Here's the first draft of the script for the combat prototype. I've worked in some dialogue options (some of which affect the progress of the mission pretty drastically) since this is after all a prototype, and I figure it's as good a place & time as any to experiment with dialogue options and event triggers, but @Carlito if you can't make it work that's fine, you can just pick whichever dialogue options and consequences should make it into the prototype. @Adam & Kieran Tell me what you think of the script by email, or just edit & revise it however you want and upload your version onto Github (you guys know how to do that right?), I'm cool with either option.

**Opening scene: Ellis city dungeon, blate night**

MC is milling about in the dungeon, unable to sleep. It's been a few days (tops a week) since he was betrayed by his former comrades in the Blood Eagle criminal syndicate and arrested by the city guard: later that day he'd be put on trial and, knowing how the Ellisian justice system treats non-wealthy commoners, likely convicted on every charge thrown at him within a few hours or even minutes.

Since MC is in a locked cell with no windows, he wouldn't be able to interact with anyone except his cell mate. Who, by the way, is not a very pleasant person (or maybe that's because you'd be waking him up in the early AM just to talk to him). The result of interacting with him:

**Prisoner:** Oi, d'you have any idea what time it is? The sun's not even up! You want company so badly, why don't you piss off to the corner and use your hand or something, I'm trying to get some sleep over here.

After MC's productive chat with the other prisoner, city guard captain Blasios Zervis will march in with two of his men, a cup of coffee in one hand & with the other on his sword's hilt, and demand to speak to you.

**Zervis:** [Insert MC's name here]. I need to have a word with you. Now.

**MC:** [Dialogue options] Yes? OR (Remain silent.)

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**Chose 'Yes?' ? Zervis:** Before we proceed, I'd like to ask you a thimple question: How much do you like living?

**MC:** Quite a bit?...Why?

OR

**Choose 'Remain silent'  Zervis:** Do you think that not cooperating will make your life here any easier?

He nods at one of his men, who promptly thrusts the butt of his spear through the gap between the cell bars to smack MC in the gut.

**Zervis:** Thpeak when you're thpoken to unless I say otherwise, boy.

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**Zervis:** I have a propothition for you. You see, until about a minute ago I was fully prepared to let you hang for your crimes, but then a brilliant thought burtht into my head - or maybe it's this Makkal concoction I've been drinking to get through last night's paperwork. I thought, 'why waste tho much effort on trying to catch criminal twine myself when I could juth get a crook, one who was intimately athociated with them until very recently, to do it for me?'

**MC:** You want me to turn in my comrades?

**Zervis:** FORMER comrades. As I recall, your Blood Eagle friendth are the reathon you're here right now.

**Zervis:** Look boy, you don't owe these Blood Eagles a damn thing anymore. You've thpent most of your life helping them take over Ellith's criminal underworld and how did they repay you? By killing off what wath left of your family and beating you tho bad that you couldn't even thtand, let alone try to fend off my ladth when they came to fith you out of the gutter. In the unlikely event that you manage to ethcape this dungeon, the moment they see you up & about again they'll surely try to finish the job, because as I recall Aggy Thkleros was not a man to leave his marks 'merely' half-dead.

**Zervis:** Tho why don't you make thomething of your wahted life and help me put down the monthter you've helped create? You'll get your revenge and I'll get me a cleaner city - we both win.

**MC:** You just said it yourself - the Blood Eagles will try to kill me on sight, so what makes you think I'd be of any help at infiltrating their ranks?

**Zervis:** You know where all their little hidey-holes are, you know who their sergeanth and botheth are, and hell I bet you even know their favorite brothelth and watering-holeth. Even if you can't deal with them yourthelf - which I doubt, conthidering how much of a terror you were on our thtreets until recently and how hard they had to work to bring you down - you could at least point me and my men in the right direction. Your help could be invaluable in putting them down.

**MC:** [Dialogue options] Fine, I'll help you./No.

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**Chose 'Fine'  Zervis:** Very good. You're going to thtart work right now. Here ith your first athignment…

OR

**Chose 'No'**  **Zervis:** I advise you to reconsider, boy. Or would you really rather I leave you here to rot until they call you out for your hanging? Maybe Ellisian justice will just forget about you completely and you'll just wind up starving here when I forget to feed you one day. Errai knows you're not the first to suffer that fate.

