

Key moment being covered

Kudzu, the chief of the forest that the Herald's been looking for, reflects on his mistakes and asks the Herald to help set things right.

Quest details

Since this is a platforming game, the overarching goals amount to 'getting to a particular point.' In this case, it's getting to Kudzu at the forest floor. The Herald has to rely on prior knowledge of the forest to know that the way to the ground is the elevator on the Sequoia Supreme.

Reaching Kudzu himself leads to the dialogue explaining why he's down here and what he needs to do, that 'doing' in question being to destroy the Sacred Order camp hidden down here - the one that was responsible for the torching of the forest. This quest introduction is simply a prelude to the boss battle, the 'False Sun', which is tough enough to take a lot of time. Kudzu and the Herald travel a short distance to the camp, and then Kudzu himself provides support during the battle. He throws in items during vulnerability periods that help the player damage the False Sun. The boss fight revolves around the upgrades and obstacles encountered in this level, such as the Conductor upgrade and the hot coal floor.

After the quest is finished, the Herald finally gets to pass on their message to Kudzu, who promises to spread it among his people.

Where is this situated?

The official quest from Kudzu is located at the end of the area, at the bottom of the elevator.

Dialogue (& Cinematics)

INT. FOREST FLOOR - DAY

We see our player character, the HERALD, enter a space of the forest floor that is surrounded by smoke. In the centre of this clearing are the remnants of a stone wall, and an ornately-clothed KUDZU kneeling next to it, praying. As the Herald comes to a stop, Kudzu opens his eyes and stands up to be on their level.

KUDZU

In our culture, there's nothing more blissful than to pass onto the other side. To become part of the fertile soil. And yet... what the hell is going on here?

HERALD

It's a bit late to be asking that.

Beat.

HERALD

The Sacred Order. They got cocky seeing a world drunk on Pentaclons, and took advantage of its weakness.
(walking to Kudzu)
Your weakness.

Kudzu wrings his hands as the Herald approaches him.

KUDZU

To think that a survivor from Morricks was more than just an omen... those gilded bastards- my own gluttony-

The Herald comes to a stop mere inches away from Kudzu.

KUDZU

(stammering)
So, what of me, then? Are you going to make me repent for my ill leadership...?

Beat. The Herald's steely gaze is not happy... but they extend a hand out for Kudzu to shake. Kudzu takes a moment, but takes the hand, shivering a little at its lack of warmth.

HERALD

No matter how you see yourself right now, your people need you. We all need each other.

KUDZU
So you fought through all that...
(points upwards)
...to come to my aid.

Kudzu clenches his fists and nods to himself before pointing behind him. We see a bright light cutting through the fog, the site of a SACRED ORDER camp.

KUDZU
It's needed there. An urban legend the Canopians called the False Sun turned out to be the source of this very wildfire. I haven't had the strength to confront them -- not in this state -- but you.

HERALD
Perhaps it's time to set things right, Chief?

KUDZU
Call me Kudzu. With you, we can snuff out that False Sun. The Sacred Order'll lose their supply line here, and you--

HERALD
You can begin to build back better.

The Herald begins walking again, in the direction of the bright light of the False Sun. Kudzu, humbled for now, follows behind the Herald, hands clasped together.

KUDZU
Me-- and what about you?

Beat.

HERALD
...I have a Message to spread.

Kudzu nods as the Herald continues to walk, as he darts into the bushes closer to the False Sun.

CUT TO GAMEPLAY AGAIN

Section 6 – Lore

New Canopy City's been under attack from the Sacred Order ever since the Herald was left for dead, thanks to the camp hidden beneath the trees being activated. That's why, as the player travels through the treetops, enemies that are affiliated with the Sacred Order always seem to appear by ascending. The Sacred Order soldiers themselves have been trained in scorched earth tactics by the False Sun, the leader of the hidden camp, which is why all of them are armed with fire and electricity-type weapons: the best means of destroying perishable resources.

The Gilded Ginkgo that the troops captured to convert into a military fort was neither gilded, nor a ginkgo tree, to begin with. It was painted gold by the Sacred Order as a sign of their dominance over the rest of New Canopy City.

Kudzu himself is on the forest floor in a meditative state. The forest floor is sacred to the people of the city, and visits there are only permissible for spiritual reasons, such as pilgrimages. Hence, Kudzu is here; he realises the error of his ways and how he's misused pentaclons to the level that he has, with the Herald even missing an audience with him earlier in the game because he'd gone to party in the neighbouring city. The forest floor is so sacred because it's the site of the old towns, which were completely infertile and wracked with famine and death before pentaclons helped the forest spring up.

Kudzu's view on death goes in line with his disapproval of the Sacred Order - death is celebrated, but only of natural, peaceful causes. This current assault is quick, sudden, aggressive and unnatural, which neither Kudzu or the Herald can agree is correct.

Speaking of aggressive, the ruined terrarium is the home of the Blue Banana Beast, which is the miniboss of this place. The player actually encountered a member of their species earlier on in the game, as the first major boss - really shows the scale of progression; what was once an important boss is not just a roadblock. The beast itself not only has a taste for the forest's famous blue bananas, like their name suggests, but it has a preference for wet, aquatic environments, which is how it managed to escape the heat for so long.