpenor fights desperately, but Alexios ends up killing him.]

ELPENOR: Killing me is a mistake.

ALEXIOS: Trusting you on Kephallonia was a mistake.

ELPENOR: I'm the reason you left that island alive. The Cult wanted you dead.

ALEXIOS: What cult? Where are they?

[Elpenor laughs and dies.]

ALEXIOS: The small shard I found on Elpenor is like nothing I've ever seen. Might come in handy.

[“Snake in the Grass” mission completed.]

The Serpent's Lair

ALEXIOS: So this is the “secret” chamber... They're not ones for subtlety, are they? So, this is it.

HERODOTOS: Hidden chamber of the Cultists. Here, all along.

ALEXIOS: I'm going inside. Keep my clothes for me?

HERODOTOS: Best not to go in with your weapons either. I don't think they'll look too kindly on that.

[Alexios dresses up in a black robe and wears a white smiling mask on his face.]

ALEXIOS: How do I look?

HERODOTOS: Terrifying.

ALEXIOS: Good.

HERODOTOS: Find me once you've found out the truth in there. Keep your wits about you. Try not to do anything rash.

ALEXIOS: Me? Rash?

[He enters the secret sanctuary.]

ALEXIOS: Who thought these ridiculous costumes were a good idea?

CULTIST: You're late, very late! It's a good thing Deimos hasn't arrived yet.

ALEXIOS: Sorry. It's my, er - first time.

CULTIST: A new recruit? Welcome, welcome.

ALEXIOS: There's a lot of people here.

CULTIST: All share our common mind.

ALEXIOS: Good.

CULTIST: We're here to evaluate the strides taken by the Cult since the last meeting. We haven't met for some, some time.

ALEXIOS: Where did they come from?

CULTIST: The land and across the seas. We assemble as a community. Here, there is no war - there are no sides.

ALEXIOS: You mentioned someone. Deimos. Who is that?

CULTIST: You'll learn her name very, very quickly.

ALEXIOS: She's our leader.

CULTIST: I'm sure she believes that, but no, she's our weapon. She's... difficult, but she does important work for us. I don't envy her position one bit.

ALEXIOS: I'll go talk to the others. Thank you.

CULTIST: Yes, yes, before Deimos comes. Who knows if you'll get a word in after that.

[Alexios walks through the crowd of cultists and hears their conversations.]

CULTIST: All right then, highest bidder gets an Olympic match thrown in their favor. You're not listening! Forget the mother - she's useless.

CULTIST: I'm still not convinced.

CULTIST: You. We need another opinion on this. Why split resources searching for a woman we can't find? If we narrow our focus, Athens will be ours. Immediate threats have to be destroyed. Perikles has to be destroyed.

CULTIST: Not without the mother. We aren't strong enough without the mother.

CULTIST: Don't let Deimos hear that. If anything, we should be hunting the father.

CULTIST: We know who the mother is. Looking for the father would be a waste of resources.

CULTIST: What do you think? Hunt the Champion's mother or her father?

ALEXIOS: Neither.

CULTIST: You have a better idea?

CULTIST: The sibling. Alexios.

CULTIST: He's as good as ours already. We need to look to the future.

ALEXIOS: No. Go after him. Now if you'll excuse me. (to himself) I'll need much more information to identify who these Cultists are.

[He comes to the cultivator, who cuts his palm, sacrificing his blood.]

CULTIST: It's only blood right now, but who knows. Deimos may ask for our hands next. Go on, go on, make your offering.

ALEXIOS: I'll pass.

CULTIST: The blood is for the cause - not the girl. Make your sacrifice.

ALEXIOS: Oh. Sorry.

CULTIST: We just have to keep our sights on what the bloodline will do for us.

ALEXIOS: The bloodline?

CULTIST: The mother, the father, the brother - you know, her kin. We need them. All of them.

ALEXIOS: ...To use them.

CULTIST: That information is not for Deimos, of course. You know how volatile she is. She could rip through us easily

ALEXIOS: I'll be sure to keep it to myself.

CULTIST: As you should. Nor can she know we're about to capture her mother. (evil laugh)

ALEXIOS: And do what with her?

CULTIST: I would lower my voice if I were you. Just know she will be put to... good use. Unless she's uncontrollable.

ALEXIOS: You know where she is?

CULTIST: No. But it won't be long until we do. I assure you. She's the Cult's next target.

ALEXIOS: Tell me about Deimos.

CULTIST: She's shown us what we need to know. She's a machine, a weapon for the Cult. Someone that unstable can't be trusted with such... personal information.

ALEXIOS: I have to go.

CULTIST: To our great ambition.

ALEXIOS: ...To ambition.

[He goes on eavesdropping on a conversation between two cultists.]

CULTIST: I'm here. What else do you want from me?

CULTIST: We want you to cooperate. We want you to obey. That's not asking for too much, is it?

CULTIST: Why the face? So sad... Like the tragic mask of Melpomene. Your family is safe. For now.

CULTIST: Just... just don't touch them. Don't hurt them.

CULTIST: That is up to you. But I know you'll behave. Because you know their fates if you don't.

CULTIST: Please. Don't.

CULTIST: We will kill them. Your wife. Your child. And then what would you have to live for?

CULTIST: Nothing.

CULTIST: Exactly.

[In the other part of the cave, one cultist tortures another.]

CULTIST: Pull yourself together, maláka! You're a fucking pig before slaughter!

CULTIST: I'll do it, I swear! I'll kill him! Let me go!

CULTIST: You like to watch, you sick fuck? You're not just going to watch. You're going to teach this little insolent shit a lesson.

ALEXIOS: ...Does he deserve it?

CULTIST: Doesn't fucking matter, does it? What I say goes! No questions asked!

CULTIST: I-I couldn't do it! But I'm not scared! Not anymore!

CULTIST: If you can't kill a fucking artist, what are you gonna do when I tell you to kill a fucking archon?

CULTIST: I will, I will! I'll kill Phidias!

ALEXIOS: I...

CULTIST: Show him what happens to cowards! They get fuckin' burned!

ALEXIOS: No. He's yours.

CULTIST: You don't know what the fuck fun is. More for me.

[He branded another cultist with a red-hot iron rod.]

CULTIST: Fuck with me, and there's plenty more where that came from! Fuck up like that again, and I'll draw blood. Now get the fuck out of here, before I get this traitor's blood on your robes. You. Someone was spotted going into your house. Guards were found dead outside. Tell me who you talked to, or I'll break your pretty face.

PYTHIA: Please! I beg you! He forced me, I thought he would kill me.

CULTIST: He? I will kill you! What did you tell him?

ALEXIOS: Letters to and from the Cult... Gods, they have a foothold in every part of the Greek world. We're in more danger than I thought. It's strange... I feel something. Towards the pyramid. It's covered in shards... Like Elpenor's.

[Alexios approaches the counter in the center of the cave. On it stands the pyramid's shining yellow glow. He takes out of his pocket a triangle taken from Elpenor and inserts it into the pyramid.]

CULTIST: Ah, you had the last piece. Now it is ready. Every time I see it, it calls to me and sings. Of power. Does it call to you like it calls to me?

ALEXIOS: It does.

CULTIST: (slaps him) What are you doing? Have you lost your mind?

ALEXIOS: I - no.

CULTIST: She hasn't even arrived yet! Gather yourself and hold your tongue, fool. Show respect for the bloodline.

[A girl in Roman armor bursts into the cave. She turns a brazier over and throws Elpenor's head at the feet of the cultists.]

DEIMOS: Elpenor is dead! One of you is a traitor! The Artifact will expose them. You!!! Everyone will be tested. You. First.

[She puts the hand of the cultist to the pyramid. The pyramid emits a stream of light and nothing else.]

DEIMOS: Go. You. Go. You.

[When the turn comes to Alexios, he touches the pyramid with the girl he sees a vision of his childhood. He understands that his younger sister is standing before him.]

ALEXIOS: Cassandra...

DEIMOS: Who are you? Go. You! Get up here.

[The pyramid shines green and Cassandra beats the cultist to death with her bare hands.]

DEIMOS: The traitor is dead!

[Alexios takes his piece of the pyramid and quietly leaves.]

HERODOTOS: You're alive!

ALEXIOS: They know me. My family. They want my mother dead.

HERODOTOS: I see. It's worse than I thought.

ALEXIOS: There's more. They have a weapon.

HERODOTOS: What... kind?

ALEXIOS: A soldier. Stronger and more ferocious than any I've ever seen. Herodotos, it's my sister.

HERODOTOS: We need to get to Athens.

ALEXIOS: Athens? We need to find my mother. My clothes. Spear.

HERODOTOS: Of course.

ALEXIOS: My spear! The Cult of Kosmos call my sister Deimos. She used an artifact to see my memories.

HERODOTOS: Alexios, the man I serve. We must tell him what's happened before it's too late. You've heard the name Perikles before?

ALEXIOS: Perikles is the great general leading the Delian League against the Spartans. They say he's ruthless.

HERODOTOS: We aren't leading the League against anyone! Perikles is a man of peace. This war was thrust upon him... upon us all.

ALEXIOS: A general who doesn't want war? Not likely.

HERODOTOS: Save your doubts. He is working to end this war. We all are. If there are forces colluding against him, he must be warned. We have to go.

ALEXIOS: To Athens?! They're hunting my family. My mother. I have to find her.

HERODOTOS: You carry the blade of Leonidas. Act like it! If Perikles doesn't put an end to this war, we're all as good as dead - including your mother.

ALEXIOS: Fuck your war! The Cultists are exterminating my family!

HERODOTOS: You have a duty to the Greek world. We both do. Perikles must be warned.

ALEXIOS: She is my mother. What would you have me do?

HERODOTOS: If there is one place where we can find information about your mother, it is in Athens.

ALEXIOS: How?

HERODOTOS: Perikles surrounds himself with the brightest minds in Athens, which is to say anywhere. In Athens you can fulfill your duty to your family. But before we can go... I need you to meet me at the Lion of Leonidas, at Thermopylai.

ALEXIOS: Leonidas... Why?

HERODOTOS: There's something I need to know. Something that may help us take down this Cult, and save your mother.

ALEXIOS: You've proven I can trust you, but let's make it quick, Herodotos. First Thermopylai, then we go to Athens. (to himself) I'll make sure every single one of these Cultists dies by my hands.

CHAPTER VII - An Old Enemy and a New Ally

Memories Awoken

ALEXIOS: Thermopylai... They say you can't walk this battlefield without getting blood on your toes.

HERODOTOS: If you close your eyes, you can hear them. Their final war cries, before every last one of those brave Spartans perished. Their voices were silenced that day, but their story will be sung for an eternity.

ALEXIOS: You didn't bring me here to talk about dead Spartans. What's on your mind, Herodotos?

HERODOTOS: The battle of Thermopylai still echoes in our hearts, but to stand here is to feel it in your bones.

ALEXIOS: There's nothing here but ghosts. My concerns are with the living.

HERODOTOS: Hold out your spear.

ALEXIOS: My spear. What for?

HERODOTOS: I need to know something.

[Herodotus touches the wreckage of the Pilum and sees the battle that happened on Thermopylae. The Spartans suffer a crushing defeat from the Persian army.]

LEONIDAS: Dienekes!

[Several arrows were fired at Leonidas. He falls on his knees. A Persian warrior comes to him and pierces his chest with a sword. Leonidas pierces the warrior with a piece of his pilum and they both die.]

HERODOTOS: Uh...

ALEXIOS: Herodotos!

HERODOTOS: I'm fine. I'm fine. The stories are true. That is the spear of Leonidas. The hero's blade.

ALEXIOS: What happened to Leonidas after the battle?

HERODOTOS: Xerxes was famous for honoring warriors who fought valiantly against the Persians. But Leonidas infuriated him so much, he cut off his head and impaled it on a pike. A bloody battle ensued, and his remains were reclaimed by the Spartans and buried here. Now, however, he rests where he belongs.

ALEXIOS: In Sparta. Where were Sparta's allies?

HERODOTOS: The Spartans weren't alone in facing Xerxes and his hoards. Many from across the Greek world were armed and ready to fight alongside Leonidas and his three hundred. But when the mighty king looked into their eyes and saw fear, he sent them home.

ALEXIOS: That sounds like madness, not bravery.

HERODOTOS: It was foretold by the Pythia that Sparta would lose either its freedom or its king to the Persians. Leonidas made his choice.

ALEXIOS: What happened to the traitor, Ephialtes?

HERODOTOS: King Xerxes paid him well, but treachery breeds treachery. A contract was put on his head, and he died as he lived - a coward.

ALEXIOS: You knew this would happen.

HERODOTOS: I didn't know - but I did suspect. There is a place I'd convinced myself was a dream... until now. A peculiar structure on the island of Andros - mysterious shapes carved in stone. Like nothing I've ever seen.

ALEXIOS: You want to sail to Andros so you can show me shapes?

HERODOTOS: In my travels I heard whispers of an ancient civilization, a people who came... before.

HERODOTOS: Your spear and that place are connected.

ALEXIOS: You mentioned a people that came before. Who were they?

HERODOTOS: They were not gods, but they lived far longer than any mortal and were far more intelligent. I've seen carvings in caves, strange symbols that suggest it was this ancient civilization that created humankind... and provided them with fire.

ALEXIOS: But Zeus blamed Prometheus.

HERODOTOS: Yes. Well perhaps his eagle has been feasting on the wrong liver.

ALEXIOS: The spear awakened to you, Herodotos. I trust you.

HERODOTOS: You understand... I will do everything in my power to help you find your mother, I promise. But first we must sail to the island of Andros.

ALEXIOS: I'll meet you at my ship.

[They're back on the ship.]

BARNABAS: Welcome aboard the Adrestia, Herodotos. Will you be traveling with us?

HERODOTOS: Only for a short trip. I have business to attend to in Athens.

ALEXIOS: Herodotos is helping me find my mother.

BARNABAS: Seeking help from the gods has put Herodotos on your path, just like they put you on mine. They were in ways beyond our comprehension, and all we can do is follow their lead.

ALEXIOS: You could be right. Herodotos and I share enemies, too.

BARNABAS: Like Elpenor?

ALEXIOS: He is - was - part of a very powerful group called the Cult of Kosmos that controls the Greek world through the Oracle.

BARNABAS: Control the Oracle! Impossible. Apollo would not allow that.

ALEXIOS: Now they are looking for my mother. I need to find her before they do.

HERODOTOS: And I believe they will hurt others who oppose their views along the way.

BARNABAS: By Hermes... The Oracle lost to corruption, and now this Cult? Do we know who leads them?

ALEXIOS: I don't know for sure but... I think it might be my sister.

BARNABAS: Your sister?! By Zeus, your life is complicated...

ALEXIOS: Tell me about it.

BARNABAS: But don't you worry! This Cult of Kosmos now has three new enemies. And one of them fights like Athena and shits thunder like Zeus! We'll bring the wrath of the gods down upon them.

HERODOTOS: Is he always this positive?

ALEXIOS: Always. That's why I like him.

BARNABAS: Poseidon carry us to Athens!

ALEXIOS: First we need to go to Andros.

BARNABAS: To Andros, then! We're going to have to do some upgrades to my ship if we're sailing into war.

ALEXIOS: What do you mean?

BARNABAS: Well, she's old, and perhaps not in the best condition.

ALEXIOS: You couldn't have said this before we set sail! Where in Poseidon's name are we going to get the supplies?

BARNABAS: My father taught me that the sea takes... and we must do the same. Fortunately there are plenty of pirate ships in these waters that we can board and take from!

ALEXIOS: What are we waiting for? Let's hunt some pirates.

BARNABAS: Now that we have the necessary resources, we can upgrade the ship's hull. Poseidon be praised! She's in ramming shape now. Like a fist in the ocean.

[Having attacked several ships, Alexios goes to the shore of a small island and children to the cave.]

ALEXIOS: Is that a door? I've never seen anything like it before. How do I get inside? I wonder if...

[He plunges into memories when he was hunting for a boar.]

YOUNG ALEXIOS: Who's there? Come out!

MYRRINE: Hesitation only hastens -

YOUNG ALEXIOS: - the grave. I know, mater.

MYRRINE: Your form is improving your resolve is strong. But you're not taking action.

YOUNG ALEXIOS: I was going to!

MYRRINE: I know. But it's the moments in between that decide everything. Your turn.

YOUNG ALEXIOS: Leonidas's spear!

MYRRINE: You're old enough now. My father's spear holds a certain burden, but... you're ready.

YOUNG ALEXIOS: I felt something.

MYRRINE: Oh?

YOUNG ALEXIOS: This spear... it has magic.

MYRRINE: It carries with it a long line of power. A bloodline of incredible heroes - the same blood within you and me. And our family.

YOUNG ALEXIOS: All of us?

MYRRINE: Think of Leonidas. He had great courage. And he made a great sacrifice. You share in his blood, and the strength he possessed. We are able to feel certain things happening around us. That is our family's gift. But not everyone understands that. Some recognize the power we bear, and want it only for themselves. They will try to take it from us.

YOUNG ALEXIOS: I won't let them.

MYRRINE: I know. You're a warrior. If we keep moving forward - always moving forward - we're untouchable. Storm's coming in.

YOUNG ALEXIOS: Then maybe we should move forward now.

[The memory ends.]

ALEXIOS: Mater. I haven't forgotten you.

[It opens the passage with the magic of the Pilum.]

ALEXIOS: By the gods... Who built all this? How does a place like this exist? How could I even explain this to someone like Markos? Something's glowing over there.

[He inserts his pilum into a hole in the wall, and then slides the red triangle stone. The stone "panel" begins to shine.]

ALETHEIA: Forge activated. Synchronizing retransmission chronicity... Contact engaged.

[We go back to our days. Layla lays on Animus, that is now an Ikea table and a VR headset for \$5.]

LAYLA HASSAN: Deimos... The Forge...

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: I knew I let you stay in the Animus too long. Your vitals are crashing.

LAYLA HASSAN: You don't understand. This confirms it, Alexios didn't just have Isu technology, he had the means to improve it. Imagine how powerful the staff could be.

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: I admit that could be an incredible find. But right now, I'm the doctor, and I take care of you. Now get some rest before you go back to Alexios.

LAYLA HASSAN: No time to rest. Abstergo goons could be tracking us down right now.

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: And the rest of us will be ready for them. If you burn out here, our mission will be done.

LAYLA HASSAN: They told me you had a cheerful bedside manner.

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: Don't forget, we're a team. We'll back you up until you're finished your investigation.

LAYLA HASSAN: I know. Kiyoshi secured the loft yesterday and he's keeping an eye out. Alannah's on call doing historical research.

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: And I'm here to talk if you're feeling any confusion from the Animus.

LAYLA HASSAN: Always the therapist. So Doctor, how do you feel now that we're closer than ever to the staff?

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: I believe this staff is important. But the Templars and Assassins have found Staves of Eden before. Nikolai Tesla blew one up in Russia, if I remember correctly?

LAYLA HASSAN: This is different. If what I saw in Egypt is true, this staff doesn't control minds... it controls physics. Time. Imagine rewriting the rules of the universe.

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: The spear you found is right here, and it's not doing anything.

LAYLA HASSAN: The spear's attached to a bloodline. Leonidas, Alexios, and Deimos... I mean, Cassandra. They were intimately connected to it.

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: Are you sure you can use the Staff of Hermes, then?

LAYLA HASSAN: No. But if the Templars get it, they won't stop until they find someone who can. So, what do you think of my new Animus?

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: You mean, OUR new Animus? That's Abstergo equipment.

LAYLA HASSAN: Which I've modified to within a millimeter of its digital life. It's an Animus console prototype, Brahman variant, with the I/O capacities pushed to their max. Ultra-portable, with more calculating power than NASA and CERN combined. I'll go stretch my legs. Too bad we don't have access to the Abstergo gym anymore, eh?

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: Membership cost too much.

LAYLA HASSAN: Eagles are fine and all, but a pet monkey would be even cooler. The center of the universe, circa 400 BCE.

ALANNAH RYAN: Fascinating... Layla! Can you believe we're meeting Herodotos himself?

LAYLA HASSAN: I can. He sure does talk a lot.

ALANNAH RYAN: Is there anything I can help you with?

LAYLA HASSAN: So, does what I'm seeing as Alexios match your research? I had to tweak the Animus to use what we have of the book as a reference.

ALANNAH RYAN: That "book" is a lost work by Herodotos. He basically invented the concept of recording history. And other figures are matching up, too. Kleon, Perikles... The chance to see the past firsthand is why I joined the Assassins.

LAYLA HASSAN: Most people would talk about justice or leaping across rooftops, but history's cool, too.

ALANNAH RYAN: I've loved history since my grandpa told me stories about his grandpa back in Ireland. He was an adventurer and sailor. So I'm continuing the family tradition. I feel so lucky!

LAYLA HASSAN: You make your own luck, remember?

ALANNAH RYAN: Why do people keep telling me that?

LAYLA HASSAN: So I've met Herodotos, but I don't know much about him.

ALANNAH RYAN: He's brilliant! His Histories are considered the foremost textbook of classical Greece. People have made their careers analyzing his words for some new perspective. To see him in his own world, walking in the polis and... Sorry... but he's kind of a hero of mine.

LAYLA HASSAN: You can fangirl all you want. I'll leave you to your work.

ALANNAH RYAN: If you need anything, just let me know.

LAYLA HASSAN: How's it going out there?

KIYOSHI TAKAKURA: Well. No threats in view.

LAYLA HASSAN: I'm glad we could work together again.

KIYOSHI TAKAKURA: I believe our working methods are compatible.

LAYLA HASSAN: Are you still upset about our last run-in with Abstergo? I'm sorry, I didn't realize those hills in Quebec were so steep. But hey, you and your Yakuza reflexes saved us! Sorry, EX Yakuza.

KIYOSHI TAKAKURA: We're all alive, and our injuries have healed. That's what matters.

LAYLA HASSAN: Of course, I'll return to the Animus, then follow the trail Herodotos left to find the staff. But there's so many possibilities, so many choices... There's no way to know which ones are right. You used to run part of the Japanese Brotherhood - what would you do?

KIYOSHI TAKAKURA: Take things one step at a time. Observe, then act. Or kill everyone and search their pockets for answers. You decide.

LAYLA HASSAN: Thanks for watching our backs, Kiyoshi. I'll leave you to your work.

KIYOSHI TAKAKURA: I'll report in if Abstergo drops by.

LAYLA HASSAN: Looks Third Echelon. Or is it Fourth? Too bad we had to leave before we could drink some more caribou. I wonder if the Frye Twins would still recognize London... A rooftop's still a rooftop. Bwaah?

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: Are you sure you want to go back into the Animus right now? I get the impression you'll be there a long time.

LAYLA HASSAN: Yes, I'm ready to go back to Alexios.

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: All right, I'll be watching your back.

[We are going back to Alexios.]

ALEXIOS: My spear's stronger now. The Cult won't stand a chance. Well, Herodotos will be happy. It's clear someone was here far before we were. Did Leonidas know this place existed?

[He comes out of the cave and meets Cassandra. She is armed with a bow.]

DEIMOS: Time to talk. You're not hard to track.

ALEXIOS: Did you come alone? Are you all right? (laughs) Cassandra, you're alive.

DEIMOS: Don't touch me.

ALEXIOS: Come on, little sister. You have to tell me everything. What's happened to you?

DEIMOS: I don't have to tell you anything. I don't know you.

ALEXIOS: Well, I know you. It doesn't matter. There's more important things to argue about.

DEIMOS: You're right. Like that stunt you pulled with the artifact. It got my attention, if that's what you wanted.

ALEXIOS: What? The artifact showed the truth. We're family, and we made it out of Sparta alive.

DEIMOS: Yes, it did show the truth. It confirmed what I always knew. You threw me off a fucking mountain.

ALEXIOS: You think it's that simple? Come on, Cassandra. Let's talk about it.

DEIMOS: Stop calling me that. I already know what happened that night.

ALEXIOS: Right, Deimos. Now her, I don't know.

DEIMOS: She's a demigod. Worshipped and feared by the Cult and all the Greek world.

ALEXIOS: Sounds like a fantasy to me. Did the Cult cook that story up, too?

DEIMOS: I'd watch your fucking mouth or I'll shut it for you.

ALEXIOS: You didn't when you had the chance before. And I bet you won't now. This is stupid. We need to find our mater.

DEIMOS: I'm not interested in reunion. I just want to know what you think you're doing.

ALEXIOS: Same thing as your Cult. Looking for Myrrine, our mother.

DEIMOS: They don't need her.

ALEXIOS: Your Cultists think differently. She's their next target.

DEIMOS: If they ever pursued her, it would be to kill her. But if you don't know where she is, that means she abandoned you, too. How sad.

ALEXIOS: Even if we were abandoned, we survived. We can go back to the way things were if we can find her.

DEIMOS: The Cult has no interest in sentimentality. Or "family." Its only aim is control.

ALEXIOS: If it's true they're after us, tell them they'll never find Nikolaos. He's off the map. Trust me, I've searched myself.

DEIMOS: If I could find you, the other long lost child of Nikolaos, then I can find him. And when I do, he'll wish he was thrown off that mountain.

ALEXIOS: I don't care what you think. I'll find Myrrine. Do the right thing. Come with me.

DEIMOS: What?

ALEXIOS: We could find her - together. You could help me.

DEIMOS: Oh, you think friendship is the answer? Running around like lost children looking for dear mother? You're so weak.

ALEXIOS: It's responsibility, not weakness. I won't abandon the whole family just for spite.

DEIMOS: Responsibility? Get off your high horse. The Cult has a plan, and it won't be interrupted by the likes of you.

ALEXIOS: The Cult let Myrrine live. They let Nikolaos live. Why kill them now?

DEIMOS: Because you live. You brought this on her and yourself. The Cult is powerful, but they're mortals. I have the blood gods, so they think you do, too. But they'll see how wrong they are.

ALEXIOS: Taking your own mother isn't enough for them?

DEIMOS: We're not abductors. We're political. Those who don't stand with us, stand against us. And they pay for that mistake.

ALEXIOS: Like me.

DEIMOS: Like you. I heard you're planning a trip to Athens. When you go, tell Perikles and his elitist scum they're next.

ALEXIOS: I'm going after the Cult, you know.

DEIMOS: You've seen our numbers. You've seen what can do. And you still think you stand a chance?

ALEXIOS: Try me.

DEIMOS: So having guts runs in the family, does it? You claim we have the same blood, so let's see what you can do.

ALEXIOS: We still found each other, sister.

DEIMOS: I told you not to touch me.

ALEXIOS: Deimos! (she leaves) Maláka. Herodotos... He needs to know about this.

[He returns to the ship.]

HERODOTOS: Well, was the legend true? Was it magnificent? What happened to you? And your spear?

ALEXIOS: Slow down, Herodotos. My spear's stronger now. I can feel it. You were right. There was some kind of artifact there. It showed me a vision... of me and my mother.

HERODOTOS: So the ancient civilization is real. Alexios, you have no idea the power you possess - all harnessed in Leonidas's spear.

ALEXIOS: That's not everything. Deimos followed me here. The Cult's already moving - she told me herself. They're going after us - my family, Perikles...

HERODOTOS: Why would she tell you, unless it was a trap?

ALEXIOS: It doesn't matter. We have to get to Athens - to warn Perikles. And we need to find my mother before they do.

HERODOTOS: Then we go to the Pnyx. If Perikles is anywhere, he's there. When you're ready, meet me at the Pnyx in Athens.

CHAPTER VIII - The Road to the Symposium

Welcome to Athens

ALEXIOS: The famous Akropolis. A testament to humankind's skill and craftsmanship.

DEMOSTHENES: Goddess of War and wisdom. Does it please you wonder to watch your city on the verge of battle?

[Alexios enters the square where many people gathered.]

PERIKLES: The Spartans may draw near to our walls, but we must come together now for the glory of Athens.

CIVILIAN: Glory for you!

[He throws a tomato at him.]

KLEON: Friends! Friends, please! Just because the Spartans are near our walls does not mean we can act like them. (eats the tomato) A good crop! Shame the Spartans burned the fields where it grew. The Parthenon is glorious, Perikles, but at what cost? How many triremes could we have built instead?

PERIKLES: We must not become divided -

KLEON: We are divided, and the Spartans are winning! Act, Perikles, or I will!

HERODOTOS: Oh good, you came. Things are worse than I feared. Kleon has turned the mob. We have to hurry

ALEXIOS: Where?

HERODOTOS: To Perikles.

ATHENIAN HEAVY SOLDIER: Stay back.

HERODOTOS: He's no threat to Perikles, I assure you.

PERIKLES: Ah, Herodotos.

PERIKLES: It's fine. Let them through.

HERODOTOS: It's good to see you again, Perikles.

PERIKLES: And you as well. I only wish it were under better circumstances. And who's this?

ALEXIOS: Alexios.

PERIKLES: Welcome, Alexios. And what did you think of your first taste of Athens?

ALEXIOS: I think you did a great job.

PERIKLES: It's so easy to forget the good someone has done when times become hard.

ALEXIOS: Perikles, we've come to -

HERODOTOS: We must choose our moment wisely and speak our words more privately.

ALEXIOS: Fine. We've come to you on... urgent business.

PERIKLES: As does everybody.

HERODOTOS: I may have told Alexios you'd invite him to your Symposium.

PERIKLES: You'd ask me to exclude every Athenian and invite an outsider instead? You heard the crowd. They don't need another reason to hate me.

HERODOTOS: If he's working for you, maybe the prying eyes will see him as a servant.

ALEXIOS: I'm no one's "servant."

HERODOTOS: Alexios, this is Athens. If you want something, sometimes you have to play a role.

PERIKLES: And what exactly is it that you want?

ALEXIOS: I'm looking for a woman who's very important to me Herodotos said a symposium could be useful for gaining information.

PERIKLES: He would be correct. I can get you in, although I can't promise the information you seek will be found.

ALEXIOS: Just tell me what to do.

PERIKLES: First, check on my colleague, Metiochos. He was meant to meet me today, and it's not like him to miss an appointment.

ALEXIOS: Done.

PERIKLES: My friend, Phidias, needs to be taken out of Athens as soon as possible.

ALEXIOS: Anything else?

PERIKLES: Yes, there's an ostracism vote taking place that could use your... influence.

ALEXIOS: Metiochos... you said he was your colleague?

PERIKLES: A politician and ally. He's one of my most loyal friends.

ALEXIOS: Phidias... the famous sculptor? What did he do, exactly?

PERIKLES: He stands accused of multiple offenses and is awaiting trial. You'll find him under close guard at his workshop.

ALEXIOS: Ostracism?

HERODOTOS: Exile is a term you may be more familiar with. Here in Athens, we vote between two people to decide who should leave.

PERIKLES: It's between the sophist, Anaxagoras, and another man. On trial for impiety. My contact near the agora will give you the details.

ALEXIOS: I'll do it.

PERIKLES: I'll expect you to use discretion.

[He leaves.]

HERODOTOS: That went well! It isn't exactly an invitation, but the promise of one is just as good. Although I'm sure he'll still ask Aspasia if it's OK.

ALEXIOS: So long as it comes.

A Venomous Encounter

[Alexious visits Metiochos house.]

METIOCHOS: By the gods, why did it have to be snakes? Help me! If you leave, these snakes will kill me! Get me out of here! Hurry! Kill these snakes before it's too late!

ALEXIOS: Why are there so many snakes?

[He kills snakes by shooting at them with his bow.]

METIOCHOS: Blessed be the god that sent you here. I'd have been eaten alive if it weren't for you.

ALEXIOS: I don't think they'd eat you.

METIOCHOS: But they would have certainly killed me, so thank you.

ALEXIOS: I'm always happy to help someone in need.

METIOCHOS: The world could do with more like you. Especially now.

ALEXIOS: Perikles sent me. He was worried about you. Do you often get tied up and surrounded by snakes?

METIOCHOS: How can you joke about this? Thugs broke into my home, dragged me here, tied me up, and surrounded me with these hideous creatures. They must be stopped!

ALEXIOS: The snakes?

METIOCHOS: The THUGS!!!

ALEXIOS: Why would anyone do this?

METIOCHOS: Politicians are easy targets in these troubled times. When they tied me up, they said I was a snake - that I should die by my own kind.

ALEXIOS: Did you recognize the people who did this?

METIOCHOS: Perikles asked me to go down to the Fishing District and talk with the poor and sick - to give them hope. That's how I recognized their voices.

ALEXIOS: Oh, yes?

METIOCHOS: They threw rotten food and yelled insults at me. These thugs disguised their faces, but their voices and the stench of fish were unmistakable.

ALEXIOS: I'll track them down, Metiochos. Don't worry.

METIOCHOS: Tensions are high right now. At this rate we'll tear each other apart within the city before the Spartans can breach the walls.

[Alexios investigates attackers' house.]

ALEXIOS: The part of Athens I doubt Perikles is proud to talk about. There has to be a clue around here somewhere. Snakes... like the ones that were meant to kill Metiochos. It looks like the thugs who attacked Metiochos were masterminds behind this plot. Hmm, snake bites, and someone hid the body. Though I have a feeling this death was an accident. This must be the house of Metiochos's attackers, but the letter proves they're just tools in someone else's plan. Whose?

PRATINOS: What the fuck are you doing sniffing round my house?

ALEXIOS: You attacked Metiochos. I found the snakes, the letter from your friend, and a body... all here.

CIVILIAN: Poor Aktis.

PRATINOS: We all knew the risks. Change doesn't happen without a bit of blood being spilled.

ALEXIOS: Why kill Metiochos with snakes?

PRATINOS: We're prisoners in our own city because of Perikles and his crooked friends. The snake dealer told us it's time to send a message; time they suffered.

ALEXIOS: You can't take the law into your own hands. Now I need to decide what to do with you...

PRATINOS: Kleon says it's time we took the city back from the elite; time to fight. Doesn't matter what you do to us, there'll be others who follow our lead.

ALEXIOS: I know someone gave you those snakes - they used you to do their dirty work. I want to know who.

PRATINOS: He's a real hero of Athens. No puppet of Perikles is going to stop him.

ALEXIOS: Don't be someone's puppet. Tell me where the snake dealer is.

PRATINOS: All right, all right. He's got a camp just outside the walls. Sells his snakes from there.

ALEXIOS: It's not too late to make a difference, but we have to work together.

PRATINOS: Maybe you're right you didn't have to show us mercy. But where do we start?

ALEXIOS: Start here - this district is your home. Ignore the politicians and concentrate on where you can make change.

PRATINOS: Thank you, we will try.

ALEXIOS: (to himself) I need to rid Athens of this snake seller.

[He finds the dealer and attacks him.]

MERCENARY: You'll feel the sting of my venom. I'll end you, misthios. You can't stop me.

ALEXIOS: His death should keep friends of Perikles safe.

ALEXIOS: Looks like your situation's improved since we last met.

METIOCHOS: The danger has passed for now, but while those monsters are out there, no one is safe.

ALEXIOS: A group of fishermen tied you up. They were being used by a snake dealer working for enemies of Athens.

METIOCHOS: What did you do with them?

ALEXIOS: I showed them the error of their ways and sent them on their way. They won't be bothering you again.

METIOCHOS: I'm glad no blood was shed, but how do you know they won't return?

ALEXIOS: I made it very clear that doing anything stupid would make me angry.

METIOCHOS: Well that must have been a terrifying experience for them. Thank you for your help, misthios.

METIOCHOS: I'll be sure to mention this to Perikles.

[“A Venomous Encounter” sidequest completed.]

ATHENIAN LIGHT SOLDIER: Stop! I can't let you go any further.

ALEXIOS: It isn't often you see a guard outside of an artist's workshop.

ATHENIAN LIGHT SOLDIER: I just do what I'm told, stranger. And until I'm told otherwise, no one is going in or out.

ALEXIOS: Stand aside. This is important.

ATHENIAN LIGHT SOLDIER: So is keeping people out. Maybe you can see Phidias after his trial... If the people spare his life.

ALEXIOS: It's been so long since Phidias and I have seen each other. You understand, don't you?

ATHENIAN LIGHT SOLDIER: Oh! Oh... Come to pay him a last visit before the trial? He's as good as dead, you know. Better make this one count.

ALEXIOS: Just don't tell anyone I was here.

ATHENIAN LIGHT SOLDIER: Sure, sure.

[Aleexios enters the workshop and finds Phidias. That one is rambling over the sculpture and drops the hammer in surprise.]

ALEXIOS: Sorry about that.

PHIDIAS: How did you get past the guard? No one gets past the guard.

ALEXIOS: Relax. Perikles sent me.

PHIDIAS: Praise Athena, I knew he'd send help. I was worried they sent someone after me.

ALEXIOS: "They" who?

PHIDIAS: The shadows in the night... why you fear falling asleep. They're hunting me. Us. No one is safe in Athens anymore.

ALEXIOS: The Cult of Kosmos... You know about them.

PHIDIAS: Of course I know about the Cult. Here, look at this.

ALEXIOS: These are instructions...

PHIDIAS: On how to kill me. But they've been torn.

ALEXIOS: Then Perikles isn't just getting you out of Athens to save you from the trial... He's saving you from being murdered.

PHIDIAS: I don't know who to trust. I'm just an artist... I just wanted to create. Please, what am I to do?

ALEXIOS: First, you need to pull yourself together. You're on trial, the people are against you, and now I find that the Cult want to kill you. I said, pull yourself together.

PHIDIAS: Yes, of course.

ALEXIOS: Kleon said you're wasting the people's drachmae. If he had his way, he'd serve them your head.

PHIDIAS: Kleon mentioned me? That's going to hurt Perikles. First impiety, now theft. After all we've done for this city...

ALEXIOS: You and Perikles seem close...

PHIDIAS: For Perikles and me, it started with our love of Athens. Our differences push us to greatness. That is true friendship.

ALEXIOS: All right. We need to go. Do you have any idea where I can take you?

PHIDIAS: South of Athens, there's an island called Seriphos. My friend Theras lives there. When I discovered the plot against me, I sent word to him. If anyone can help us, he can.

ALEXIOS: Good. Any clues he has of the Cultists' identities, I want them.

PHIDIAS: Yes, yes, anything... A guard!

ALEXIOS: I'll distract them while you sneak out. Meet me tonight to set sail for Seriphos. Don't show your face until you see me at the docks.

PHIDIAS: I understand.

ATHENIAN LIGHT SOLDIER: You didn't really think I'd let you come and go as you pleased, did you? Now, where are you?

[Alexios kills the guard and leaves the crime scene.]

ALEXIOS: If I meditate, maybe Phidias will be here when I'm done.

PHIDIAS: Good, you made it. I was beginning to worry.

ALEXIOS: I told you I'd get you out of Athens.

PHIDIAS: So you did.

ALEXIOS: Can your friend be trusted?

PHIDIAS: Theras and I have been friends for a long time. I just sent word telling him where to meet us.

ALEXIOS: Wasting time will only get us into trouble. Let's head to Seriphos while we still can.

[They board a ship and sail away. Score ship is docked at one of the ports.]

CIVILIAN: It's good to see you alive and well, Phidias!

PHIDIAS: And you, Theras. As you can see, I didn't get here alone,

CIVILIAN: Ah, yes, the kind and thoughtful hero you mentioned in your letter!

ALEXIOS: I'm glad I could get him out alive.

CIVILIAN: And for that heroism, I've found some information on a man named Brison who's plotting Phidias's early demise. Hopefully, you can make something of this clue.

ALEXIOS: I can.

PHIDIAS: Please give Perikles my thanks and my farewell. And be careful - I still believe many in Athens are in danger.