**MC:** [Dialogue options] Fine, fine!/Go fuck yourself, lisper!

**Chose 'Fine, fine!' ** See what happens when you agree at the first opportunity above.

OR

**Chose 'Go fuck yourself, lisper'  Zervis:** …heh, fine then. Suit yourself. Ladth, come the dawn, see to it that this rat gets half rations. And yeah Pappath, you can start taking betsh on whether he'll live to get hanged. (walks away)  Game over.

**Scene: The city guard HQ in the slums, late night/early morning**

Zervis and his men march MC down the hallway leading out of the dungeon & to the atrium of the guards' compound.

**Zervis:** …we've gotten the name of one of the upstanding gentlemen who betrayed you. Do you remember an 'Aioloth Katharoth'?

**MC:** You mean Aiolos Katsaros? That gutless street rat? Yeah, sure. I'm guessing you want me to bring his head in or something? That should be easy enough, I remember he used to wet himself and almost drop dead whenever one of the higher-ups so much as glared at him.

**Zervis:** Well before we cruth him, we need to actually find him first. Do you know where he -

**MC:** He's got an apartment down on Falcon Road, he always stays there unless told to do otherwise by the bosses. I expect he's gotten a promotion from that shit Skleros after what he did, so it's safe to assume he's got at least a few guards to watch his back too. Nothing I can't handle, I'm sure - the Eagles won't assign their best and fiercest fighters to guard some weaselly nobody like him.

**Zervis:** Ahem. Two things: first, never interrupt me when I'm thpeaking. And thecond, you sound awfully confident about being able to bring this man down on your lonethome. If he's got guards as you just said, you'd be better off with a squad or two of my men to back you up when things turn ugly.

**MC:** Not a chance. Katsaros is **mine** - I've got more right than any of your goons to plant a knife between his eyes for what he did to me.

**Zervis:** You know, under most circumstances I'd be perfectly happy to let hotheadth like you run headfirst into danger tho you get a first-hand lesson in why it's important to always have thomeone else watch your back, but unfortunately for me you're too damn important to be allowed to just get yourself killed. Pappath, Macholakoth, I want your squads to shadow [MC]. See to it that he doesn't betray us and doesn't commit stupicide. Once you get in sight of Katharoth' hideout, bust down the front door, kill anyone who resists and clap anyone who doesn't in irons. We only really need Katharoth himself alive, though.

**Pappas & Macholakos:** Yes sir!

**MC:** Hell no, 'sir'! I told you I don't need anybody tagging along with me, and that Katsaros is MY mark. Besides, even the dumbest thug alive would know to bolt if he sees me coming down his street with a small army of watchmen. If we go with your plan, Katsaros will be on his way to one of his other hidey-holes before your come anywhere near his door, and Errai knows how much more time we'll have to waste tracking him down.

**Zervis:** …fair enough. You win, [MC]. But I insist on having my men tharing the glory of the athault. They'll shtay out of the immediate neighborhood tho they don't give you away, but when you do need them to come running, light this torch.

Zervis hands MC a torch with one end wrapped in a blue cloth. At the same time, his expression declares that he will brook no further argument on the subject of whether or not his men are tagging along.

**MC:** Ugh, fine. But in case you haven't noticed, the sun isn't even out yet. How are your men going to tell this thing apart from all the other torches and lanterns out there?

**Zervis:** This is a thpecial thignal-torch I ordered from the Magical Association. It'll burn with a blue flame, there ith no way can anyone mistake it for an ordinary torch.

**MC:** Well, alright then. But now it's my turn to insist on being the one to take out Katsaros.

**Zervis:** Very well, in the interest of getting our…'parthership' off to a good start, I'll permit you that much.

**MC:** [Dialogue options] I s'pose this is as good a start as either of us can expect./'Partnership'? Heh. Funny term for 'slavery'.

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**Chose 'As good a start as…' ** **Zervis:** Yes, that it ish. Now get moving and do your job already.

OR

**Chose 'Funny euphemism for 'slavery''  Zervis:** Are you accuthing me of being anything like them Umari bastards? You're no shlave, you melodramatic fool. Once you're out that door, you can walk away from all thish and we'll probably be none the wiser until dawn…if you don't mind walking away from your only real chance at revenge on the Blood Eaglesh as well, because somehow I doubt you can do much of anything against the largest criminal thyndicate to blight our Empress of Cities without the manpower and resources of the city guard.

