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, late 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.

(Adam's suggestion: put a timer here, the conversation between MC & the prisoner should not be necessary to cause Zervis to come in)

After MC's productive chat with the other prisoner/Eventually, 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 fish 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 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 lays low down 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 hideouts 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?

**Blacksmith:** Is it my lead disease talking or have you actually come back? Get out!

**Blacksmith:** I don't just make weapons, you know. I also know how to use them. Leave now!

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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 GOING ON IN THIS HOUSE!

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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:** You should know by now that 'pretty much' isn't good enough for [MC's full name].

**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 make him suffer.

**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 - our prison is no flowery meadow.

**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.

This is the first draft of the script for the diplomatic section of the prototype. The basic idea can be found in pages 9-12 of 'gamecharconcepts.docx', so I won't restate it here. The plan that I've got for this section will be to further test choices & consequences carrying over from the previous combat section + new choices with new consequences here, and to explore the possibility of non-violent resolutions to conflicts in addition to the feasibility of scripting such an outcome in RPGMaker: therefore, as I said in the previous document, @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 Since I'll be coming to your place this Sunday afternoon (I think?) we can discuss it further there, or if the Sunday meeting is off then we obviously still have email or future meetings as a backup option. @ 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 watch office, dusk**

MC is seated in Zervis' office, while Zervis himself is pacing around his desk. It's been around 12 hours since their dustup with Katsaros, resulting in his death or incarceration, and now they are hoping to similarly bag/dispose of the next crime lieutenant on their list - Alusian Atanasov, a formidable enforcer for their crime lord archnemesis Skleros, who is known for terrorizing the docks in particular - before news of Katsaros' demise can spread too far.

**Zervis:** Perhaps you've grown weary of hearing it, but I must rethate this once again: your thervice earlier this day was well done, [MC]. By [killing/capturing] Katsaros you've already made more progreth in one morning than I and my men have over the past year.

----------------Zervis' next lines are dependent on whether you killed/captured Katsaros------------

**If you killed Katsaros:**

**Zervis:** But our work is far from over, indeed it's only just begun. You've put Katharoth in the ground, and as I have thaid that's well and good, but he was just a worm shquirming at the very bottom of the criminal hierarchy.

**Zervis:** We must shtrike again while the iron's hot, before too many of his friends can learn that he ish now rotting face-down in a thewer, and I think I have just the man in mind. Do you recall a hirsute man just as broad as I but taller, with shaggy black hair and a Perikunian accent, in your company before he helped shtrike you down last night?

**MC:** Are you talking about that oaf Atanasov?

**Zervis:** Yesh. When we searched Katsaros' room, we found an invitation to a party being hosted by one Akakios Raptis, a cloth merchant in the *Carcharon* - our fine city's eastern port. And this Aluthian Atanathov just so happens to be one of Raptis' guests of honor…

OR

**If you captured Katsaros:**

**Zervis:** Good thing you took him in alive, too, though our torturer would not agree. He did not get a chance to even touch the worm - Katsaros started babbling about everything he knew when the man started waving pliers in his face. The man is a 'killjoy' according to our hooded friend.

**Zervis:** Anywayth, we now have a name and a place to go on. Are you familiar with Aluthian Atanathov?

**MC:** Big man, taller than you but not half as fat, covered in black hair, speaks with a Perikunian accent he must have inherited from his parents, drinks so much of this strong fruit brandy that his breath stinks of it all the time and has an even bigger appetite for violence? That Alusian Atanasov?

**Zervis:** Yesh, that Atanathov. Katsaros told us he ish a guest of honor at a party hosted by this cloth merchant, Akakios Raptis, in the *Carcharon* - our eastern port - to celebrate moving up in the world.

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**Both branches converge here**

**Zervis:** Raptis has recently gotten a permit to live and trade in the Copper Dishtrict. Considering his athociation with Atanasov, one must wonder how he really got ahead of his competition…but that is a matter for another time. The priority right now ish, without queshtion, Atanasov.