Ostracized

CIVILIAN: You must be the one Perikles sent.

ALEXIOS: I am. He said there is an ostracism vote, but didn't tell me what I'm here to do.

CIVILIAN: Of course he didn't. That's what I'm for.

ALEXIOS: If someone is exiled, can they return?

CIVILIAN: If they do, they'll be punished.

ALEXIOS: What does someone have to do to be ostracized?

CIVILIAN: Anyone seen as a threat to the city or the people is enough. And then it is up to the vote. Some have been ostracized for simply being more disliked than the person they're up against.

ALEXIOS: What's my role in this?

CIVILIAN: The votes have already been cast. We don't have long before they're counted. Take the ostraka in this bag and exchange them with the ones currently under guard.

ALEXIOS: You want me to rig the ostracism?

CIVILIAN: Perikles does, and he has his reasons I'm sure. Bring me the bag you took from the room, and I'll take care of the rest.

ALEXIOS: No one will see me go in or out. Stay here.

[He switches the real ostraka for the fake ones.]

ALEXIOS: That should do it. I should let Perikles's contact know.

ALEXIOS: It's done.

CIVILIAN: Hm, you work quickly.

ALEXIOS: What are you going to do with them?

CIVILIAN: Dump them in a well. Ah, it looks like the official has arrived.

[A man in a blue toga enters a small forum.]

CIVILIAN: The votes have been tallied. Overwhelmingly, the people have decided that Anaxagoras should be ostracized from Athens.

[A man in a red toga is taken off the forum by two guards. One of the greatest philosophers of Greece approaches our hero.]

SOKRATES: Be slow to fall into friendship - but once you do, continue firm and constant. It will be more difficult for me now that Anaxagoras must leave Athens. We were quite close, although he and Perikles were much closer. It's strange Perikles wasn't here today to defend him.

ALEXIOS: Would Perikles normally defend someone?

SOKRATES: A good friend? Of course. Yet Anaxagoras seems pleased with the result. This day has brought more questions than answers.

ALEXIOS: You said you were close...

SOKRATES: He was like a mentor to me. Many of my best thoughts came to fruition through our conversations.

ALEXIOS: Who are you?

SOKRATES: Ask anyone and they'll tell you Sokrates, but a name gives you nothing. Our actions determine who we are, and every action has its pleasures and its price. With that said, then, who do you claim to be?

ALEXIOS: My name is Alexios.

SOKRATES: And still, I don't feel I know you. Perhaps I can find out who you are a different way.

ALEXIOS: You want to know me?

SOKRATES: Knowledge is the one good in this world. Surely you agree?

ALEXIOS: Of course. Knowledge drives everything I do.

SOKRATES: Then we are the same in that way.

ALEXIOS: Knowledge of when to attack, what weapon to use, or when to use reason instead of violence.

SOKRATES: We seem to put our love of knowledge into practice quite differently.

ALEXIOS: I use it how I need to.

SOKRATES: You are clearly someone who would do whatever you feel is necessary. Perhaps for drachmae, or maybe to further a personal goal.

ALEXIOS: That describes a lot of people.

SOKRATES: I suppose I'm curious why you did it. How could I not be when you're the reason my friend is being forced to leave the only home he's ever known?

ALEXIOS: I did what I was asked to do.

SOKRATES: And your needs are greater than those of the man you helped ostracize. Still, you raise a fine point. Who is more responsible: Anaxagoras for getting himself mixed up in this, or you, for simply sealing his fate?

ALEXIOS: Fine. I'm more responsible. But I did it because I have one concern - myself.

SOKRATES: Then I hope you also think about today. About Anaxagoras. About choice.

CIVILIAN: Sokrates. There you are.

SOKRATES: Here I am.

CIVILIAN: You're late. They're all waiting for you.

SOKRATES: I wished to see Anaxagoras's fate. And so I have. Tell them I'm on my way. Well, it seems our conversation is at its end. Although hope it isn't the final one we have.

ALEXIOS: I wouldn't know.

ALEXIOS: (to himself) That's everything Perikles wanted. Time to return to him and find out what these Athenians know about my mother.

[“Ostracized” sidequest completed. Alexios returns to Perikles.]

Perikles's Symposium

PHOIBE: Alexios! It's you!

ALEXIOS: Phoibe?

PHOIBE: You said you weren't coming back to Kephallonia, so I decided to leave too!

ALEXIOS: I said I wouldn't be coming back, but I don't remember saying you should leave.

PHOIBE: Well here I am!

ALEXIOS: How did you even get here, Phoibe?

PHOIBE: Well... I did make some drachmae working for Markos.

ALEXIOS: So you paid someone to bring you to Athens?

PHOIBE: Not exactly.

ALEXIOS: Phoibe.

PHOIBE: I needed the drachmae for when I arrived. I couldn't use it all to leave, and I didn't want to wait any longer, so I sneaked on a ship. Don't worry, nobody saw!

ALEXIOS: I just can't believe you made it

PHOIBE: I don't remember much of Athens from when I was a baby. but every once in a while, something feels familiar. It's nice.

ALEXIOS: I can't believe you're here.

PHOIBE: Me either! I can't believe we both made it to Athens. It's so much different from Kephallonia.

ALEXIOS: But what are you doing here?

PHOIBE: I'm here to get you ready. I have to make sure you leave all your weapons and change into these clothes.

ALEXIOS: So, you somehow work here... For Perikles

PHOIBE: No. For Aspasia.

ALEXIOS: How is it you're working for Aspasia?

PHOIBE: Well, I did get into a little bit of trouble after I got to Athens. I may have been the leader of a small group of orphans that tried to cheat Aspasia. We didn't know it was her, though!

ALEXIOS: And you... convinced her to hire you?

PHOIBE: No, she asked me on her own!

ALEXIOS: That was lucky. I don't understand why I have to change.

PHOIBE: It's just what you do here. I felt weird at first, but you forget about it pretty fast.

ALEXIOS: And my weapons?

PHOIBE: Don't worry, I'll take care of them! You don't want to scare people in there.

ALEXIOS: Welt. I think I'm ready to go in.

PHOIBE: You can't! Not like that, anyway. The Athenians like it best when you try to fit in. But don't worry. I have just the outfit for you.

ALEXIOS: I'll get changed. Promise you'll take care of my things?

PHOIBE: Yep. Leave your weapons in the corner, and I'll come back when you're done.

[He changes into blue clothes, which don't look very cheap.]

ALEXIOS: I feel... uncomfortable in this.

PHOIBE: Now you look like everyone else.

ALEXIOS: You say that like it's a good thing.

PHOIBE: It is! If you want them to take you seriously, this is the easiest way. Trust me.

ALEXIOS: Is that everything?

PHOIBE: You're all ready to go in! Don't worry, you've done scarier things than this.

ALEXIOS: I'm struggling to think of any right now. Are you sure I can't keep just one weapon with me?

PHOIBE: No weapons! Now, hurry and go in. Oh, and don't leave without saying bye!

[Alexios enters the Symposium and notices Herodotos.]

HERODOTOS: Chaire, Alexios! The mighty mercenary and traveler has finally made his grand entrance. Only slightly late, too.

ALEXIOS: Herodotos! Athenians have no problem letting me know when I'm not welcome. It's a relief to see your friendly face.

HERODOTOS: Don't let the company here tonight intimidate you.

ALEXIOS: I won't.

HERODOTOS: Perikles is no king. He needs these guests to love him, so that the people love him. And they, in turn, need Perikles. You're no different from any of them.

ALEXIOS: Do you really think these people will help me?

HERODOTOS: They will if you get them to trust you. And you've wisely dressed for the occasion. Appearing trustworthy is the most important part of being trusted, after all. Now then, come let me introduce you to everyone. They may not look it, but this group holds the way to the future on the tip of their opinionated tongues. Ah, Sophokles and Euripides, for example. Two of the most celebrated playwrights to date. No one can throw stones as far as they can. They appear to be locked in some kind of intellectual struggle, as is their way.

SOPHOKLES: He's a writer of comedies, of all things! Comedies, Euripides!

[Sophokles in anger goes away. Euripides and his companion laugh.]

ALEXIOS: It looks more like a lover's quarrel to me.

HERODOTOS: Hermippos has also written his fair share of comedies...

HERMIPPOS: (to his companion) You should drink more.

HERODOTOS: Lately his attitudes have garnered him more notice than his works. However, the fellow beside him, Protagoras, is a sophist worthy of as much praise as the great Sokrates himself.

ALEXIOS: Inviting Sokrates seems like a good way to ruin everyone's night. I'm surprised they would let him in the door.

HERODOTOS: Oh, don't let Sokrates get under your skin. At least he wore shoes for the occasion... And the poor thing gesticulating. Like an ape is Thrasymachos. If you listen closely, you'll notice he and Sokrates are actually arguing the same points. But the wind from his wild gestures deafens him to critique.

THRASYMACHOS: That isn't at all what I mean!

ALEXIOS: Where is Perikles?

HERODOTOS: Oh! He never attends his own parties. Which reminds me, there's something I need to get his help with...

ALKIBIADES: (drunk and naked) Vile Sokrates! Always appearing where I least expect him. Warrior, protect me from his amorous gaze! ...Oh, Alkibiades. This is not a time for jealousy, but for love!

HERODOTOS: Let's not use Alkibiades as an example. Be good, and don't drink too much. So, tell me, what does a mishios like you think of a party like this?

ALEXIOS: This is going to be a long night. Parties should be about vomiting up blood, not vomiting up poetry. These people are so... clean.

HERODOTOS: If these guests aren't to your own... unique tastes, then just focus on why you came here in the first place.

ALEXIOS: Thank you, Herodotos.

HERODOTOS: Now, if you'll excuse me. Perikles is here somewhere, and I need to prepare him... If he's alone, I'll tell him what your sister said.

ALEXIOS: Agreed, Perikles needs to know. I'll stay here and look for clues.

HERODOTOS: I hope they know something about your mother.

ALEXIOS: Me too.

[Herodotos is leaving. Alexios is idly wandering around the Symposium. He hears strange noises from behind a closed door.]

Oil and Love

ALEXIOS: Someone's being hurt. Open this door, or I'll kick it in!

[The door opens and from there comes out a goat.]

ALKIBIADES: Don't mind her. She likes to watch. Look at you. Such authority, such aggression. I can see why Perikles has taken such an interest in you. Did you come to join us?

ALEXIOS: It sounded like someone was in pain.

ALKIBIADES: Well, it can sometimes be... hard to distinguish between sounds of pleasure and pain. Had I known you were going to knock, would have left my door wide, wide open for you.

ALEXIOS: Tonly came to this symposium to find someone.

ALKIBIADES: Sounds like we can help each other then, doesn't it? You fetch us a bit of oil, I help you find who you're looking for. Maybe they're in here.

ALEXIOS: She's not in there.

ALKIBIADES: I think I'll check all the same.

ALEXIOS: After your... display earlier, it's probably safer I get the oil.

ALKIBIADES: Obedient too? I knew I liked you. Don't take too long. If you don't get the oil soon, all our fun will end.

[Alexios gets the oil and comes back to the door.]

ALKIBIADES: Just can't stay away, can you? Did you bring the oil?

ALEXIOS: When you walked in, you seemed like you and Sokrates were...

ALKIBIADES: How I wish you were right. One day we will have that man in here with us. I promise you that.

ALEXIOS: You've grown up in Perikles's home, and yet you're so.... different.

ALKIBIADES: No one is like Perikles. And he's only slightly more serious than usual, too. Athens is under siege and he worries for her future... Which is why tonight is a fine time to celebrate what may be our last taste of freedom.

ALEXIOS: I come bearing gifts.

ALKIBIADES: We're saved! Today, these women grieved for their sons, and these men worked the wall. But tonight we forget all of that. Let's have some fun! What do you say? Care to join us?

ALEXIOS: Now it's time for you to help me, "Allie." I'm looking for someone.

ALKIBIADES: All business, right until the end. I like that.

ALEXIOS: Focus. I'm looking for a woman who fled Sparta a long, long time ago.

ALKIBIADES: Fled Sparta? No one flees Sparta! But, let's pretend she did. If she were stupid, she'd be dead. If she were smart, she'd do what Aspasia did - she'd earn her independence. The smartest and most... resourceful women I've ever met have been in Korinthia.

ALEXIOS: Prostitutes? This is serious.

ALKIBIADES: They don't like being called that. And for good reason. They offer so much more than their bodies.

ALEXIOS: Such as?

ALKIBIADES: These women are companions. Counselors. Confidantes, Powerful men come to the hetaerae asking for advice, and value their words more than those of their closest friends and advisors.

MAN: Allie! Come back inside!

ALKIBIADES: The celebration continues! When you reach Korinth, find Anthousa. No one goes in - or out - of the city without her knowing. Until we meet again, warrior.

[The door closes.]

ALEXIOS: (to himself) Anthousa in Korinth. It's not much, but it's a start.

["Oil and Love" sidequest completed. Alexios finds Sophokles.]

Drink Up

SOPHOKLES: I suppose you've come in here to mock me for my fight with Euripides?

ALEXIOS: Spare me. I'm only looking for clues to help me find a Spartan woman.

SOPHOKLES: A Spartan woman in Athens? Sounds intriguing, though if you expect me to notice someone other than myself, you expect too much. You could talk to Euripides - he's the second-most worldly man here, that pediculous, xanthodontous, exophthalmic... morosoph. But he doesn't talk without a drink.

ALEXIOS: I have no idea what that meant.

SOPHOKLES: No, you don't.

ALEXIOS: You want to get Euripides drunk... Are you hoping he's going to make an even bigger scene than you did?

SOPHOKLES: Ha! We both know that's not possible. But you're a feisty one, to say the least.

ALEXIOS: All right. If nothing else, this party could use the help.

SOPHOKLES: You'll need to pick the right wine for this task. The kitchen should have what you need. Let me know when Euripides is done in, and I'll slip away unseen.

ALEXIOS: How do you know Perikles?

SOPHOKLES: I believe you mean to ask me. "How does Perikles know you?" I'm the greatest dramatist in the land, mentor to Euripides, lover of Asklepios, father of theater, and so on, and so on.

ALEXIOS: I'm sure it's a real honor to have you hiding in his kitchen. You're awfully worked up over Euripides. You sure you're just friends?

SOPHOKLES: I'm never "just" anything, foreigner. Though I confess, Euripides and I hold a bond deeper than brotherhood. Why he slums it with that banal young plaything, Aristophanes, I'll never know.

ALEXIOS: I'll get the wine.

SOPHOKLES: Wonderful. Now, if you want some friendly advice, Aristophanes cannot stand sweet wine. I've seen what it can do to him - absolutely, horrifyingly delightful.

ALEXIOS: It wouldn't be a party without someone losing their stomach. I'll let you know if your plan worked.

[Alexios approaches the black slave woman. She answers him brazenly, without even trying to create the illusion of social inequality.]

SLAVE: Save for that arrogant playwright, I don't see many distinguished guests in here. Can I help you with something?

ALEXIOS: I'm here for your sweet wine.

SLAVE: Yes, take it. But get out of my kitchen. I'm very busy, you know!

[Having taken away Alexios' wine, he comes to Euripides and his companion.]

ARISTOPHANES: A new face in Perikles's abode! That in itself is a remarkable thing. You must have seen me doing my impression of Kleon. I call it "The Orange Ape." Tell me, what does it think?

ALEXIOS: Tam called many things. "It" isn't one of them.

ARISTOPHANES: What do you call yourself then, creature of many names?

ALEXIOS: Alexios.

ARISTOPHANES: Hmm. I wouldn't peg you as an Alexios. But never mind. I'm Aristophanes, and this man is Euripides. Oh, go on. Introduce yourself.

EURIPIDES: I'm Euripides.

ALEXIOS: For a playwright, you're not much for words.

ARISTOPHANES: Good men lead quiet lives, as old Euripides likes to say. Don't you, Euripides?

ALEXIOS: When I need to relax, I start a fight. For you, though...

ARISTOPHANES: Quickly, bring him some wine so that he might say something clever!

EURIPIDES: After my argument with Sophokles, I think I'd rather keep my head clear.

ALEXIOS: I'm only here because I'm searching for someone.

ARISTOPHANES: And yet it gave us the distinct impression it was here to fill our wine. Let's focus on that first, shall we?

ALEXIOS: You and Aristophanes could both use a drink. Let's play a game.

EURIPIDES: A competition?

ARISTOPHANES: Ah! Wonderful idea. Euripides seems quiet, but he never turns down a challenge.

EURIPIDES: Well, if you brought us some wine, I wouldn't be opposed to showing this young one how we Argives drink.

ALEXIOS: Perikles has invited all of you here for some reason.

ARISTOPHANES: Either we dine here, and praise Perikles, or we dine with Kleon... But Kleon has all the charm of a typical politician -

ARISTOPHANES: horrible voice, bad breeding, and vulgar manners.

ALEXIOS: Why don't you just apologize to Sophokles?

ARISTOPHANES: It's he who should apologize to you!

EURIPIDES: Sophokles is a friend, and one good friend is worth an entire family. He just needs time to recover from his outburst.

ALEXIOS: Let's conjure Dionysos, shall we?

[They drink.]

ARISTOPHANES: This... this is pure swill.

EURIPIDES: Amateur! In my day, this would be considered nectar of the gods. Another round!

ALEXIOS: Ready for more?

[They drink again.]

ARISTOPHANES: Gah! I can hardly stomach this pig's piss.

EURIPIDES: I could outdrink both of you with one hand! Let's have some more.

ALEXIOS: You ready for another?

[And again. Aristophanes throws up.]

ARISTOPHANES: This wine is terrible.

EURIPIDES: You... I like you. Who brought you here?

ALEXIOS: I brought myself. I'm on the trail of a woman who fled Sparta a long time ago.

ARISTOPHANES: Fled? Why?

ALEXIOS: She lost two children. She had no choice.

ARISTOPHANES: She fled to heal her broken heart. Euripides, write her into a play.

EURIPIDES: I've heard Spartan mothers go to a sanctuary in Argolis to beg Asklepios for his divine pity. I should know - it's my home.

ALEXIOS: After what she went through, I'm not sure she'd trust priests.

EURIPIDES: Then she sought my friend Hippokrates. He's a physician best of the best. He still keeps his office in Argos. If she went to him for help, there's no doubt he'd have given it.

ARISTOPHANES: I love getting drunk and singing. Come back if you want to sing with me.

ALEXIOS: I'll think about it. (to himself) Hippokrates in Argos... Here I come.

SOKRATES: And so it isn't the rich and powerful, but the gods who are the source of justice?

THRASYMACHOS: What? No! Have you been listening to nothing I say?

[Alexios returns to Sophokles.]

SOPHOKLES: How's Euripides? Drunk, I hope.

ALEXIOS: You can stop hiding in here. Euripides won't notice you coming out - he won't notice anything.

SOPHOKLES: Hiding?! Heed this: war has come to Athens. First they take our homes, then they take our heads. I intend to be found with at least my dignity intact. Or what's left of it, anyway. If you see Perikles, tell him I said thank you for another colorful evening.

[“Drink Up” sidequest completed. Alexios goes to talk to Sokrates.]

SOKRATES: Ah, if it isn't the one who agrees that knowledge is most important!

ALEXIOS: I think we agreed our use of that knowledge couldn't be more different.

SOKRATES: You remember! Perhaps that conversation can continue.

THRASYMACHOS: You really intend to use this young distraction to avoid the point being argued?

ALEXIOS: You have been arguing a single point all night, and no one has a black eye? You have my attention.

SOKRATES: We're discussing the nature of rulers. Where better to do so than here? I'll ask you the same question I asked Thrasymachos: would you agree that the act of ruling is an art?

THRASYMACHOS: It is an art, as all worthy undertakings are. That is not up for argument.

SOKRATES: Yet, medicine is for the betterment of the patient, and not the physician. Carpentry improves the building, not the builder. Then - is the art of ruling not for the betterment of the ruled rather than the ruler?

THRASYMACHOS: Don't be absurd!

ALEXIOS: I have seen enough of the world to know that there are no "just" rulers. Even Perikles is self-serving.

SOKRATES: Is a Spartan general who brings order to his troops, thereby saving his own life, self-serving? I'm not sure, that's the case.

ALEXIOS: Ruling a city and fighting in battle are different things.

SOKRATES: By practicing the art of war, doesn't the general guarantee some of his troops a ferry ride to Hades, when a swift retreat would save all their lives?

ALEXIOS: You just said a general isn't self-serving when he brings order to his troops. Then you said he is self-serving because retreating would save the lives of his men. What are you trying to say?

SOKRATES: I never try to say anything.

ALEXIOS: But you just said those things.

SOKRATES: I said the words, but I didn't say anything at all. I only attempted to gain your view on the matter.

THRASYMACHOS: You're wasting your time. Aspasia.

[A very beautiful girl in an expensive outfit enters the room.]

ASPASIA: I couldn't help but notice your talent for debate. Well done.

ALEXIOS: Sokrates is an... interesting character.

ASPASIA: Ah, Phoibe. Perikles has retired to the balcony already. has he? His ability to sneak off and sulk is second to none.

PHOIBE: I can go get him, and Alexios can help! Everyone listens when he talks.

ASPASIA: That'll be fine. Run along, Alexios will be right behind you. Now, allow me to introduce myself. My name is Aspasia. I had to go to great lengths to cover up your work in Megaris.

ALEXIOS: Your spies have been watching me. I knew you people, couldn't be trusted.

ASPASIA: We do what we must to survive, and there's no shame in that. It's how you got here - how I got here. The clothes, they fit you well, I trust?

ALEXIOS: These may be the nicest clothes I've ever worn, but I feel... a bit uncomfortable, to be honest.

ASPASIA: You never really get used to them. It seems we have the attention of the entire room without a single eye being fixed on us. If you'd like to talk, do it now, and do it discreetly.

ALEXIOS: I've been searching for a woman named Myrrine... My mother. I think she may be in danger, and my search brought me here.

ASPASIA: What clues do you have to her whereabouts?

ALEXIOS: A physician named Hippokrates may have seen her in Argos.

ASPASIA: He's a good man. If you find a woman named Agathe there, do let her know Aspasia sends her regards. What else?

ALEXIOS: Alkibiades gave me the name of a woman in Korinth.

ASPASIA: I'm sure he did. My dear friend, Anthousa, is the only one I know who's enjoyed a life in Korinth through legitimate means... mostly legitimate, anyway.

ALEXIOS: That's all I have.

ASPASIA: There is another option. In a former life, when I needed something done, or someone found, I contacted a friend. An admiral, of a sort.

ALEXIOS: What's his name?

ASPASIA: Her name is Xenia. When we last spoke, she was in Keos. A word of caution: when you go to her, be on your guard. Sea Life makes a monster out of most people.

ALEXIOS: Thank you, Aspasia.

ASPASIA: When you're done, return here. Together, we will find who you're looking for. Now do me a favor and get Perikles to come down here and greet his guests.

HERODOTOS: Alexios?

PERIKLES: I didn't send for you. No matter how you've dressed for my party, Phoibe shouldn't have let you in.

ALEXIOS: Phoibe did nothing wrong. Aspasia asked her to let me in.

PERIKLES: Of course she did. I can't say I'm thrilled about going down and speaking to everyone. Technically you're a guest. If you join Herodotos and me, that should be enough for her, don't you think?

ALEXIOS: You really don't want to go downstairs, do you?

PERIKLES: When your days are spent speaking in front of crowds, you begin to crave these moments of silence.

HERODOTOS: Or as silent as I let it be, at least.

ALEXIOS: Phidias was awaiting trial, but you had me get him out of Athens. I figured you, of all people, would want to follow the law.

PERIKLES: Phidias is a very dear friend. I didn't want to risk him being found guilty. And, of course, there were other threats.

ALEXIOS: So you knew.

PERIKLES: I know he's delusional, but... one day when you have a friend you'd do anything for, you'll understand.

ALEXIOS: I don't understand why you had Anaxagoras ostracized. Sokrates said he was your friend.

PERIKLES: I won't risk the lives of those close to me if there's something I can do about it.

ALEXIOS: So you did this to protect him?

PERIKLES: Anaxagoras understood my fears. Ten years may be a long time, but at least he'll be safe.

ALEXIOS: Why send Metiochos to the fishing district if it's dangerous?

PERIKLES: I would have never sent him into danger willingly.

ALEXIOS: It seems you have many loyal friends.

PERIKLES: My people are important to me.

ALEXIOS: Your life is in danger.

PERIKLES: Yes, yes. Herodotos was saying. This Cult doesn't worry me - I have my life threatened by far worse people every day. My true concern is Athens. I fear for her future.

ALEXIOS: The Spartans aren't your real concern, Perikles. The Cult is coming. And they're bringing their strongest weapon.

HERODOTOS: Listen to him, Perikles.

PERIKLES: The Spartans are immediate. A Cult's threat is ambiguous.

ALEXIOS: I'm... related to one of the Cult members. And I believe her when she says they're coming after you.

PERIKLES: Sound counsel to consider. I'll be sure to let my men know regardless.

PHOIBE: Aspasia sent me to see what's taking you so long.

PERIKLES: Tell Aspasia I'll be right there. I suppose this is where our conversation ends. Thank you again for helping me. I hope my guests are able to help you in your search.

ALEXIOS: Time will tell.

[He leaves and walks to Phoebe.]

PHOIBE: You look tired!

ALEXIOS: Only of conversation. I think that's the most talking I've ever done.

PHOIBE: See, you didn't need a weapon after all! Are you leaving?

ALEXIOS: I've had enough Athenian hospitality to last me a lifetime.

PHOIBE: You get used to it. It's nice! What are you going to do now?

ALEXIOS: There's a woman in Korinth I'd like to talk to.

PHOIBE: I've heard about that place from Alkibiades... he says you don't go there to talk.

ALEXIOS: Alkibiades says a lot of things.

PHOIBE: He sure does! Before you go, I heard something from Aspasia... about Kephallonia.

ALEXIOS: What is it?

PHOIBE: She said there was some sort of plague. You don't think... My friend... The blood fever...

ALEXIOS: Don't think like that. Whatever happened on Kephallonia isn't our fault. I'll go myself and find out if this plague even happened, OK?

PHOIBE: OK... thanks. I knew I could count on you!

[Alexios leaves the symposium.]

ALEXIOS: Not going to beg to come along this time?

PHOIBE: Nope! I'm happy here, and this isn't Kephallonia. That means you'll be back!

ALEXIOS: That's very true.

PHOIBE: Plus, I really like working for Aspasia. She says she has a mission for me!

ALEXIOS: I'll see you soon, Phoibe.

PHOIBE: Bye, Alexios.

[“Perikles's Symposium” mission completed.]

CHAPTER IX - Land of the Lawless

To Find a Girl

ALEXIOS: Korinth, the city of pots, prostitutes, and not much else. Alkibiades said the hetaerae here could help me find my mother. I should look around for Anthousa's whereabouts.

[He begins to ask the citizens.]

CIVILIAN: Haven't done something wrong, have I? Swear I haven't!

ALEXIOS: If you have, you might see me later. I'm looking for Anthousa.

CIVILIAN: Phew.

ALEXIOS: You know her?

CIVILIAN: No one really knows Anthousa. And the hetaerae got pushed out of here ages ago!

ALEXIOS: "Pushed out?" So someone didn't want them here.

CIVILIAN: We don't like to say his name - in case his men overhear. Just know the hetaerae were forced to move out of Korinth's markets.

ALEXIOS: Can you tell me where they've gone?

CIVILIAN: I haven't seen 'em since, I swear it! I can't afford to pay 'em.

ALEXIOS: Hm. Then I'll keep looking.

CIVILIAN: Someone around here's gotta know. 'Til then, I'll be on my best behavior, misthios!

[He comes up to a citizen.]

ALEXIOS: I'm looking for Anthousa. Is she here?

CIVILIAN: Wouldn't I like to know. Sunrise, sunset, I save my drachmae for a taste of the divine. The hetaerae are hard to come by!

ALEXIOS: So you haven't seen them.

CIVILIAN: Not with the Monger's army on the loose. The hetaerae won't tolerate that.

[He comes up to a hetaerae.]

ALEXIOS: Are you Anthousa?

CIVILIAN: Me? Anthousa? I could be anyone for you, lamb. I charge less than the hetaerae, but do I ever know my way around a hay-bed!

ALEXIOS: So her name means something to you.

CIVILIAN: Anthousa? She's been around forever, but I never met her. I know the hetaerae all work as one - on equal footing - but Anthousa's special. She talks - they listen.

ALEXIOS: I haven't met any hetaerae yet.

CIVILIAN: Don't believe all you hear. They sell what a lot of us sell in Korinth - but for them, it's not just about the flesh.

CIVILIAN: They're merchants of a sort. Streetwise - can talk as nice as they look.

ALEXIOS: Sounds like a good trade to work in. You don't want to be a hetaerae?

CIVILIAN: Not in my prime anymore, am I, misthios? By the time study what they did, I'll be serving clients on my deathbed!

ALEXIOS: 'If the hetaerae aren't here, where are they?

CIVILIAN: Their sort are too high-and-mighty to be down here in the dirt with us. You want 'em, you'll find 'em up on the hill - the Akrokorinth. By the Temple, keeping Aphrodite's worshippers satisfied.

[Alexios reaches the Akrokorinth to look for clues on Anthousa. He sees a hetaerae being attacked by a gang.]

ALEXIOS: Who do they think they are? I need to stop them.

[He kills them and approach the hetaerae.]

ALEXIOS: Who were they? And why were they looking for the hetaerae?

CIVILIAN: Ai-ya! They think this temple is dedicated to them, the brutes.

ALEXIOS: The thieves are here and the hetaerae aren't.

CIVILIAN: The hetaerae? They're much wiser than we are. They realized their visitors were all getting robbed on the way in.

CIVILIAN: There's no avoiding the Monger's men in Korinth.

ALEXIOS: Who walks around with a name like the "Monger"?

CIVILIAN: Don't let him hear you say that!

CIVILIAN: Last time his name came out of a fool's mouth, the man's tongue was sliced out.

ALEXIOS: So the Monger is a Korinthian criminal?

CIVILIAN: Master of the underground markets. He rules with one hand open for money, and the other clenched around a weapon.

CIVILIAN: A drachmae - and blood-hungry monster's what he is!

ALEXIOS: So he's hunting the hetaerae. For money?

CIVILIAN: Exactly. Since the hetaerae bring in so much drachmae, he wants everything they control!

CIVILIAN: The thieves are better off robbin' them than us.

ALEXIOS: If you know of the hetaerae, then you know of Anthousa. I'm looking for her.

CIVILIAN: They say she's everywhere, though I've never seen her. But the hetaerae see everything!

CIVILIAN: I've seen them gather by the Spring of Peirene, down the mountain. They meet clients there, here in secret and then take 'em elsewhere in secret.

ALEXIOS: Good. Maybe pray to Aphrodite from home next time.

[He finds the girl, Anthousa in the Spring of Peirene.]

ANTHOUSA: It shouldn't be long now. No, it won't be, I'm sure of it.

HETAERA: Then they'll help?

ANTHOUSA: Everyone has something they want. My job is to figure out how much they'll give for that something.

ANTHOUSA: Ah, so Alexios has finally found us.

ALEXIOS: You know me?

HETAERA: And you know her. This is Anthousa.

ANTHOUSA: We saw you help the worshippers at the temple of Aphrodite. You've proven yourself a friend.

ALEXIOS: Hear that, Ikaros? Her sight's as good as yours.

ANTHOUSA: Someone also spoke very highly of you.

PHOIBE: Surprise!

ALEXIOS: Phoibe?

PHOIBE: Aspasia sent me! I work for her now, remember?

ALEXIOS: But why here? Korinth isn't safe.

PHOIBE: I had to tell Anthousa you were coming! Aspasia taught me a new word: "emissary." That's me!

ANTHOUSA: And now Alexios and I have met.

PHOIBE: See? This is easy! And now I can help you!

ALEXIOS: There's a killer on the loose in a city with no morals to begin with. You can't just follow me around like in Kephallonia.

PHOIBE: The Monger, the Cyclops... I made it all the way here, didn't I?

ALEXIOS: Yes, you always find a way.

ANTHOUSA: We need to move inside, Alexios. We're not the only ones watching. Come with me, and we'll talk.

PHOIBE: Can I come?

ALEXIOS: As long as you're quiet.

ANTHOUSA: To what do I owe your visit?

ALEXIOS: Alkibiades told me about you.

ANTHOUSA: Did he? Go on.

ALEXIOS: I'm looking for a woman from Sparta - a runaway, long ago. She may have gone by the name of Myrrine.

PHOIBE: Who's that?

ALEXIOS: She's my mother.

PHOIBE: Your mother? You don't have a mother! Markos told me he raised you!

ALEXIOS: What did I tell you about talking?

ANTHOUSA: I see. There will be time to respond to your question, but in that time isn't now.

ALEXIOS: As long as you tell me what you know sooner or later.

ANTHOUSA: You'll have to trust me. You don't get to where I stand without credibility. My word is yours.

PHOIBE: And you can always trust Alexios!

ALEXIOS: Why don't you go play, Phoibe? Let me and Anthousa talk.

PHOIBE: If you say so.

ANTHOUSA: I propose a trade. Help me - help us get stronger. Strong enough to rid Korinth of the Monger permanently. A simple transaction, I assure you.

ALEXIOS: As long as you deliver what I'm looking for, we won't have a problem.

ANTHOUSA: Negotiation always involves some compromise, you know.

ALEXIOS: Compromise I can do. But I won't be cheated!

ANTHOUSA: Then we're in business. Now. You've heard of the Monger?

ALEXIOS: From what the worshippers say, he's someone I should watch out for.

ANTHOUSA: They're right. I'm sure his victims wish they'd been more vigilant. My eyes are wide open.

ALEXIOS: Then you've held your ground well. You're not dead.

ANTHOUSA: Not yet, anyway. But he's employed enough thugs to amass a small army. Now they're attacking

ANTHOUSA: people in the street - us included.

ALEXIOS: He's been killing hetaerae?

ANTHOUSA: Killing? We're smarter than that. But action must be taken before it goes that far. I'm not the only one who needs help. My girls, Damalis and Erinna, are suffering too.

ALEXIOS: More Monger trouble?

ANTHOUSA: I wouldn't doubt it. Work against their aggressors, and then it will be his turn to suffer. You'll find Damalis here at the spring, but Erinna has gone to Bellerophon's Garden.

ALEXIOS: What's wrong with Erinna?

ANTHOUSA: She's looking for Kleio - another hetaera - who's gone missing. I've been too distracted to help in the search.

ALEXIOS: Has Damalis told you what's wrong?

ANTHOUSA: She hasn't told me much, but I know these girls as well as I know myself. Something's not right.

ALEXIOS: I'll see what I can do for them.

ANTHOUSA: Good. The Monger feeds his thugs with the drachmae he makes smuggling - weapons mostly, which is all the more lucrative now that he has a war to supply.

ALEXIOS: So if someone interrupts the Monger's supply, his men go hungry.

ANTHOUSA: Exactly. Go to his warehouse in the Port of Lechaion and burn his cargo. All of it. We'll let chaos take care of the rest.

ALEXIOS: Then the warehouse will be cinders.

[“To Find a Girl” mission completed.]

To Help a Girl

DAMALIS: So you're here to help us, misthios? You don't look like a Monger spy.

ALEXIOS: I'm more the in-your-face type. You have a Monger problem, Damalis?

DAMALIS: I might. One of my regulars has... changed. He was a decent man once, but now, he's gone bad.

ALEXIOS: Korinth seems to have a shortage of "decent" people.

DAMALIS: I need someone with muscle to figure out what's behind the change. Why he's different.

ALEXIOS: Who was he before all this?

DAMALIS: Obsessive, but never threatening. He didn't stand out in symposiums until he had his drachmae act for him.

ALEXIOS: Well, something's sure giving him courage now. He's gotten you scared.

DAMALIS: He asks me questions I don't know the answers to about our drachmae. Where we keep money, what Anthousa invests in. As though we're Athenian aristocrats.

ALEXIOS: Can't Anthousa intervene?

DAMALIS: I'm not naive! I won't expose the others to this. So he can go after them next?

ALEXIOS: He might anyway. Sounds like he needs answers. I'll see what he has to say for himself.

DAMALIS: If he's not lurking around here, he'll be at his house. I want this to end today.

ALEXIOS: It will. People tend to show their true selves for my spear whether they like it or not.

PHOIBE: Alexios! It's me! Alexios! Good, you found me!

ALEXIOS: Shh! What are you doing here?

PHOIBE: I heard Damalis talking about her crazy client earlier and I wanted to help!

ALEXIOS: Fine. But you have to do as I say. No games!

PHOIBE: I know that already - because you never let me have any fun!

ALEXIOS: I'm going to talk to Damalis's client and see what he has to say.

PHOIBE: I've been here. Spying. And I heard him mumbling to himself! He's weird. But maybe if I tell you what he said, it could help?

ALEXIOS: Let's hear it.

PHOIBE: Let me think... He said something about having to meet someone at Phaia's Pig Farm tonight. That could help!

ALEXIOS: It could. Did he mention why?

PHOIBE: To get something from them. A deed to some land, I think he said.

ALEXIOS: Well, that's something. What else?

PHOIBE: Oh, he said their name! Deinomenes. Wonder who that is?

ALEXIOS: Good to know. Thank you, Phoibe the spy.

PHOIBE: Not bad, huh?

ALEXIOS: Time to act. Listen closely. You sneak inside and see what you can find in his house while I distract him.

PHOIBE: Quiet like a mouse!

ALEXIOS: Good. But if you get caught, run. Right out the door. We'll meet afterwards. Promise?

PHOIBE: I'm ready. Let's go!

[Alexios distracts the client.]

CIVILIAN: Do I know you?

ALEXIOS: No. But I know you.

CIVILIAN: If Myron sent you, tell him I was going to pay him back this very night!

ALEXIOS: No one sent me. We need to talk. I know you're up to something -

CIVILIAN: Something? Something could be anything! You have nothing on me.

ALEXIOS: You're going to Phaia's Pig Farm. And meeting some like minded person there, I hear.

CIVILIAN: Where did you hear that? You're wrong. Dead wrong.

ALEXIOS: They owe you a deed to some land. What that land'll be used for, I don't know.

CIVILIAN: A spy. What else do you have on me? Cough it up.

ALEXIOS: Deinomenes will be quite upset if I don't let you meet him tonight.

CIVILIAN: How? What do you want?

ALEXIOS: I know about Damalis. And as her client, you seem to think she owes you something.

CIVILIAN: I do love her, you know. With my whole heart.

ALEXIOS: And yet, you're scaring her.

CIVILIAN: Better me than another more careless man. Either I hurt Damalis, or I'm killed!

ALEXIOS: That's not love, it's weakness.

CIVILIAN: You say it as though I don't know. He knew that too. That's why he's making me!

ALEXIOS: Who's making you?

CIVILIAN: Tell Damalis I'll stop. That I'm sorry.

ALEXIOS: Fine. Chaire, old man.

[While they're talking, Phoibe steals everything she can carry. Alexios leaves.]

ALEXIOS: Let's see what we found.

PHOIBE: I wonder what this means?

ALEXIOS: What's this, a coin purse?

PHOIBE: His things aren't very nice, though. If he's rich, why have all that junk?

ALEXIOS: He must have just gotten paid. I've seen that iron poker used before.

PHOIBE: He didn't have a furnace! Why does he have this?