**MC:** Ugh, fine, you've made your point. But nothing you just said means I have to like you or your thugs in mail.

**Zervis:** Nor I you. Now get the hell out of here and do your damn job already.

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From here on out, the player should be free to wander around the atrium, though since this is still just the combat prototype you won't have too many things to interact with/people to talk to. The player could talk with the guards loitering around the atrium, though that's like trying to chat up cops milling about the police station at 2 AM when nothing's happening.

**Possible lines for guards in the atrium:**

It's too early to welcome you onto the force, 'friend'.

Let's see how useful you are before we crack the wine-casks open.

What do you want, directions to the latrine?

Some of the boys just fished another body outta the sewer. \*sigh\* Another night, another murder.

Hey, don't ask me for directions. I'm only here 'cause Hatzidakis just got called away to stop a robbery.

Y'know, as much as I hate this job, I've really got to thank Errai that I didn't become an imperial minter. Those guys have been busy trying to suppress counterfeiters for decades.

\*yawn\* Can't believe they assigned me to the graveyard shift…I didn't know the captain would get so angry over my impression of his lisp.

Oi thief, can you go steal some coffee from the captain for me?

Zz…eh? Oh shi - I mean, I'm not dozing off on the job, you saw and heard nothing 'friend'.

Don't you have somewhere else to be?

Go bother someone else.

Get outta here and do your job already!

**Scene:** **The Brown Quarter's central market, early morning (near dawn)**

Again, not a whole lot of lines (or characters) here since this is just the prototype. As discussed with Carlito, only the blacksmith will be available for interaction at this time.

--------------------------------------------------First encounter-------------------------------------------------

**Blacksmith:** And they said I was an idiot for opening my store before dawn…ahem, welcome my good man! You've just come to the best blacksmith outside of the Bronze Quarter.

**MC:** 'The best smith outside of the Bronze Quarter'? You're not very good at this advertising thing, are you?

**Blacksmith:** Well excuse me, Your Highness! I didn't realize you could saunter up there to party with all the Chalkies, unlike us lowly peons! Do forgive me for not being able to afford the tools and training of Chalkie smiths.

Note: 'Chalkies' is a term I just made up for residents from the Bronze Quarter, since chalkos = Greek for 'copper', which as you should know forms the majority of the bronze alloy. Normally I would've gone for something actually based on bronze, but the Greek word for bronze is 'brountzos' and I can't think of anything based on that yet. Also, this note should not make it in-game.

**Blacksmith:** Look pal, I get enough of this shit from visiting uptowners during the day. If you're not here to buy anything, piss off.

-----------------------------------------------Repeat encounters------------------------------------------------

**Blacksmith:** Welcome back!...oh, it's you again. You here to buy something or to give me more reasons to throw you out?

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**Possible lines for guards in the streets:**

Move along, citizen.

I've got a million other things I'd rather do than just stand here.

I'm going to guess that the sergeant is still pissed at me for lighting all that dung under his bed.

Ugh, this is awful. You accidentally kill ONE hostage and they give you the graveyard shift for the rest of your life…

I'm watching you.

Who are you and why are you even talking to me?

You better have a good reason for being out on the streets before the dawn, 'friend'.

Do you want me to arrest you for lollygagging or something? Get out of my face!

-------------------------------------When breaking & entering certain houses------------------------------

**Tenant #1, young man:** What the - who the hell are you?! I don't recall inviting you here!

**Try to steal from Tenant #1  Tenant #1:** Help! Thief! THIEF!

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**Tenant #2, old woman:** Oh Marae, have we fallen so far from the Ellis of your day that vagabonds will steal from the widows of soldiers who gave their lives for your city?

**Try to steal from Tenant #2  Tenant #2:** I'm warning you, all five of my remaining boys are in the city guard!

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**Tenant #3, middle-aged man:** Children, go upstairs and wake your mother! And as for you…who are you and why are you in my home?!

**Try to steal from Tenant #3  Tenant #3:** Hey, get away from that! Guards! GUARDS, THERE'S A ROBBERY IN PROGRESS HERE!

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**Scene: Katsaros' hideout**

**MC:** Well, here I am. Katsaros' apartment. I can see some candles burning…guess he's home after all. Should I get the guards to back me up or do this on my own?...

**MC:** [Dialogue options] [Light the torch.]/[Proceed without backup.]

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**Chose 'Light the torch' ** **Sergeant Pappas:** Oi Macholakos, you see what I'm seeing?

**Sergeant Macholakos:** Yep, our pet rat just lit his signal. Time to go ruin some Blood Eagles' day.

Both men turn to their squads.

**Both:** Let's move boys, we have some heads to crack!

(Pappas and Macholakos will join MC's party as temporary companions. Both are defense-oriented warriors using one-handed weapons, you probably won't even need separate pics to represent them)

OR

**MC:** No…I've got to do this alone.

(The MC obviously gets no backup with this option, meaning the fights ahead will be harder)

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**Scene: Katsaros' hideout, first floor, near dawn**

**Chose 'Light the torch':**

The scene opens with the two guard squads (so let's say a total of twelve men, with six per squad) assembling just outside the hideout. The sergeants are prepared to kick the front door in.

**Sergeant Macholakos:** Take no prisoners lads, we don't need a single one of these scumbags alive except maybe Katsaros himself!

After the sergeants smash the front door into splinters, their men will proceed to rush in & handily mow down the three Blood Eagles on this floor. The player won't even have to fight anyone here, since the guards do all the killing. However, that does mean the player gets less experience & loot.

**Blood Eagle #1:** What the fu -

**Blood Eagle #2:** What's going on - ugh!

**Blood Eagle #3:** I surrender! I surrend - ahh!

**Guardsman:** This floor's clear, sergeant. The men have also secured the stairway.

**Sergeant Pappas:** Excellent work, men. [He turns to look at the stairs leading up] Well, [MC], it's our turn to lead the charge.

Upstairs, MC + the sergeants will have to fight at least one Blood Eagle in the hallway leading to Katsaros' room.

**Blood Eagle #4:** Oh hell no! Boss, we've got a problem!

**Sergeant Macholakos:** Hey now, why don't you worry about yourself first?

**Blood Eagle #4, after defeat:** Ugh…I didn't think it'd end like this…(dies)

As discussed with Carlito, there will also be an optional fight in the form of another Blood Eagle, who will attack the party if they enter his room.

**Blood Eagle #5:** Who's waking me up at - oh shit, it's the guards! (grabs weapon) You dogs will never take me alive!

**Sergeant Pappas:** Oh, we don't intend to.

**Blood Eagle #5, after defeat:** Hah…hah…I should have listened to Mother when she said to avoid the wrong crowd…(dies)

OR

**Chose 'Proceed without backup'**

MC will have to sneak past the Blood Eagles on the first floor. Fortunately for him one's over in the corner trying to sleep off a hangover, the second guy has fallen asleep onto his breakfast, and the third is walking around the table in a set pattern & will stop at each corner to just stare ahead for a while, so this should be easy. However, if you alert one guard by interacting with him, both of the others will rush to engage you straight away, forcing you into a fight with all three.

**Blood Eagle #1, if alerted:** Huh? Wha - Errai help us but I don't think I'm hallucinating, we've got an intruder over here!

**Blood Eagle #2, if alerted:** Hmm? Sabitha, is that you? Gimme a big old kiss - hey wait a minute, you're not Sabitha! WE'VE GOT AN INTRUDER!

**Blood Eagle #3:** Intruder! To arms, boys!

Upstairs, the situation is no different from what happens if you enter with the guards, except obviously you won't have any guards to help you: there's one mandatory fight before the boss in the form of a Blood Eagle patrolling the upstairs hallway…

**Blood Eagle #4:** Who in the blazes are you?

**MC:** Your death, if you don't get out of my way.

**Blood Eagle #4:** BOSS! WE'VE GOT COMPANY!

**Blood Eagle #4, after defeat:** Ugh…I didn't think it'd end like this…(dies)

… and one optional fight triggered by walking into a certain bedroom:

**Blood Eagle #5:** \*yawn\* Who's there - gah! Intruder!

**Blood Eagle #5, after defeat:** Hah…hah…I should have listened to Mother when she said to avoid the wrong crowd…(dies)

Both versions of the assault on the headquarters will lead up to the same point: the final confrontation with Aiolos Katsaros in his room. How the conversations play out will differ slightly depending on whether or not the guards are with you, but the outcome is the same: you have to fight Katsaros.