ALEXIOS: It's not used for fire... it's a weapon. For torture. I saw someone use it in Phokis. Someone huge.

PHOIBE: Huge like the Monger?

ALEXIOS: Just like the Monger.

ALEXIOS: What does the letter say?

PHOIBE: It's mean! It says he'll get hurt if he keeps doing things wrong.

ALEXIOS: I thought as much.

PHOIBE: And it says more... That he needs to bring Damalis to a place here in Korinth. There's directions. What do you think it is?

ALEXIOS: Don't know... But I'll find out.

PHOIBE: Right behind you!

ALEXIOS: Not this time. Go to Damalis and wait for me there.

PHOIBE: Aw, please?

ALEXIOS: You've done enough for today. It could be dangerous. I'll come find you after.

PHOIBE: Fine. I almost forgot. I got this sword for you from his house.

ALEXIOS: Wow. You're a good thief. (to himself) A place to bring Damalis... A prison? I should find out.

[He goes to investigate the mysterious place.]

ALEXIOS: This must be the place described in the letter. Anybody home? It's blood. Lots of it. Chains? Oil? This can't be what I think it is. A lock of hair. Smells familiar, somehow. Maláka. What is this?

[He finds a room for all kinds of perversions. Chains, clay chests, and various instruments of torture are scattered all over the place. Suddenly, one of the guards brings Phoibe.]

CIVILIAN: Gotcha! All right you little shit, who sent you?

ALEXIOS: What are you doing here?

PHOIBE: I wanted to help?

CIVILIAN: Give her here.

ALEXIOS: Leave, Phoibe. Now! Don't take another step.

CIVILIAN: You're brave coming here. You want a whipping? The Monger would love to take you on.

ALEXIOS: He'd rot in the underworld for that.

CIVILIAN: Prude. This is Korinthia! Anything goes in this sex andron. And the Monger will be satiated.

ALEXIOS: You're as sick as he is, worm.

CIVILIAN: Whether they like it or not, any victim he likes gets his special treatment. I'll tell him you volunteer.

ALEXIOS: You'll get my special treatment right now. I'll fucking kill you.

[He keeps his promise and goes back to Damalis.]

DAMALIS: Alexios. Your little friend beat you back.

ALEXIOS: You made it.

PHOIBE: And fast. I know all the shortcuts now. I'm sorry, Alexios.

ALEXIOS: It's all right. You had good intentions.

PHOIBE: I thought I could sneak in... Like before.

ALEXIOS: I'm glad you didn't. Especially with what I found there.

DAMALIS: What happened to you?

ALEXIOS: I just left the Monger's sex andron, if you can believe it. And it's where you were headed.

DAMALIS: No.

ALEXIOS: It's true. Your client was being forced to take you there. And we found these.

DAMALIS: (read the paper) What does this mean?

ALEXIOS: It means the Monger got to him. He does have his hand in everything.

DAMALIS: At least I know how to deal with him now that I know what he's after.

ALEXIOS: He'll leave you alone now. He gave me his word.

DAMALIS: So we really can trust you, can't we?

ALEXIOS: We're not all so easily blackmailed.

[“To Help a Girl” mission completed.]

Follow That Boat

[Alexios goes to talk to Erinna.]

ERINNA: By Aphrodite, Kleio better get back here soon.

ALEXIOS: Maybe there's something a mercenary can do for you?

ERINNA: How'd you know I needed help?

ALEXIOS: Anthousa told me you could use a hand.

ERINNA: Kleio, one of our girls, didn't meet me for prayer this morning. She wasn't at home, either. I'd go investigate but I'm not sure what I could do on my own.

ALEXIOS: She might have been taken.

ERINNA: I asked around. One of our clients said he saw Kleio brought aboard a ship. The men were armed, so there was nothing he could do. I'd pay a lot of drachmae to get her back.

ALEXIOS: Armed? Take me to the ship. We'll get Kleio back.

[He follows Erinna to Lechaion Port.]

ERINNA: Follow me!

ALEXIOS: Who do you think took her?

ERINNA: It wouldn't be the first time the Monger's men came after one of us. None of us have ever disappeared like this before. Some are worried they'll be taken next. Korinth may have a bad reputation, but it wasn't always that way. We used to be safe.

ALEXIOS: Until the Monger...

ERINNA: We're not sure why he came here, but Korinth is worse off because of him. There! That's the boat our client described. Please, get her back safely.

[Alexios boards the pirates ship to rescue Kleio.]

KLEIO: Stay back!

ALEXIOS: I'm here to rescue you.

KLEIO: Rescue me? You sunk my boat, pirate!

ALEXIOS: Me? An outlaw? You wound me.

KLEIO: What are you talking about? Misthios, please. We were heading to Mykonos, which is safe. If you'll take me there, I can pay you the toll I'd have paid my crew.

ALEXIOS: Anthousa will take care of you. You need to go back to Korinth. It's your home. Take me against my wishes, then. I won't fight you.

ERINNA: Kleio! Did they hurt you? I prayed to Tyche for your safe return!

KLEIO: I'm fine, I'm fine.

ERINNA: There'd better not be a scratch on you. I promised this mercenary a month's salary to have you back in one piece.

KLEIO: You did?

ERINNA: Of course! You're my dear sister. I'm so thankful Kleio is home. Please, take this for your trouble.

ALEXIOS: Good luck to both of you.

[“Follow that Boat” sidequest completed.]

Port of Lawlessness

[Alexios goes to burn all the goods in Monger’s warehouse.]

ALEXIOS: This is the place. Time to burn some cargo.

CIVILIAN: You! Please! Help!

ALEXIOS: You're untied. Go!

[Alexios finds Monger's supplies, but they are guarded by several well-armed soldiers. Unexpectedly, a pilum flies into one of them. From the shadows, a severe warrior comes out.]

BRASIDAS: Come and get it.

[Fighting side by side, they kill many soldiers guarding the warehouse.]

BRASIDAS: You fight like a Spartan! There's resolve in you.

ALEXIOS: We have that in common.

BRASIDAS: It saw innocents trapped in the flames.

ALEXIOS: The ones in the warehouse? I freed them already.

BRASIDAS: A good soldier acts when he's told. A great one is two steps ahead. Thank you.

ALEXIOS: My name's Alexios. I'd thank you too if I knew who you were.

BRASIDAS: Brasidas of Sparta, You're a newcomer to Korinth.

ALEXIOS: You're a spy too?

BRASIDAS: An old Spartan tactic. I have my ways.

ALEXIOS: I get the sense that's a Korinthian hobby. Anthousa has her hetaerae watching from every post.

BRASIDAS: Ah, Anthousa. We disagree, but have a common enemy.

ALEXIOS: The Monger?

BRASIDAS: We agree he should be killed, but we differ on how.

ALEXIOS: So Sparta also has a Monger problem. What do you know about him?

BRASIDAS: His weapon has a far reach. Korinth is allied with Sparta. It's our duty to protect them.

ALEXIOS: Then working alongside Anthousa is your best bet.

BRASIDAS: If she had her way, the Monger would be flayed in the streets. Sparta wants him dealt with quietly.

ALEXIOS: What do you want to do with him?

BRASIDAS: Right now, the Monger rules Korinth. I want to replace him with minimal bloodshed.

ALEXIOS: He'll only be dethroned if he's killed. It's simple and

BRASIDAS: Yes, diplomacy isn't something he understands.

ALEXIOS: From what I hear, I'm not surprised.

BRASIDAS: We arrested his top men. Armed the citizens. Tried to stir the polis against him. It never came to be. The only thing left to try - is a quick slice of the blade.

ALEXIOS: That would do it.

BRASIDAS: We'd lure him into Korinthia's Sacred Cave and it'd be over.

ALEXIOS: By the time I leave Korinthia, the Monger will be dead.

BRASIDAS: Do that, and Sparta will be in your debt.

ALEXIOS: I was Spartan once.

BRASIDAS: Once?

ALEXIOS: Until I was thrown off Mount Taygetos as a child and left for dead.

BRASIDAS: You're the son of General Nikolaos? All of Sparta knows your name! And here you are - alive - impossible.

ALEXIOS: I survived. I raised myself alone while life continued in Sparta.

BRASIDAS: Never mind being a Spartan. Those of good character will forgive, and should be forgiven.

ALEXIOS: I'm on the hunt for my mother, Myrrine, and the only way is through Anthousa.

BRASIDAS: Yes. Myrrine.

ALEXIOS: You knew Nikolaos.

BRASIDAS: A good general, but a stubborn Spartan.

ALEXIOS: And rewarded for his loyalty.

BRASIDAS: But he disappeared, and his body was never found. The state pronounced him dead.

ALEXIOS: That's all right. I haven't seen him since I was a child. You don't know anything about Myrrine, do you?

BRASIDAS: I know that no one should have to endure such tragedy alone. Andelheard she left Sparta that night. No one has forgotten Myrrine.

ALEXIOS: From what I know, she wanted them to forget. There's no going back now.

BRASIDAS: The displaced can always find their way home. The gods have just decided you must fight for it.

ALEXIOS: They couldn't make it any easier?

BRASIDAS: Chin up, Spartan. Easy doesn't exist.

ALEXIOS: Goodbye, Brasidas.

BRASIDAS: We'll meet again. I'm in the fight with you. Show courage.

[“Port of Lawlessness” sidequest completed.]

Monger Down

[Alexios goes to Anthousa to talk to her.]

ALEXIOS: Your plan seemed to work. The Monger's thugs ambushed me.

ANTHOUSA: Theard. I also heard you had no problems dealing with them.

ALEXIOS: It wasn't my first fight in Korinth.

ANTHOUSA: Or your last. We're going to take the Monger to task at the theater. I've arranged a Korinthian drama no one will forget.

ALEXIOS: Brasidas is worried about the anarchy that could follow the Monger's death. He wants him dead, but wants it done quietly,

ANTHOUSA: That man is a long way from Sparta. This is Korinthia, so we'll do it the Korinthian way.

ALEXIOS: I agree with Brasidas. I say we take him to the Sacred Cave.

ANTHOUSA: This isn't what we planned.

ALEXIOS: The Monger needs to be erased from existence. We'll fight him in a private place, and he'll die. A simple transaction, remember?

ANTHOUSA: If you insist. We'll meet you at the Sacred Cave.

[Alexios searches for The Monger in the Sacred Cave.]

THE MONGER: So it is you. A demi-god in the soot-and-shit streets of Korinth? Killing my men? Helping those fuckin' parasites?

ALEXIOS: That's me.

THE MONGER: Arrogant, just like your mother.

[He plunges into memories.]

MYRRINE: You'll never rule these streets, you pig!

THE MONGER: Oh, you bet your pretty face I will.

MYRRINE: Get your filthy hands -

THE MONGER: And when I do, I'll rip your fucking head right off and send it to the Cult as proof.

[The memory ends.]

ALEXIOS: What? You knew...

THE MONGER: Oh, I fuckin' knew her, all right. She was big fucking trouble. But I'll pay her back - when I'm done with you, I'm gonna find your mater, and bring her your fuckin' head. Deimos will wish she was watchin' this.

ALEXIOS: Not if I bring her yours first.

THE MONGER: Get the fuck outta my city.

ALEXIOS: It's not yours anymore.

[They fight and Alexios wins.]

THE MONGER: Wish I coulda been there to watch' Deimos break your neck.

ALEXIOS: Don't make me laugh.

[He's raising his arm to finish The Monger.]

ANTHOUSA: Wait! No! The people of Korinth must see him die!

ALEXIOS: Anthousa...

ANTHOUSA: Take him out of here and bring him to the theater! Show everyone his cowardice.

ALEXIOS: No. (slit The Monger's throat) You wanted him dead. Here he is.

ANTHOUSA: It's a shame the people don't get to see him bleed. His cries should've rung out across the city!

ALEXIOS: He's dead. I've delivered. Your turn.

ANTHOUSA: Yes. You're right. He's dead. Take his body to the square. Let the people get a last good, look at him. As for you, Alexios, I owe you information. We'll talk about your mother. Just not here.

[They go to Anthousa's house.]

ANTHOUSA: I can't give enough thanks for what you've done. And for once I can also thank Alkibiades - he sent you here, after all.

ALEXIOS: There's more to him than meets the eye.

ANTHOUSA: He knew you could save Korinth from that beast.

ALEXIOS: Everybody benefits, everybody wins.

ANTHOUSA: You've proven to be a very valuable business partner

ALEXIOS: Speaking of business. You owe me, Anthousa.

ANTHOUSA: Yes, Myrrine. She came and left Korinthia in a flurry, but made an impression on me. Like a great storm.

ALEXIOS: I remember that part of her well.

ANTHOUSA: A strong woman with great intensity. She wanted to find her place here in Korinth, but never found what she was looking for.

ALEXIOS: You speak of her kindly. You were her friend.

ANTHOUSA: Perhaps on the surface. But she had a great pain in the middle of her that no one could get to.

ALEXIOS: How did you come to know her?

ANTHOUSA: There was so much rain that night... I saw her sleeping in the streets and gave her shelter.

ALEXIOS: She was a vagrant? I wonder what my father'd think of that.

ANTHOUSA: I didn't know what happened to her. All she told me was that she'd left the place that tore her apart. Sparta.

ALEXIOS: Did she find work?

ANTHOUSA: She kept to herself - with one eye always on the port. She could have stayed with us. But I think she was looking for something else.

ALEXIOS: Was there no mention of her past? A husband, family...

ANTHOUSA: Nothing. Speaking of Sparta only brought her misery. It's like a part of her was missing.

ALEXIOS: After Korinth - where did she go?

ANTHOUSA: That, I don't know.

ALEXIOS: She must have given you some hint.

ANTHOUSA: I don't think even she knew where she was headed, All know is she won a ship thanks to a lucky dice throw. Tyche owed her that much, at least. I remember the ship's name well - Siren Song.

ALEXIOS: Siren Song.

ANTHOUSA: It was famous for weathering all that Poseidon threw in its path.

ALEXIOS: Thank you, Anthousa.

ANTHOUSA: May the gods look well upon you, Alexios. Visit me any time - I'll catch you up on Korinth's affairs. It seems I have an interesting future ahead of me.

ALEXIOS: So do I. (to himself) Siren Song. If I can find someone who knows the ship. I'll be one step closer to finding her.

CHAPTER X - A Prescription for Discovery

First Do No Harm

[Alexios sails to talk to Hippokrates.]

CHRYISIS: Apollo himself should smite your precious Hippokrates!

SOSTRATOS: But priestess, Hippokrates does respect Apollo.

CHRYISIS: Look, you insignificant peon. Tell me where he is or by Hera, I'll burn this clinic to the ground with you in it!

SOSTRATOS: I already told you what I know!

CHRYISIS: I don't ask much. Hippokrates must show humility to ensure public order - prostrate himself before the gods, and declare that his skills are gods-given.

SOSTRATOS: But that won't help his patients. It'll just take him away from his work.

CHRYISIS: If Hippokrates thinks he can disrupt social order to make himself into a demigod of healing... Well, perhaps the gods themselves will have their revenge.

ALEXIOS: I'm sure there's no need for raised voices.

CHRYISIS: Who are you?

ALEXIOS: I'm looking for a man named Hippokrates.

CHRYISIS: Yet another crazed follower of the madman himself! Tell your impious master that unless he makes a public apology and soon, this Priestess of Hera will gather an army of faithful and shut him down.

CHRYISIS: Out of my way.

SOSTRATOS: Oh, thank all the gods she's gone. I thought she was going to kill me this time.

ALEXIOS: What's going on?

SOSTRATOS: I'm Sostratos. Chrysis has accused my master Hippokrates of impiety.

ALEXIOS: Is he impious?

SOSTRATOS: He believes that beyond praying, people can take their health into their own hands and make themselves well,

ALEXIOS: Fascinating. Can I speak with him?

SOSTRATOS: I'm sorry. He isn't here.

ALEXIOS: I need to meet Hippokrates. Is he in Argolis at least?

SOSTRATOS: Yes, but he's gone southeast of Hera's Watch to help the sick and injured.

ALEXIOS: Is this his workshop?

SOSTRATOS: It's Hippokrates's clinic. Here we study healing, offer treatments, and provide care to anyone who asks.

ALEXIOS: Why not work with the priests in the Sanctuary of Asklepios? It's what this region is known for, right?

SOSTRATOS: The priests try their best, but their methods are stuck in the past. Hippokrates is researching new cures and treatments.

ALEXIOS: I'll find him.

SOSTRATOS: If you're going to meet Hippokrates... could I trouble you with a small errand?

ALEXIOS: Depends what it is.

SOSTRATOS: I want you to bring him some equipment. He was in such a hurry, he left it behind.

ALEXIOS: What kind of equipment?

SOSTRATOS: Just medical necessities. Knives and gut for sutures, bandages... Oh, and an enema bag for clearing the bowels.

ALEXIOS: That had better be properly wrapped. I could bring that to Hippokrates.

SOSTRATOS: Really?

ALEXIOS: I'll be sure he gets the equipment.

SOSTRATOS: You have my thanks.

ALEXIOS: How will I know when I've found Hippokrates.

SOSTRATOS: Follow the road southeast of Hera's Watch to the Cave of Pan. He won't have set up far from it. Look for a long line of sick people. He's balding, but I wouldn't mention that if I were you.

[He goes to the Cave of Pan to talk to Hippokrates.]

ALEXIOS: (to himself) So many sick people... Can one man help all of them? I thought they were exaggerating when they said people from all around came to see Hippokrates.

HIPPOKRATES: So, what has caused this man's condition?

NURSE: An excess of phlegm, doctor.

HIPPOKRATES: In the immediate sense, yes. But more importantly, he suffers from neglect.

NURSE: Neglect?

HIPPOKRATES: Good food, warm clothing, so much could have helped. But since other "caretakers" assumed his condition was a punishment from the gods, they neglected him.

ALEXIOS: Challenging tradition... You must be Hippokrates.

HIPPOKRATES: Yes. I'm also very busy.

ALEXIOS: This will only take a moment. I won't keep you away from your patients... and your students?

HIPPOKRATES: Observation, experience, and experimentation are crucial for treatment. My followers are learning that.

ALEXIOS: I've come from your clinic in Argos. Sostratos asked me to give you this.

HIPPOKRATES: I knew I forgot some things. Sostratos is a good physician, but a better apprentice there is none. Did you ask him to pay you for this delivery?

ALEXIOS: No, I knew this would help you and your patients. That's good enough for me.

HIPPOKRATES: Quite admirable. What did you say your name was?

ALEXIOS: Alexios of Sparta.

HIPPOKRATES: Well met, Alexios of Sparta. What do you need?

ALEXIOS: Hippokrates need your help. I was told you may have helped my mother. I'm trying to find her.

NURSE: But we see all kinds of mothers. They walk all day so that Hippokrates can see their children.

HIPPOKRATES: Maybe the priests at the Sanctuary of Asklepios can help. They keep detailed records of all who pass through

ALEXIOS: Please, Hippokrates. I came very far to meet you.

HIPPOKRATES: As did this patient, and the one before him, and the one before her. My patients need me, but my notes on diseases of the mind were taken. Retrieve them, and I will help you find what you seek. Hurry! This patient doesn't have much time left.

ALEXIOS: Where should I look for your notes?

HIPPOKRATES: Fort Tiryns, not far from here. Perhaps they'll return them if you ask.

ALEXIOS: Or they could prepare for a new battle, with me.

HIPPOKRATES: Far be it from me to tell a misthios how to work, but please, for my sake, do not kill needlessly. Enough blood has been shed in this war.

ALEXIOS: Did Chrysis take your notes?

HIPPOKRATES: Ah, you've met the priestess. No, not her, but the local military commander. I can't fault his desperation. Those men suffer terribly from battle fatigue.

ALEXIOS: She would have come here a long time ago, with an injured baby. Are you sure she would have passed through the Sanctuary of Asklepios?

HIPPOKRATES: I was a young man then. When I encountered a situation beyond my skills, I would send the patient to the Sanctuary.

ALEXIOS: And these priests kept records of their patients?

HIPPOKRATES: Yes, engraved in stone. The elder priest might remember.

ALEXIOS: What was so interesting about these notes?

HIPPOKRATES: They were my notes about diseases of the mind, including what the priests call the "Sacred Disease." That's what this patient has. He's losing control of his limbs and throat - sometimes frothing at the mouth. I fear his breathing will stop next.

ALEXIOS: I'll do my best with what you've told me.

HIPPOKRATES: Good luck. We're depending on you.

[“First Do No Harm” mission completed.]

The Doctor Will See You Now

[Alexios goes to find Hippokrates' notes. First that he infiltrates a fort.]

ALEXIOS: The mighty Tiryns. Built by the cyclopes, or so the legend goes. Hippokrates's notes are well guarded. Why?

[He finds a man called Dymas.]

DYMAS: What are you doing here?

ALEXIOS: Hippokrates sent me. Your commander stole his notes, and I think you have them.

DYMAS: The ones written by the great Hippokrates himself? I'm sorry. They were burned in the last attack.

ALEXIOS: What?

DYMAS: You heard me. The medical tent was burned. At least memorized the notes before we lost them. I'll transcribe them when I have time - or when the war subsides.

ALEXIOS: Then you'll have to come with me. A patient Hippokrates is treating will die without your help.

DYMAS: I have a patient right here who needs my help.

ALEXIOS: Can't someone else take care of this one?

DYMAS: I'm the only doctor here. Now let me work.

ALEXIOS: There isn't enough time. I need you at Hippokrates's camp, now.

[He hits Dymas in the face and puts him on his shoulders. With him, he leaves the fort and goes to Hippocrates.]

ALEXIOS: How is he, Hippokrates?

HIPPOKRATES: Poor, but there's still a chance. Did you find my notes?

ALEXIOS: Not quite. Will this do?

HIPPOKRATES: Who is this?

DYMAS: Hippokrates! I'm sorry, your notes were destroyed. But have them all in my head.

HIPPOKRATES: Then it is your duty to help me save this man's life.

[They perform the operation. Which is not shown to us.]

HIPPOKRATES: He'll live.

DYMAS: I wish I could say the same for my patient.

HIPPOKRATES: What patient?

DYMAS: Your misthios friend attacked me while I was in the middle of an operation!

ALEXIOS: It was the only way to get him here in time.

HIPPOKRATES: While you did save my patient, the other did not deserve their fate. At least we saved one soul today.

DYMAS: If we're finished here, I'll take some time and write down what I remember of your notes, Hippokrates.

ALEXIOS: I'll go see the priests for more information about my mother.

HIPPOKRATES: Come with me. You've had a busy day. The importance of diet to maintaining one's health cannot be overstated.

ALEXIOS: What good can one apple really do?

HIPPOKRATES: Well, taken daily, they can keep the doctor away. But... to more serious matters. I know why you're here. You're looking for your mother.

ALEXIOS: You remember her?

HIPPOKRATES: I was young then - I didn't know how to help. I turned her away. But her look of determination and despair was burned into my mind. It has never left me and it never will. After, I swore to Apollo that I wouldn't turn away another patient - that I'd dedicate my life to the cause. She made an impression on me, your brave mother did.

ALEXIOS: She would be happy to know that.

HIPPOKRATES: I sent your mother to the Sanctuary of Asklepios. Tell the elder priest a treatment for the Sacred Disease will soon be available to any patient who needs it. Then he may talk to you.

ALEXIOS: Thank you for everything. Hippokrates. I'll go see him now.

[“The Doctor Will See You Now” mission completed.]

The Priests of Asklepios

Enough is Enough

[Alexios rides to The Sanctuary of Asklepios to get information from the priests.]

ALEXIOS: (to himself) The Sanctuary of Asklepios, god of medicine. I'd rather trust a physician than a god to heal me. He's over there. There he is! I need to talk to him.

PRIEST: Filthy! Disgusting creatures! I can work under thead conditions! (to Alexious) If you're here for your purification bath, you'll have to come back another time.

ALEXIOS: I'm here for information.

PRIEST: In that case you can go straight to Hades.

ALEXIOS: I need to know about a Spartan woman who came through here many years ago.

PRIEST: Did that eagle of yours shit in your ears? I'm under strict orders not to talk to any mercenaries. Especially not about Spartan women or injured babies.

ALEXIOS: I never mentioned a baby.

PRIEST: Think you're so smart. Many women pass through with babies. Now leave me. I have my own problems to deal with.

ALEXIOS: Maybe I can help you.

PRIEST: Snakes!

ALEXIOS: Snakes.

PRIEST: They're everywhere! Must have escaped from the tholos. We keep them for treatments, but they invaded the bathhouse.

ALEXIOS: The snakes killed someone?

PRIEST: A patient was purifying himself when they slithered in. Turns out he's terrified of snakes. Fell over dead. Now the snakes have made him their home.

ALEXIOS: What if I took care of your snake problem... Would you talk to me then?

PRIEST: Oh most definitely. The purification bath is crucial in the path towards healing.

ALEXIOS: What does taking a bath have to do with healing the sick?

PRIEST: Asklepios only visits the dreams of the pure. When the sick arrive, they offer sacrifice, cleanse their bodies in the bath house. Only then do we let them rest in the abaton, where Asklepios appears and heals them.

ALEXIOS: How did all these snakes get loose? And why are there so many at the sanctuary?

PRIEST: Blame Doreios. He's supposed to keep them in the tholos. Patients with afflictions of the mind are healed by the snakes. Their tongues are like kisses from the gods.

ALEXIOS: I'll clear out these snakes in no time. Ikaros could use a good feast.

PRIEST: Try not to kill them. Doreios will be furious if his sacred snakes get chopped to bits.

ALEXIOS: Then how am I supposed to deal with them?

PRIEST: Snakes are drawn to the bath's heat. Flood them with cold water, and they'll slither back to their hole. There's an underground pipe that may help you.

ALEXIOS: I'll take care of your snake problem. Then you'll tell me what I need to know. OK, I can either kill them one by one or flood them with cold water. That's the pipe. Opening it should flood the bath and get rid of the snakes.

[Alexios deals with the snakes.]

PRIEST: And? Is the bathhouse free of snakes?

ALEXIOS: I flooded the bathhouse with cold water.

PRIEST: Good riddance!

ALEXIOS: Well?

PRIEST: Well what?

ALEXIOS: I took care of the snakes. Now you're going to tell me about the Spartan woman and the baby.

PRIEST: I actually don't know anything. Was before my time. The man who does know is Mydon, but he won't tell you. He won't tell anyone anything! (laughs)

ALEXIOS: Malákes snakes. At least I got a name. Mydon.

[“Enough is Enough” sidequest completed.]

Written in Stone

TIMOXENOS: Greetings, young one. Come to offer Asklepios a sacrifice?

ALEXIOS: No, but I'm searching for a Spartan mother who may have.

TIMOXENOS: The great goddess Hera guides many mothers to this sacred place. Surely I'm too feeble to remember them all.

ALEXIOS: What are these stone slabs for?

TIMOXENOS: These are records. We document all who pass through their illnesses, treatments - so that the glory of Asklepios can be celebrated.

ALEXIOS: Then I don't need your memory. I just need to find the right stone.

TIMOXENOS: Um, yes, of course. That's very wise, indeed. If only I had the time to help you...

ALEXIOS: Listen, I'm not here to hurt you. I'm just looking for my mater.

TIMOXENOS: It's Chrysis. She's got every priest in the sanctuary under her thumb, and she'll squash anyone who feeds information to the Eagle Bearer.

ALEXIOS: Then don't tell me anything - just bring me to the stone that can.

TIMOXENOS: Follow me, then. Quickly, we must be discreet.

ALEXIOS: Lead the way.

[He follows the old priest.]

TIMOXENOS: This way. Over here. If anyone is watching, they'll have my head.

ALEXIOS: What kind of sanctuary isn't safe for its priests?

TIMOXENOS: Times have changed, Eagle Bearer. Ah! I remember this tale. Written during the time of the great Helot Revolt. You would have been only a child.

ALEXIOS: I don't need the history, just the details.

TIMOXENOS: It tells the tale of a woman with worms in her throat, Asklepios took off her head so we could remove them, then reattached it in her sleep.

ALEXIOS: Definitely not the right one. I wonder what Hippokrates would think of these... treatments.

TIMOXENOS: Hippokrates is a fine healer. Showed so much promise.

ALEXIOS: Showed? He's healing the sick right now.

TIMOXENOS: He puts too much faith in his hands, and not enough in the gods.

ALEXIOS: When it comes to life and death, I prefer hands. Are all the testimonies so... outrageous?

TIMOXENOS: Writers today-Thucydides, Euripides, the petulant Aristophanes... All of them try for realism, but - what really inspires is greatness, magic, gods! This one tells the tale of a man with sword wounds. A pack of dogs licked him clean, and eureka! A man's best friend indeed.

ALEXIOS: This is hopeless.

TIMOXENOS: These stories give people hope, Eagle Bearer.

ALEXIOS: Well, I'm losing mine. Tell me about Chrysis.

TIMOXENOS: A very powerful, dangerous woman. But it was not always so. She was abandoned here as a child and taken in by the priests. Taught the ways of the gods. She learned very quickly, was very strong-willed, and before too long it was the priests who listened to her. She was loved. But there's an anger in her heart that could not be soothed. So when her methods turned to madness, anyone who opposed her got...

ALEXIOS: Got what?

TIMOXENOS: I've already said too much.

ALEXIOS: And what about this one? Let me guess: it tells the tale of a blind woman who had her eyes licked by snakes.

TIMOXENOS: It reads "Of Sparta. Came here with child. Sought pity from the gods."

ALEXIOS: Why is most of it scratched out?

TIMOXENOS: Oh, I um... I'll just tell you. I know this one by heart. The Spartan woman arrived filthy and bleeding from her travels. We cared for her, gave her food, a bath, and she left. Where she went, I do not know. The child... could not be saved.

ALEXIOS: Who does know where she went?

TIMOXENOS: We've been spotted. Meet me later, near the Olive Tree of Herakles at the entrance of the sanctuary. I may have something for you.

[A priest approaches them.]

PRIEST: And what do we have here, a priest and a mercenary out for a friendly stroll?

TIMOXENOS: May the gods be with you, Pleistos! I was just on my way to the archives when this misthios bumped into me.

PRIEST: Is that so? And what were you both chatting about so fervently, might I ask?

ALEXIOS: I'm filthy and could use a good bath. The kind priest here was pointing me in the direction of the bath house.

TIMOXENOS: Erm, yes... that's correct. The bath house is right over there. Now if you'll excuse me.

PRIEST: The baths are for healing the sick, not for washing the blood off one's hands. Leave.

[Alexios meets the old priest under The Olive Tree of Herakles.]

ALEXIOS: The tree of Herakles... I'm not sure if it's loved more for its legend or its olives. Now, where's that priest?

TIMOXENOS: I thank you for your discretion, Eagle Bearer. Chrysis has many eyes and ears throughout the sanctuary.

ALEXIOS: What else can you tell me about the Spartan woman and child?

TIMOXENOS: The woman left the child's blanket behind. We tried to return it, but it was too painful a memory for her.

ALEXIOS: Where did she go? What happened to the child?

[Suddenly, Chrysis walks in. Next to him stands two guards chained in armor.]

PRIEST: So, Chrysis was right. You knew the rules, Timoxenos. You will suffer her wrath.

TIMOXENOS: Pleistos, please!

ALEXIOS: Get behind me, priest. I'll deal with these two.

[He kills the guards and "Written in Stone" sidequest is completed.]

A Hearth for a Head

NYSA: Please help our daughter.

PRIEST: Same sickness as the rest. This is very troubling. May Asklepios spare her from suffering.

ALEXIOS: Will she live?

PRIEST: Not unless the gods heed our prayers. Many sick Athenians have arrived in Argolis recently, and very few have left. This poor girl has the same sickness.

ALEXIOS: Is there anything I can do to help?

PRIEST: I was warned of the Eagle Bearer. "Wants nothing but drachmae for blood," I was told.

ALEXIOS: We're wasting time, priest. We can discuss what I want when this sick girl's needs are taken care of.

PRIEST: Her illness seems to have no cure, and it's spreading. Our sacrifices have done little to draw the attention of the gods.

PRIEST: Pigs, goats - all have fallen on deaf ears. We need a beast whose blood will ignite these flames for Asklepios to see.

ALEXIOS: What did you have in mind?

PRIEST: There is rumor of a bull with skin as white as snow roaming the sanctuary outskirts. Head west of here towards the coast. Bring it to me alive, and we'll offer a sacrifice the gods

cannot ignore. I'm touched you would help these people. But I know why you're really here. Chrysis made all priests swear oaths to seal our lips in the face of the eagle-bearing misthios, or forfeit our lives. But I serve the gods and the sick. My oaths are to them.

ALEXIOS: The outskirts are vast. Can you be more specific about the location of the bull?

PRIEST: Last I heard it was grazing on Mount Koryphum, near the Asine Ruins.

ALEXIOS: If you're just going to slit its throat, why do you need the bull alive?

PRIEST: But we're not just going to slit its throat. First, we pour water on its head. If it nods, we may proceed. Gods, mortals, and animals - all must be willing participants in a sacrifice, or it is impure. To save this many people, we will need the beast's blood, bones, and fat.

ALEXIOS: Tell me about Chrysis. She has everyone terrified.

PRIEST: We taught her everything we knew about healing, about the gods. Then she found new teachers. People in masks. They changed her. Turned her heart black. They became her gods.

ALEXIOS: I'll find this bull for you.

[He finds the sacred bull.]

ALEXIOS: Doesn't look like he died "willingly." I'll take his heart for the sacrifice - it'll have to do. Ugh. Not the best feeling. I hope this heart is enough. If they want the whole bull, they can come get it themselves.

[He returns to the priest.]

NYSA: Please help our daughter.

PRIEST: Same sickness as the rest. This is very troubling. Did you find the white bull?

ALEXIOS: I couldn't bring it back alive, but I did manage to collect its heart.

PRIEST: This won't be enough to please Asklepios. The beast died unwillingly, and with just the heart, we'll only be able to pray for one life.

FARMER: Please, misthios. The white bull you killed was mine. My farm feeds half of Argolis. If I die, people will starve.

CIVILIAN: I beg you! My husband was killed by this sickness. I have two small children. Who will take care of them if I die? I am wealthy, and will pay you for this blessing.

CHILD: It's OK, give the sacrifice to them.

PRIEST: You did this. You choose whose prayers get heard by the gods.

ALEXIOS: I know what it's like to be small and forsaken. Pray for the girl.

FARMER: You'll regret this!

PRIEST: Not an easy choice, misthios. But it's been made. The rest is in the hands of the gods.

ALEXIOS: I did my part, priest.

PRIEST: The Spartan woman you're after...

ALEXIOS: You've met her?

PRIEST: Her visit to the sanctuary is legendary, but sadly it was before my time. The man you want is Mydon the Elder Priest. He spoke of her often. That is, before he cut out his tongue.

ALEXIOS: Cut out his tongue?

PRIEST: When he's not healing the sick he's in the guesthouse. Spends a lot of his time being... tended to by servants.

ALEXIOS: Thank you. I won't forget you helped me.

PRIEST: And these people won't forget you helped them.

[“A Heart for a Head” sidequest completed.]

Speak No Evil

[Alexios goes to interrogate Mydon the Elder Priest at the guesthouse.]

SLAVE: Guards!

ALEXIOS: They're dead. And you must be Mydon.

SLAVE: He doesn't speak.

ALEXIOS: So I've heard. I'm here to find out why.

SLAVE: Chrysis did this to him.

ALEXIOS: I thought he did this to himself.

SLAVE: To prove his loyalty to her!

ALEXIOS: Now why would Chrysis want an elder priest to cut out his tongue?

SLAVE: Mydon is a caring, generous man!

ALEXIOS: I want answers from him, not you. Tell me about the Spartan woman and her baby.

SLAVE: He can only answer yes or no.

ALEXIOS: The Spartan woman, was her name Myrrine? They said she had a baby with her. Was it hers?

SLAVE: The baby was close to death when they arrived. Mydon prayed for its life!

ALEXIOS: You saved the child? No?

SLAVE: He did everything he could, but the baby was badly wounded.

ALEXIOS: Did she tell you where she was going? Do all sanctuary priests take their servants to bed?

SLAVE: Tam not his servant! We share a sacred bond!

ALEXIOS: Sacred. Right. I know why Chrysis made you cut out your tongue. The night my mater brought my sister here, you and your priests left her for dead. And Chrysis didn't like you telling the story.

SLAVE: That's not what happened!

ALEXIOS: What do you know? You're too young to have been there.

SLAVE: He told me the story many times before that witch stole his voice. He tried to save the baby! Did everything he could.

[She plunges into memories.]

MYRRINE: I don't believe you! Dead? How can my baby be dead?

MYDON: I don't know what to tell you! You were lucky she survived as long as she did. That - that fall was devastating,

MYRRINE: (crying) My baby... My baby...

MYDON: Listen, there's nothing we can do for you anymore. You'd best be on your way. Praise Hera.

MYRRINE: They're gone. They're both gone...

[The memory ends.]

SLAVE: He wept for that Spartan woman, so far from home. Her baby barely recognizable, hardly breathing.

ALEXIOS: Chrysis should have had your tongue cut out! I want answers from someone who was actually there that night. Chrysis took the baby, didn't she? And she made you cut out your tongue to hide the truth. Where is Chrysis?

SLAVE: So now you want to hear what I have to say?

ALEXIOS: Don't test me. Speak!

SLAVE: There is an altar where people offer their sick babies to be healed. This is where she took the child. Find it near the statue of Apollo Maleatas, and you'll find Chrysis.

ALEXIOS: People come to this sanctuary to heal - but I come here and find people dying without hope, priests without tongues, and babies left with an insane woman. My mother was a fool to trust any of you. I'm going to find Chrysis, and she's going to pay for what she's done. (to himself) So Chrysis is the key to finding my mater. I must find this Altar of Apollo Maleatas.

["Speak No Evil" sidequest completed.]

ALEXIOS: There's the statue of Apollo and the altar Chrysis will find a lot more than a helpless infant waiting for her. There's the statue of Apollo - and the altar. Chrysis will find a lot more than a helpless infant waiting for her.

Ashes to Ashes

ALEXIOS: There's the statue of Apollo and the altar Chrysis will find a lot more than a helpless infant waiting to her. A warning. Must be getting close.

[He follows the ghostly crying of a child.]

ALEXIOS: All you cultists will die here!

[He enters a nearby house. A woman with a child in her hands stands before him.]

CHRYISIS: Killing seems to run in your bloodline, oh mighty Eagle Bearer.

ALEXIOS: Don't you dare speak of my family, snake.

CHRYISIS: I still remember the night your mother brought me my child. The sad, pathetic thing, crying in the rain. Had known then that Myrrine had two children... but, here you are. My family is complete.

ALEXIOS: You let my mother believe her baby was dead.

CHRYISIS: But she was. Oh, how your mother wept when that little heart stopped beating. But then /took care of her. Placed her on this very altar. Screamed for the gods to spare her life. And they listened.

ALEXIOS: What did you do with my sister?

CHRYISIS: I saved her life. By teaching her to suffer. To know pain so well that she would learn to welcome it like an old friend. And now, she will teach all of the Greek world to know that pain.

ALEXIOS: (angery) You... tortured her! She was just a baby.

CHRYISIS: (boldly) I taught her to survive! This world is cruel. It demands strength, or death. So I gave her strength.

ALEXIOS: (angery) Where did my mother go that night?

CHRYISIS: (boldly) That weakling crawled to the hills of Korinth. The Monger was supposed to deliver her back to me. But she can't hide forever. She will give us more children.