**Chose 'Light the torch':**

MC & the sergeants walk into Katsaros' room. Katsaros himself has already pushed his desk over to serve as a makeshift barrier and drawn his knives in preparation for a fight.

**Katsaros:** You bastards, d'you think you can get away with trying to arrest an important Blood Eagle like myself - what the hell?! Is that you, [MC]? I - I thought you'd be dead by now!

**MC:** You thought wrong. And now I'm here to repay the Blood Eagles for what they've done…with interest. Painting this room with your blood sounds like a good start to that.

**Sergeant Pappas:** Looks like you and your pals fucked over the wrong guy, kid.

**Katsaros:** Okay, okay. How about this? You let me go, and I don't get the Blood Eagles to send men after your families. Uh, you guys have families right? Not [MC] anymore though, I mean considering -

**MC:** You're just pissing me off with every word you utter, Katsaros. Time for you to go down.

**Sergeant Macholakos:** You know 'friend', threatening the families of the men who can end your life in a heartbeat isn't a bright idea. I'm with our new rat - you're going down right here, right now, and it's up to you to choose whether we do this the easy way or the hard way.

**Katsaros:** Fuck all of you and your mothers! I ain't coming with you!

**Sergeant Macholakos:** Hard way it is, then! Good thing too, the hard way is always more fun.

Cue the boss battle.

OR

**Chose 'Proceed without backup'**

MC walks into Katsaros' room alone. Katsaros has drawn his knives but hasn't kicked his desk over.

**Katsaros:** …oh dear Errai, it's you. I - I thought we pretty much killed you!

**MC:** 'Pretty much' doesn't necessarily mean 'definitely'.

**Katsaros:** I'm gonna guess that reminding you of all the good times we had, from the day you and Skleros took me in to that time I helped you get some candy for your sister, isn't going to keep you from trying to kill me?

**MC:** Not even a little bit. In fact, reminding me about my sister - considering what you bastards did to her - is only going to make me want to rip you limb from bloody limb even more.

**Katsaros:** \*sigh\* Well, it was worth a shot.

Cue the boss battle.

Either way, you will have to defeat Katsaros in a boss battle. It's probably easier with the guards backing you up, though if you went in alone you might've gained a level or two from fighting all the other Eagles to compensate for the lack of party members.

Upon defeat:

**Katsaros:** Wait, wait! Stay your hand, please! I don't want to die -

**MC:** My sister and I didn't want to die either, yet you helped kill her and tried to kill me, you bastard!

**Katsaros:** I'm sorry for everything, really! Please, I'm begging you, don't kill me! I uh, I swear, if you let me go I'll catch the first boat out of the country and I will never get in your way again, I swear it on my life.

**MC:** I don't remember you and your friends giving me that kind of chance.

If the guardsmen are present, they will step back to let you choose whether to kill him or not & to pass some commentary:

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**Sergeant Pappas:** If I were you, [MC], I'd put this sniveling shit down hard. A man helps kill my family, I know I'd want to tear him limb from bloody limb.

**Sergeant Macholakos:** Have you forgotten we've got strict orders to 'deal with him'? You can't let him go, [MC]. But if you really don't want his blood on your hands, you can let us take him in alive. You said he just got a promotion, right? Maybe he knows who our next target should be and where he or she's hiding.

(note: If the guards weren't brought along, just skip straight down to the dialogue options)

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**MC:** [Dialogue options] Kill him./Spare him.

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**Chose 'Kill him':**

**MC:** Don't be such a crybaby Katsaros, I'm just showing you the mercy you showed me and mine! (moves forward to kill him)

**Katsaros:** NO! Please, please -

**MC:** Do try to die with a little dignity, kid.

MC stabs Katsaros to death. If present, the guardsmen will have the following lines:

**Sergeant Pappas:** Good riddance to bad rubbish.

**Sergeant Macholakos:** \*sigh\* Well, I guess that's that. I was hoping you'd take him in alive for questioning, but considering what our interrogators are like, killing him might've been a mercy. We should report back to the Captain now.

If the guardsmen are not present, the above conversation happens without their lines.

**Chose 'Spare him':**

**MC:** …get up.

**Katsaros:** What?

**MC:** I said 'get up'. On your feet Katsaros, I'm taking you in.

**Katsaros:** You're not going to kill me?

**MC:** As much as I want to…no. Now get up already.

**Katsaros:** Oh, thank you! Thank you from the bottom of my heart, [MC] -

Katsaros attempts to hug MC but is shoved away and turned around so MC can tie his hands together & gag him.

**MC:** Don't put up any further resistance and don't try to stab me in the back. If you do, I'll have to change my mind - and you'll have to die screaming.

If the guards are present, they will have the following lines:

**Sergeant Macholakos:** \*laughs\* Oh, I wouldn't thank him, 'friend'.

**Sergeant Pappas:** Hmph. If this rat slips out of our hands, that's on your head, [MC].

If the guardsmen are not present, the above conversation happens without their lines.

--------------------------------------------------Denouement---------------------------------------------------

MC heads back downstairs, where Zervis awaits with the two guard squads (regardless of whether or not you signaled them to join you: if you didn't, they'll be here at his command). If Katsaros lived, he will of course be right behind you. The guard sergeants will also be following you if they joined the party, if not they'll be flanking Zervis. If you snuck past the first floor guards, they're all dead now.

**If MC took the guards & killed Katsaros:**

**Zervis:** I mushtered reinforcements and got here as fast as I could when I heard that the boys were moving in for the athault, but it seems you didn't need us after all. Where is Katharoth?

**Pappas:** Dead, Captain.

**Zervis:** Truly? Well done, ladth! That's one less pest on our fair city. And as for you [MC], you've just taken the first shtep on your road to vengeance. You've thtill got quite a waysh to go, but we will help you advance to its very end. Right now though, I need you to come back with us for a debriefing.

Game ends.

**If MC didn't take the guards & killed Katsaros:**

**Zervis:** Imagine my thurprithe when I saw my men thtill milling about in the streets while you had gone off and started your assault on this rat-hole! I had to learn that this…unpleathantneth had already begun from a little urchin. What were you thinking, attacking a crime lieutenant and his band of lackeyth all on your lonethome?!

**MC:** None of that matters. I've already killed Katsaros, and I didn't need your men to do it.

**Zervis:** Oh for the love of - look, you work for me now whether you want to accept it or not, boy! And tho I expect you to obey my orderth, like that order to light a thignal for my men when you've reached the hideout! Clearly we are going to have to dithcuth thith novel concept called 'dithcipline' when we're debriefing you…

Game ends.

**If MC took the guards & spared Katsaros:**

**Zervis:** I mushtered reinforcements and got here as fast as I could when I heard that the boys were moving in for the athault, but it seems you didn't need us after all. Where is Katharoth?

**Pappas:** Right here, captain.

Once everyone's reached the bottom of the stairs, Pappas shoves the bound Katsaros forward.

**Zervis:** Very good. The interrogator ish going to be very busy tonight…for your own thake I do hope you're quick to thing, boy. And as for you [MC], we'll need to debrief you back at the barracks.

Even with his gag, Katsaros manages to let out a muffled laugh at Zervis' lisp. The unamused Zervis promptly storms up to him and smashes him across the face with the hilt of his sword, instantly knocking him out. Game ends.

**If MC didn't take the guards & spared Katsaros:**

**Zervis:** Imagine my thurprithe when I saw my men thtill milling about in the streets while you had gone off and started your assault on this rat-hole! I had to learn that this…unpleathantneth had already begun from a little urchin. What were you thinking, attacking a crime lieutenant and his band of lackeyth all on your lonethome?!

**MC:** None of that matters. As you can see, I didn't need their help to capture Katsaros.

**Zervis:** Oh for the love of - look, you work for me now whether you want to accept it or not, boy! And tho I expect you to obey my orderth, like that order to light a thignal for my men when you've reached the hideout! Clearly we are going to have to dithcuth thith novel concept called 'dithcipline' when we're debriefing you…just count yourthelf lucky you don't have to share a room with this wathte of thpace.

Even with his gag, Katsaros manages to let out a muffled laugh at Zervis' lisp. The unamused Zervis promptly storms up to him and smashes him across the face with the hilt of his sword, instantly knocking him out. Game ends.