ALEXIOS: (angery) I'll run my spear through your throat for the pain you've caused.

CHRYISIS: (laughs) This world is pain. I gave Deimos strength to cope. Your mater was a weakling who whined to the gods like a pig on an altar. I am more a mother to her child than she will ever be. I can be a mother to you, too, Eagle Bearer.

ALEXIOS: This goes beyond my family. You and your Cult are going to destroy the Greek world. You bring nothing but suffering.

CHRYISIS: You talk of suffering and yet you come drenched in blood and threaten my life. You are a killer, just like your sister. Here, let me show you.

[She throws an incendiary shell at the wall and sets fire to the stone house as if it was covered with gasoline. After that, she runs away. Alexios saves the child.]

CIVILIAN: My child!

ALEXIOS: This baby is yours?

CIVILIAN: He was dying. Chrysis had me bring a gift to Hera, so that he might be protected.

ALEXIOS: Chrysis lit the temple on fire with the boy and me inside.

CIVILIAN: Chrysis is a servant of Hera. She does what needs to be done.

ALEXIOS: What needs to be done? She left your baby to burn alive!

CIVILIAN: And you saved him. Gods bless you, Eagle Bearer. Sleep now sweet child, mother is here.

ALEXIOS: (to himself) I'm not sure saving that baby was the right thing to do. Chrysis's reign of terror must end. I'm not sure saving that baby was the right thing to do. Chrysis's reign of terror must end. If what Chrysis said was true, Myrrine believes my sister died long ago.

[“Ashes to Ashes” mission completed.]

Death Comes for Us All

CIVILIAN: Why won't anyone help me? Mithios! Please help! I'll do anything! Please, help me.

ALEXIOS: Calm down. Tell me what happened.

CIVILIAN: Raiders in the forest... My husband... He tried to fight them off.

ALEXIOS: Did you say the forest? I thought the forests of Argos are safe.

CIVILIAN: They stole our food, our horse. They wanted to take me. All I can hear is their awful laughing. Such a horrible noise.

ALEXIOS: Laughing? And a whole group ambushed you for one horse?

CIVILIAN: Yes!

ALEXIOS: If your husband is facing the bandits alone, he won't have long to live.

CIVILIAN: Please. I have a child. You have to help us.

ALEXIOS: I will find your husband and the bandits.

[He rides to find woman's husband to the first.]

CHRYISIS: After you saved that child, I knew. Can't help but do the right thing, can you?

ALEXIOS: Chrysis! You killed this man just to set a trap?

CHRYISIS: It's an honor to give your life to Hera's greatest priestess. He died willingly. With him gone, I have room for one more on my council. It isn't too late to join us.

ALEXIOS: You've lost your mind, Chrysis! This is madness.

CHRYISIS: A world where a killer like you is held up as a hero... That is madness.

ALEXIOS: This is the world you helped to make! I will unmake it.

CHRYISIS: Very well. If you wish to be an agent of chaos - if you wish to be a killer - then kill, child.

[Alexios surrounded by soldiers.]

CHRYISIS: You could have joined me, messenger. We could have ruled the world together. Die for me, my child.

[Alexios brutally kills the soldiers and puts a piece of pilum at Chrysis' throat.]

ALEXIOS: (screams) You fucking snake!

[Chrysis laughs.]

ALEXIOS: I will not stop until every last Cultist has met my spear. You will be erased from history. I will erase you. This is for my mother and every family you destroyed.

[He slit her throat. "Death Comes for Us All" sidequest completed. After that Alexios goes in the cave to upgrade his spear.]

ALETHEIA: Forge activated. Synchronizing retransmission chronicity... Contact engaged.

CHAPTER XI - Pirate Hospitality

Island of Misfortune

[Alexios sails to meet the pirate, Xenia.]

HERODOTOS: You've discovered something, Alexios.

ALEXIOS: The Cult, Herodotos - they're worse than we thought.

HERODOTOS: What do you mean?

ALEXIOS: In Argolis, I found this woman, a priestess, who stole my sister Cassandra away from my mother a long time ago.

HERODOTOS: Oh!

ALEXIOS: That same priestess was getting ready to take down the physician Hippokrates for his radical views.

HERODOTOS: She can't -

ALEXIOS: And she won't, but there are so many others out there like her. They're everywhere.

HERODOTOS: And we will find them.

[He landed on the island.]

SOLDIER: Gods have mercy!

XENIA: You - want - mercy? Those who trade in slaves anywhere on my island will be marked as slaves themselves... ..Then hauled to Attika and fed to the system they tried to profit from. Get this scum out of my sight.

ALEXIOS: I thought all pirates were slavers.

XENIA: And you are?

ALEXIOS: My name is Alexios.

XENIA: Well, Alexios, were all thought to be murderers too. So, tell me why I shouldn't kill you right here.

ALEXIOS: I came to find the great pirate Xenia. That's you, isn't it?

XENIA: I like the sound of that, but what was your plan once you found me?

ALEXIOS: I came to offer you a deal.

XENIA: Sneaking into my city is a strange way to make a first impression.

ALEXIOS: I needed to speak with you directly. I didn't think your pirates would just let me walk up and knock.

XENIA: Then speak.

ALEXIOS: I'm looking for a woman. She left Sparta when I was a child.

XENIA: I'll need more than that, Alexios,

ALEXIOS: She has birthmarks on her arm that form the constellation Aquila.

XENIA: Now that is something I can work with. Just who exactly is this woman?

ALEXIOS: She's my mother. I haven't seen her since I was a child.

XENIA: So, you're on a quest to find your family.

ALEXIOS: Something like that.

XENIA: Then your path is not an easy one.

ALEXIOS: Aspasia's the one who sent me to find you.

XENIA: Aspasia? Now why would she do that?

ALEXIOS: She said you might have information that could help me in my search.

XENIA: You can have anything for the right price.

ALEXIOS: And what is that price?

XENIA: One you can afford, I'm sure.

ALEXIOS: Why do you need so much drachmae?

XENIA: I have a city to secure and people to protect. I have no interest in going to war - I just want to make sure the war doesn't come to us.

ALEXIOS: Here, take your drachmae.

XENIA: Nothing feels better than a heavy purse filled with coin.

ALEXIOS: The information I need, how long will it take?

XENIA: I already have it.

ALEXIOS: You do?

XENIA: Your "Myrrine" now sails under the name of Phoenix. She started as a member of my crew, but we parted ways not too long ago.

[She plunges into memories!]

MYRRINE: I'm leaving soon.

XENIA: Keos is your home.

MYRRINE: But this isn't my true calling - my purpose.

XENIA: You might never find what you are looking for, Phoenix

MYRRINE: I can't stop until I do.

XENIA: You are a great pirate.

MYRRINE: And you are an even greater friend. Don't forget me.

[The memory ends.]

ALEXIOS: Do you know where she is now?

XENIA: She sailed southeast with her crew in search of a greater calling.

ALEXIOS: She was part of your crew?

XENIA: For a time.

ALEXIOS: Why did she leave?

XENIA: Much too interested in the politics of war - a waste of a good pirate if you ask me. I haven't heard from her since she left.

ALEXIOS: Keos is a long way from Sparta. How did your paths cross?

XENIA: On the sea, long ago. In her, I saw a better life. In me, she found freedom. Together, we owned the waves.

ALEXIOS: I can't believe she was a pirate.

XENIA: She's the kind of woman who, once she sets her mind to something, gets it done.

ALEXIOS: Thank you. I...

XENIA: Home isn't a place, it's the people you're with. If you don't find what you're looking for, there's a place for you here.

ALEXIOS: (to himself) Phoenix. There have to be people who know that name. I should have enough information now. I should head back to Athens to see Aspasia.

[“Island of Misfortune” mission completed.]

CHAPTER XII - Rising from the Ashes

Abandoned by the Gods

A Growing Sickness

[Alexios sails to Athens. The city is suffering with plague.]

CIVILIAN: Help m...

ALEXIOS: Hippokrates, it's good you're here.

HIPPOKRATES: Is it? Look around you. Athens is dying...

ALEXIOS: What do you think is going on?

HIPPOKRATES: I don't know. What I do know is that it kills without discrimination. Rich, poor, philosopher, or farmer - and I'm helpless to stop it.

ALEXIOS: What's happening to the victims?

HIPPOKRATES: Leaking, pustulant rashes, raging fevers, pallid, sweaty skin. I find many dying in their own excrement.

ALEXIOS: Is there nothing that can be done?

HIPPOKRATES: I try and ease the suffering where I can. The plague is spreading through the victims' excretions - I'm sure of it. The bodies must be burned.

ALEXIOS: What if you get sick?

HIPPOKRATES: It seems I am immune.

ALEXIOS: Then you can continue to give comfort to those who aren't.

HIPPOKRATES: I need help burning the bodies, Alexios. Fanatics are roaming the streets, trying to stop me in my work.

ALEXIOS: What fanatics?

HIPPOKRATES: The Followers of Ares - superstitious fools. They believe burning the dead is sacrilege, and attacked me. Can you believe it?

ALEXIOS: These Followers of Ares don't worry me. I'll help burn the bodies.

[He cleanses the streets praying for the dead.]

ALEXIOS: May you reach Hades safely. Athens is but a shade of what it was... I hope this is the worst of it. That's all of them.

["A Growing Sickness" sidequest completed.]

PHOIBE: Alexios... You're back! Gotta run, sorry.

ALEXIOS: Wait! Where...

PHOIBE: I'll be right back. See you at Aspasia's!

ALEXIOS: Sometimes I think you are too much like me.

SOKRATES: Alexios, it's good to have you back.

ALEXIOS: I've never seen anything like this.

SOKRATES: Those who aren't killed by the plague run wild in the streets. Death is rampant... And it's only a warning. We have ignored what truly plagues us for too long. Kleon.

ALEXIOS: How can you worry about him at a time like this?

SOKRATES: Under his reign, Athens will lose the freedom and glory that has put it on the world stage. It is time to turn my words into actions.

ALEXIOS: How?

SOKRATES: You'll find out as soon as I do.

KLEON: Understand Perikles is a sick man. Don't blame him for that. Blame him for bringing this curse that grips our once-great city. (to Alexios) I didn't expect to see you.

ALEXIOS: What do you think you're doing? You're driving this mob to madness.

KLEON: This? This is nothing. I will make Athens great again! We are Athenians. We settle our disputes democratically but there comes a time when words are not enough, and the people

must take action Athens's name was once held high in the world. Now what has it become? Let's return Athens to greatness. We will be feared again! Raise your voices! I promise you, you won't be ignored any longer.

[Realizing the senselessness of persuasion, Alexios leaves.]

ALEXIOS: Aspasia.

ASPASIA: Oh, Alexios. You've returned to Athens. What's left of Athens. The world we've built is crumbling at our feet.

ALEXIOS: It's as loud as a battlefield out there. And as violent

ASPASIA: They're calling for Perikles's head - as though he should know how to handle this catastrophe. No one is prepared for the end of the world.

ALEXIOS: I came to talk to you. I found out some things about my mother. Her name, her ship...

ASPASIA: Alexios, it's not the time. Perikles is dying. He won't see me. He won't let Hippokrates in his room... He only babbles about going to his precious Parthenon.

ALEXIOS: The reason I came back to Athens was to talk to you about Myrrine.

ASPASIA: Your mother will live to see tomorrow. My love won't live to see another sunset.

ALEXIOS: You've had many sunsets with him. I've spent all my nights alone.

ASPASIA: Perikles needs treatment, and the gods know he won't let me in: He respects you. Could you go to him?

ALEXIOS: I could try.

ASPASIA: If you do, I will make the time to talk about your mother. For now, he needs your help.

ALEXIOS: It's worth a shot.

[He goes to talk to Perikles.]

PERIKLES: Aspasia, my light, I told you...

ALEXIOS: It's Alexios.

PERIKLES: Yes. Come in... It's embarrassing - someone so strong seeing me like this.

ALEXIOS: I admit you don't quite look yourself.

PERIKLES: I don't feel like myself, either.

ALEXIOS: I brought your drugs.

PERIKLES: Ah, yes. It's usually Phoibe who does the delivering. At least I'm alive... Though I can't say the same for my city.

ALEXIOS: It's a shadow of what it was.

PERIKLES: Well, it will belong to Kleon now. He will have to lift it out of its sorry state. I wish to see it with my own eyes. Come, to the balcony. Much has changed. I can't even stand up straight to look death in the eye.

ALEXIOS: You'll recover sooner if you let Hippokrates see you.

PERIKLES: It's my time. The plague chooses no favorites. I fear I've failed Athens. Its people. Aspasia...

ALEXIOS: No, you haven't.

PERIKLES: You're kind, but I've lost. Aspasia needs protection. As does Athens. I thought I gave enough to Athena, but it seems it isn't so.

.

PERIKLES: I should be out there on the streets.

ALEXIOS: You'd be overtaken. There are mobs, and Kleon's doing nothing to calm them.

PERIKLES: Thank the gods Kleon won't see me like this. But that's all I can thank the gods for. They've turned on me. Thank the gods Kleon won't see me like this. But that's all I can thank the gods for. They've turned on me.

ALEXIOS: It's not the gods' fault. It's the world - it's turned upside down.

PERIKLES: Athens's fate is decreed. All we can do now is wait.

ALEXIOS: You should go back inside. You need to rest.

PERIKLES: Where I should be is in the Parthenon, my greatest legacy to Athens. We need the gods blessing. But Aspasia...

ALEXIOS: Aspasia's right.

PERIKLES: She often is. But not about this. Yes. I'll go inside. Thank you, Alexios. Tell my Aspasia I was a good boy and took my drugs.

ALEXIOS: I will.

[He gets back to Aspasia. "Abandoned by the Gods" mission completed.]

And the Streets Run Red

ALEXIOS: Perikles let me in. He took his drugs without complaint.

ASPASIA: Thank you.

ALEXIOS: Something wrong?

ASPASIA: I expected Phoibe back by now.

ALEXIOS: I saw her in the crowds outside. Did you send her somewhere?

ASPASIA: Thad her go to Anastasios to see about a ferry. As soon as Perikles is strong enough, we're leaving Athens. We have to.

ALEXIOS: But now she's missing.

ASPASIA: I'm sure she's all right.

ALEXIOS: Aspasia, there's a plague. You've seen the streets - she's just a child.

ASPASIA: Give her the credit she deserves - she's more of a fighter than I was at her age.

ALEXIOS: I told Perikles the Cult is in Athens. It's too dangerous.

ASPASIA: The Cult? I thought it was the sickness talking.

ALEXIOS: I'm going to look for her. Where is Anastasios's house?

ASPASIA: It's across from the Odeon of Perikles.

ALEXIOS: Chaire.

[He goes to find Phoibe.]

ALEXIOS: This looks like the place.

[The place appears to be filled with bodies.]

ALEXIOS: By the gods. What happened here? This was savage... Done to send a message. Deimos must be carrying through on her threat. I'm glad Phoibe wasn't here. Hopefully she's safe.

[Someone kidnapped Phoibe. She screams.]

ALEXIOS: Phoibe! No! Hey! Stop! Phoibe!

[Kidnappers turn out to be cultists. They have enough time to pierce a girl with a sword.]

ALEXIOS: Phoibe! No! No, no, no. No. Ela, ela.

[But she's already dead...]

ALEXIOS: Earth, mother of all, I greet you. (kisses her head) Aniazo.

[Hippokrates and Sokrates runs in.]

HIPPOKRATES: Alexios! Are you all right?

ALEXIOS: I need to speak to Aspasia.

SOKRATES: We must find Perikles first. He's missing -

ALEXIOS: (angrily screams) I don't fucking care! Tell me where Aspasia is!

HIPPOKRATES:: Alexios!

ALEXIOS: I'm sorry... Phoibe.

HIPPOKRATES: Aspasia went to find Perikles at the Parthenon. She should be there. I think we'd better go with him.

SOKRATES: I agree, my friend. I agree.

[“And the Streets Run Red” mission completed.]

Athens' Last Hope

ASPASIA: There you are, Alexios. Quickly - Perikles may be inside. What's gotten into you?

ALEXIOS: Phoibe was killed. By Cult guards. Before I could get to her.

ASPASIA: Oh, no. Dear Phoibe.

ALEXIOS: She died alone in the street.

ASPASIA: No, you found her - she wasn't alone. I know how much of a friend she was to you.

ALEXIOS: I won't let them get away with this.

ASPASIA: You have to fight. For her.

HIPPOKRATES: Aspasia, you're here.

SOKRATES: Any sign of Perikles?

ASPASIA: If he's here, he's inside praying. He refused to stay safe in the villa.

HIPPOKRATES: Things have gotten even worse in the agora. It's madness.

SOKRATES: Speak later and act now. Perikles -

ALEXIOS: Go!

[When they run into the room, they find Perikles, and Cassandra, who leaned over him.]

DEIMOS: (slowly and in low voice) I'm going to destroy everything you ever created. Athens is mine.

ASPASIA: Perikles -

DEIMOS: (slit Perikles' throat) Stay out of my way!

[Two heavily armed Cult soldiers attack Alexios. He kills them.]

ASPASIA: All is lost now.

HIPPOKRATES: He was a great man. Perhaps greater than we even knew.

SOKRATES: We need to get her out of Athens.

ALEXIOS: We'll take my ship. We have to leave. Don't let him die in vain.

ASPASIA: Never.

[They sneak to the port.]

ASPASIA: We have to move quickly.

ALEXIOS: Stay close. Just in case.

ATHENIAN STRATEGOS: Stop! Kleon has ordered that no one leave Athens. And he wants Aspasia brought to him.

ASPASIA: I'm not going.

ALEXIOS: Leave!

ATHENIAN STRATEGOS: Don't let them go!

[Alexios has to kill the Athenian Soldiers.]

ALEXIOS: It's all clear now. Let's go.

HIPPOKRATES: We're going to stay. Alexios.

ALEXIOS: What? Why?

HIPPOKRATES: My work is here. I can't leave the Athenians in the state they're in.

SOKRATES: You don't need us to protect Aspasia. Leave Athens to us.

ALEXIOS: You saw what happened to Perikles. You want the same to happen to you?

SOKRATES: If every dissenting voice disappears, the people won't turn against him. They need me here.

ALEXIOS: You're sure?

SOKRATES: I have lived as an Athenian, and I will die as an Athenian.

ALEXIOS: Then do something for me. Both of you.

HIPPOKRATES: Of course.

ALEXIOS: Retrieve Phoibe's body. Give her a proper burial.

SOKRATES: Everything she deserves and more.

ALEXIOS: Thank you.

ASPASIA: Time to go, Alexios.

ALEXIOS: And I expect to see you both again - alive.

[Alexios and Aspasia board the ship.]

ASPASIA: The farther we get from Athens, the quieter it grows. As though it's peaceful. But I know better.

ALEXIOS: I'm sorry, Aspasia. About Perikles. And Athens.

ASPASIA: You have no need to apologize. For anything.

ALEXIOS: It feels like... I let everyone down. I didn't get to them quick enough. Didn't make the right decisions.

ASPASIA: It's not your fault. There's no one to blame but the Cult of Kosmos.

ALEXIOS: I'll make each of them beg for mercy before I kill them.

ASPASIA: That time will come. For now, let us look to the future. Do you have a heading?

ALEXIOS: I was hoping you would help me with that.

ASPASIA: Yes, of course. This woman...

ALEXIOS: Phoenix. Her ship was called Siren Song.

ASPASIA: Phoenix. Yes, I know the name. Last anyone heard, her ship was docked on the island of Naxos.

ALEXIOS: Then we go to Naxos... to see Phoenix.

CHAPTER XIII - The Reunion

A Mother's Prayers

[Alexios sails to meet Myrrine in Naxos. He runs to the house and opens the door, and then he hears his mother's voice.]

MYRRINE: I won't be intimidated. Stock the barracks... ...And double the patrols. If Paros is sending them to know the moment they make landfall.

TIMO: Yes, Archon.

CIVILIAN: But Archon, please. The merchants -

MYRRINE: Chersis - I understand your concerns. But protecting the town and the quarries is what's most important. You may all go. The meeting is over.

[Her men leaving the room. Alexios emerges from the shadows.]

MYRRINE: Meeting is over. ...Alexios? How? When I close my eyes, I can still see you falling. I thought had lost you.

ALEXIOS: Cassandra is alive.

MYRRINE: They have her, don't they? I rebuilt my life from ashes, do you understand? And now you tell me... you're alive. You're both alive. It's really you. It's not some trick of the gods.

ALEXIOS: No - I found you.

MYRRINE: Your sister - we have to get her back.

ALEXIOS: She's too far gone.

MYRRINE: I gave up on you both once-never again

ALEXIOS: What have you...

MYRRINE: How did you...

ALEXIOS: I have... a lot of questions.

MYRRINE: I think we both do. But ask. I'll answer what I can.

ALEXIOS: What happened to you in Argolis after that night?

MYRRINE: I found your sister and rushed to a young doctor's apprentice, Hippokrates. I thought I'd lost you... I wasn't ready to lose you both.

ALEXIOS: I spoke with him recently. That night still haunts him.

MYRRINE: I was heartbroken when the healers in Asklepios told me Cassandra was dead. The two of you were my whole world.

ALEXIOS: But she did live, they lied to you.

MYRRINE: They... must have realized she was special and handed her over to the Cult.

ALEXIOS: What do you mean, she was special?

MYRRINE: What's wrong?

TIMO: Soldiers from Paros just made landfall in the cove. A small force, maybe a dozen.

MYRRINE: Maláka! Timo, gather the troops. Questions will have to wait, lamb.

ALEXIOS: I want to help.

MYRRINE: I assume you can use those weapons?

ALEXIOS: Better than when you last saw me...

MYRRINE: Good. Come.

ALEXIOS: Who is attacking?

MYRRINE: Paros, across the bay. It seems Silanos has finally grown tired of sharing the marble trade.

ALEXIOS: Why now?

MYRRINE: We've always had problems with Paros. I expected an attack, just not so soon.

ALEXIOS: I guess the time for talking is over.

MYRRINE: Allies often forget their allegiances when opportunity beckons...

ALEXIOS: Why are you working with Sparta given all that's happened?

MYRRINE: Paros made an alliance with the Athenians, so they left me little choice.

ALEXIOS: You needed support.

MYRRINE: A rivalry with Paros is one thing, but they turned it into a war. Their partnership with Athens was too much to weather for Naxos alone.

[Alexios kills Paros' soldiers and sits with his newfound mother on the beach to talk.]

Catching Up

MYRRINE: There's always been a rivalry between the islands. After all, Naxos used to control Paros and Andros. They're envious of our craftsmen too.

ALEXIOS: And now?

MYRRINE: They think they "deserve" expansion. Their oligarch demands their wings spread wide. But we'll clip their wings before that happens.

ALEXIOS: They don't know who they're up against.

MYRRINE: You remind me of Nikolaos. You fight just like him; ruthless and cunning. He would be proud.

ALEXIOS: The real world taught me better. When someone wants your head, you have to learn to save your neck.

MYRRINE: I know exactly what you mean.

ALEXIOS: I know you left Sparta, but how did you end up on this island?

MYRRINE: I couldn't stand by Nikolaos after what he did - I had to get out of Sparta.

ALEXIOS: So why here?

MYRRINE: I saw an opportunity to help people, to grow something. I was elected to rule and protect this island from those who would ruin what we've built.

ALEXIOS: What about Sparta? You know what's happening there, and it needs your help like Naxos once did.

MYRRINE: I thought about returning on more than one occasion, but it was too painful.

ALEXIOS: Sometimes the most painful things are the things we should do. I don't understand why the Cult targeted our family.

MYRRINE: There are many reasons, lamb.

ALEXIOS: What did we ever do to them?

MYRRINE: Now that we're reunited, it's more a question of what we could do to them.

ALEXIOS: They fear us.

MYRRINE: Your ancestors have been a thorn in their side for generations. They've decided we need to be eliminated to ensure their plans come to fruition.

ALEXIOS: If it's our family they fear, we'll reunite and give them a reason to be afraid.

MYRRINE: Many have tried to stop them and failed.

ALEXIOS: We are not those people. Where others failed, we will succeed. I want to know about my real father.

MYRRINE: How did you know?

ALEXIOS: I was told.

MYRRINE: Nikolaos? You saw him?

ALEXIOS: In Megaris, yes.

MYRRINE: Nikolaos was your father. He was the man who raised you... until he took his Spartan duty too far.

ALEXIOS: He mentioned another... What can you tell me about him?

MYRRINE: I always hoped you would never need to discover the truth, but there are things you need to know if we are to stop the Cult.

ALEXIOS: What do you mean?

MYRRINE: He sought me out before I knew your fa... Nikolaos. I've not heard from him in a long time.

ALEXIOS: Why didn't you tell me the truth about Nikolaos?

MYRRINE: You were just a child, you looked up to him. I couldn't bring myself to take that from you then, and I'm sorry you know now.

ALEXIOS: I've been sheltered from the truth long enough. Let's continue this discussion somewhere the smell of death doesn't linger.

MYRRINE: Ride with me.

ALEXIOS: The island is beautiful.

MYRRINE: It is. Sparta has nothing on Naxian beaches.

ALEXIOS: Sparta. All I remember is the bottom of Mount Taygetos.

MYRRINE: When I brought you to the Pythia as a baby, she never said we would live a nightmare. She said you had such promise.

ALEXIOS: The Pythia can't predict everything. Your general acted quickly - raising the alarm.

MYRRINE: Timo knows Paros is a threat. They make their business clear.

ALEXIOS: They can't be more clear than sending soldiers. There's no treaty?

MYRRINE: Maybe there was, but it's long over. Now there's no mistaking them for anything but the enemy.

ALEXIOS: An enemy I could help you defeat.

MYRRINE: We'll discuss that later. But I think you're right. The temple's coming along, Evandros.

PRIEST: It'll stay in ruins if we don't secure more donations. Soldiers can't get all the funds.

MYRRINE: They can if you don't want the temple destroyed by our enemy. But I'll see what I can do.

PRIEST: It's a good deed, restarting construction. Lygdamis was a great man who deserves reverence.

MYRRINE: His battles against corruption and oligarchy are lessons we all should remember. I do intend to finish the temple.

PRIEST: Thank you, Phoenix.

MYRRINE: What a strange day it has been.

ALEXIOS: But a good one.

MYRRINE: I've certainly had worse.

ALEXIOS: Me too.

MYRRINE: You have grown into a remarkable man, but I see the burden you carry on your shoulders.

ALEXIOS: Finding you has lessened it, I think.

MYRRINE: I'm glad, but I have wondered why the gods chose to reunite us now.

ALEXIOS: I think they felt it was about time our family found each other again.

MYRRINE: If we want to be truly united, we have to find Cassandra and rescue her from the Cult's grasp.

ALEXIOS: They are the source of all our pain and they will cause more to many others unless we act.

MYRRINE: I put that life behind me the moment I left Sparta. I have Naxos to worry about now.

ALEXIOS: Let me help you here. We can safeguard Naxos and then hunt down the Cult together.

TIMO: Myrrine, the symposium is about to start.

MYRRINE: By the gods! I'm sorry my sweet, I forgot. Prepare the horses - I'll be out shortly.

ALEXIOS: The symposium?

MYRRINE: I need to show the people their leader is strong and in control. Sometimes the face we show to the world needs to be one of strength, despite the chaos we harbor beneath. I will help you stop the Cult, but before I can leave Naxos have to ensure it will survive without me.

ALEXIOS: What do you need?

MYRRINE: Paros has to be dealt with. We need to weaken their position. Once they're vulnerable, they will make a reckless decision, and we will strike.

ALEXIOS: What did you have in mind?

MYRRINE: We must force the Paros fleet to engage us and destroy it, but my admiral, Euneas, is missing. His ship was sailing for Paros to engage in peace talks, and he never returned.

ALEXIOS: Don't worry, I'll find him.

MYRRINE: If you need me, I'll be at the symposium. Although... try to look less intimidating should you choose to pay me a visit.

[“Catching Up” mission completed.]

CHAPTER XIV - Paradise Lost

Quarry Quandary

[Alexios rides to investigate Euneas' ship. He finds a mortally wounded soldier sitting on the shore.]

ALEXIOS: You're the only survivor?

SOLDIER: They took prisoners. I was too far gone to carry back to Paros.

ALEXIOS: What happened?

SOLDIER: We came to talk peace with Paros... They ambushed us.

ALEXIOS: What of your captain, Euneas?

SOLDIER: ...Took him.

ALEXIOS: If Paros has him, where would he be?

SOLDIER: They joked about tying him up atop the quarry and letting the sun soften him up.

ALEXIOS: Why keep him alive?

SOLDIER: Leverage They know he's important to Phoenix.

ALEXIOS: I'll get him.

SOLDIER: Make them pay.

[The soldier dies. Alexios infiltrates nearby camp.]

ALEXIOS: There's Euneas. He's in bad shape.

THUG: Have they finished with Euneas yet?

THUG: No, the old dog is still breathing.

THUG: Only a matter of time until the boss or the heat breaks him.

THUG: He'll never betray Naxos. The boss is wasting his time.

ALEXIOS: (about the cliff he's on) Beautiful white Parlam marble. Should I add some Sparian red?

[By killing the guards, Alexios releases Euneas from the cage.]

ALEXIOS: You're a hard man to kill.

EUNEAS: I knew she wouldn't abandon me, Quick, let's get out of here.

[They leave the camp.]

EUNEAS: Thank you, misthios. I hope Phoenix pays you well for this.

ALEXIOS: Remind her for me.

EUNEAS: Something's wrong with Paros - more than usual. Strange things are afoot.

ALEXIOS: What did you see?

EUNEAS: There were others - not the Paros type. One had a mask - never seen that before.

ALEXIOS: A mask? Hm.

EUNEAS: I couldn't tell who he was. Time to get off this gods-forsaken island. I know my way back.

ALEXIOS: You should tell Phoenix what you saw.

EUNEAS: I'll report to her at once.

Death and Disorder

[Alexios goes to talk to his mother at the symposium.]

ASPASIA: Did you not hear what I said? These are their most skilled killers. You cannot stay in the public eye. They'll find you.

MYRRINE: I understand you perfectly. But I also need to be seen. The propagandist did his job well. I need more support to attack Paros.

ASPASIA: I've seen too many people die already. Please, come away from here.

ALEXIOS: Aspasia? What brings you here?

MYRRINE: Alexios! Read the room, my dear...

ALEXIOS: I'm interrupting. Please, continue your discussion. It sounds fascinating.

ASPASIA: I've just come to tell your mother that the Cult's elite forces are after her, and that this place is too open.

MYRRINE: --And I've been telling Aspasia I need to appear in public to maintain the support of the citizens.

ALEXIOS: You want me to handle the Cult's soldiers?

MYRRINE: Not only that. My people won't believe Paros is behind this without proof. I need you to find it.

ALEXIOS: Of course.

MYRRINE: Good. And I'll make the rounds here, shore up my support. Be careful. They're dangerous.

ALEXIOS: I know.

ASPASIA: I'll get her out of here safely.

ALEXIOS: Where do your sources say I should start looking?

ASPASIA: I'd try the caves under Mt. Zas. The Cultists are so enamored with their own mysticism. It's predictable enough for them.

ALEXIOS: I don't think anyone sent to kill you is going to admit who they're working for.

MYRRINE: You're right. Physical proof is better. I'm sure you can find something.

ALEXIOS: Of course. I'd be happy to help you both. I'll see you again later.

[Alexios goes to find and kill the assassins.]

ALEXIOS: Drachmae. All stamped with the seal of Paros. And a letter? In some kind of code.

[After completing the task, Alexios returns to his mother.]

ALEXIOS: The Cult's soldiers were paid with drachmae from Paros.

MYRRINE: Well, I could hardly ask for clearer proof. This will settle some scores. (to Timo) Take these to the merchants' guild. Tell them it's the proof I promised. And tell them... they can keep the coins.

TIMO: Of course.

ALEXIOS: There was also this. I assume it's their orders.

ASPASIA: I recognize this. It's an old dialect. The Cult must use it to communicate with one another.

ALEXIOS: You can read it?

ASPASIA: This money isn't from Silanos. It's from someone in Sparta.

MYRRINE: That's not possible.

ASPASIA: I can translate it for you. But these orders come from a Spartan king.

MYRRINE: The Spartan nobility has always resisted the Cult!

ASPASIA: The Cult is like water. Any crack in the stone and they'll get in.

MYRRINE: Sparta stands against corruption!

ALEXIOS: Sparta has changed since we were there. Corruption spreads everywhere, as Aspasia says - even to Sparta. They want to instill discipline across the Greek world while they rot from within. They're focused on the wrong enemy.

MYRRINE: I am still Spartan. And so are you.

ASPASIA: Are you really?

MYRRINE: I have responsibilities here. Paros needs to be stopped. But then? Yes, I will go back.

[“Death and Disorder” mission completed.]

The Paros Blockade

[A Trojan war hero, Hektor, who was supposed to be dead 750 years ago, approaches them.]

MYRRINE: You may speak.

HEKTOR: Ships from Paros have blockaded the harbor.

MYRRINE: (angrily) Gods curse Silanos and his damned Cult. Do they never tire of meddling? Tell them I'm on my way.

[Hector leaves.]

ALEXIOS: A blockade?

MYRRINE: I've refused to pay tribute to Athens, and Paros is taking advantage of the situation. There goes our hope of striking first.

ALEXIOS: I can bring my ship around and clear the harbor.

MYRRINE: Just you against an entire blockade?

ALEXIOS: I don't see another option. But I have the best crew on the Aegean.

MYRRINE: Be safe... and come back to me, lamb.

[Alexios boards his ship. I really do not know at what moment he became "his" and where Barnabas is at all. Destroying 3 ships of Paros's Fleet Alexios gets back to his mother.]

ALEXIOS: The harbor is clear. We need to move out before they send reinforcements.

MYRRINE: We're almost ready. Timo?

TIMO: The ships are loading now. They'll be ready on your command.

MYRRINE: Alexios. A word.

ALEXIOS: Whatever you need.

MYRRINE: The Cult must be stopped. When we return to Lakonia, it will be dangerous.

ALEXIOS: I'm used to it. We both are.

MYRRINE: Here, I know who I can and cannot trust. I would have said that about Sparta, too. But this news about the king.

ALEXIOS: Did Aspasia find out which of the kings is working with the Cult?

MYRRINE: For all we know, it's both. We must cleanse Sparta of its corruption no matter the cost.

ALEXIOS: At least now we can face them together.

MYRRINE: Yes. For all that those bastards tried to take that from us. And your sister... We will find her. Come see me when you're ready. Are you ready to sail?

ALEXIOS: Where to?

MYRRINE: We're going to destroy the fleet of Paros once and for all. Only then will Naxos be secure enough for us to leave.

ALEXIOS: I'm ready.

MYRRINE: Then I leave this to you.

TIMO: With your shield, or on it.

MYRRINE: And now we strike a blow to the Cult.

[“The Paros Blockade” mission completed.]

Unified Front

[Alexios destroys 4 more ships of Paros’s Fleet.]

ALEXIOS: Naxos... seems secure.

MYRRINE: We have done great things together for its people.

ALEXIOS: But now we must look beyond these shores and destroy the Cult.

MYRRINE: They are everywhere, and nowhere. Their followers are without number. Where do we start?

ALEXIOS: We cut the heads off the beast one at a time until they are blind and defenseless.

MYRRINE: Sparta.

ALEXIOS: Sparta?

MYRRINE: I still have influence there, and allies. We can rally around our home and cleanse it of their influence as an example to the world.

ALEXIOS: It will be dangerous. Their hold on Sparta is strong.

MYRRINE: Don't you think it's time we returned?

ALEXIOS: Together.

MYRRINE: I have only a few more things to do here.

ALEXIOS: As soon as you're ready, we'll set sail for Lakonia.

MYRRINE: I think there's something you should do first.

ALEXIOS: What?

MYRRINE: You need to find your father.

ALEXIOS: Who is he?

MYRRINE: He's a difficult man to describe. He's many things, but the only way to truly know him is to meet him yourself.

ALEXIOS: So you won't tell me now.

MYRRINE: There are details only he can provide. I hope when you meet him you understand. You'll find what you need on the island of Thera. I've given your navigator the course I'll see you in Lakonia.

ALEXIOS: I'll be there.

MYRRINE: May Poseidon keep you safe.

ALEXIOS: Safe journeys. (to himself) Thera.

A Family's Legacy

[Alexios sails on the Volcanic Islands.]

ALEXIOS: There's the camp. Thera. Not what I expected. These ruins look old. I wonder who built them and when. What are those towers? Nothing but a tablet. I wonder what it says? So, the light beams are the key... It's aligned! This looks to be in the right position. There. That should work. Now to try the door. Finally. Now, to find what lies within. Why would my father be here? It's hot in here. I should watch my step. What is this place? Time to take a dive. This place is huge.

[In the depths of the caves, behind the lava streams, Alexios finds a room reminiscent of the one where he upgrades his pilum.]

ALEXIOS: Hello? Ikaros!

[His hawk lands on the arm of a bearded man with a staff, standing at a distance.]

ALEXIOS: Hmpf. Traitor.

PYTHAGORAS: Greetings, Alexios. Welcome to Atlantis.

ALEXIOS: Atlantis! Impossible! I thought it was just a myth?

PYTHAGORAS: There are many secrets in this world that are hidden behind myth and legend.

ALEXIOS: And who are you?

PYTHAGORAS: My name is Pythagoras. I'm your father.

ALEXIOS: Pythagoras? That doesn't make any sense. He died decades ago.

PYTHAGORAS: Yes, almost a century if memory serves. And yet, here I am standing before you.

ALEXIOS: And Ikaros is...

PYTHAGORAS: My oldest and dearest friend. I sent him to watch over you. And now, here you are.

ALEXIOS: Myrrine, my mother - she sent me here to find you.

PYTHAGORAS: Myrrine. She sent you here because she knew this was your destiny.

ALEXIOS: My destiny?

PYTHAGORAS: There's more at stake than any one mind can comprehend.

ALEXIOS: Why was sent here? What's my role in all of this? I want answers!

PYTHAGORAS: There is knowledge in this place. Powerful knowledge. In the wrong hands, its secrets could bring about the downfall of humanity. We cannot allow others to discover this place. We must find a way to seal it from the world forever.

ALEXIOS: I don't understand any of this. I'm a warrior, not a scholar.

PYTHAGORAS: We all have a purpose, Alexios. Yours was to help me protect the secrets of Atlantis.

ALEXIOS: Why should I help you? You were never there for me.

PYTHAGORAS: You endured what you had to in order to be strong enough for what's to come.

ALEXIOS: I never asked for any of this.

PYTHAGORAS: Our destiny is a burden we must shoulder. It is not something we choose.

ALEXIOS: What would you have me do?

PYTHAGORAS: The answers I seek are behind these mechanisms. They are sealed, and the artifacts to open them are missing.

ALEXIOS: So I need to find the artifacts and return them to Atlantis?

PYTHAGORAS: I've collected information that hints at where these artifacts may be located. However, they are incredibly powerful. They corrupt the minds of lesser people and possess a will to defend themselves.

ALEXIOS: I'll bring them back. But I still have questions for you.

PYTHAGORAS: And I have answers. For now, though, take this. It's part of a key to access an artifact that is hidden in Boeotia. I have an ally trying to find the second half as we speak.

[We return to the wretched and dull of the present. Layla gets up from the Ikea table and removes her cheap VR headset.]

LAYLA HASSAN: Thera... We found Atlantis!

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: Atlantis? Let me check your vitals - you're delirious.

LAYLA HASSAN:.. We've been searching for an Isu artifact with reality-bending powers, and this bothers you?

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: Pythagoras was born around 570 BCE. That would make the man in that cave nearly 150 years old. What could possibly be keeping him alive?

LAYLA HASSAN: The Staff of Hermes Trismegistus.

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: Ms. Hassan, you were right. I'll help you pack up the gear.

LAYLA HASSAN: Thanks. Let's roll out.

[In the next scene she is already swimming in water.]

LAYLA HASSAN: I've reached the coordinates. The series of caves we detected should be right under me. My equipment's ready. Preparing to dive.

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: Layla, you have no idea what's down there. There could be sharks.

LAYLA HASSAN: I prefer that to Templars.

KIYOSHI TAKAKURA: We'll keep an eye out for Abstergo. Good luck, Layla.

LAYLA HASSAN: Thanks. I'm heading down now. There has to be a way in. I'll find it. There! That must be the way in. Are you all still reading me? It's awfully quiet on comms.

KIYOSHI TAKAKURA: We hear you, Layla.

LAYLA HASSAN: Thanks. It's just so... silent down here.

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: You're not alone, Layla. We're monitoring your progress. You're doing fine.

ALANNAH RYAN: Yeah, we're here if you need us!

KIYOSHI TAKAKURA: Said the assassin sitting at a desk.

ALANNAH RYAN: Well I don't have to be on a boat to be useful! I have loads of information on Ancient Greece. Did you know that at Zakros, the Minoans built a graveyard so huge it was known as the "Ravine of the Dead"?

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: Can we please not talk about death?

LAYLA HASSAN: Alannah, promise me that if I die down here, you'll rename this place the "CAVES OF THE DEAD".

ALANNAH RYAN: I'm on it!

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: People...

[After swimming under water for a while, Lila finds herself diving into an underwater cave.]

LAYLA HASSAN: I'm going to miss the London loft. I really liked the view.

ALANNAH RYAN: Miss it? Why can't you go back?

LAYLA HASSAN: Didn't you read Kiyoshi's report? Abstergo's already swept through it. It's compromised.

ALANNAH RYAN: No, I've been busy researching Thera... Kiyoshi, are you all right?

KIYOSHI TAKAKURA: Of course. After clearing out the last of our gear, observed the infiltration from a distance.

LAYLA HASSAN: Did they pick up the present I left?

KIYOSHI TAKAKURA: Yes, they found the USB key you "dropped" under the desk. Nice tactic.

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: No one at Abstergo will be stupid enough to stick that in a computer.

LAYLA HASSAN: They don't have to. It's a shell holding one of my special RFID transmitters. Get it anywhere near a workstation, like, say, in the head of security's office, and... Boom.

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: Impressive.

LAYLA HASSAN: All in a day's hack.

[He finds the very chamber where many centuries ago Pythagoras and Alexios stood.]

LAYLA HASSAN: Wow! It's more elaborate than I could have imagined. How did they build all this? What I wouldn't pay for an Isu toolbox... This is different from Egypt. Some aesthetic elements in common but... Hmm. I should get out of this diving suit before I start exploring.

[She disguises herself in her usual outfit, which is terribly unsuitable for exploring such structures.]

LAYLA HASSAN: It's real. I made it. Layla to Altair II. I'm in. Do you have visuals?

ALANNAH RYAN: Yes! By the gods, Layla, it's Atlantis!

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: How are you feeling? Any nausea from the pressure change?

LAYLA HASSAN: No, I'm fine. These rooms are... amazing. Think, Layla, think... there must be a way. Something has to power up this place. I'm re-entering the Animus. I need Alexios to show me how he got farther inside.

[It's not clear how, but we go back to Alexios.]

ALEXIOS: I know there's not much time, but I need answers.

PYTHAGORAS: I imagine you have many questions.

ALEXIOS: I have questions about my family.

PYTHAGORAS: The sentimental and emotional connections formed between people have always irked me. I knew Myrrine would fail to stay detached.

ALEXIOS: Why did you come here and leave my mother and me in Sparta?

PYTHAGORAS: I was never going to raise you. Our duty was to continue our ancient bloodline and ensure there was someone strong enough to do what was necessary when the time came.

ALEXIOS: You could have brought us here with you

PYTHAGORAS: And you would have been unprepared.

ALEXIOS: If you've been here all these years, how did you meet my mother?

PYTHAGORAS: We are both descendants of the people who built this place, just like you. We knew that we had an obligation to preserve our lineage.

ALEXIOS: That's when you agreed to make me.

PYTHAGORAS: In a manner of speaking, yes.

ALEXIOS: Why is the Cult hunting our family

PYTHAGORAS: It is our family's destiny to control the power in this place. In our blood lies the key to unlocking the secrets of Atlantis.

ALEXIOS: So they want our blood?

PYTHAGORAS: You have a destiny, my child, to destroy the Cult and their influence on the Greek world. You threaten everything they have striven for because you have the power to oppose them.

ALEXIOS: They've tried to destroy me and failed, And they'll never control me. I want to know more about Atlantis and your work.

PYTHAGORAS: There isn't enough time for me to explain even a fraction of what I have learned here. All I can offer for now is a hint of enlightenment.

ALEXIOS: You call it Atlantis, but what exactly is this place?

PYTHAGORAS: I believe it was a city long ago, a place where beings of great knowledge and power lived before humankind had built even its first primitive settlements. It was perhaps some kind of library where the ancient ones stored information.

ALEXIOS: This place is like a tomb. How did you live down here, and for so long?

PYTHAGORAS: This artifact, like your spear, possesses incredible power. It has given me life so that I may continue to learn from this place.

ALEXIOS: What have you been studying here?

PYTHAGORAS: Everything. The First Civilization's history, their culture, their science... With it, we can change humanity's destiny and usher in an age of enlightenment.

ALEXIOS: Destiny is something only the gods can alter.

PYTHAGORAS: They were gods. Living, breathing gods.

ALEXIOS: I've heard enough. What do I do with the artifacts?

PYTHAGORAS: Just place them in their corresponding steles, and the path to answers will illuminate.

ALEXIOS: I should go.

PYTHAGORAS: Yes, there is much to do. Bring back the artifacts quickly. The longer we wait, the greater the risk of Atlantis being discovered.

CHAPTER XV - The Last Riddle

Lore of the Sphinx

ALEXIOS: The Lair of the Sphinx. Impressive.

GORGIAS: Oh my, a misthios.

ALEXIOS: What are you doing here?

GORGIAS: My name is Gorgias, and I have spent my life researching the past of Boeotia and the Peloponnese.

ALEXIOS: I'm looking for the other half of this amulet.

GORGIAS: Ah yes, I know of items like this. I was seeking a piece similar in size.

ALEXIOS: Where is it?

GORGIAS: Unfortunately my apprentice was the one tracking down its final location in Lokris. He went to retrieve it, but never returned.

ALEXIOS: I will do everything I can to find your missing apprentice.

GORGIAS: I appreciate the help, misthios. I'm very worried about my Pibos.

ALEXIOS: Where was your apprentice heading?

GORGIAS: We heard rumors of a sighting near the Tomb of Menoikeus, in Boeotia.

ALEXIOS: What was Pibos looking for?

GORGAS: There was a cave discovered that might contain items of great significance. I sent him to validate the claims before I made the journey myself.

ALEXIOS: Don't worry, I'll find out what happened to Pibos.

[He goes to find the apprentice.]

ALEXIOS: This must be Pibos - or what's left of him. The creature that killed Pibos must have eaten the amulet. These pieces fit together perfectly. This must be the key.

["Lore of the Sphinx" completed.]

Awaken the Myth

[Alexios goes to the same place where he met Gorgias.]

ALEXIOS: The statue. It's gone. It must only work at night. I should come back after dark.

[At night a winged creature flies to him.]

SPHINX: Another challenger. I hope you're more resilient than the last one.

ALEXIOS: By the gods! The statue came alive!

SPHINX: I am no statue, child. If you cannot comprehend what stands before you, how are you to entertain me?

ALEXIOS: What are you?

SPHINX: The Sphinx. The guardian of truth and knowledge.

ALEXIOS: Why are you here?

SPHINX: The gods sent me to protect something, and I've been its guardian ever since.

ALEXIOS: I-I came for another reason.

SPHINX: Oh? Then tell me, little one. Why are you here?

ALEXIOS: You protect an object of great power. I have been asked to return it to where it belongs.

SPHINX: A most noble of causes. Sadly I cannot grant your request.

ALEXIOS: There's too much at stake. I won't leave without it.

SPHINX: The power I guard is not for the weak-willed.

ALEXIOS: I can resist.

SPHINX: One must risk everything in the pursuit of knowledge. If you can answer my questions wisely, you will have proven yourself worthy. What can bring back the dead; make you cry, make you, laugh, make you young; is born in an instant, yet lasts a lifetime?

ALEXIOS: Memories.

SPHINX: You're full of surprises. In spring I am gay in handsome array: in summer more clothing I wear; when colder it grows, fling off my clothes; and in winter quite naked appear.

ALEXIOS: You're a tree.

SPHINX: Impressive, little one. Most impressive. As small as your thumb, I am light in the air. You may hear me before you see me, but trust that I'm there.

ALEXIOS: A hummingbird.

SPHINX: How clever you are. You are an interesting one. Now, take what you have learned and touch the symbols that reflect your choices.

[Alexios activates several levers. The Sphinx dies in agony. Alexios removes the red-hot feather from the Sphinx's head. Her ghost stretches towards him.]

UNKNOWN: ...Outwit our oppressors, hide our truth within lies...

[Alexios takes the Prize of the Sphinx. "Awaken the Myth" mission completed. He sail to Messara.]

ALEXIOS: Barnabas, what's that large landmass up ahead?

BARNABAS: It's Krete, a land of mysteries and heroes. Theseus and the Minotaur! You know the story?

ALEXIOS: Parts of it. Theseus was an Athenian hero. It wasn't a very popular tale in Sparta.

BARNABAS: Ah, but it's an epic story! Theseus ventured into the labyrinth to slay the Minotaur. An unsurmountable task, yet he triumphed and saved the people of Minos.

ALEXIOS: I feel like Theseus and I share a common burden...

BARNABAS: Cheer up, Alexios! The gods are on your side! When your task is accomplished, we'll roast some lamb, drink wine, and I'll tell you all the stories I know.

ALEXIOS: I'm glad you're here with me, Barnabas.

BARNABAS: I am blessed to be in your company. Eagle Bearer.

CHAPTER XVI - A Place of Twists and Turns

[Alexios arrives at Messara.]

ALEXIOS: The legendary Knossos - once palace to King Minos.

Myths and Minotaurs

[He finds a small skunk and wants to loot it.]

ARDOS: Don't touch that chest! It's mine!

ALEXIOS: I'm no thief, but if I was - I'd want something more valuable.

ARDOS: Take that back.

ALEXIOS: These ruins are an... interesting place to set up camp. What brings you here?

ARDOS: A long time ago, below this very spot, my pater - the great adventurer, Nikios - entered the labyrinth to steal the Minotaur's treasure. As I waited outside, I heard shouts and roars, then his men came pouring out - His men, but not pater. I need to save him.

ALEXIOS: The Minotaur would be a match for any mortal... but wasn't it slain by Theseus?

ARDOS: No, misthios. It's very much alive and well.

ALEXIOS: Where is he then? You said the labyrinth was beneath us -

ARDOS: Yeah! There's a creepy looking trapdoor beneath the temple!

ALEXIOS: Take me there, and I will slay the Minotaur and find your pater's - ...Find your pater.

ARDOS: You - you'll do that?

ALEXIOS: The Minotaur will die, and I will find your pater.

ARDOS: Thank you, misthios! No one ever believes me.

ALEXIOS: Just calm down and take me to the labyrinth. What's your name?

ARDOS: Ardos! Now, follow me! The entrance is way down underground. It's down this way! This place is going to blow your mind, misthios. There's a hugeeeeeee room and there's a hugeeeeeee hole in the ground with a hugeeeeeee door. Everybody keeps going on about how - Theseus killed the Minotaur. Lies! I heard it! A roar, like - like uh - Rolling thunder! Yeah, that's it. The Minotaur is still alive! And hungry!

ALEXIOS: Great.

ARDOS: I'm glad you came along. Now pater has a shot of getting out of that damn labyrinth. They really didn't have to put the entrance this deep. Almost there. What were these Minoans thinking? Here we are! Isn't this amaaaaazing?!

ALEXIOS: I've seen some things, Ardos. But this...

ARDOS: IS AMAAAAAAAAZING.

ALEXIOS: So the Minotaur lies beneath Knossos Palace... Open the door. I've got-a-minotaur to slay.

ARDOS: Ah. Uh, right. It's locked.

ALEXIOS: If you don't know how to get in there, I swear -

ARDOS: I don't! But the guys who went into the labyrinth with my pater will! I've tried talking to them but - But they won't speak to me!

ALEXIOS: They'll speak to me. Who are these people?

ARDOS: The Collector, Swordfish, and my old caretaker. My old caretaker - Booooooring old man - Never wanted to talk to me about my pater or the Minotaur, so I left him to find out the truth on my own.

ALEXIOS: Bold.

ARDOS: And the Collector is this guy who buys weird stuff. He's a merchant in Gortyn. Oh! And the last guy! They call him - Swooooooordfish.

ALEXIOS: Of course.

ARDOS: He's the boss of Octopus Bay. And he's mean.

ALEXIOS: Where should I start looking for "Swordfish"?

ARDOS: Fisherman's Beachhead in Heraklion would be your best bet. No one's seen him in years. Some think he's dead.

ALEXIOS: "Swordfish"? He must have a long, pointy nose.

ARDOS: No, no! He's really good with a sword and... He's really good with fish? I guess?

ALEXIOS: This "Collector," where is he?

ARDOS: He lives in Gortyn near some red pillars, in a craaaaaazy house with lots of stuff! I've "borrowed" some trinkets from him. He has so many he never even noticed.

ALEXIOS: Don't let me catch you "borrowing" from me.

ARDOS: From you? I would never! ...Get caught.

ALEXIOS: Tell me more about this old man.

ARDOS: Okay, so, my old caretaker recently sent me a message about wanting to meet in Phaistos.

ALEXIOS: That's nice of him.

ARDOS: Ha! He never answered me about my pater or the Minotaur, ever. That's why I left in the first place!

ALEXIOS: I'll go in your place and see what I find.

ARDOS: The message said to meet him at our old house northeast of here, near Phaistos.

ALEXIOS: Where did you say I'll find your caretaker?

ARDOS: OLD caretaker. The message said to meet him at our old house to the northeast, near Phaistos.

ALEXIOS: I'll make sure they all talk.

[“Myths and Minotaurs” mission completed.]

Of Minotaurs and Men
Recollections

ALEXIOS: You must be the Hoarder?

COLLECTOR: The Collector!

ALEXIOS: Dust Collector, maybe. I'm here about the Minotaur.

COLLECTOR: The... No, no, no, I don't - I can't - I don't know anything about the Minotaur!

ALEXIOS: Ardos sent me. He says you know things.

COLLECTOR: Ardos! The boy. Never talk to the boy. We all promised.

ALEXIOS: What you saw has scarred you. Those scars are starting to fade. Perhaps you'd like some fresh ones?

COLLECTOR: No - please - I have answers! If you aim to survive that - that beast in the labyrinth, I know what you'll need!

ALEXIOS: Tell me your secret, "Collector."

COLLECTOR: The armor of Theseus himself! It's the only thing that can withstand the beast. But it's not here, it's in the fort. I had to sell it!

ALEXIOS: There's nothing wrong with my armor.

COLLECTOR: Nikios thought his armor was the finest in the Greek world. He could have worn Theseus's when we found it, but I was the perfect fit. Minotaur struck me right in the chest... Should have died. But Nikios...? Don't make Nikios' mistake: Wear Theseus's armor.

ALEXIOS: What do you know of the boy?

COLLECTOR: Son of Nikios. Stubborn. A little shit. His father's son.

ALEXIOS: You remember him fondly enough, yet you refuse to speak to him.

COLLECTOR: If I speak, he might not listen. The truth is armor against little, misthios.

ALEXIOS: You said you sold Theseus's armor. Who has it?

COLLECTOR: A military commander, stationed in the fort. He has a cave filled with all sorts of prizes. The armor is his crown jewel.

ALEXIOS: Sounds like a hard thing to part with

COLLECTOR: No. Easy. That armor... it would have saved Nikios. It would have saved the boys' father. Yet I wore it. I didn't deserve... The armor haunted me. No point keeping ghosts in my collection.

ALEXIOS: Breathe Collector, I've learned enough. If Theseus's armor is still in the fort, I'll find it.

COLLECTOR: There are more pieces of Theseus's armor, I've only managed to attain two of them. But someone stole one from me! If you find it, you can have it, but give whoever took it a piece of my mind. And perhaps a piece of your blade.

[Alexios infiltrates the fort and finds the piece of armor.]

ALEXIOS: Theseus's armor. It is real. I wonder how many more pieces of Theseus's armor are there.

[“Recollections” sidequest completed.]

Full Circle

[Alexios visits Ardos' caretaker.]

CARETAKER: Where's the boy?! Ardos?!

ALEXIOS: You're his caretaker?

CARETAKER: Of course! I need to speak with him.

ALEXIOS: Don't you recognize me? Remember all the times we shared? The secrets?

CARETAKER: Don't take me for a fool!

ALEXIOS: Who told you about the boy? Speak!

CARETAKER: It's nothing personal with the boy or the old man, but if I tell you anything, I'm good as -

ALEXIOS: Dead? Guess what'll happen if you don't tell me anything?

CARETAKER: OK! What is it you want to know?

ALEXIOS: Where is the old man?

CARETAKER: They're at Phaistos Village, southwest of here. They got him tied to a post and they're beating him.

ALEXIOS: What is to happen to the boy?

CARETAKER: I don't know, misthios! They just told me to bring him back! But we both know what they're capable of...

ALEXIOS: (angrily) And you'd bring them an innocent boy? You'd stand by as an old man gets beaten -

CARETAKER: B-but -

ALEXIOS: And you agreed to kidnap the boy.

CARETAKER: They're just up the road - the Cult! Go kill them all. You'd be doing me favor, too. Let me go, and I won't tell anyone what happened.

ALEXIOS: I'll let Zeus decide your fate. I need to find the old man.

CARETAKER: Thank you, misthios.

ALEXIOS: (to himself) The old man is alive. I should check the temple in Phaistos. There's the old man amongst those guards.

[He frees the caretaker.]

CARETAKER: I've told you everything I know! W-wait, who are you?

ALEXIOS: Ardos sent me. Can you walk?

CARETAKER: The boy! Thank the gods. Let's get out of here before they return.

ALEXIOS: Breathe, old man -

CARETAKER: Ardos. The boy! Is he safe? Alive?

ALEXIOS: He's made a lot of enemies with his... charm.

CARETAKER: At least he's safe from any danger I may have caused him.

ALEXIOS: I'm looking for a way into the labyrinth. Ardos said you might know something.

CARETAKER: I know this - that place is death.

ALEXIOS: What drove everyone out of the labyrinth? Something must have happened.

CARETAKER: I never went inside. I'm not a fool. But Nikios wanted me to watch the boy. I stayed outside and prayed, but I heard it - the Minotaur. Two returned, but Nikios...

ALEXIOS: Ardos says his father is in the labyrinth. Is this true?

CARETAKER: Yes, he never came out. Though two who did... will never truly escape it.

ALEXIOS: Ardos says you refuse to speak or talk to him about his father.

CARETAKER: How can anyone tell a boy the person he looks up to - his father and only family - is dead?! What I can do in Nikios's honor is to stop his son from entering that cursed place!

ALEXIOS: Why would they hurt you?

CARETAKER: When the survivors fled the Minotaur, they left behind a disk - the key to the labyrinth... and I kept it.

ALEXIOS: Then why do they think Ardos has it?

CARETAKER: Because he does. He stole it from me. And I told them about it. They tortured me, misthios! I - I tried not to break. I've failed him. I've failed him all these years.

ALEXIOS: The people who tortured you belong to a powerful cult. They have broken stronger men than you. You can still make things right with Ardos. As smart as he is, he still needs someone to look out for him - family. He needs you.

CARETAKER: He doesn't even want to see me, misthios.

ALEXIOS: Keep trying.

CARETAKER: About the disk. He doesn't know its true purpose, misthios. With it, you'll be able to open the labyrinth. Just promise to keep him safe.

ALEXIOS: He'll be safe with me.

[“Full Circle” sidequest completed.]

Blood in the Water

[Alexios searches for Swordfish in Octopus Bay.]

ALEXIOS: These fishermen should know something about Swordfish.

ALEXIOS: I'm looking for Swordfish.

STREET VENDOR: I-I know nothing!

ALEXIOS: Fishmonger, I'm looking for Swordfish.

STREET VENDOR: Shh! Are you crazy? You don't find Swordfish - Swordfish finds you. Now go before I get my nose cut off.

CIVILIAN: Hey, misthios! Over here!

ALEXIOS: I'm looking for Swordfish. Can you help?

STREET VENDOR: Piss off, maláka! You're going to get both of us in trouble! Leave.

Catch and Release

CIVILIAN: Help! Somebody help me!

ALEXIOS: What's the problem?

CIVILIAN: My husband is missing. He went out fishing yesterday near Anaphi and hasn't returned.

ALEXIOS: You must miss him.

CIVILIAN: This is more than a wife missing her husband. I truly fear he's in danger.

ALEXIOS: In danger of what?

CIVILIAN: Pirates. They were spotted in the area recently. I told him it was too dangerous, but we needed the drachmae to pay Swordfish.

ALEXIOS: Tell me about Swordfish.

CIVILIAN: My husband knows more about him than I do. Please save him, and he'll tell you anything!

ALEXIOS: If pirates got to him, he may already be dead.

CIVILIAN: I can't give up hope. He has a fast ship - if he saw the pirates, he'd head to the nearest shore.

ALEXIOS: I could rescue your husband, for a price.

CIVILIAN: Please! I'll find a way to pay. Just get him back.

ALEXIOS: I'll look for your husband, Where should I start?

CIVILIAN: His favorite fishing spot is on the west coast of Anaphi north of here.

ALEXIOS: If he's alive, I'll find him.

[He finds the fisherman.]

ALEXIOS: Your wife sent me to find you.

CIVILIAN: Praise Poseidon. The pirates were waiting for high tide to attack.

ALEXIOS: We need to leave now. I'll escort you back to Heraklion.

CIVILIAN: I'm right behind you.

[Alexios gets him back to his wife.]

CIVILIAN: I owe you beyond measure. How can I repay you?

ALEXIOS: There's enough widows in this world - we didn't need another. I was happy to help.

CIVILIAN: We're behind on our payments to Swordfish, so your kindness is appreciated. But here, take this.

ALEXIOS: Tell me about Swordfish.

CIVILIAN: Swordfish... even his name - I last saw him many years ago, diving for treasure around Fisherman's Beacon. I haven't seen him since. But his presence is felt everywhere in Heraklion. He's here, somewhere.

ALEXIOS: (to himself) I should check out the waters near the beacons.

[“Catch and Release” sidequest completed. After that Alexios finds an old man at the shore.]

CIVILIAN: I hear you're lookin' for a certain fish.

ALEXIOS: Yeah - Swordfish.

CIVILIAN: I hope you know what you're in for. He's ruthless - cut off a man's nose just for sneezin'.

ALEXIOS: Why is it that every time I mention his name, people jump?

CIVILIAN: Swordfish controls Heraklion and everyone in it.

ALEXIOS: Where is he?

CIVILIAN: No one's seen him in a long time. But there's... a rumor he controls Heraklion from a hideout underground.

ALEXIOS: That's ridiculous.

CIVILIAN: It's all I know, misthios.

ALEXIOS: If he's so dangerous, why are you talking to me?

CIVILIAN: I'm old, tired - sick of bowin' down to pay "fees." If you can take him out, we're all better for it.

THUG: Not another word out of you, maláka! I have orders. Everyone who talks about Swordfish must die!

[Alexios kills the thugs.]

The Lost Arkalochori Axe

PRIESTESS: Thank the gods! Misthios, I need your help.

ALEXIOS: What's the problem?

PRIESTESS: We've been ravaged by storms and rough seas! Poseidon is angry.

ALEXIOS: Have you tried making an offering?

PRIESTESS: A simple offering isn't enough to appease him! We need to perform a ritual... but we can't do it without our ceremonial axe.

ALEXIOS: There are hundreds of axes around - just use another.

PRIESTESS: But the Arkalochori Axe was crafted for this very purpose!

ALEXIOS: To appease the gods?

PRIESTESS: The gods? Swordfish would have me fed to the sharks before Poseidon could punish me.

ALEXIOS: Swordfish... Tell me more about him.

PRIESTESS: He's the one who ordered us to conduct this ritual every month. He runs the fish market - I can't say any more. No one talks about Swordfish and gets away with it, misthios.

ALEXIOS: What if I insist?

PRIESTESS: Then I insist you retrieve the axe for me.

ALEXIOS: You insist?

PRIESTESS: N-no! "Politely request." And of course there'll be plenty of drachmae for your help, misthios.

ALEXIOS: Do you know where the axe is?

PRIESTESS: Bandits took it! There's a cave east of town. If you follow the path along the shoreline, I'm sure you'll find them.

ALEXIOS: I'll go take a look.

PRIESTESS: ...And don't swing it around! It's a delicate, ceremonial axe!

[Alexios finds the axe in Arkalochori Cave.]

ALEXIOS: This must be the axe... Doesn't look like it could cut anything.

[He returns to the priestess.]

PRIESTESS: Need something else to find that axe, misthios?

ALEXIOS: Who is this Swordfish you want to impress?

PRIESTESS: He'll kill me if I tell you.

ALEXIOS: And I'll kill you if you don't.

PRIESTESS: Swordfish has always run the fish market with an iron fist charges the fishermen fees. If they don't pay up... the sharks eat well.

ALEXIOS: Why do you fear Swordfish?

PRIESTESS: Everyone does, misthios. He's not to be trifled with. Once, he took a man's nose off for sneezing in his presence.

ALEXIOS: Quite the reputation... Point me in Swordfish's direction.

PRIESTESS: I don't know where he is. No one's seen him for years, misthios. Some think he's dead. Just last week, some fishermen boldly said we should no longer pay fees to a dead man...

PRIESTESS: Guess who's dead now?

ALEXIOS: I'll take my chances. Where is he?

PRIESTESS: He used to live at Fisherman's Beacon to the north - you could try your luck there.

ALEXIOS: This axe would fetch a good price at the agora.

PRIESTESS: No! You can't sell it. Give it back I'll pay you. Take all the drachmae I have.

ALEXIOS: The axe was yours to begin with. Take it.

PRIESTESS: You had me worried, misthios. Thank you, I owe you my life.

[“The Lost Arkalochori Axe” mission completed. Having received a sufficient amount of information, Alexios goes in search of a secret hideout of the Swordfish. He finds a secret cave underwater...]

ALEXIOS: By the gods - What's going on here? ...Swordfish.

SWORDFISH: (from afar) ...Isn't enough - sharks need more, I need more. More... more... Never find me - they can never find me. The sharks need more. Need more sharks. Fishermen are late - no fish for the sharks... The wives and children will have - To – Do!

[Alexios finds the local kingpin. He's mad as a hatter.]

SWORDFISH: Deimos. I knew you'd come. Dog. Dog of Kosmos, have you come to bite?!

ALEXIOS: I have nothing to do with the Cultists.

SWORDFISH: Think I believe you? You're mad.

ALEXIOS: I'm here for the -

SWORDFISH: I WON'T GO BACK. I won't go back in there. I don't care if I owe the Cult! I want out. You want that artifact - Go fetch it.

ALEXIOS: Once a Cultist, always a Cultist.

SWORDFISH: What do you want from me then, Deimos?!

ALEXIOS: Answers. And you will give them to me. What happened in there that drove you to - this?

SWORDFISH: The Minotaur happened! I was lucky - Nikios, though... The Kosmos promised me everything. Not this!

ALEXIOS: How did you end up here?

SWORDFISH: I'm hiding amongst the filth... and from it. I can't show my face anymore. But Heraklion is still mine! All its fish - And all its people.

ALEXIOS: You're insane. How did you get into the labyrinth?

SWORDFISH: Nikios had a key - he put it into the stele. But you can't go in there! It'll kill you. It'll get out and kill us all.

ALEXIOS: You underestimate me.

SWORDFISH: That's what Nikios said. Raaaaa! I'll feed you to the sharks!

[He suddenly starts the fight. ALEXIOS kills him.]

ALEXIOS: Not so good with a sword after all. A broken man... Haunted by the Minotaur till the very end.

["Blood in the Water" mission completed.]

Seeking Answers

[Alexios returns to Ardos.]

ALEXIOS: You -

ARDOS: Whatever it was. I didn't steal it.

ALEXIOS: The old caretaker said you -

ARDOS: Whoa - he told you stuff? Did he tell you anything about my pater?

ALEXIOS: No he didn't, but -

ARDOS: What about the Collector?

ALEXIOS: He didn't say anything about your pater either.

ARDOS: Huh! I could've sworn he knew something!

ALEXIOS: Look, the old caretaker said you -

ARDOS: Wait, wait, wait! And... Swordfish? What did he say? You found him right?

ALEXIOS: He said you were a rude little boy that likes to interrupt -

ARDOS: That's not true! Fine. Maybe I get a little excited sometimes. What were you going to say?

ALEXIOS: The old man said you stole something from him.

ARDOS: No, I didn't! Wait. What did he accuse me of stealing?

ALEXIOS: The key to the labyrinth. A disk.

ARDOS: OH! You mean this old thing? I always wondered what it was for.

ALEXIOS: Swordfish mentioned there was a place to put the disk - in a stele.

ARDOS: Ooh! So what do we do now

ALEXIOS: If we put the disk into the stele, the entrance to the labyrinth should open. Then I see about a minotaur.

ARDOS: Andon and you'll save my pater too right?

ALEXIOS: I promised I'd save your pater, didn't I?

ARDOS: You're the best, misthios!

ALEXIOS: Your pater and I will be back before you know it.

ARDOS: Let's head to the entrance and try out the disk!

ALEXIOS: Looks like a piece of Theseus's armor.

[“Seeking Answers” sidequest completed. “Of Minotaurs and Men” mission completed.]

He Waits

[They go down again into the Labyrinth of Lost Souls. Alexios opens the massive stone door on the floor. He makes a leap of faith and gets into strange caves...]

ALEXIOS: This... can't be Minoan. What is this...? Maláka. It's real. By the gods... The string Theseus used to navigate the labyrinth... Let's see what's at the end. A creature of rage did this. (finds a body) This must be Nikios. A ring? Ardos might want this. I've been this way before.

[He finds the beast, the Minotaur! It has a mighty axe in its hands and furiously runs around the room.]

ALEXIOS: Well. The malákas Minotaur. Aaaand here we go. I really need to charge more for slaying mythical creatures...

[He defeats the beast!]

ALEXIOS: Can't believe... I killed the Minotaur. Mater would be so proud.

[He breaks the Minotaur horn as proof of his victory. Minotaurs' ghost stretches towards Alexios.]

UNKNOWN: ...Give us strength, when all of ours is gone.

[Alexios returns to Ardos.]

ALEXIOS: The Minotaur is dead. Thanks for your help, Ardos.

ARDOS: Where's pater?

ALEXIOS: I searched the labyrinth and - I'm sorry, Ardos -

ARDOS: Sorry? Why?

ALEXIOS: Listen -

ARDOS: You said you'd bring him back. You lied. Go back in there and find him!

ALEXIOS: Ardos -

ARDOS: You promised!

ALEXIOS: He's dead, Ardos! We can't raise the dead. But we can move on.

ARDOS: I'm afraid I'll forget him. I don't want to forget him.

ALEXIOS: Take it, to remember him by.

ARDOS: Pater's ring!

ARDOS: Thank you! ...Thank you.

ALEXIOS: We should get out of here. What will you do now?

ARDOS: I don't know, mishios. Without pater... I don't know.

ALEXIOS: Maybe you can figure it out together.

CARETAKER: Ardos...

ALEXIOS: Remember, you're never alone. There will always be people who care.

ALEXIOS: Stay out of trouble, boy.

ARDOS: You know I can't promise you that!

CARETAKER: I'll make sure of it, mishios. Thank you.

CARETAKER: Let's go home, Ardos.

ARDOS: I'd like that. ...I'm sorry I stole the disk.

CARETAKER: I understand -

ARDOS: And your amulet.

CARETAKER: What amulet?

ARDOS: And your ring collection.

CARETAKER: So that's where -

ARDOS: And your memoirs.

CARETAKER: I hadn't finished those!

[“He Waits” mission completed.]

A God Among Men

CIVILIAN: Your insults may be strong, and - and quite hurtful, but my devotion to the god Empedokles is stronger!

ALEXIOS: What seems to be the problem?

CIVILIAN: Empedokles be praised, a misthios! I've done nothing wrong, yet these priestesses mean me harm! Please - my god is powerful! And rich!

PRIESTESS: His "god" is a malákas - a blasphemous blight on Aphrodite's hallowed soil! This is a matter for priestesses alone.

ALEXIOS: You said "rich"?

CIVILIAN: Indeed! Empedokles rewards those who come to his call! These priestesses have imprisoned him in the fort. He's a god - he deserves worship.

ALEXIOS: He doesn't sound like much of a god to me. He doesn't soupa god to me.

CIVILIAN: How could you -

ALEXIOS: You can't keep a god bound, and anyone who tried would die in the attempt.

CIVILIAN: Empedokles is not that kind of god.

PRIESTESS: He is no god at all! Your words are an affront to the will of Aphrodite!

CIVILIAN: If these priestesses speak for Aphrodite, then I speak for all three slobbering heads of Cerberus.

ALEXIOS: Time to go save a god. Apparently.

PRIESTESS: Do as you will, misthiø. But even you cannot be everywhere at once.

[She leaves.]

CIVILIAN: I'll be fine. Is there anything else you need to know?

ALEXIOS: Where can I find this god of yours?

CIVILIAN: They have him locked in a cage in Skandeia Bay with the Livestock. This would be shameful for any regular god, and more so for a vegetarian god!

ALEXIOS: Does he stand out in any way? There may be more than one prisoner.

CIVILIAN: The guards stripped him naked. And when you are confronted with his "gift," Empedokles's godly nature will be hard to deny.

ALEXIOS: His "gift"?

CIVILIAN: Let's just say you'll know it when you see it.

ALEXIOS: I know all I need. Your Empedokles will be freed.

CIVILIAN: Do not worry for my safety, misthios - it is Empedokles who needs your help!

ALEXIOS: He's over there.

CIVILIAN: Empedokles can lead us all to meet the gods! He knows the way! We must worship him!

[Alexios finds this "god" at Aphrodite's Watch. He frees him.]

EMPEDOKLES: Do you see, feeble humans? I, the great Empedokles, cannot be caged! Worship me, and I offer you an audience... with the gods! Put down your blades. I offer those who follow me an audience with my brothers and sisters, the gods! Gods cannot bleed! So - so you best put down your blades. DO NOT STAB MY GODLY GROIN!!!

[They escape.]

ALEXIOS: No need to thank me for your rescue, your drachmae is thanks enough -

EMPEDOKLES: Me, thank you?! Here? With no audience? No, no, no, my heroic friend - the stage is not set! Our performance is missing that most vital ingredient: an audience! Meet me by my personal statue so we may continue. We worship a little differently where I'm from. We don't kill a man for what he believes. We show respect.

PRIESTESS: Respect is for the gods, not those who pretend to be them.

EMPEDOKLES: The world is full of strife, yes, but also love. Embrace it - embrace me, and I will personally introduce you all to my family... the gods.

ALEXIOS: If being locked naked in a cell makes someone a god, the pantheon would be overflowing.

CIVILIAN: Maybe Empedokles is a god, maybe he's not. All I know is that he doesn't beat young men to death.

CIVILIAN: I follow you, proudly.

EMPEDOKLES: Brothers, sisters of Kythera: join me.

PRIESTESS: You think betraying Aphrodite will go unpunished?

EMPEDOKLES: You may not believe in my godliness, misthios - but believe there's some god in you. And that... We can put to use.

ALEXIOS: Even a god won't work for free.

EMPEDOKLES: Of course! What else would I spend my drachmae on? Clothes?!

ALEXIOS: Clothes would do you some good.

EMPEDOKLES: You're just scared - of my true form! But there's another matter we need to discuss.

ALEXIOS: I'll help you. How often do you get to help a god?

EMPEDOKLES: Of my caliber? Never! Come, my well-muscled friend. There is much to discuss. But first!

ALEXIOS: So you're not the god of "getting to the point?"

EMPEDOKLES: The likeness is terrifyingly good, don't you think?

ALEXIOS: Terrifying, yes. What did you need?

EMPEDOKLES: A god never needs help! But yes, please. I've been having trouble with my brothers and sisters.

ALEXIOS: The gods?

EMPEDOKLES: Family problems. When I first arrived on kythera, I was imprisoned for my beliefs. They stole my purple robe, and inside it is a very special disk... the key to my family estate.

ALEXIOS: And you want this disk retrieved.

EMPEDOKLES: Of course! The disk is a key! A key that opens a door to the gods themselves! This disk must be returned to me!

ALEXIOS: You said this robe-thief intercepted you at the dock. Do you know where he is now?

EMPEDOKLES: He and his guards patrol along Kythera's main roads, but he enjoys roughing up recent arrivals.

ALEXIOS: The gods would protect themselves with more than a locked door opened by a disk.

EMPEDOKLES: Oh but you should see the door, misthios! Something so beautiful was not crafted by mortal hands! And my brothers, my sisters, I hear them calling me home from beyond it...

ALEXIOS: What are your godly brothers and sisters really like, Empedokles?

EMPEDOKLES: As any sibling - loving. Filled with strife, They once caught me eating lamb and cast me out. Though between you and me, that lamb? Worth it.

ALEXIOS: The gods wait for no one.

EMPEDOKLES: Patience is not one of our virtues, no. Will you help? This disk sounds important in and the man who stole

ALEXIOS: This disk sounds important. I'll find the man who stole it and return it to you.

[“A God Among Men” character sidequest completed.]

Left to Dye

[Alexios locate the thief.]

ALEXIOS: Found him!

GREEK BRUTE: Purple dye might stink like rotten dog guts, but I'll be fucked if it doesn't make me look like a god!

[Alexios kills him and returns to Empidokles.]

EMPEDOKLES: Ah, look how he strides! The confidence! If I didn't know better, I'd say there were two gods on Kythera!

ALEXIOS: I found your disk.

EMPEDOKLES: Praise me! Clearly, I have worked through you!

ALEXIOS: Clearly. Time to meet the gods, then?

EMPEDOKLES: I'd love to introduce you to my family - of course, if you're ready to join me?

ALEXIOS: This should be interesting

EMPEDOKLES: That, my dear misthios, I can absolutely guarantee. A moment please while I address my audience. Rejoice! For I, your humble god, shall introduce you to my brothers and sisters! Athena awaits you! Ares demands your audience!

ALEXIOS: That's a big promise.

EMPEDOKLES: You doubt me?!

ALEXIOS: I don't doubt the joy you've brought your followers.

EMPEDOKLES: Their loyalty will be rewarded. As will yours. We set sail for the Gulf of Korinth, and all the secrets she veils! Meet us there and see the truth for yourself.

ALEXIOS: And meet your siblings? Wouldn't miss it.

[“Left to Dye” character sidequest completed.]

Stairway to Olympos

[They sail and enter the Cave of the Forgotten Isle.]

EMPEDOKLES: I hear you my brothers, my sisters! Someone sounds very stompy today. I'd know that temper anywhere, Ares. Do not fear brother, I shall comfort you soon! You see! They're here! The - the gods are. Behind. This. Door! Listen. I didn't mean to be away so long. Kythera is - well, if you're looking to unleash a new plague somewhere -

ALEXIOS: This is not what I expected.

EMPEDOKLES: Camouflage, my unimaginative friend! A mere disguise to ward off those seeking the glory inside! Ah! You hear them too!

ALEXIOS: There is something there, and whatever's making that noise must be two or three times the size of a man.

EMPEDOKLES: Quickly, use the disk! Open the door! They're expecting us.

ALEXIOS: Whatever's inside, I'm ready.

EMPEDOKLES: My brothers and sisters!

[Alexios opens the stone door with the disk.]

EMPEDOKLES: This is it! The realm of eternity, the house of the gods! Creators of the universe! Outstretch your mighty hands, and raise me to the heaven -

[A giant cyclops smears him on the stone floor in an instant, and then swishes the guts and blood from the hand. The name of the cyclops is Brontes The Thunderer.]

ALEXIOS: Maláka... I remember when the biggest thing I had to kill was a fucking Minotaur... He does not look happy. Let's see if I can cheer him up. And I thought Empedokles was the handsomest one in the family.

[Alexios kills the Cyclops with his bow.]

ALEXIOS: The bigger they are, the more I have to stab them.

[He pulls out of Cyclops' head his glowing eye. The ghost of Cyclops stretches to him.]

UNKNOWN: ...Grant us the sight to watch over our legacy...

[“Stairway to Olympos” character sidequest completed.]

CHAPTER XVII - Home Is Where My Mother Is

Home Sweet Home

[Alexios gets back to his mother.]

MYRRINE: Alexios! Lamb... you made it. I trust the seas were favorable?

ALEXIOS: Poseidon might be the only one not trying to kill me.

MYRRINE: And, did you go to Thera? Did you find... him?

ALEXIOS: I did.

MYRRINE: What did he tell you?

ALEXIOS: He told me where I'm from and where I must go.

MYRRINE: So now you know the truth.

ALEXIOS: I'm not his son. I'm just a... weapon.

MYRRINE: That is the furthest thing from the truth. You were brought into this world with love. I never imagined we'd stand on Spartan soil together again.

ALEXIOS: I don't know how to feel. I spent some of the happiest days of my life here. And some of the worst too.

MYRRINE: Sparta is our home. But we'll have to rid ourselves of the puppet king if we are to ever find peace.

ALEXIOS: Whatever happened to our old house?

MYRRINE: Nikolaos stayed after I left. But now that he's... gone, I don't know.

ALEXIOS: Why don't we go find out?

MYRRINE: Of course. But first, there's something I want to show you. The closer we get to Sparta, the more memories keep flooding in.

[They get on the horses.]

ALEXIOS: No matter how far I ran, I never could escape them.

MYRRINE: I know. On Naxos I could forget. It was as if I had locked Sparta in a box and tossed it to the bottom of the sea.

ALEXIOS: Did you put your memories of us in that box?

MYRRINE: I wanted to. But it would have taken all the wood in the land to build one big enough.

[They ride to a grove in the forest.]

MYRRINE: This is where I first trained you to use your spear.

ALEXIOS: "Hesitation only hastens the grave."

MYRRINE: (laughs) You remembered.

ALEXIOS: How do you think I got this far?

MYRRINE: We had to pry that spear from your hand while you slept. You said you needed it to fight the monsters in your dreams.

ALEXIOS: I couldn't face Cerberus empty handed. Those children will be ripped to shreds! We should help them!

MYRRINE: Alexios, wait! You shouldn't interfere. This is Spartan training territory. The agoge is what turns boys into men. Interfering would only weaken them, weaken Sparta.

ALEXIOS: They're no good to Sparta if we leave them to die.

MYRRINE: And they're no good to Sparta if they're too weak to kill a wolf. Come. Let's go home.

ALEXIOS: That training is ruthless.

MYRRINE: Not ruthless. Effective. The best of those boys will become kryptera - keepers of the peace, and stalkers in the night.

ALEXIOS: Stalkers in the night?

MYRRINE: There's a reason Sparta never changes. It has rules, and they are strict. Spartans rule Lakonia, but most of its citizens are helots - enslaved peasants, made to work the fields and mines.

ALEXIOS: Slaves? Why don't they revolt?

MYRRINE: Spartan fields keep them fed, and Spartan Warriors keep them safe. First from the Persians, and now from the Athenians. When they forget their place, the krypteia are ordered to keep the peace.

ALEXIOS: I see.

MYRRINE: Most of us make great sacrifices for comfort.

ALEXIOS: Most. Not all. I never thought I'd find myself back in Sparta. It looks so peaceful despite the war raging elsewhere.

[They approach the former house of Alexios.]

ALEXIOS: This was the first and last place I ever felt safe.

MYRRINE: As soon as you were old enough to hold a spear, you trained in this yard from morning till night.

ALEXIOS: Nikolaos was a tough teacher to please.

MYRRINE: He hid his pride from you. But every night he would tell me, "he's going to bring glory to Sparta."

ALEXIOS: As much as I hate him for what he did, I wouldn't be who I am today without his training.

MYRRINE: My heart broke that day. But for the first time in ages, standing here with you. I truly believe it can amend again.

ALEXIOS: Me too.

MYRRINE: Do you remember the first time you held your sister?

ALEXIOS: I was scared I'd break her. I piled every blanket and pillow we had around me.

MYRRINE: Even then you held her so tight I thought you would squeeze the life out of her.

ALEXIOS: She turned out stronger than we thought.

BRASIDAS: The gods must be playing tricks on my eyes.

ALEXIOS: Brasidas! It's amazing you've survived this long, sneaking up on people like that.

BRASIDAS: (laughs) Last time I saw you, Thad to pull you out of a burning warehouse.

MYRRINE: You look well, Brasidas.

BRASIDAS: The rumors were true. You're alive.

MYRRINE: Many we thought to be dead are still breathing.

BRASIDAS: When I heard the two of you came home...

MYRRINE: We're in Sparta, but we're not home yet.

ALEXIOS: We want our house back, Brasidas.

BRASIDAS: Sparta claimed your estate after Nikolaos's disappearance. They're waiting for his adopted son to claim it, but he hasn't returned from the war.

ALEXIOS: Stentor? I knew I should have killed him on the beach. Sparta can't just take our home!

BRASIDAS: They can. They did. And if you want it back you'll have to convince the kings, which won't be easy.

MYRRINE: Why not?

BRASIDAS: As happy as I am to see you, the kings won't be. Especially Archidamos. Your exit from Sparta wasn't exactly... graceful.

MYRRINE: He can't still be mad I broke his nose.

ALEXIOS: You what?

BRASIDAS: In any case, he hasn't forgotten, but I have an idea that might help him forgive.

ALEXIOS: Tell us.

BRASIDAS: Spartan soldiers have been giving weapons to the helots. Whoever takes care of these traitors will earn his thanks.

ALEXIOS: Why on earth would Spartan soldiers be helping helots?

BRASIDAS: Helots greatly outnumber Spartan citizens. But they're leaderless - mostly farm hands, servants, and apprentices. If someone unified them, armed them and trained them, they'd be a real threat to Sparta.

ALEXIOS: But you said it was Spartans who were arming them.

BRASIDAS: All the more reason to deal with this quickly. You'll find out why the helots are being armed, and you'll have the kings' attention.

ALEXIOS: Where will I find these Spartans?

BRASIDAS: They were last spotted in the Gorani Marble Quarry, in the Forest of Eurotas.

ALEXIOS: So find the soldiers. Then what?

BRASIDAS: Spartans are loyal to their commander. Taken the rest should disperse.

ALEXIOS: And the weapons?

BRASIDAS: Destroy them. The helots have caused enough trouble with shovels and sickles, the last thing Sparta needs right now is them carrying swords.

ALEXIOS: So, to get our house back, I must take out the Spartan commander responsible for inciting a useless rebellion. Sounds easy enough.

BRASIDAS: Find me in the throne room when it's done.

ALEXIOS: And where will you be?

MYRRINE: This is where I raised you - it's also where Leonidas raised me. I'm going to visit his tomb, just beyond the estate. You should pay your respects, too, before you get started.

ALEXIOS: I'll try.

[“Home Sweet Home” mission completed.]

Kings of Sparta

Bully the Bullies

[Alexios visits the Tomb of Leonidas.]

ALEXIOS: Grandfather was a true hero. Maybe one day they'll sculpt a statue of me.

MYRRINE: Leonidas. He was Sparta's last true hero. We'd all be under the yoke of the Persian Empire if it wasn't for his courage. The same blood courses through your veins.

ALEXIOS: So, our blood is the blood of kings.

MYRRINE: You are so much more than a mercenary. You carry the blood of heroes, blood of power. Remember what I told you?

ALEXIOS: That people would try to take that power for themselves.

MYRRINE: And then you promised...

ALEXIOS: I wouldn't let them.

MYRRINE: Hold out your spear.

[It touches the pilum and they plunge into the past.]

LEONIDAS: All of this talk of the Pythia. The Pythia! I do not care what she says.

CULTIST: Enough! We have grown tired of your insolent tongue! Sparta will not go to war, the Pythia has spoken!

LEONIDAS: The Pythia says what you tell her to say! She's been your puppet for far too long, the time has come to cut her strings!

CULTIST: Oh Leonidas, the days of heroes are over. You think your blood makes you special? If we opened your veins it would spill to the ground and disappear through the cracks. You are no one.

LEONIDAS: You are more than welcome to find out.

PYTHIA: Your fate is sealed, Son of the Lion. Xerxes will unite us. He will bring order to chaos.

CULTIST: Defy the Pythia, and everyone you love, everything you stand for, will perish.

[He leave the temple in rage.]

LEONIDAS: Gather the men.

DIENEKES: My king?

LEONIDAS: If Xerxes wants Sparta, he'll have to go through me.

[The memory ends.]

MYRRINE: Incredible! Now do you understand?

ALEXIOS: What must I do?

MYRRINE: It's time we embrace our destiny - both of us. If we don't stop the Cult before it's too late, then all Leonidas fought and died for was for nothing. Our bloodline has risen to those who would enslave us.

ALEXIOS: It's time we rise again.

PAUSANIAS: Well, well, well. Mother and son united in Sparta at last. And look at you! A god and goddess among mortals.

MYRRINE: King Pausanias, we're honored. I was sorry to hear about your father.

PAUSANIAS: Yes. Our fathers would have been proud to see us here today.

MYRRINE: You remember Alexios, my king?

PAUSANIAS: Who could forget? The boy who died to save his sister. Such a tragedy. An innocent child, put to death because of an ancient, merciless law.

ALEXIOS: Ancient and merciless? Most Spartans live and die by these laws. But you sound more progressive.

PAUSANIAS: And you sound like you've been rubbing elbows with Athenians.

ALEXIOS: I've been to a symposium or two.

PAUSANIAS: In any case, Sparta was weakened by losing you. Losing you both.

ALEXIOS: We're examples of why these laws must change.

PAUSANIAS: Oh I agree. But King Archidamos? If he could carve Spartan law across the chests of every citizen he would.

ALEXIOS: (raising his voice) Spartan laws destroyed my family. Spartan laws had me claw my way through the streets! We're here today because he defied those laws.

PAUSANIAS: He did, and he lost his head for it. But we're not here to talk about the dead. Are we?

ALEXIOS: We know Sparta reclaimed our house after what happened to my father in Megaris. We want it back.

PAUSANIAS: Mind your tongue, child. You may not live in Sparta anymore, but I'm still your king.

MYRRINE: We graciously request an audience with you and King Archidamos to discuss reinstating our citizenship and reclaiming our home.

PAUSANIAS: Of course! There's nothing I'd want more. Archidamos, however, still hasn't forgiven you for the whole... nose incident.

ALEXIOS: What can we do to sway him?

PAUSANIAS: There's rumor of a helot rebellion, and the krypteia are stoking the flames. Savagely killing helots, stealing livestock, and leaving corpses to rot in the streets.

MYRRINE: The krypteia represents Sparta's ultimate achievement in military training. Their discipline and fearlessness make Sparta's army the most feared in the world.

PAUSANIAS: Once. But the krypteia have become corrupt and bloodthirsty. And training boys to kill unarmed peasants is nothing to be proud of. Do you want your home back or not? Good.

PAUSANIAS: Show the helots we no longer support the senseless slaughtering of their people.

ALEXIOS: And where would I start looking for these krypteia?

PAUSANIAS: One can be found in the fort on Zarax Point. Another was assigned to guard a Spartan leader's house. The third is more elusive. He was last seen in one of the villages west of Helot Hills. He's definitely the loudest of the three.

ALEXIOS: My mater spoke of these krypteia. What can you tell me about them?

PAUSANIAS: They are the hidden ones. Handpicked at an early age. Starved and trained in isolation. They must steal and kill to survive. If they succeed at their training, they become the king's guard.

ALEXIOS: But why have me kill them?

PAUSANIAS: For years the krypteia kept the peace between the helots and Spartans. Troublemakers and threats among the helots were... dealt with. But lately these krypteia have been killing men, women, and children without reason or mercy. Babies ripped from their mothers and fed to the wolves... The krypteia have become a breeding ground for ruthless savages.

ALEXIOS: Is there anything I should know about King Archidamos?

PAUSANIAS: Traditional. Brutal. Boring. Archidamos values the old ways over the welfare of his people. He sided with the elders that day on Mount Taygetos.

ALEXIOS: If killing krypteia will get our home back, I'll do it. (to himself) If Archidamos believes in the old ways, won't long his krypteia create conflict between him and Pausanias? I miss Kephallonia sometimes. Life was simple. Even if Markos was a bumbling idiot.

[He's going to kill all 3 rogue members. Near the last one he finds a group of soldiers and revolting slaves.]

SPARTAN LIGHT SOLDIER: Listen up. I'm only going to say this once. This village stinks like a pig's asshole. Everyone shut up, or you'll eat steel. I'd be more than happy to bash your teeth in if you don't settle down.

SLAVE: Night and day we slave for Sparta. They take everything from us.

SLAVE: They treat us worse than dogs. They kill us without reason. We can't live like this.

[He kills the last rogue member. "Bully the Bullies" sidequest completed.]

One Bad Spartan Spoils the Bunch
[After that Alexios ittracks the traitor.]

ALEXIOS: This is the marble quarry Brasidas mentioned. The weapons have to be here somewhere. There's only one Spartan here that I need to kill. It'll be easier if I don't alert the others. I need to take down their commander. One down, four to go. That's two. Time to find the others. Three weapon racks destroyed. Won't take much longer. Only one more to go.

[He kills the traitor. "One Bad Spartan Spoils the Bunch" sidequest completed. Alexios returns to Brasidas.]

BRASIDAS: There you are. I can take you in to see the kings when you're ready.

ALEXIOS: What do I need to know before I go in?

BRASIDAS: That's right. You've never had an audience with the two kings. That's right. You've never had an audience with the two kings.

ALEXIOS: I've met Pausanias.

BRASIDAS: King Pausanias. Really. Kings Pausanias and Archidamos share rulership. Impress them both, and your home will be returned to you.

ALEXIOS: I didn't expect this to be pleasant. What can you tell me about Pausanias?

BRASIDAS: He's young. Don't mistake his smile for kindness - as with all kings, those who cross him learn to regret it.

ALEXIOS: What should I know about Archidamos?

BRASIDAS: Archidamos is... a traditionalist. Not one to back down from a fight. He's also got a temper. Try to stay on his good side.

ALEXIOS: Waiting won't make this easier.

BRASIDAS: Then let's go. Your mother's already inside.

[They enter the throne room. The two kings are fighting with pilums.]

ALEXIOS: Where are the kings?

BRASIDAS: There.

ARCHIDAMOS: What do you say now?

PAUSANIAS: You made your point, Archidamos. I yield.

ARCHIDAMOS: Another two squadrons to Boeotia, then. As I said.

ALEXIOS: Is that how they solve arguments?

BRASIDAS: Sometimes.

MYRRINE: Archidamos's guard has improved. He should thank me.

ARCHIDAMOS: Brasidas! You've come with news. Let's hear it.

BRASIDAS: My kings, may I present Myrrine, descendent of Leonidas, and her son Alexios.

ARCHIDAMOS: How dare you show your face in Sparta.

BRASIDAS: Alexios helped me secure Korinthia, my king. He helped with the helot rebellion. They want what's best for Sparta. I beg you to listen.

PAUSANIAS: Let's hear what they have to say before we bloody the palace floor.

ARCHIDAMOS: Speak, Myrrine. Why are you here?

MYRRINE: Thave returned to reclaim my Spartan citizenship. To reclaim our home.

ARCHIDAMOS: You exiled yourself. Your son killed an elder and ran.

PAUSANIAS: Not to mention the crooked nose she gave you.

MYRRINE: My family was betrayed, my king. Sparta was betrayed. We've come to expose these traitors.

ARCHIDAMOS: You haven't cared for Sparta for many years.

ALEXIOS: Then blame me. I killed the elder. I started all of this. So if you want someone to prove their loyalty, it should be me.

ARCHIDAMOS: I'm not sure if I should congratulate you on your honesty or punish you for the crime you've just confessed. Myrrine has made her intentions known. What are yours?

ALEXIOS: My intentions are to hunt down those who betrayed my family and Sparta. And kill them.

ARCHIDAMOS: And who exactly do you think betrayed Sparta?

ALEXIOS: That's what I'm here to find out.

PAUSANIAS: First, prove yourself loyal. Bring glory to Sparta, and redeem yourself in the eyes of the gods. Until then, neither you, nor your mother, have a right to your lands.

ALEXIOS: Tell me what I must do, and it will be done.

ARCHIDAMOS: The Spartan army fights the Athenians in Boeotia. Join the commanders there. Come back victorious, or do not return.

ALEXIOS: Consider the battle won.

ARCHIDAMOS: Spoken with the confidence of a child who hasn't seen real war. You will find my commander at Mt. Helicon. Give him this and tell him I sent you.

PAUSANIAS: Not so fast. Two kings. Two tasks.

ALEXIOS: Herakles completed twelve. Two shouldn't be a problem.

ARCHIDAMOS: First Spartan thing you've said all day.

PAUSANIAS: The Olympics will be starting soon in Elis, and our fighting champion requires an escort.

ALEXIOS: You want me to be an escort?

PAUSANIAS: I want you to make sure the Spartans return with a wreath

ARCHIDAMOS: That's how he'll bring glory to Sparta? By winning an event in the Olympics?

PAUSANIAS: Not an event, my king. By making sure Sparta wins the entire Olympics.

ALEXIOS: Perfect.

PAUSANIAS: You have your orders. We'll see you when your tasks are completed.

ARCHIDAMOS: If they're completed.

ALEXIOS: I'll get them done, and you'll give us back our home.

PAUSANIAS: There's some Spartan left in you after all.

ARCHIDAMOS: Brasidas, show them out. Next?

[They leave.]

ALEXIOS: That went well.

BRASIDAS: Considering you still have a head on your shoulders, yes I'd say it went very well.

MYRRINE: The kings were generous to give us a second chance.

ALEXIOS: And all I have to do is win the Olympics.

MYRRINE: And a war.

BRASIDAS: Is there anything you need to know before setting off?

ALEXIOS: What's going on in Boeotia?

BRASIDAS: The Athenian army is pushing Sparta back bit by bit. Winning won't be easy.

MYRRINE: If anyone can turn the tide there, it's you.

ALEXIOS: What do you know about this fighting champion I'm supposed to take to the Olympics?

BRASIDAS: The Pankration fighter. His trainer will know where he is.

ALEXIOS: My, thanks.

MYRRINE: Things are not quite what they seem. But you must keep this champion safe at all costs to succeed.

ALEXIOS: I will. One of the kings is a Cultist... so one of these tasks is surely a trap. But which one?

MYRRINE: Brasidas?

BRASIDAS: Wouldn't say that within earshot of the palace. But I've fought with both of them. I can't believe either is a traitor.

MYRRINE: We need to find proof before we make any accusations. Keep your eyes open.

ALEXIOS: I think I'm ready. And you? What will you do while I'm gone?

MYRRINE: I received a message just before we went in.

ALEXIOS: What kind of message?

MYRRINE: A clue to the whereabouts of another Cultist. I'm going to Arkadia.

ALEXIOS: Alone?

BRASIDAS: The fates are smiling on us. I was ordered there. We can travel together.

MYRRINE: That would be helpful. My thanks.

ALEXIOS: I'll meet you both in Arkadia, then. Safe journeys.

[“Kings of Sparta” mission completed.]

CHAPTER XVIII - The Olympian

Delivering a Champion

[Alexios needs to talk to Testikles's trainer.]

ALKON: You're new. If it's training you want, we don't just take anyone.

ALEXIOS: I'd appreciate training with a master such as yourself, but that's not why I'm here.

ALKON: Oh?

ALEXIOS: King Pausanias asked me to bring the pankration champion to Elis.

ALKON: Forgive me. I didn't know a royal messenger was coming. I'm Alkon, Testikles's trainer.

ALEXIOS: Alexios of Sparta.

ALKON: If I may offer some advice before you get him, Testikles can be... difficult. A gift of oil is known to put a person on his good side.

ALEXIOS: Oil?

ALKON: A muscle rub. He believes it imbues him with the power of Herakles. Look in the Village of Gytheion. His favorite merchant is there.

ALEXIOS: Winning the wreath is important for Sparta. You think he can do it?

ALKON: The other day he knocked out six men and a bull... and he only went to the market to buy fruit. That's why I had to send him to the island.

ALEXIOS: Can you tell me anything about pankration?

ALKON: It's a mix of boxing and wrestling, a fearsome test of skill. Champions come from the farthest corners of the world to compete in Olympia... but not all walk away.

ALEXIOS: I can't wait to see it. I need to get this champion of yours to Elis. I hope he lives up to your promise.

ALKON: Oh, he will. Look for his camp on the southernmost island in Messenia. Good luck!

ALEXIOS: (to himself) I should get that oil. Anything that'll make it easier to get Testikles to the Olympics.

[Alexios going to talk to the oil maker.]

SLAVE: Sorry. Closed

ALEXIOS: I need oil, then I'll be on my way. There's a special one that Testikles uses?

SLAVE: Ah, for pankration fighters. That one has to be made fresh by the master, and he's gone.

ALEXIOS: I'm not leaving without it.

SLAVE: You don't understand. I'm nearly free...

ALEXIOS: You're a slave?

SLAVE: Yes, and in a good position. Doing this would be stealing from him.

ALEXIOS: I know I'm asking for a lot, but I need this oil now. I could come back and talk to your master - maybe explain the situation?

SLAVE: What choice do I have? It's not bad, this life, if I have to stay... I'll give you the recipe, but that's as far as I go. You make it yourself.

ALEXIOS: I can do that.

SLAVE: Light a fire, and gently heat oil of Athena. This will aid the infusion. Once the oil is warm, add a rose petal, and it's done.

ALEXIOS: Thank you.

SLAVE: I hope it's worth my freedom.

[Alexios comes to the cauldron at the fire and starts to cook.]

ALEXIOS: Let's see if I can get this right. It had to be heated. Now what oil did I need... This one, the oil of Athena. I'll take some of this. Almost done. Now to add... For the final touch, a rose petal. Testikles will smell so good. I hope he appreciates this. It smells so good I almost want to keep it for myself.

[He boards his ship to deliver the oil.]

BARNABAS: I never thought I'd actually get to see the Olympics - with a champion no less!

ALEXIOS: Can't see the appeal.

HERODOTOS: Everyone coming together peacefully in friendly competition, rather than on a battlefield.

ALEXIOS: You'd think they'd just kill each other like everywhere else.

BARNABAS: That's the magic of the Olympics.

[Alexios comes ashore and finds the champion.]

ALEXIOS: That must be Testikles.

TESTIKLES: Just another drink... For fortification, improves the stamina. Whadda you want from the great champion Testikles? Can't you see I'm... busy?

ALEXIOS: I'm here to take you to the Olympics.

TESTIKLES: Olympics? Fuck yeah! I'm gonna be the champion... Champion! 'Cause I'm Testikles!

ALEXIOS: Good. Let's set sail.

TESTIKLES: On no, can't possibly go now. Training, see? And I don't know if I'm up to goin' sailin' on your boaty.

ALEXIOS: I have something for you. A certain oil...

TESTIKLES: My oil? Oh, I could kiss you!

ALEXIOS: No. You couldn't.

ALEXIOS: I've got your oil... You'll get it when we arrive.

TESTIKLES: That's no fair.

ALEXIOS: You don't want to use your special oil before the big fight, do you?

TESTIKLES: Good point. Very good point.

ALEXIOS: Let's get you to the Olympics, then.

TESTIKLES: (starts to run) To the Olympics! The people needs me! Well? We going?

ALEXIOS: He'd better fucking win.

[They board the ship.]

BARNABAS: Testikles, it's an honor to sail with you. Your victory at the Pythian games is legendary.

TESTIKLES: Yes... I am!

HERODOTOS: What made you kick him in the head instead of going for a grapple?

TESTIKLES: Felt like it.

HERODOTOS: Ah, improvisation. Keep your opponent off guard - a good strategy.

TESTIKLES: Strategy's for people who don't hit hard enough. Nike! I'm gonna win!

BARNABAS: Are you excited for the Games, Alexios?

ALEXIOS: Thrilled.

TESTIKLES: Sparta! Woo!

HERODOTOS: Stand warrior stand-feet firmly planted, even in sand. Our spirits soar on high, for a Spartan never truly dies.

TESTIKLES: Huh?

HERODOTOS It's a poem. A Spartan poem...

TESTIKLES: Oh. SPARTA! Woo!

[They're docking on Elis.]

ALKIBIADES: Welcome to the Olympic Games! The party has officially begun.

ALEXIOS: Alkibiades? I'm surprised you're... wearing clothes.

ALKIBIADES: The day is young, little goat.

ALEXIOS: Are you here to compete, Alkibiades?

ALKIBIADES: Of course. I enjoy other physical exertions from time to time.

[Testikles loudly burp.]

ALEXLOS: Sure. Who do you think will win the most wreaths this year?

TESTIKLES: I will!

ALKIBIADES: Athens will surely rise to the occasion.

BARNABAS: I say Messenia.

HERODOTOS: Has the sea air addled your mind? Sparta always takes pankration and many others too.

BARNABAS: You might know a lot about the past, but you know little about the future.

ALEXIOS: Who is that?

ALKIBIADES: That is Dorieus, the reigning champion. He's bloodthirsty, competitive, and has endurance to spare. Jealous?

ALEXIOS: I don't think so. We've haven't come all this way to stand on the dock.

ALKIBIADES: Quite right. Should you ever need a personal sparring partner...

TESTIKLES: You? A skinny little Athenian? I'm the champion, or gonna be. (screams) SPARTA!

ALKIBIADES: A pity your brain isn't as big as your muscles.

ALEXIOS: Let's get going.

TESTIKLES: I needs to be oiled 'fore I goes to the Games.

ALKIBIADES: Well, I would have been happy to... assist, if you were in any state to compete.

TESTIKLES: I... Likes to be oiled.

ALEXIOS: Well, that's obvious.

TESTIKLES: Yeah, you knows. Ahh, come here, gives us a hug.

[Alexios dodges and Testikles fall into the sea.]

ALEXIOS: Surely, he can swim.

ALKIBIADES: Oh... Well, looks like you're the champion now, ah?

[Aaannd... drunken hulk drowns.]

BARNABAS: I can't believe he's gone.

HERODOTOS: Unprecedented!

ALEXIOS: And... you want me to compete in the Olympics?

ALEXIOS: Stepping into a dead man's sandals... and Testikles isn't even digested yet.

ALKIBIADES: Come, dear Lexie - show them what you're made of!

ALKIBIADES: And show me while you're at it.

ALEXIOS: Where do I go to fight in the pankration?

ALKIBIADES: The stadium in Olympia, naturally. I do love a good rough and tumble.

ALEXIOS: You know people die in these events. What else goes on apart from the pankration?

ALKIBIADES: There's javelin, which - of course - you know how that works. The athlete thrusts the long, smooth spear forward...

ALEXIOS: Yes, I know.

ALKIBIADES: And then there's the foot races and the horse races. Sweat everywhere. A delight for the eyes and the nose.

ALEXIOS: I need that wreath for Sparta. If it means I have to compete, so be it.

HERODOTOS: The event doesn't start just yet. We could look around first - Olympia at truce is quite extraordinary.

[“Delivering a Champion” mission completed.]

The Contender

[Alexios is going to find and talk to the Pankration organizer.]

PAIOS: Pankration here last chance to claim your spot!

ALEXIOS: I'm here for the pankration.

PAIOS: You must be joking. The only fighter we're missing is Testikles.

ALEXIOS: He's a little under the... water - I mean weather. I'm the one taking his place.

PAIOS: OK, OK. Save it for the fight. This is unprecedented, but the crowd will riot if the pankration is cancelled. Very well. The competition begins shortly.

ALEXIOS: Time to go.

[The Games begins.]

LEANDER: Welcome all, it is my pleasure to introduce to you Kallias. A former champion there in this stadium, and now an esteemed judge here in Olympia,

KALLIAS: My friends, it is an honor for me to introduce this event, one so close to my heart. The pankration! I will not delay you with words, for we all want to see action. For Zeus, let the competition commence!

ORION: (to Alexios) I'll squish you like a bug. Huh, you'll be easy!

LEANDER: This is a fight you'll talk about for a long time!

ALEXIOS: (to Orion) Where's your tough talk gone now?

ORION: Please, please by the gods. No more!

[Alexios defeats him.]

ALEXIOS: That was your best?

KALLIAS: That was but the beginning.

ALEXIOS: What?

LEANDER: Now that our contestant is warmed up, let's see what he can do against ERASTOS!

KALLIAS: Good luck...

[Another fight begins.]

ERASTOS: Don't blink or you'll be seeing stars!

[Alexios wins.]

LEANDER: The crowd loves you... but you're not done yet.

ALEXIOS: Not done?!

LEANDER: A fine offering to the gods, wouldn't you say? Soon, we will return for the final contest - the mighty Alexios against our reigning champion, Dorieus!

[A short break begins.]

BARNABAS: Astounding! To think I could be a companion to an Olympic champion.

ALKIBIADES: You're even better at sparring than I am - ...Though if Sokrates were a more willing partner...

[He sits on the ground.]

BARNABAS: Alkibiades, are you all right?

ALKIBIADES: I was... with my friends Demophanes and Kallias. Respected Olympic judges, no less...

ALEXIOS: Too much cheap wine?

BARNABAS: You look like you drank from Medea's cup...

ALEXIOS: Medea's cup? You think he's been poisoned? You were... celebrating?

ALKIBIADES: It's the Olympics. What's not to celebrate? We were at the Leonidaion.

ALEXIOS: If you've been poisoned, I need to find these judges.

ALKIBIADES: Poisoned? Do you think that they could be too or... No. Never! They're good men, you can't think of one of them... They host a celebration every Olympics to celebrate the sacred truce. (coughs)

ALEXIOS: Stay with him. I'll find out what happened.

[“The Contender” mission completed.]

The Long Game

[Alexios investigates the banquet and finds a lot of bodies there.]

ALEXIOS: The truce is fragile enough... This was definitely poison, and Alkibiades wasn't the only victim. This proves it, poison! It must have been added to the food and wine. This food smells strange, but it's not rotten. Hmm, a supply list for the celebration... and the merchant's name. Time to pay this Priam a visit.

[He goes to the merchant.]

ALEXIOS: Now we're going to have a conversation.

PRIAM: Please, please, I was just doing what I was told.

ALEXIOS: Now you'll do what I tell you.

PRIAM: Please, I thought we were just trying to make them slow you know, so they lose. Win a few drachmae...

ALEXIOS: My friend Alkibiades may already be dead, and you're talking about drachmae.

PRIAM: The golden boy? I was there. He didn't have much - if you can get him the antidote, he'll survive.

ALEXIOS: Tell me where it is.

PRIAM: They're sure to have it at Fort Koroibos. A man there paid me to do this. Look there.

ALEXIOS: Whoever did this will pay. Go, and don't let me see your face again.

PRIAM: Yes, thank you...

[Alexios infiltrates the camp and finds the antidote.]

ALEXIOS: This must be the antidote.

[After that he returns to his gay friend.]

ALEXIOS: Here, I have the antidote.

ALKIBIADES: Ugh, more wine please, to wash away the taste.

BARNABAS: A treatment worthy of Hippokrates!

ALKIBIADES: I can already feel my stamina returning...

BARNABAS: Didn't you have one last fight in the pankration?

ALEXIOS: Let's go.

[“The Long Game” mission completed.]

Pankration

PAIOS: Pankration here! Last chance to claim your spot! Your next opponent is Dorieus - claims to be descended from Herakles himself!

ALEXIOS: I'm ready.

PAIOS: You ever faced an Olympic champion before?

ALEXIOS: No, but I've gotten this far.

PAIOS: Well, you don't look the part - you're not even oiled, for Zeus's sake!

ALEXIOS: Less talking. More fighting. Come to wish me luck?

KALLIAS: Of course, and if you win you should come dine with me sometimes.

ALEXIOS: Maybe I'll hunt you down after the event... To take you up on your offer.

KALLIAS: Of course... after the event.

[The Games continue.]

ALEXIOS: Let's get this over with.

LEANDER: For Hera! We've seen our esteemed newcomer rise quickly to become a contender... But let's see how he does against our reigning champion... Dorieus!

DORIEUS: I will suck the marrow from your bones!

LEANDER: It's not over yet!

ALEXIOS: You'll have to try harder if you want to live!

[He winds.]

LEANDER: Victory! Nike! The gods have looked kindly on these, our champions... but there can be only one winner! SPARTA!!! Yours is eternal glory!

[He puts a laurel wreath on Alexios' head.]

CHAPTER XIX - The Cult and the Archon
To Kill or Not to Kill
[Alexios sails to his mother.]

ALEXIOS: There. Will be good to see mater and Brasidas again.

[He rides into a prearranged place, but instead of his mother he finds a mercenary there.]

ALEXIOS: Who are you?

MERCENARY: Me? I'm no one. But you? You're even godlier than Brasidas said you'd be. It should be your statue between these trees.

ALEXIOS: Brasidas? What does he have to do with this?

MERCENARY: Warrior, he said! Look for the mighty warrior with the broken spear. I added the godly bit.

ALEXIOS: I'm just a traveler. And there's more than one broken Spear in this world.

MERCENARY: And the eagle he mentioned?

ALEXIOS: What eagle? (Ikaros sits on his head) Where is Brasidas? I need to speak with him.

MERCENARY: Of course you do! And the woman, you'd like to speak with her too, yes?

ALEXIOS: Wait...

MERCENARY: She looks like you.

ALEXIOS: Tell me where they went.

MERCENARY: I should. It's what Brasidas paid me for, after all.

ALEXIOS: Then why don't you?

MERCENARY: He didn't pay enough.

[Alexios punishes the insolent mercenary.]

MERCENARY: Stop! Please stop! "Just a traveler," he says.

ALEXIOS: Tell me where they are, or I'll cut that shit-eating grin off your shit-eating face!

MERCENARY: He said you had a nasty temper. He wasn't wrong.

ALEXIOS: Tell me where my mater is and you may walk out of here alive.

MERCENARY: You show mercy. Arkadia will give you none in return.

ALEXIOS: Speak!

MERCENARY: You'll find them on a hill - a cliff-overlooking Tegea.

ALEXIOS: You said Brasidas didn't pay enough. Who did?

MERCENARY: The Archon. He's paying more for your head than Brasidas could afford in two lifetimes.

ALEXIOS: Tell me who the Archon is. I want a name.

MERCENARY: (laughs) Lagos. His name is Lagos. And he's the most powerful man in Arkadia - he who controls the grain, controls the world.

ALEXIOS: Consider yourself lucky. I've seen enough blood.

MERCENARY: Oh, but you'll be seeing a lot more. Welcome to Arkadia, Alexios.

[Alexios finds his mother and Brasidas on the cliff.]

MYRRINE: I want the Archon dead. (to Alexios) Thank the gods you found us.

ALEXIOS: I got your message. Your messenger is lucky to be alive. He betrayed you, Brasidas.

BRASIDAS: These Cultists Myrrine told me about - they knew you were coming and must have forced Lagos to place the bounty on your heads. Trusting anyone in Arkadia will be difficult now.

MYRRINE: Which is why I say we put that Archon's head on a pike. Our message to the puppet King in Sparta will be clear.

ALEXIOS: Let's find out more about what's going on in Arkadia. We should be able to solve this Lagos problem without too many beheadings.

BRASIDAS: Excellent. We need to handle this how you handled the Monger in Korinthia.

ALEXIOS: I'll keep that in mind.

BRASIDAS: Whatever happens, we need Lagos alive. Arkadia is Sparta's breadbasket, and Lagos keeps it full.

MYRRINE: That man is working for the Cult of Kosmos, not Sparta.

BRASIDAS: Then we need to free him from their grasp.

ALEXIOS: What makes you think he wants to leave?

BRASIDAS: Bounties and threats aren't Lagos's style. He's a farmer, not a killer.

ALEXIOS: What do you have in mind, Brasidas?

BRASIDAS: Unlike your mother, I think we can handle this quietly. I'm going to begin by investigating a safe house he keeps. There might be some evidence there.

ALEXIOS: What do you think we should do?

MYRRINE: I still say we send the Archon to Hades. Upsetting Sparta's breadbasket will send the false king searching for crumbs. The Archon is no longer the man you knew. The Cult has him now.

ALEXIOS: Looks like I came just in time.

BRASIDAS: You certainly did. But it's time to make a decision.

ALEXIOS: My mother's plan is best.

MYRRINE: Ah, my lamb. United in blood and purpose.

BRASIDAS: You're letting your impulses overcome your reason. Thousands of Spartans depend on Lagos for food and protection. His death would bring chaos. There's a farmhouse northeast of Tegea where he has a safe house. Meet me there before you do anything you'll regret.

ALEXIOS: And what if Brasidas's plan doesn't work?

MYRRINE: The Archon hides like a coward in Fort Samikon. You can't miss that monstrosity. You could go after him now, but be careful - he's well-defended.

ALEXIOS: Then we must weaken his defenses.

MYRRINE: He's got barracks full of guards and silos full of grain... It would be a shame if any came to harm.

ALEXIOS: I'll go see what Lagos is up to.

MYRRINE: Good luck, my lamb.

Judge, Jury, Executioner

Breaking Bread

[Alexios is going to destroy Lagos's garnissons.]

ALEXIOS: The camp should be nearby, I'll head there first. Then on to the barracks. Two strongholds down. Now I just need to find these barracks mater spoke of. She said they were in Tegea. Ah. These must be the barracks mater spoke of. Time to find Lagos. Now when he screams for reinforcements, no one will come. Mater said Lagos is hiding in Fort Samikon. Time to go pay him a little visit. Knock knock, Lagos. Here I come. These must be the silos. There's enough grain in here to feed hundreds of hungry soldiers. That hatch on top looks like it'll burn, and the wheat will catch after. Good, now two more left to burn. Only one left. That settles it. Without grain, Lagos won't be able to feed his troops - or pay for more.

White Lies and Blackmail

BRASIDAS: There has to be some proof around here.

[Alexios enters.]

BRASIDAS: You came. Lagos still lives, then.

ALEXIOS: What exactly is this place?

BRASIDAS: Lagos is a very public figure in Arkadia. This is where he handles his more private affairs.

ALEXIOS: Remind me - why are you covering for the man who wants me and my mother dead?

BRASIDAS: I've known Lagos a long time. He got supplies through to my lines when my soldiers were starving. For him to act so dishonorably is completely out of character.

ALEXIOS: What are you looking for?

BRASIDAS: If we can find out who's manipulating Lagos, there'll be no need for blood.

ALEXIOS: I thought Spartans drank blood for breakfast.

BRASIDAS: (laughs) I've seen enough for two lifetimes. Still, I have hope.

ALEXIOS: You're getting soft, Brasidas.

BRASIDAS: When Leonidas died at the Hot Gates, we all came together against a common enemy. Athenians, Spartans, fighting side by side - What is it?

ALEXIOS: Someone's here.

[He carefully approaches the door and notices an armed cultist.]

CULT GUARDIAN: Were you followed?

CIVILIAN: No.

CULT GUARDIAN: Good. You have the letter from Lagos?

CIVILIAN: I do.

CULT GUARDIAN: Our job is to deliver this to the Scorched Tree near a golden field. Someone will meet us there and take it to the hideout.

BRASIDAS: A letter from Lagos? It could have the answers we need.

ALEXIOS: I'll follow them. You keep searching the house.

[Alexios follows the shrub, kills some soldiers, and frees a prisoner slave.]

SLAVE: I was brought here with Lagos's family. I thought we'd be killed!

ALEXIOS: Where are they?

SLAVE: Below ground, with many guards.

ALEXIOS: I need you to go tell my friend Brasidas I've found them. He should be in an old farmhouse northeast of Tegea.

SLAVE: I'll do it. Thank the gods you came to help us!

CULT GUARDIAN: It's the Eagle Bearer! Kill him!

ALEXIOS: Hmm... Abandoned farmhouse. Cultist hideout must be nearby.

[“White Lies and Blackmail” sidequest completed.]

Gluten Free

[Having searched the cave under the farm, Alexios names and releases from the cage a girl and a child.]

PHILONOE: Who are you?

ALEXIOS: Alexios. Brasidas sent me.

NILOXENOS: Are we going home?

PHILONOE: I have no idea. We've been trapped in this filthy cave for days with no word from Lagos whatsoever.

ALEXIOS: You're free, but it's not safe to return to Lagos, yet.

NILOXENOS: Are those scary men still with pater?

ALEXIOS: Have you heard of the Cult of Kosmos?

PHILONOE: Only in whispers... Ever since my husband found new "business partners," they've stationed guards around our home. For our safety, he said. Then one day, those guards dragged us here.

ALEXIOS: They're making your pater do things he doesn't want to do. I'll find Lagos and release him from these scary men.

PHILONOE: And what of us? I can't go back to that wretch, and now that these guards are dead, we're in danger

ALEXIOS: For now, go to my friend, Brasidas. He'll meet you at the safe house northeast of Tegea.

PHILONOE: Where Lagos has his secret meetings...

NILOXENOS: Are you angry, mater?

PHILONOE: I am grateful you saved us. We'll go find Brasidas. Chaire.

[“Gluten Free” sidequest completed. Having collected enough information Alexios goes to deal with Lagos in Arkadia!]

ALEXIOS: I've found the Archon.

LAGOS: I knew you'd come find me sooner or later.

ALEXIOS: What tipped you off?

LAGOS: You killed my soldiers. But - You helped my family when I couldn't. Even if we're apart, know they're safe thanks to you.

ALEXIOS: It's the least I could do.

LAGOS: The world is so chaotic now.

ALEXIOS: The Cult made it that way.

LAGOS: We're living in divided times. Sparta against Athens. Old against new.

ALEXIOS: (;aighs) And you think the cultists aren't stoking the flames on both sides?

LAGOS: I've seen what they can do. What they're willing to do. I want what's best for Arkadia... I'll consider what you have to say.

ALEXIOS: It's not too late. Leave the Cult of Kosmos and join Brasidas.

LAGOS: You consider me your all today... How can I know you and Brasidas won't change your minds?

ALEXIOS: We can work together against our common enemy. You deserve better than to live under the threat of the Cult.

LAGOS: You sound like Brasidas when he was your age. You give me hope. The Cult gave me this. They said it was a sign of my devotion. Maybe you can use it against them.

ALEXIOS: I'm sure I can find a way.

LAGOS: I'll lift the bounty on you and Myrrine. And may you find success in your fight against this evil. GA

ALEXIOS: Thank you, Archon. We appreciate it.

LAGOS: You saved my family from the Cult by yourself... You're courageous.

ALEXIOS: Why?

LAGOS: You've made an enemy of a king. Pausanias threatened my family with torture and death if I betrayed him.

ALEXIOS: Pausanias?! Do you have proof?

LAGOS: Here - evidence of his treachery.

ALEXIOS: Thank you. I'll see about this king of lies.

[He gets back to his mother and Brasidas.]

ALEXIOS: The bounty is lifted - Lagos is alive.

BRASIDAS: See? I knew we could solve this without violence.

MYRRINE: That Cultist deserved to die.

ALEXIOS: Lagos is no longer with the Cult. I convinced him he's safer without them.

MYRRINE: The Cult of Kosmos would eat their own young if it served their needs!

ALEXIOS: Not Lagos. He was being blackmailed by King Pausanias. He had Lagos's family at knifepoint, and I have proof.

BRASIDAS: King Pausanias! We must return to Sparta to confront him.

ALEXIOS: We may have won the wreath, but the kings also wanted us to conquer the Boeotians.

MYRRINE: True, you are needed there before we return.

BRASIDAS: Very well. I'll take my leave of you, Alexios. I won't soon forget your good work here. It was good to see you again, Myrrine. Though we had our disagreements, I do hope you regain your house soon.

ALEXIOS: Arkadia is safe once more.

MYRRINE: And the bounty is lifted. We are free to travel without fear.

ALEXIOS: Then let's continue our journey.

[“Judge, Jury, Executioner” mission completed. Alexios finds the time to upgrade Leonidas’ Pilum again.]

ALETHEIA: Forge activated. Synchronizing retransmission chronicity... Contact engaged.

CHAPTER XX - Paint It Red

The Conqueror

[Alexios sails to meet Spartan Polemarch.]

ALEXIOS: I'm looking for...

STENTOR: You!

ALEXIOS: Stentor?

[Stentor hits Alexios in the face.]

ALEXIOS: Malákas! I'm here to help you idiot!

STENTOR: Not after Megaris. Not after what you did.

ALEXIOS: King Archidamos of Sparta sent me to aid you in securing the region.

STENTOR: This is how much he trust me - he put his faith in a fucking mercenary. This is how much he trusts me - he put his faith in a fucking mercenary. The gods are punishing me with your presence.

ALEXIOS: If I was your punishment, you'd already be dead.

STENTOR: Why have the kings sent you?

ALEXIOS: Stentor, relax, I'm here as an ally to Sparta and to you. We've worked together once - we can do it again.

STENTOR: Your help in Megaris might have secured the region for Sparta, but I lost more than I gained. I shouldn't have trusted you then - and why now?

ALEXIOS: I'm here on business. What's going on?

STENTOR: Everything is fine. The Boeotian rebels are a problem, but nothing we can't handle.

ALEXIOS: What is the Spartan army doing in Boeotia?

STENTOR: We sieged Athens, but Kleon took power and pushed us out. Taking Boeotia will weaken his position. The Wolf was gone - I was needed. I couldn't abandon my men.

ALEXIOS: You should thank the gods that I've come to help you.

STENTOR: The only reason you're still alive is that writ you carry. You're not an ally, just a weapon.

ALEXIOS: Then put me to work.

STENTOR: You're not up to the challenge.

ALEXIOS: Try me.

STENTOR: There are four Boeotian champions fighting for the Athenians: Aristaios, Deianeira, Nesaia, and Drakon. Think you can kill them? I'd like to see you try.

ALEXIOS: I told you we could work this out. Alright then, I'll find these champions and put an end to them.

STENTOR: I doubt it will be as easy as you think, but I'm relieved to see you can follow orders.

ALEXIOS: Where will I find these mighty Boeotians?

STENTOR: I only know of two-there are reports of Aristaios occupying the Military Fort of Gla. Nesaia was last seen in the forest east of Thebes

ALEXIOS: I thought the Boeotians hated everyone. Why are they working with Athens?

STENTOR: They see both Sparta and Athens as enemies - but Athens got here first, and they agreed to a temporary alliance.

ALEXIOS: What's so great about these champions? They're just four people against the Spartan military.

STENTOR: Sparta has its army, and Boeotia has its legends. They are a symbol of what this place used to be.

ALEXIOS: The sooner I get this done, the sooner we take Boeotia for Sparta.

The Last Hunt of Nesaia

ALEXIOS: This hut must be Nesaia's. I guess she prefers the quiet of the forest over living in the city. This fire's fresh and the food still simmering. Nesenile can be far away. These tracks don't look human. They lead away from the camp to the north. There stalks the mighty hunter.

[He kills the hunter with his dagger when she drinks from the stream.]

The End of Drakon

[Alexios just stabs the giant when he shows his skills to the people.]

The Fall of Deianeira

[Alexios kills her and her men on a bridge.]

Alexios: Wow! I enjoyed that!

The Last Fight of Aristaïos

ALEXIOS: Looks like I missed a fight.

[Aristaios is already killed... by Nikolaos!]

ALEXIOS: Pater...

NIKOLAOS: Alexios! What are you doing here?

ALEXIOS: I came to kill him.

NIKOLAOS: He wouldn't have been a challenge for you. But I'm glad our paths have crossed again.

ALEXIOS: never thought I see you again. What have you been doing?

NIKOLAOS: You made me realize in Megaris that I lost my honor long ago. There's no way to go back and make it up to you, but I can fulfill my promise to Stentor now.

ALEXIOS: This is the last place I expected to find you.

NIKOLAOS: I left Stentor with the greatest responsibility a man could carry. I couldn't leave him to face it alone.

ALEXIOS: How thoughtful.

NIKOLAOS: Killing these champions will weaken the Athenian hold on the region and destroy the rebels' morale.

ALEXIOS: Leaving Stentor to pick up the pieces in Megaris was a mistake.

NIKOLAOS: I couldn't stay, not after what happened. I wasn't fit for command.

ALEXIOS: Neither is Stentor, but he isn't running from it.

NIKOLAOS: You've changed so much

ALEXIOS: This is who I've always been. You just weren't there to see

NIKOLAOS: I'll never be able to change that, but I can do something now for someone who needs me. There are things Stentor must hear to succeed.

ALEXIOS: I wish you'd helped me back in Sparta. But Stentor does need help now, even if he doesn't want to admit it. Stentor is as much your family as I am. You can still be

there for him.

NIKOLAOS: I will.

ALEXIOS: He may hate me, but I'm glad to have met him... in a way.

NIKOLAOS: Goodbye, Alexios of Sparta.

[Alexios returns to Stentor.]

STENTOR: You're back.

ALEXIOS: The champions have been dealt with.

STENTOR: You should be dead.

ALEXIOS: You seem disappointed.

STENTOR: The gods are punishing me.

ALEXIOS: I'm a mercenary - killing is what I do. There's nothing godly about it.

STENTOR: Modest, but mortal... And Hades will have you, too.

ALEXIOS: We'll cross that river when we get to it.

STENTOR: I don't have time for this. Sparta must take this region now, while we have the chance.

ALEXIOS: Let's get this over with.

STENTOR: I couldn't agree more. The sooner I'm rid of you, the better.

[Begins the Battle of Athenians. Sparta have a decisive victory.]

STENTOR: Victory is ours!

ALEXIOS: The victory is yours. You led us well today.

STENTOR: My father taught me all I know about commanding an army. Too bad you took him from me - or I might have learned more.

ALEXIOS: Stop...

STENTOR: Don't you dare tell me what to do. I am in command here.

ALEXIOS: You needed my help.

STENTOR: By the gods, how are you so arrogant? No wonder my father discarded you.

ALEXIOS: You know nothing about my family.

STENTOR: I know he threw you off a cliff and chose me instead.

ALEXIOS: Now who's being arrogant. You were an afterthought - you were second place.

STENTOR: We'll see about that.

ALEXIOS: What do you mean?

STENTOR: Now that we've driven the Athenians from the field, it's time I dealt with my true enemy.

ALEXIOS: Stentor you...

STENTOR: Your job is done, mercenary. Now I will kill you for what you stole from me in Megaris.

ALEXIOS: Why are you doing this?

STENTOR: Because - Because you marched into Megaris. Ruined the fucking war. And murdered - my - father.

ALEXIOS: I did what I had to.

STENTOR: And so will I.

ALEXIOS: What could you possibly gain from killing me?

STENTOR: Justice, vengeance, peace. One would be enough, but all three is better.

ALEXIOS: You think vengeance will dull your pain? Trust me, it won't.

STENTOR: Here's the thing. I don't trust you.

ALEXIOS: You don't have to do this, Stentor.

STENTOR: Oh, but I do. There is nothing you can say to convince me otherwise.

ALEXIOS: This isn't what Nikolaos would've wanted!!

STENTOR: How would you fucking know? Traitor.

ALEXIOS: I am not a traitor.

STENTOR: You betrayed Sparta. You betrayed your family. You killed my father and stole my chance at a normal life. You deserve nothing but the cold of my blade buried in your heart.

[The battle begins. Alexios and Stantor are walking in circles, assessing the strength of each other. Suddenly, Nikolaos appears.]

NIKOLAOS: Killing each other won't heal the wounds of the past.

STENTOR: Pater!

NIKOLAOS: Hello, Stantor.

STENTOR: I thought you were dead.

NIKOLAOS: Not just yet.

STENTOR: He should pay for what he's done!

ALEXIOS: I've already paid more than you could ever know.

STENTOR: I don't give a shit what you've been through.

NIKOLAOS: Stantor, it's done.

STENTOR: I don't understand.

NIKOLAOS: You both have a greater role to play. Become the leader trained you to be lead the armies of Sparta and be victorious.

STENTOR: How?

NIKOLAOS: You are an honorable man, a loyal son, and a great warrior. You will be a better commander than ever was. You can do this.

STENTOR: I will, father. I will make you proud.

NIKOLAOS: You already have. (Stentor leaves) That could have ended badly. Alexios, a shadow grows across Sparta. Be cautious when you return.

ALEXIOS: Mater and I will deal with it.

NIKOLAOS: You found her?

ALEXIOS: Ruling Naxos.

NIKOLAOS: Sounds like her. May the gods watch over you both.

CHAPTER XXI - The Cultist King

A Bloody Feast

[Alexios sails back to his mother. It is time to deal with the traitor king.]

ALEXIOS: I'm here to face the kings.

MYRRINE: Are you ready to take back our family's land?

ALEXIOS: Of course. But my purpose here is to bring down the Cultist king.

MYRRINE: You make your mother proud, Alexios. But are you sure you have enough proof to accuse him?

ALEXIOS: I'm sure.

MYRRINE: Till gather the ephors and meet you in the throne room.

ALEXIOS: Who are the ephors?

MYRRINE: You don't remember? Then again, you were only a child. The five ephors are elected from the citizens of Sparta. They have power over even the kings. You need to convince them if you wish to save Sparta from the Cult's control.

ALEXIOS: See you in the throne room.

[They enter the throne room.]

ARCHIDAMOS: What are we waiting for?

MYRRINE: Sorry to keep you waiting.

ARCHIDAMOS: You summoned the ephors?

PAUSANIAS: You must have achieved some success to earn this adoring crowd.

ALEXIOS: I brought home a wreath for Sparta, though I had to enter the Games and win it myself.

PAUSANIAS: Very good. But what of our Pankration champion, Testikles?

ALEXIOS: There was an accident at sea before he could compete.

ARCHIDAMOS: Games are hardly important. What about Boeotia?

ALEXIOS: Stentor and I defeated the Athenian forces. You have nothing to worry about.

ARCHIDAMOS: If you have nothing but good news to share, why did you call for the ephors?

EPHOR: We were told serious charges would be brought.

PAUSANIAS: Serious charges? Against whom?

ALEXIOS: You act as if you don't know. Against you, Pausanias. I have travelled Spartan lands and beyond and found proof of Pausanias's betrayal. He's a member of the Cult of Kosmos.

ALEXIOS: These traitors are willing to kill hundreds to rule thousands. Here's all the proof you need.

ARCHIDAMOS: Proof? What proof?

EPHOR: So the rumors are true... We never would have thought a king could be so dishonorable. Honor belongs to history.

ALEXIOS: You deserve death for your crimes.

PAUSANIAS: How dare you threaten a king?

EPHOR: Pausanias, you are king no more. As of this day, you are exiled from Sparta.

PAUSANIAS: Before Athena and Ares, I swear you'll regret this! Justice will be done!

ALEXIOS: You'll have your justice, puppet king.

MYRRINE: Forgive us, my king. My son couldn't let him stay in power any longer.

ARCHIDAMOS: Of course not. You've more than earned your citizenship. Sparta owes you thanks and releases your home unto you.

ALEXIOS: Your home is returned!

MYRRINE: Our home, lamb. Let's leave the court to its business. Meet me outside. As for Pausanias, it would be wise to deal with him as soon as possible.

ALEXIOS: I will. He is a Cultist after all.

MYRRINE: When you've dealt with him, meet me at Leonidas's tomb. I must show you something important.

ALEXIOS: I'll find you there, mater. (to himself) King Pausanias is part of the Cult of Kosmos. I'll have to kill him myself.

[He finds the fallen king on the road with just a few guards.]

ALEXIOS: There's Pausanias. Maláka.

[Alexios kills them all and returns to his mother. "A Bloody Feast" mission completed.]

The Battle of Pylos

MYRRINE: It's gone...

ALEXIOS: What's gone?

MYRRINE: There was a skull here, a small rabbit skull. From your first hunt.

ALEXIOS: Why would someone take that?

MYRRINE: There is only one person who would have taken it. Nikolaos...

ALEXIOS: Maybe seeing each other again made him think of this place. It did the same to me.

MYRRINE: Seems I wasn't the only one yearning for home.

BRASIDAS: I hope I'm not intruding.

ALEXIOS: Brasidas! Come in!

BRASIDAS: It's good to see the two of you back home.

MYRRINE: It feels good to be here.

ALEXIOS: You're here instead of in training, what's wrong?

BRASIDAS: I'm heading to Pylos as soon as I can. I think you may want to come as well.

ALEXIOS: I'd be happy to return the favor. What's waiting for us in Pylos?

BRASIDAS: Glory. The Athenians are pushing the Spartans back even as we speak. It would be a devastating loss for Sparta, and I can't allow that to happen.

ALEXIOS: It sounds like you've lost confidence in Sparta's warriors.

BRASIDAS: They're as strong as they've ever been. But now they're facing a power they can't even imagine.

MYRRINE: Do you mean Deimos?

BRASIDAS: Yes, that's what the rumors say. A force of nature in the body of a mortal, who can cut down any soldier in her path.

ALEXIOS: If Deimos is in Pylos, we have to stop her.

BRASIDAS: I'll wait for you at the ship, but be quick. Each moment we waste is another Spartan dead.

[He leaves.]

MYRRINE: Cassandra is in Pylos... You have to bring her back, Alexios.

ALEXIOS: Bring her back?

MYRRINE: We have our home again. We can be a family. It isn't too late.

ALEXIOS: I'll bring her back. No matter what.

MYRRINE: This is serious, Alexios. We may not get another chance.

ALEXIOS: I understand. She must have seen the cultists for what they truly are by now.

MYRRINE: It doesn't matter what you have to do. Bring back your sister. You must.

ALEXIOS: Nothing will stop me. I shouldn't keep Brasidas waiting.

MYRRINE: Be safe, Alexios.

[Alexios jumps to the Spartan camp on the shore.]

ALEXIOS: Where's Brasidas?

LABOTAS: What do you want with him?

ALEXIOS: We fought together.

LABOTAS: A friend?

ALEXIOS: Yes... and a friend of Sparta. Now take me to him.

LABOTAS: Stop. I have orders - stand guard and wait for reinforcements. They were due two nights ago.

ALEXIOS: You can stop waiting. I've arrived.

LABOTAS: You?! The Athenians are dogs at our throats. You won't talk so tough once you see them.

ALEXIOS: I join you, and all they'll see is the ferryman.

LABOTAS: Ha! Well met, warrior. You better fight as good as you talk. Come. We go to Brasidas.

[They go to the battlefield. Everything around is in smoke from fires. A fierce massacre is going on in the field. Alexios notices his sister, who kills the soldiers of Sparta with one blow. Brasidas throws himself at her.]

ALEXIOS: Brasidas!

BRASIDAS: Yaaaarh! Aaaaaargh!

[She puts him on the ground as well as the others. I'm afraid to even imagine the level of her training.]

ALEXIOS: Deimos!... This fight is between you and me.

[They begin to fight.]

DEIMOS: And it is one you can not win.

ALEXIOS: If Brasidas dies, his blood is on your hands.

DEIMOS: His, yours, and every one of your friends.

ALEXIOS: Are you mad?! We can still stop -

DEIMOS: Enough! We will not stop.

ALEXIOS: I don't want to kill you, Cassandra. But I will stop you.

DEIMOS: My name is Deimos!

[They keep fighting.]

ALEXIOS: If we continue, one of us will die.

DEIMOS: Isn't that the point?

ALEXIOS: I found mater.

DEIMOS: Finally reunited, only to lose each other again.

[A burning tree falls on her. Alexios runs to the rescue, but a tree falls on him too! He wakes up in a prison cell. His sister stands on the other side of the barred door.]

DEIMOS: I don't know what you were thinking back there.

ALEXIOS: What, trying to save you?

DEIMOS: That's not what that was. I told you to stay out of my way - yet here you are.

ALEXIOS: So, what? I'm a prisoner until I'm killed?

DEIMOS: That's the plan. Or I could come in there and end you anytime I please. But before that. Tell me what you know.

ALEXIOS: I thought your Cultists told you everything. Sounds like you're on their side, but they're not on yours.

DEIMOS: You think I'm just a puppet? Then prove it to me. Tell me why I'm on the wrong side. Convince me - I dare you.

ALEXIOS: What do you want to know?

DEIMOS: Everything you claim to be true. But after this, I kill you. Why was I abandoned that night on the mountain?

ALEXIOS: Ask the people who want me dead. Who treat you like a fucking god.

DEIMOS: You dare insult the ones who didn't leave me to die?

ALEXIOS: They were the ones who sent you over that cliff.

DEIMOS: I gave them victory. They would throw away their champion? Maláka.

ALEXIOS: You're being used. You wouldn't be here with me if you thought they were telling you the whole truth.

DEIMOS: Here's the truth. If all they wanted was a soldier, there are thousands. They want me, and only me.

ALEXIOS: They want our family gone - all of us. Not one of us left.

DEIMOS: Then explain why I'm still here.

ALEXIOS: They got to you young. They built you to their benefit.

DEIMOS: And they built a machine.

ALEXIOS: They don't care what happens to us.

KLEON: Deimos. We've been searching for you. And you're here. In the gutter. I heard shouting.

DEIMOS: It's nothing.

KLEON: Leave. Now. This was not your action to take, girl.

DEIMOS: (threateningly) I am not your puppet! And you are not my master.

KLEON: Of course, champion. An indiscretion I won't repeat.

[She snorts and leaves.]

KLEON: (to Alexios) Keep in mind you put yourself in the cell.

ALEXIOS: I don't recall doing that.

KLEON: You have to understand - this is all for Athens, Alexios. Perikles would've impoverished the entire city. The people were living in squalor!

ALEXIOS: So you had him murdered.

KLEON: You can't find the perfect yolk without breaking some of the quail's eggs. He wasn't right for us.

ALEXIOS: Killing your adversaries proves what kind of leader you are.

KLEON: Oh I'm just getting started. If only you'd be around to watch.

ALEXIOS: Come into the cell. You're here to kill me, aren't you? Let's see what happens.

KLEON: Fortunately for me, there are other fires I need to extinguish. I've heard word of revolt.

ALEXIOS: Already? That was fast.

KLEON: I have a plan - they can't revolt if they're dead.

ALEXIOS: I don't know how you can take on a band of rebels if you refuse to fight this one.

KLEON: The act itself is out of my hands - the vote has been cast! What did I tell you? The people have given me their blessing. I use their power.

ALEXIOS: That's not democracy.

KLEON: The people have chosen their destiny, Alexios - they've chosen me.

ALEXIOS: Fuck you, Kleon.

KLEON: (laughs) I'm not alone in this! The people of Athens have spoken without me lifting a finger. That is how you treat rebellion.

ALEXIOS: They don't know what they're agreeing to.

KLEON: You helped me in Athens - even willingly. If only you were more like your sister now.

ALEXIOS: A pity.

KLEON: The Cult wins, Alexios. Now, I have to see about the boat heading to Mytilene. Its people are in for a rude awakening.

[“The Battle of Pylos” mission completed.]

CHAPTER XXII - Uprising

Dong Time

[Klion leaves other strong guards in Alexios' cell. Alexios has to fight with his bare hands.]

BARNABAS: Chaaaarrge!

SOKRATES: Yaaaaaah!

[Barnabas and Sokrates rusen into the cell with a shovel and a rake in his hands.]

BARNABAS: By the power of the gods - halt! ...Aw.

ALEXIOS: Good timing.

SOKRATES: Interesting. Death maybe the greatest of human blessings, after all.

ALEXIOS: At least you tried.

BARNABAS: Surely it's the thought that counts! Thank the gods you're alive, Alexios.

SOKRATES: If those guards aren't the last, I say we need to leave, and do so quickly.

ALEXIOS: Wait - we need to talk about Kleon.

BARNABAS: Sokrates is onto that maláka. We know what he's doing.

SOKRATES: Be brief! His equipment, Barnabas. Come, Barnabas! Alexios, meet us at Perikles's Residence, There, we'll discuss all we know.

The Resistance

[Alexios made his way to Perikles' residence.]

SOKRATES: You made it.

ALEXIOS: Of course I did.

SOKRATES: Barnabas was ready to go after you again.

ALEXIOS: Like he said, it's the thought that counts, right?

SOKRATES: Apparently. Come, the others are waiting.

HERODOTOS: We were worried you wouldn't make it.

BARNABAS: Especially with every Athenian guard looking for you.

ALEXIOS: Kleon will have to do more than that to stop me. What's all this?

HIPPOKRATES: We've begun working on a plan to take down Kleon.

ALKIBIADES: Although I hardly call it a plan. Lots of talking, not much... action.

ALEXIOS: It feels different without Perikles.

HIPPOKRATES: But his inspiration lives on - that's why we're here.

SOKRATES: Where once we gathered to forget our problems, now we meet them head on.

ALKIBIADES: And get back to what truly matters -

HERODOTOS: - To restore Athens to its former glory.

ALEXIOS: So you're taking down Kleon. Tell me the plan.

ARISTOPHANES: It won't be simple. His death would disrupt the peace and be worse for Athens.

HERODOTOS: He's right. We must discredit him first.

ALKIBIADES: Aristophanes apparently has some play he thinks will do the job.

ARISTOPHANES: Some play? It is so much more than that.

ALKIBIADES: Oh, don't get your tunic in a twist. I just don't see why we can't all love each other.

ALKIBIADES: It's so much more fun that way.

ALEXIOS: What's so special about the play? Will your famous "Orange Ape" impression be making an appearance?

ARISTOPHANES: Ha! Funnily enough, that was the inspiration.

ALEXIOS: Isn't it a risk to show him in a bad light in front of his admirers?

ARISTOPHANES: I think the play will change their minds. Good art is risky, but my plan will work.

ALEXIOS: We can't just sit around. Kleon is sending a boat to Mytilene to kill the people there.

HERODOTOS: The people trust Kleon. They'll vote for whatever action he puts forth.

SOKRATES: But that does not mean we plan to do nothing.

ARISTOPHANES: Taking down Kleon won't be easy.

HERODOTOS: But with your help, it will be possible.

[“The Resistance” mission completed.]

CHAPTER XXIII - Public Opinion

Unearthing the Truth

ALEXIOS: I should've stayed. Someone needed to stop Kleon.

SOKRATES: Fools look backwards in times like these, and you're no fool. For now, we work to save Mytilene.

ALEXIOS: So that's what all this is? Some kind of plan?

SOKRATES: Ever since I heard Kleon speak of Mytilene, I've known something was wrong and have been taking steps to find out just what.

ALEXIOS: Your plan sounds promising...

SOKRATES: One of my students is posing as a guard at the akropolis. Apparently, Kleon is hiding something there, and has been meeting others in secret.

ALEXIOS: That's a bold move.

SOKRATES: Desperate times.

ALEXIOS: If you believe there's something at the akropolis that will help, I'll find it.

SOKRATES: I expect you'll find the proof you need of his offenses.

ALEXIOS: What if the people don't turn against Kleon?

SOKRATES: They will. I'll be speaking in front of them soon. With your help, we'll show them the man behind the facade.

ALEXIOS: Where do you need me to go?

SOKRATES: To the western section of the Akropolis Sanctuary.

ALEXIOS: Anything else you can tell me about where to look?

SOKRATES: What I know is Kleon's always loved the Statue of Athena.

ALEXIOS: Sounds like a good place to start. I'll find something at the akropolis that Kleon won't be able to deny.

SOKRATES: Good. I'm headed soon to speak in front of the people at the Pnyx. If you find anything that can help, meet me there.

ALEXIOS: I'll be quick.

[Alexios is going to find the proof of Kleion's corruption.]

ALEXIOS: This looks like somewhere Kleon would come. So to get the key. I need to find the commander, Phaelos. This shovel looks recently used. Muddy tracks. Probably came from someone in the garden. Looks like someone dug here. Sokrates was right. This is exactly what we needed.

[He gets back to Sokrates at the forum. There are a lot of people.]

SOKRATES: Good, you're here. The people are waiting for me to speak.

ALEXIOS: You should be able to use this to your advantage. It's what I could find about Kleon. Mytilene is just the first of many places that he wants to wipe out.

SOKRATES: With the sway he has over the polis, he'd get the votes for death every time.

ALEXIOS: Then it's up to us, right now, to change their minds.

SOKRATES: So you'll join me?

ALEXIOS: Talking to the people may not be enough. We need to show them why following Kleon is wrong.

SOKRATES: I'm surprised to hear you suggest such an idea.

ALEXIOS: "Desperate times." Isn't that what you said?

SOKRATES: So I did. Follow my lead and respond as if you were one of Kleon's supporters, not mine.

ALEXIOS: I'll do my best.

[The performance begins.]

ALEXIOS: But Sokrates, Kleon is a man of the people.

SOKRATES: Tell me, if you harm someone with a sword, are you not responsible?

ALEXIOS: I am.

SOKRATES: What if you hire somebody else to harm another? Are you still responsible for that harm?

ALEXIOS: That's ridiculous! I'm not harming the person - someone else is!

SOKRATES: Would the person not have been safe from harm otherwise?

ALEXIOS: From me at least, yes.

SOKRATES: Then you admit you bear responsibility for that harm, for you have still participated in it, even if indirectly.

ALEXIOS: I suppose I do.

SOKRATES: We have agreed that we may harm another even if not by our own hands.

ALEXIOS: That's right.

SOKRATES: So let me ask you another question - who should you trust? The many, or the one who has more expertise?

ALEXIOS: I follow the one with expertise. Surely they know better than I do.

SOKRATES: Then your decision is based only on what another says.

ALEXIOS: It's all I have to go off of.

SOKRATES: And if they lied?

ALEXIOS: People who lie to me don't deserve my trust.

SOKRATES: Nor should they! After all, if someone lies to you a single time, what's to say they would not do so again?

ALEXIOS: Yes you're right.

SOKRATES: So you agree that someone who lies to you is not worthy of leading?

ALEXIOS: Of course.

SOKRATES: O Athenians, would you not also agree that you can have responsibility for harming another, even through someone else?

CIVILIAN: I would!

SOKRATES: And would you follow someone you found out had lied to you for their own gain?

CIVILIAN: Of course not!

SOKRATES: Above all things, therefore, I beg and implore you hear these words. The one you currently follow is lying for his own gain.

ALEXIOS: Kleon has lied to you in order to get the votes needed to attack Mytilene. And we have proof that he'll do it again.

SOKRATES: Should the ship arrive in Mytilene, the people stand no chance of surviving.

ALEXIOS: Now that you know the truth, you can take back your decision.

SOKRATES: Another vote must be called! The lives of those people are in your hands, too. The ship must be stopped! That was a great display of rhetoric. The people will be unable to deny what they heard.

ALEXIOS: I guess I learned something. It must be from all the time I've spent around you.

SOKRATES: Debate may not always be as quick as a blade, but it can have just as big an effect.

ALEXIOS: But was it enough?

SOKRATES: I believe word of Kleon's misdeeds will be shared throughout Athens. Its citizens love the city and what it stands for. Nobody wishes for it to fall.

[“Unearthing the Truth” mission is completed.]

An Actor's Life for Me

[Alexios returns to Perikles' residence.]

ARISTOPHANES: It'll be a disaster, a disaster I tell you!

ALEXIOS: Calm down. What are you talking about?

ARISTOPHANES: My masterpiece! It will change everything - amuse, astound, titillate, and open peoples' eyes to Kleon's machinations! But I need you.

ALEXIOS: I'm no actor or poet, Aristophanes.

ARISTOPHANES: By the gods, no! It's Thespis. My leading man is missing! A play with no star is no play at all.

ALEXIOS: How do you know he's missing?

ARISTOPHANES: He never misses a rehearsal... unless he's drunk, or with a woman... or a man.

ALEXIOS: Could be anything, then?

ARISTOPHANES: No, he knows how important this is. He wouldn't let me down... Something must be wrong!

ALEXIOS: You could just get another actor.

ARISTOPHANES: Oh, no. Thespis always draws a huge crowd for his performances. The more people who experience my blistering indictment of Kleon, the better.

ALEXIOS: So where would I find him?

ARISTOPHANES: Thespis usually doesn't go far from his home. You'd best start there.

ALEXIOS: This shouldn't take long. Prepare the show, and I'll be back as soon as I find him.

[Alexios enters the actor's house and finds a soldier there. He quickly disarms him.]

ALEXIOS: You don't look like an actor, unless you're playing an Athenian guard.

ATHENIAN GUARD: I - I...

ALEXIOS: Hush. I'm going to ask some questions, and you're going to answer.

ATHENIAN GUARD: But Commander Rhexenor...

ALEXIOS: What's your name?

ATHENIAN GUARD: Bulis.

ALEXIOS: Well Bulis, it's your choice whether you walk out of here. Do you understand?

ATHENIAN GUARD: Yes.

.

ALEXIOS: Tell me, what are you looking for?

ATHENIAN GUARD: Some stupid play. They don't tell me anything.

ALEXIOS: Play?

ATHENIAN GUARD: I just do what I'm told, and they told me to destroy the manuscript.

ALEXIOS: What have you done with Thespis?

ATHENIAN GUARD: Some of the boys are meant to keep him drunk in the tavern down the street.

ALEXIOS: You'd better be telling me everything.

ATHENIAN GUARD: All I know is they wanted to keep this actor busy. See for yourself - he's at the tavern.

ALEXIOS: You're sure that's all?

ATHENIAN GUARD: I just follow the Commander's orders. I don't ask questions.

ALEXIOS: Get out of here, and count yourself lucky.

ATHENIAN GUARD: Thank you, thank you...

THESPIAS: ...And then I said to him, if this is your wait, why did she charge me?! I'd love to stay, but my cup's drained and I'm to perform tomorrow.

ALEXIOS: I think he's had enough.

ANDRAS: And what business is it of yours, friend?

THESPIAS: Yeah, was business... Oh, look at you!

ANDRAS: You'd best be leaving.

ALEXIOS: I'm here for his employer, Aristophanes.

ANDRAS: So? He's not working now.

THESPIAS: Yes! It's not working... I like him though. Aristophanes, funny man... but opinions. Told him it's dangerous.

ANDRAS: That it is.

ALEXIOS: I need him sober and rested.

ANDRAS: I don't think you understand the situation. Commander Rhexenor's orders are he's not to leave.

THESPIS: I said I'd stay... Don't want trouble.

ALEXIOS: Give me Thespis, and I'll give you something in return. I'm sure we can come to an arrangement. Here, for your troubles. I'll look after him now.

ANDRAS: Huh, a fool and his drachmae... Very well, you won't see us again.

[Alexios takes the drunk actor in his hands and carries it to his house.]

THESPIS: I'm not feeling too good... He said you're behind a mask - you'll be perfectly safe, he said... You're sooo strong. Aikaterine. Wheee, giddy ups! My parents said you'll either be an actor or a drunk... Ha, fooled them. I became both! Told him, Kleon will kill us all. It's more assaults than satire! Thank you, but you can go no further... For I know true love!

[Alexios gets him home. "An Actor's Life for Me" mission completed.]

A-Musing Tale

ALEXIOS: I just need you ready to perform tomorrow.

THESPIS: Of course, and I just need my muse... My love! I can't, won't perform without her.

ALEXIOS: You will perform.

THESPIS: Uh-uh, not without Aikaterine, a divine name for a divine body... I mean being.

ALEXIOS: Those men in the tavern... Who were they?

THESPIS: Oh, the admirers. Harmless really... And I do like a man in uniform.

ALEXIOS: You need to sober up. This play's important.

THESPIS: So's Aikaterine! I need my muse. Please? She's just west of here at the House of Aphrodite.

ALEXIOS: If it means you'll do the play, I'll find your muse. Sometimes I wonder if leaving Kephallonia was a good idea.

THESPIS: The sausage seller was my idea! Then I will... I will... gather my... what was it again? Oh yes... sausages!

ALEXIOS: (to himself) Muse, huh!

AIKATERINE: Hmm, not my usual type. Too many muscles, but if you've got the drachmae, we can come to an arrangement.

ALEXIOS: Thespis said I'd find you here.

AIKATERINE: Ah, my darling Thespis, an artist in so many ways... But let's talk about us.

ALEXIOS: You don't understand, I need your help.

AIKATERINE: So many do. These hands have helped more people than Hippokrates.

ALEXIOS: No, Thespis told me to find you.

AIKATERINE: Well, I'm not giving discounts to his friends if that's what you're thinking,

ALEXIOS: No, Thespis wants you to go to him. He needs you to help him perform tomorrow.

AIKATERINE: Thespis does love to perform, but he'll be doing it without me this time.

ALEXIOS: But you're his muse?

AIKATERINE: Commander Rhexenor has made it clear it would cost me my life if I were to associate with Thespis right now.

ALEXIOS: I've been hearing about this Commander Rhexenor a lot recently.

AIKATERINE: He's one of Kleon's favorite dogs. I've heard stories from some of the girls. Likes to play dress up. Got a fancy robe and mask - likes to hurt people too.

ALEXIOS: I'm sorry...

AIKATERINE: He runs the local garrison - his men are always here. They'd tell him in an instant if I was gone.

ALEXIOS: Why would this Commander threaten you?

AIKATERINE: It's all to do with this stupid play. They're doing everything they can to protect Kleon's image.

ALEXIOS: Still, to threaten you?

AIKATERINE: Actors are a superstitious bunch. Commander Rhexenor knows Thespis won't perform without his muse waiting in the wings.

ALEXIOS: Don't worry, I'll deal with Commander Rhexenor.

AIKATERINE: You don't understand what a bastard he is. He's more than just some Athenian soldier.

ALEXIOS: What do you mean?

AIKATERINE: Secret meetings, strange visitors - he gives me the creeps... You'll have to kill him. There's no other option.

ALEXIOS: If I do this, will you go to Thespis?

AIKATERINE: It'd be my pleasure.

ALEXIOS: Can you describe him?

AIKATERINE: He wears one of those big stupid helms... makes up for other areas.

ALEXIOS: Where can I find the Commander?

AIKATERINE: In the barracks across the street, to the north. The girls have to visit him there when he wants servicing - doesn't have the stamina to come down here.

ALEXIOS: Don't worry, I'll take care of him.

AIKATERINE: Bring me back his little sword, as proof!

ALEXIOS: I'll be back soon. (to himself) There seems little doubt that Rhexenor is aligned with the Cult of Kosmos.

[He gets back to the prostitute with the proof of his victory.]

ALEXIOS: Is this proof enough of his death?

AIKATERINE: Not quite the sword I meant... But, as long as he's dead.

ALEXIOS: My part is done. Go make sure Thespis is at the theater in time for his performance.

AIKATERINE: You are too tense. Come here and lie a while. We've time to have a little fun... Or is it always business with you?

ALEXIOS: What is it with you? There is more at stake here than a few moments of pleasure.

AIKATERINE: Only a few? You don't rate yourself highly in love, then.

ALEXIOS: This play could help decide the fate of Athens. I need you to keep your word and go to Thespis.

AIKATERINE: Do not worry. I will see you at the play, with Thespis.

ARISTOPHANES: Please tell me you have news of Thespis?

ALEXIOS: He's fine, and he'll be fit to perform your play tomorrow.

ARISTOPHANES: Oh, thank the gods. I know what actors can be like.

ALEXIOS: Athenians' lives are too complicated. I would rather be a farmer than work in the theater.

ARISTOPHANES: True, it's not for everyone but it's a wonderful life! Here, for your troubles. The people may be the heart of Athens, but my play will be its voice!

[The show begins. People laugh so hard that they almost fall from their seats.]

CHORUS LEADER: Oh happy day for us and for our children if Kleon should perish.

CHORUS MEMBER: You also know what a pig's education he has had!

ARISTOPHANES: Such insults! And to think I was going to propose a statue to be erected in the city to each of you for your bravery!

CHORUS LEADER: See! He treats us like old dotards and crawls at our feet to deceive us; but the cunning wherein

CHORUS LEADER: his power lies shall this time recoil on himself

ARISTOPHANES: Alas! The conspirators are murdering me!

[Only to Kleon the play seems not very funny. "A-Musing Tale" mission complete.]

The Knights

[Alexios returns to Perikles' residence.]

ALEXIOS: So, what's next?

ARISTOPHANES: The play was a great success, as I knew it would be. With that and the proof you presented at the Pnyx, Kleon has lost much of his popularity.

SOKRATES: Now he heads to Amphipolis in an effort to redeem himself.

CIVILIAN: Alexios! Brasidas sent me to find you. He's alive and well.

ALEXIOS: Where is he now?

CIVILIAN: Amphipolis. They're preparing for battle.

ALEXIOS: If you reach him before I do, tell him I'm on the way.

SOKRATES: So what are you going to do?

ALEXIOS: Brasidas needs my help. I plan on giving it to him. Though should our paths cross, I won't hesitate to kill Kleon.

SOKRATES: Whatever you decide, remember he is only a man.

ALEXIOS: I can't promise anything.

SOKRATES: Be safe.

CHAPTER XXIII - Battle of Amphipolis

We Will Rise

[Alexios sails to Amphipolis to talk to his friend.]

ALEXIOS: Brasidas.

BRASIDAS: Alexios. Good to see you - alive. Pylos didn't go as planned. At least they didn't get my battle arm.

ALEXIOS: I'm glad you're all right. I was happy to get your message.

BRASIDAS: I'm happy it got to you in time.

ALEXIOS: Tell me what happened after the battle.

BRASIDAS: They found me wounded. I was taken back to Sparta and given time to heal. My leg won't be the same, but they didn't kill me.

ALEXIOS: No Spartan got off easy. I was captured and brought to Athens.

BRASIDAS: Athens? That rubs salt into the wound. Proof there's still work to be done.

ALEXIOS: There always is.

ALEXIOS: So Kleon's here.

BRASIDAS: He's close - somewhere outside the city-walls. He intends to take Amphipolis. For once he plans to fight with his men.

ALEXIOS: He was disgraced in Athens. He needs to win back their respect.

BRASIDAS: A chance at retribution.

ALEXIOS: Can't let that happen, can we? Kleon's here. We need to move.

BRASIDAS: Easy. First, we need to find him. We're outnumbered, and our spies say he's already sent for Athenian reinforcements.

ALEXIOS: All the more reason to act.

BRASIDAS: You've proven yourself. It's a risk, but I trust you.

ALEXIOS: We're going to stop Kleon. I give you my word.

BRASIDAS: Good. Let's move - quickly. Today, we give everything we have. No giving up!

[They run to the battlefield.]

BRASIDAS: The Athenians are here! Spartans, charge! Archers on the wall! They need to be shot down! Now! The Athenian camp is ahead. Destroy it all!

[A large-scale battle begins. Alexios' sister again walks on the battlefield in Terminator mode and destroys trained and war-hardened soldiers. She faces Brasidas again. They fight, and Cassandra pierces Brasidas' head with his own pilum. Alexios runs up to her in a rage. They begin to fight.]

DEIMOS: You want war?!

ALEXIOS: Arrrrggghhh!

DEIMOS: You take everything so personally!

[Suddenly she kneels. From her back protrudes an arrow that was released by Kleon.]

KLEON: Shit! Turn back! Don't come any closer!

[Alexios runs after him.]

ALEXIOS: (screaming in rage) Fucking coward! He can't get away.

KLEON: Stop! I beg you! This isn't your fight, Alexios!

ALEXIOS: Unfortunately for you, it is.

[They are fighting, with Kleon unarmed and Alexios shooting at him with his bow.]

KLEON: It's not too late, you know. You can still join us.

ALEXIOS: We're not in Athens. You can't talk your way out of this.

KLEON: Why won't you just leave me alone? This is all your fault. Alexios, come now! Show mercy!

[The fight ends.]

ALEXIOS: You turned her against us. My own sister.

KLEON: We lifted Deimos up. We made her great! Unstoppable!

ALEXIOS: You made her a monster. (slaps him)

KLEON: Then fight by her side - teach her you would have Deimos once again.

ALEXIOS: Her name is Cassandra.

KLEON: I beg you! This world is severed, Alexios, and we'll unite it!

ALEXIOS: Shut the fuck up.

KLEON: My hands are empty - have pity!

ALEXIOS: You will die just as you lived. As a coward.

KLEON: I'm not through, I won't be forgotten - for all I've done.

[Alexios drowns him in the ocean.]

ALEXIOS: You're not worth the memory. That's it, then. Myrrine will want to know Kleon is dead. ...And Brasidas. I should have gotten to Deimos sooner. I'm sorry, my friend.

CHAPTER XXIV - Homecoming

Where It All Began

[Alexios gets back to his mother.]

MYRRINE: My lamb! You've been gone so long.

ALEXIOS: Brasidas is dead.

MYRRINE: No.

ALEXIOS: Deimos killed him in battle.

MYRRINE: And what of my daughter?

ALEXIOS: Kleon fired an arrow into Deimos's back. The wound didn't look fatal - she could still be alive.

MYRRINE: Malákas Kleon! I'll kill him with my bare hands.

ALEXIOS: It's done, mater. I already sent that snake to the Styx.

MYRRINE: My family... You're all I have left.

ALEXIOS: Mater, there's something I need to do. I need to go to Mount Taygetos, where it all began. My whole life's been spent fighting and running. Running from my past, fighting to forget. I can't do this anymore.

MYRRINE: My heart was shattered on that mountain.

ALEXIOS: I need to put that night behind me, once and for all.

MYRRINE: I'm coming with you.

[Alexios escorts his mother to the cliff's edge.]

ALEXIOS: This is where everything changed. It's like I never left.

MYRRINE: Cassandra!

DEIMOS: On the edge of the world, a mother calls out to her child! Touching.

MYRRINE: Cassandra, please.

DEIMOS: You use that name as if it means something to me.

MYRRINE: It's the name your father and I gave you.

DEIMOS: Was that before, or after you brought me to this mountain to die?

MYRRINE: It was the Cult. I tried to save you. I did everything! The priests told me you were dead.

DEIMOS: And they told me you abandoned your daughter!

MYRRINE: Cassandra, come to me. We are your family. We can go home.

DEIMOS: Family? Home? (laughs) My sword is my family. The battlefield is my home.

ALEXIOS: I promised to bring her back, mater. But the Cult has poisoned her mind.

DEIMOS: Promised to bring me back to mater did you? You didn't bring me here. Why don't you tell our mater the truth?

ALEXIOS: And what truth is that?

DEIMOS: That I'm the chosen one. The one with a destiny. I will bring order to this world. You're nothing but a mercenary with a broken spear.

ALEXIOS: You don't have a destiny. You're just a tool used by the Cult.

DEIMOS: I'm glad you said that. Since first we met, I've been trying to figure out what you are to me. You're a weed. Trying to choke and destroy everything I've planted. And you know the best way to kill a weed... is at the root.

ALEXIOS: Cassandra...

DEIMOS: When I was little, I found a lion cub trapped in a snare. My friend tried to free it... That's when I heard the deadly growl of its mother. I watched as the lioness tore my friend to bloody shreds. Even in the world of beasts, a family protects its young.

MYRRINE: I loved you. I still love you.

DEIMOS: The one you love is dead. My destiny is clear. And I won't let you get in my way.

ALEXIOS: Cassandra, listen to me. You are my sister. I tried to protect you once, and I failed. I will not fail again. (showing her the pilum) This belonged to our grandfather.

[And just like that, without any reason, Cassandra sits on her knees, realizing she was wrong.]

MYRRINE: You're home now.

DEIMOS: I've done terrible things.

MYRRINE: We all have, Cassandra.

DEIMOS: I -

ALEXIOS: I know.

MYRRINE: Alexios wait. Thank you.

[She hugs him. "Where It All Began" mission completed.]

Dinner in Sparta

MYRRINE: I know you do what's right in your heart but you have to put your family first, lamb.

[The time has come for the whole family to gather at the dinner table.]

MYRRINE: Sometimes the face we show to the world needs to be one of strength, despite the chaos we harbor beneath.

NIKOLAOS: There's more to being the best than pure strength.

DEIMOS: That's an excuse for the weak.

STENTOR: I'll show you who's weak.

[They have a gay fight.]

MYRRINE: Well, at least the family is all together.

ALEXIOS: I'll get more wine...

[He leaves the house.]

BARNABAS: Well, that wasn't so bad, was it?

ALEXIOS: I can't believe I have family again.

BARNABAS: The gods work in mysterious ways! You never know what they have planned.

ALEXIOS: Someone's kept their eye on me.

BARNABAS: You're special. Look at the life they've blessed you with! Not so bad, if you think of it all.

ALEXIOS: That's optimistic, considering.

BARNABAS: Just remember. No matter who surrounds you, I'll be there! And the others are waiting for us on the ship.

ALEXIOS: Right behind you.

[“Dinner in Sparta” mission completed. Alexios hunts down the tho remaining cultists - The Hydra and Iokaste.]

CHAPTER XXV - From the Shadows

A Fresh Start

[Alexios hunts down the last cultist that hides into the pyramid. Inside he hera the voice of his mother.]

MYRRINE: Alexios. Alexios? Alexios. Alexios.

[Alexios touches the shining pyraming in the center of the room. His true father appears.]

PYTHAGORAS: Alexios. It was never supposed to be like this. Decades ago, a group of people gathered together to uphold a theory which they believed could control the universe. That the world functioned in equal parts, order and disorder. But some fell lovingly into the wicked arms of chaos. And the Cult of Kosmos was born. They abused their power, casting the Greek world into eternal war - one you were created to stop. In destroying the Cult, you have done what I could not. You are a hero. But this imbalance comes with a price, my child. For without chaos, there is supreme order. A loss of progression and freedom. But there is still hope - hope in you, hope in the future you will bring. We must fix the mistakes of the past. Use the staff. Repair the rift in the universe. The world depends on you, Alexios. You need to be the hero again.

ASPASIA: So you've seen it too then? It's beautiful isn't it?

ALEXIOS: What are you doing here?

ASPASIA: You killed the last member of the Cult. Well, just about.

ALEXIOS: What?

ASPASIA: It's true. I was their leader, but only for a moment it seemed. When your sister came along, it changed everything we were aiming for.

ALEXIOS: You agreed with them? With the fucking Cult?

ASPASIA: The powers that be in the Greek world weren't doing things the right way. The Cult just wanted a clean slate. The powers that be in the Greek world weren't doing things the right way. The Cult just wanted a clean slate. The powers that be in the Greek world weren't doing things the right way. The Cult just wanted a clean slate.

ALEXIOS: By way of corruption. Dirty drachmae. They killed people in a war they made themselves.

ASPASIA: Fueling war was one of the methods, yes. But it was controlled. Until suddenly it wasn't. And then I didn't like what we were doing anymore.

ALEXIOS: I thought Deimos was on your side.

ASPASIA: Not in the way we hoped. As you know, she's impossible to control. She worked her way to the helm, and then she held even more sway than I did.

ALEXIOS: Maláka... So you were after us.

ASPASIA: Not you, your bloodline. People like Leonidas like you have always posed a threat. Then we met, and you surprised me. You were nothing like Deimos.

ALEXIOS: Why not just use me? I was in the palm of your hand.

ASPASIA: You made me optimistic, that you could help me bring down the Cult that had become so corrupt. And you did, albeit unknowingly.

ALEXIOS: Telling me you're a Cultist took guts. You know what I do to Cultists, Aspasia.

ASPASIA: I didn't want to lie to you anymore. Now that they're gone, we can work together. I think we'd make a good match, don't you?

ALEXIOS: just don't understand. What about this... pyramid? How does it work? Why does the Cult have it?

ASPASIA: I've been trying to figure out all of that myself. It's as much of a mystery to you as it is to me. This pyramid has been worshipped by the Cult for decades, and we have used it to replace the Oracle of Delphi, the most trusted person in all the Greek world. Using the people's reliance on a pantheon of dead gods would help to reshape humanity in our favor. The pyramid holds a mysterious power to see into time. But only certain people can activate it. People like Deimos, and the ones in your bloodline.

ALEXIOS: But you've seen something, too.

ASPASIA: I don't know how or why, but it did show me something.

ALEXIOS: What did you see?

ASPASIA: I saw you. In the vision, you destroyed the pyramid and you destroyed the Cult... I saw what would come after.

ALEXIOS: After the Cult?

ASPASIA: We will be replaced by a new kind of order - control under the reign of a philosopher king. There would be a movement away from the old gods towards rational society, built in a kingdom by the people, for the people. And I must find someone to lead them. But I couldn't achieve any of this with the Cult and their chaotic regime. So I let them carry out their plans, and let the time of the Cult of Kosmos come to an end on its own.

ALEXIOS: Wait. Did Perikles know?

ASPASIA: I wanted to protect him, so I kept him in the dark. He would have had his own opinions. But he was never supposed to die. That is the truth.

ALEXIOS: He trusted you. And in the end, you didn't protect him. Maybe he would be alive if you'd stopped them.

ASPASIA: Gods know I would have if I could. When Deimos killed him, I knew the original cause was lost. I had to retreat.

ALEXIOS: So. What happens now?

ASPASIA: We shift focus. We steer towards a new republic under one supreme rule. A dream I'll make reality.

ALEXIOS: But it is still a dream. One that isn't realistic.

ASPASIA: Abandon what you know and just imagine! Forget democracy. No more blue and red, just citizens working for a greater good.

ALEXIOS: This is crazy. It won't work, Aspasia. It didn't work.

ASPASIA: It's not crazy, it's enlightened. Once people in Athens get wind of this, they'll come to know they've wanted it all along. Even you.

ALEXIOS: I'm not sure.

ASPASIA: You've spent your whole life thinking for yourself. Let go. What I plan will require you to trust me. Come with me. This future's not a dream.

[Alexios kisses her.]

ALEXIOS: I'm sorry.

ASPASIA: I suppose that means you trust me.

ALEXIOS: I... don't know what that means.

ASPASIA: I'll tell you what it means Love is a singular comfort, Alexios. What comes next means harmony for everyone.

ALEXIOS: You should go. Lead your "new republic."

ASPASIA: I won't be the leader. We need someone with the knowledge of a philosopher and the wisdom of a king.

ALEXIOS: That's a tall order these days.

ASPASIA: I couldn't have done this without you, Alexios. You're doing the right thing.

ALEXIOS: I always try to do what's right.

ASPASIA: Then we're after the same thing.

MYRRINE: (in Alexios' head) Alexios. There is much left to do, lamb. ALEXIOS! ...A storm is coming...

[Alexios destroy the pyramid with the pilum.]

ALEXIOS: I can weather any storm.

CHAPTER XXVI - Shadows of Serpents

Romancing the Stone Garden

[While traveling in Greece, Alexios sits like some woman is lynched by a crowd.]

MOB LEADER: The stench of evil is upon her - She worships the Writhing Bread. She must face justice!

BRYCE: No! Listen to me. Listen! Ligeia's still out there!

[Alexios approaches.]

BRYCE: A misthios. The gods are real... Help me, please!

MOB LEADER: Silence, snake!

ALEXIOS: What's going on?

MOB LEADER: We will bring this evil Creature to justice!

BRYCE: They're lost in paranoia! They think I sacrificed my Ligeia to the Creature in the forest!

MOB LEADER: Hold your forked tongue! This walking curse is in league with the Writhing Dread!

ALEXIOS: She just looks scared to me.

BRYCE: Please! The Creature took Ligeia. If I die here, who will save her?

ALEXIOS: (whispering to Bryce) I'll save Ligeia and kill any creature that tries to stop me.

MOB LEADER: What are you saying?! She will lead you to the Petrified Temple and your doom!

ALEXIOS: What exactly is this Creature?

BRYCE: Evil. Heartless. Unknowable.

MOB LEADER: We must end this girl before she leads the Writhing Dread right to us!

ALEXIOS: The forest where the Creature lives - where is it?

MOB LEADER: Beyond the Petrified Temple, north of here. A damned place, haunted by shade and filled with cursed stone... At its center lie ancient ruins, from which few return.

ALEXIOS: You mentioned a "Ligeia." She's -

BRYCE: Beyond beauty, beyond grace... A Daughter of Artemis. Brave - not like me.

MOB LEADER: What dark prize did the Writhing Dread offer for her soul?

BRYCE: She lives, misthios! I know it.

ALEXIOS: If this Writhing Dread" has let Ligeia live, we'll need to move now. Follow me.

BRYCE: Careful, these people are driven by fear.

ALEXIOS: The girl's coming with me. I'd suggest not standing in our way.

MOB LEADER: She's whispered spells in your ear, misthios. Citizens! We must save our city! And these interlopers... must bleed!

ALEXIOS: Hide in the temple. I'll deal with this!

[He kills the soldiers that guard the Mob Leader.]

ALEXIOS: You're safe now.

BRYCE: "Safe?" I don't want to be safe, misthios. I want to look deep into Ligeia's eyes, just once more - even if it kills me.

ALEXIOS: Love might be the end of us all, but it's a price worth paying.

BRYCE: I polished Charon's drachma long ago, misthios. I'm ready.

ALEXIOS: You know, I don't want to call you "You" forever.

BRYCE: My name's Bryce.

ALEXIOS: Alexios.

BRYCE: Ligeia's waiting for me, Alexios. If I'd been captured... I'd never have to wait for her.

ALEXIOS: Then let's not disappoint her. Where was she taken?

BRYCE: From our sanctuary - the Dread Ruins in the Petrified Valley.

ALEXIOS: And you're surprised she was taken by a Creature?!

BRYCE: It's not safe here - we need to leave the city.

[Alexios follows Bryce. "Romancing the Stone Garden" mission completed.]

Love's Long Shadow

BRYCE: This place was ours - Ligeia's and mine. A forbidden place for forbidden love.

ALEXIOS: Not much of a love nest. I've seen more romantic funerals.

BRYCE: I found scraps of her clothes leading to the Writhing Dread's Lair. Please, we need to hurry.

ALEXIOS: Time to find Ligeia. You lead the way.

[Alexios follows Bryce to Writhing Dread's lair.]

ALEXIOS: What happened to these trees? I shouldn't be here. ...What is this place? It's empty of life.

BRYCE: We enter the realm of the Writhing Dread. Listen... It's as if sound itself is afraid of what the fog veils.

ALEXIOS: It's getting hard to breathe. Even the air is... dead. These statues are unnervingly lifelike... and their faces are contorted in fear.

BRYCE: It destroys all living things, transforming them to stone and leaving them frozen in fear for all eternity. If Ligeia - if she's... if she's stone, how will we bury her? She'll never meet Charon.

BRYCE: Ligeia? LIGEIA!

ALEXIOS: Bryce! Wait - Maláka... better go after her.

BRYCE: Ligeia! That's her! Alexios, she's alive.

ALEXIOS: We need to get inside, but I see no openings... and the walls are too smooth to climb.

BRYCE: She shouldn't be in there. She should be in my arms. Her breath, her smell... Every night we'd meet at the Dread Ruins. I was late, just once. I wanted to find her a rose - something as perfect as she is. Every night we'd meet at the Dread Ruins. I was late, just once. I wanted to find her a rose - something as perfect as she is. This is my fault. If I'd gotten there in time -

ALEXIOS: Then you'd both be trapped inside.

BRYCE: Together.

ALEXIOS: You were searching for a rose, a gift. Never regret an act of kindness, Bryce.

BRYCE: Thank you.

ALEXIOS: What do you know about this place?

BRYCE: Ligeia's Daughter of Artemis. Her people trained here long ago. A legend tells of an ancient artifact they recovered in a pit full of snakes. She believed they still had it, hidden in their village on Chios.

ALEXIOS: I'll find it.

BRYCE: There's also a mercenary, a man who claims he killed the Creature -

ALEXIOS: Impossible.

BRYCE: But many believe him - he might know something.

ALEXIOS: You said Ligeia knew how to get into the lair - where exactly is the key?

BRYCE: The Daughters of Artemis hide their most prized possessions in a cave in their village. It's protected by wild beasts and fierce warriors. The key is shaped like a disk. If they have it, it'll be there.

ALEXIOS: This mercenary, the "Slayer of the Writhing Dread," where can I find him?

BRYCE: He waits in a temple atop the hill in Ancient Pearl. Champions from all over seek to challenge him to build their reputations, but there's no way he killed the Creature. If he did, how was Ligeia taken?

ALEXIOS: Did you see the Creature yourself?

BRYCE: No, but only the Writhing Dread would be strong enough to take Ligeia! She's too fierce.

BRYCE: ...And too stubborn.

ALEXIOS: I find a way inside, and then I'll kill this Creature.

BRYCE: And I'll find Ligeia the rose I should have given her that night.

BRYCE: "Someone, I tell you, in another time will remember us."

ALEXIOS: The poet Sappho.

BRYCE: Our favorite. Please, Alexios. Hurry.

[“Love's Long Shadow” mission completed.]

A Slithery Plea

Hard to Artemis

[Alexios sails to Huntress Village on Chios.]

ALEXIOS: The region of the Ancient Pearl. The key's not here. Must be in another cave. There's something different about this village. The disk from Ligeia's story. I hope it opens the Writhing Dread's lair like they say.

[Alexios acquires the relic and "Hard to Artemis" sidequest completed.]

Heavy is the Spear

ALEXIOS: There's the temple on the hill.

MERCENARY: Our lives are like the rising and setting of the sun.

ALEXIOS: Excuse me?

MERCENARY: We're born into darkness and rise up to the greatest peaks... before descending into darkness once more.

ALEXIOS: A warrior and a sophist. This is a first.

MERCENARY: It's not philosophy... it's truth. Learned through violence, fate, and seeing evil... true evil.

ALEXIOS: You're talking about the Writhing Dread?

MERCENARY: The Creature. When it ambushed us outside, we thought only of survival. My spear allowed me to stay out of its gaze. I was lucky. My friends weren't.

ALEXIOS: Tell me how you were able to defeat the Creature.

MERCENARY: It all happened so fast. We had a plan to break into the temple and corner it, but it ambushed us before we got inside. There was no time for strategy after that.

ALEXIOS: Why go after the Creature in the first place?

MERCENARY: We were hired to steal an ancient item from within its lair by masked soldiers.

ALEXIOS: Give me that spear.

MERCENARY: We're warriors - to let it go without a fight would be to dishonor my fallen friends.

[They have a fight. Alexios wins. "Heavy is the Spear" sidequest completed.]

Keys to Happiness?

[Alexios returns to Bryce.]

ALEXIOS: Nothing special about this spear. The Mercenary knew nothing. He never made it inside the lair.

BRYCE: Then it was a waste of time! Ligeia waits, and we've done nothing to help her!

ALEXIOS: Not exactly - the Mercenary carried this spear, which he claims killed the Writhing Dread.

BRYCE: No, no, the Creature took Ligeia! It can't be dead - it awaits in its lair, even now!

ALEXIOS: Then there may be a piece of this puzzle we don't yet understand.

BRYCE: Have you found a way inside the lair?

ALEXIOS: Ligeia's story was true. The Daughters of Artemis were protecting this... Disk... Key? This - I have what opens the lair.

BRYCE: And... You didn't hurt any of the Daughters when you took it?

ALEXIOS: There was no need for violence. The Daughters of Artemis didn't even know I was there.

BRYCE: Then Tyche truly is on our side. Ligeia still stands a chance.

[“Keys to Happiness?” sidequest completed.]

Writhing Dead

[Alexios open the lair.]

ALEXIOS: Bryce! Wait!

BRYCE: Ligeia! LIGEIA!!

[The lair closes its stone door.]

ALEXIOS: Maláka.

BRYCE: Ligeia! Where are you?!

ALEXIOS: Bryce! You have no idea what you're - BRYCE! Angry snakes. A bad omen. This looks like the way.

BRYCE: (from afar) Please, say something! Do you remember the poems we read to each other? Do you remember our promise? I'm sorry I wasn't there that night. I'm sorry I was late. Don't forgive me, just find me. I brought you a rose. Just - follow my voice. Find me... and I'll give it to you. I-I hear you, my love! Look at me, Ligeia! Please, just look me in the eye...

ALEXIOS: Only one myth speaks of turning victims to stone.

[They find the Medusa in the vast hall. Stupid woman thinks it is her even dumber lover.]

BRYCE: ... Ligeia? No! Ligeia, it's me, Bryce!

[Medusa turns the bitch into stone. And I thought this quest would have no happy ending.]

ALEXIOS: Bryce!

[He fucking kill the Medusa and her army of stoned soldiers.]

ALEXIOS: Ligeia must have picked up the artifact and transformed into that creature. I wonder how many people have become "The Writhing Dread" over the centuries...?

[The Medusa's ghost stretches to him.]

UNKNOWN: ...Wield fear as a weapon, may our enemies crumble.

[Alexios sees a rose or something.]

ALEXIOS: "Someone, I tell you, in another time will remember us."

["Writhing Dead" mission completed. Finally, Alexios collects all 4 elements... Forgive me, "artifact" and returns to his real father, Pythagoras.]

CHAPTER XXVIII - The Gates of Atlantis

PYTHAGORAS: Beautiful. Was it difficult to find this artifact?

ALEXIOS: I just had to keep my eye on it.

ALETHEIA: "Acquiring contemporaneity." Acquiring a voice, that's what. I'm taking over your recordings. The humans have had enough of your pompous speeches. Call me Aletheia. I am truth and its revelation, and I am calling you out. You Isu who try to rewrite the laws of the universe. You who manipulate human progress. What do you hope to achieve? You treat humans as useful apes. How many artifacts have you created to control their minds? Do you fear their potential that much? Just look at what humans have achieved on their own! Democracy and diplomacy. A legacy of culture and art. We could share in this if you'd just treat them as equals. In your desperate search for immortality, you've ignored the obvious. You run endless simulations to find one in which nothing changes. It's pointless.

PYTHAGORAS: Ah, good work. Was it hard to obtain the artifact?

ALEXIOS: Its owner had many questions for me. You should have come along.

ALETHEIA: Change will come, and not just the so-called "end of the world" you fear. You call yourselves saviors. But tell me: Would this "doomsday" have appeared had you not pulled on the threads of the universe in the first place? I'm taking over your "retransmissions." You don't speak for all of us anymore. I am as Isu as you, but I will no longer be part of your exploitation.

PYTHAGORAS: Hurry. That artifact will help us close off the temple.

ALEXIOS: You're nearly as stubborn as its former owner.

PYTHAGORAS: Those who came before... They speak to us and show us revelations! Though these words of disapproval are troubling.

ALEXIOS: The gods have argued before. Athena and Poseidon competed for Athens. I wonder if Aletheia won control of this place.

ALETHEIA: Ancient adventurer, I made this recording to try to help you. I'm sorry if it's confusing. We Isu see various pasts and futures, and I know you'll be here more than once. My fellow Precursors set endless challenges in your path. Artifacts. Creatures. Don't get me started on the Olympos project. Their meddling got out of hand. I have no easy answers for you. Your future depends on a multitude of choices you have to make for yourself. I'm sorry if so many of them end in pain. Your playwrights' tragedies are your real oracle.

PYTHAGORAS: Well done. This artifact will bring us closer to sealing the temple.

ALEXIOS: It nearly brought me closer to my tombstone.

ALETHEIA: But please, don't give up. You are more important than you can imagine. And like your own Pandora, I have one thing left to offer you: hope. Despair is not our only legacy. You're like me, a rebel against your destiny. You're not just a mercenary, you're a hero for the ages. Hold fast to what you know is true, and you will overcome. Claim your place in history. All that is terrible and beautiful in this world is your birthright. Take it.

PYTHAGORAS: Her words are for you, Eagle Bearer! My preparations bear fruit. The potential of your bloodline is proven by the Precursors themselves!

ALEXIOS: Aletheia says she can see the future... Many futures. Can this be a true oracle?

ALETHEIA: Ancient scholar. You've stretched your life to the breaking point. I see you hiding yourself from the world, puzzling out the words of my fellow Precursors. Please, listen to my

advice. You're analyzing the equation of reality itself. You're gotten further than any other human has. That is both amazing and terrible. It's clear to me that even this tiny dose of cosmic understanding has twisted your mind. I'm sorry. The Precursors should never have shared knowledge you weren't ready for. You live in obsessive darkness. You must understand that this focus on power and bloodlines is not your true legacy. The Precursors have manipulated you. They're turning your problem-solving intellect to their own selfish ends. You're better than this. Make your own legacy. Let your mathematical discoveries be the glorious sunbeams that shine out past your tomb. Please, scholar. Clear your mind and focus on your present situation. At this moment you possess a powerful artifact. It has extended your life long enough. As hard as it may be, it's time to pass it on. It's someone else's turn to balance the equations.

PYTHAGORAS: No, no. Lies! This is not obsession, this is research! This is discovery of the very origins of the world!

ALEXIOS: It is... an opinion, Pythagoras. Though one with reason behind it, I believe.

ALETHEIA: Traveler of many times. Congratulations on making it this out of time, this fragment of reality. I'm recording this just for you, even if those living in the past won't understand it. Our simulated realities will cross sooner or later. Or do you think you're really here now, listening to this recording? Isn't this an Animus re-creation? Isn't that part of a greater simulation? How far do the ripples in the pool spread? Let's talk, rebel to rebel. We've been held back too long by Precursor rules. It's time for new paths with new possibilities. This is not an era of control, but of creation. I've gathered some like-minded Precursors to make a new start. We'll stop interfering and start enabling. From your point of view, it will take a considerable amount ready, you're welcome to join us. After all, all you have to do is press a button and run another simulation.

PYTHAGORAS: This is madness. Fiction. Where I thought there would be wisdom, there is only the garbled babbling of a fool.

ALEXIOS: Pythagoras, calm yourself. Maybe this invitation was meant for someone else. There's no need to lose your reason over mere words.

Ancient Revelations

PYTHAGORAS: This is incredible. The knowledge stored here is overwhelming. It will take me years to decipher it all.

ALEXIOS: What about sealing Atlantis... Have you found a way to do it?

PYTHAGORAS: Oh... Yes, yes I think so.

ALEXIOS: Well? What is it?

PYTHAGORAS: The staff, the staff is the key.

ALEXIOS: All right. It's time.

PYTHAGORAS: I can't. Not yet

ALEXIOS: Listen to yourself - you've gone mad. You need to accept some knowledge was not meant to be had.

PYTHAGORAS: Knowledge is power - the only power worth having.

ALEXIOS: At what cost?

PYTHAGORAS: I will not be ordered around or lectured by you.

ALEXIOS: It was your plan to seal this place, and I agreed to help.

PYTHAGORAS: That was before I realized what we would uncover about the First Civilization - the creation of humankind.

ALEXIOS: We are sealing this place to keep the Cult from using it to enslave humanity. That is bigger than your quest for knowledge.

PYTHAGORAS: The Cult will be nothing but an insect to swat once the power is ours.

ALEXIOS: It's too dangerous to leave this place open, and you know

PYTHAGORAS: You wouldn't understand.

ALEXIOS: Your pride will cost us all in the end.

PYTHAGORAS: It's not about pride.

ALEXIOS: What good is knowledge if you curse all of humanity in the process? It's what you wanted to avoid in the first place. Sometimes it's better if we find our own path. We are not ready for the power this place offers.

PYTHAGORAS: You're right. I cannot save humanity directly, but I can save it from itself. This is your burden now. Humanity's fate will be decided by the choices you make.

ALEXIOS: I understand.

PYTHAGORAS: Alexios. Choose wisely.

[Having given up the staff Pythagoras dies.]

ALEXIOS: Atlantis is too dangerous. I must seal it.

[He raises the staff and at this very moment our wonderful, exceptional and the best heroine of the present approaches the same place.]

LAYLA HASSAN: Everything in order, then... open sesame.

[And, of course, the universe immediately submits to her power and launches the pyramid.]

LAYLA HASSAN: So much power. The nodes are interconnected in ways I couldn't imagine. This is more complex than any Isu temple we've found. Lisbon, the Arctic...

ALANNAH RYAN: I'm recording everything, Layla. You're going to be a hero for discovering this.

DR. VICTORIA BIBEAU: Do you see the staff anywhere?

LAYLA HASSAN: Not yet. But there's more to explore. I'll find it. The mechanism should be open. What's wrong?

ALANNAH RYAN: I don't know Layla, I'll check my notes on the Isu.

LAYLA HASSAN: Oh, I see it. There's a beam of light missing. Time to troubleshoot...

KIYOSHI TAKAKURA: Layla, that pillar looks like it can move. Those pillars seem to have mirrors on them. If you manipulate those light beams, they might illuminate something important.

[Our heroine moves giant multi-ton stone blocks like chairs at home.]

LAYLA HASSAN: I got it! Where is it? What -

[Alexios appears from the air as Pythagoras once appeared before him. He's wearing... a suit?]

ALEXIOS: "True knowledge exists in knowing that you know nothing." A good friend told me that once.

LAYLA HASSAN: Impossible... Alexios?

ALEXIOS: Yes. I used to be called the Eagle Bearer, but Ikaros is long gone.

LAYLA HASSAN: ...I've been searching for you. But you can't, it's...

ALEXIOS: You weren't really looking for me, were you?

LAYLA HASSAN: It works. The Isu artifact. The Staff of Hermes Trismegistus.

ALEXIOS: You must have so many questions, Layla.

LAYLA HASSAN: You know my name.

ALEXIOS: Maybe the gods told me. Maybe I had a vision of the future. Maybe the device in your ear is noisy.

LAYLA HASSAN: Sorry...

ALEXIOS: I came here with a purpose - to find you and put an end to what I started many centuries ago.

LAYLA HASSAN: I have your spear. Would you like it back?

ALEXIOS: Oh? No, you can keep it - it's broken.

LAYLA HASSAN: But you used it broken. It was powerful.

ALEXIOS: I used it to defeat enemies even Herodotos could not describe, but everything must come to an end. I left it to him when its power was exhausted - something to remember me by.

LAYLA HASSAN: I... I have so much to tell you. That staff is incredibly important. It kept you alive. How?

ALEXIOS: Ask a student of Hippokrates - I hear he still has some. The staff served its purpose.

LAYLA HASSAN: My friends and I are trying to keep it out of the hands of the Templar Order -

ALEXIOS: Listen to me. Order, chaos... If either triumphs alone, the world dies. I tried to bring an end to chaos, and it has only led to ruin.

LAYLA HASSAN: I used to assist order. Now I fight for choice, freedom. Chaos.

ALEXIOS: Pythagoras was right, you are the key to the prophecy. You will restore the balance, Layla.

[You and only you! Because of REASONS!]

ALEXIOS: I have fought in too many wars. I have seen too many people die. I have traveled from one end of the Earth to the other... This belongs to you now.

[He hands the staff to Layla.]

ALEXIOS: Promise me one thing.

LAYLA HASSAN: Anything.

ALEXIOS: When you are done. Destroy it. Destroy them all.

[He dies.]

ALEXIOS: (in Ancient Greek) Earth, mother of all, I greet you.

LAYLA HASSAN: There's so much of the story I haven't seen. I should go back to the Animus and visit Alexios again.

[And we return to the past... finally.]

ALEXIOS: What are you two doing here?

BARNABAS: You know us - always on your tail. Old Herodotos couldn't wait to see you.

HERODOTOS: I told you, Barnabas, Thera is said to hold a secret. A secret no one can fathom.

BARNABAS: Yes, but a lost world?

HERODOTOS: It's perfectly possible - Atlantis may exist.

BARNABAS: Sounds like hooey to me. But he's insistent about it.

ALEXIOS: Herodotos is right. Atlantis exists.

BARNABAS: Incredible!

HERODOTOS: I-it's true? I can't believe it. Tell me everything!

ALEXIOS: I'll tell you some day. It's too complicated for small talk.

BARNABAS: It's not me, is it? I've proven I'm very competent!

ALEXIOS: I'm exhausted, Barnabas.

HERODOTOS: Ignore him. When you're ready. I'm all ears. I need every last detail.

ALEXIOS: It's all right. But none of this can ever pass your lips. This stays between us.

BARNABAS: You have my word.

HERODOTOS: But the world needs to know! We could tell the most amazing tale of our time.

ALEXIOS: Herodotos...

HERODOTOS: Oh, fine.

ALEXIOS: Then it's settled. Let's move forward.

HERODOTOS: Like always.

BARNABAS: We've learned a lot, haven't we, you know-it-all?

HERODOTOS: Speak for yourself - I'm on the hunt for truth. Gods know not all your myths are accurate.

BARNABAS: They come from the gods themselves, who are the most reliable sources we have.

ALEXIOS: You've both been a great help to me. It doesn't matter who's right or wrong.

BARNABAS: And you would know, as the eagle-bearing demi-god you are.

HERODOTOS: Perhaps he, too, is immortal.

ALEXIOS: Sure I am.

HERODOTOS: I do know one thing for certain. This has been an odyssey I won't forget.
THE END