**MC:** So what do you want me to do? If you're expecting me to bring him down [alone/with a few of your lackeys], well I do hate to disappoint you, but that cannot happen. I've seen Atanasov ripping a man's head off with his bare hands, punching a horse to death and defeating several armed men in a bar brawl, he's not an opponent I would bet against.

**Zervis:** I'm well aware. Your former friend has quite the…reputation for being very good at mindleth violence, if nothing else, hence why Shkleroth keeps him ash an enforcer. Hell, he hath the audacity to drop off a severed head on MY doorthep a few months ago. But I do not need you to fight him at all tonight. Jusht get in thath meeting, find out where Atanathov is going later this night, and report back to me.

**MC:** I can do that. Anything else?

**Zervis:** Wha - we haven't even decided on HOW you will be infiltrating the party in the firsht place!

**MC:** Doesn't matter, I can think of a few plans already. Now…anything else you need me to do while in there?

**Zervis:** \*sigh\* Normally I would have one of my men club you until you listen to me, then have another follow you to this merchant's hovel to ensure you carry out my instructions, but in light of your service this morning I'll let your flippancy pass. Anyway, there is indeed something else.

**Zervis:** One of my men, an informant who has shpent the past eight months trying to infiltrate the Blood Eagleth, was captured about a week ago. You probably know of it already, hell you might have helped capture him in the first place.

**MC:** …I think I know who you're talking about. Short fellow with short hair the color of sand, resembles a rat almost as closely as Katsaros [does/did]?

**Zervis:** That's the one. So you have seen him after all?

**MC:** [Dialogue options] Be honest./Lie.

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**Chose 'Be honest.'🡪MC:** I helped capture him, actually. Tripped him and sent him flying face-first onto the floor when he tried to flee our headquarters.

**Zervis:** Well. I knew that already, I do have more sources than just him after all, but thank you for being honest with me. Anyway, we know he's being held in Raptis' cellar, Atanathov likely intends to 'interrogate' him once he's done speaking with Raptis. I need you to rethcue him or I will have you killed by midnight.

**MC:** Wait, what? I just [killed/captured] Katsaros for you!

**Zervis:** Yes, you did. But Katharoth [is/was] nothing in the grand scheme of things, his loss is something even Skleros can forgive. Rescue my informant, and I will know that you are not playing some bizarre double game with me.

**Zervis:** But I have no use for an agent I cannot trust, so I really will have my men put a shpear through your shkull if you fail in this. I do not make idle threats, you know this. I appreciate your candor, so I am being honest with you now in return: get my man out of Raptis' home, you will win my trust and another day to live. Fail, and you will die just as thurely as he will without your help.

OR

**Chose 'Lie.'🡪MC:** No, I've only heard of him and the incident in which he was captured by my then-friends.

**Zervis:** Really? Because I heard a different shtory from one of your so-called friends.He told me you were directly rethponthible for my man being taken prisoner.

**MC:** I wouldn't know about that. Besides, I've no doubt the Eagles will say anything to discredit me now that I am less than nothing to them. Who spun this tale for you?

**Zervis:** His name is Ioannes Floros, and he is another agent on my payroll, who infiltrated the Blood Eagleth seven months ago on my order. You might remember him as one of your cooks.

**MC:** …

**Zervis:** And here I thought we were getting along sho well. I do not know whether to credit you for your bravery in lying to my face when I shtill hold your life in my hands, or to strike you down right now for your shtupidity. But first, I need you to get my man out of Raptis' cellar. Fail, and I will have you killed before the sun rises.

**MC:** Wait, what? I just [killed/captured] Katsaros for you!

**Zervis:** Of course. But Katharoth [is/was] nothing in the grand scheme of things, his loss is something even Skleros can forgive. Rescue my informant, and I will know that you are not playing some bizarre double game with me.

**Zervis:** But I have no use for an agent I cannot trust, so I really will have my men put a shpear through your shkull if you fail in this. I do not make idle threats, you know this. I see even less reason to trust you now than I did a few minutes ago, as you had the gall to transparently lie to me just now. But I am prepared to be honest even with men who will not offer me the same courteshy, so allow me to reiterate: get my man out of Raptis' home, you will win my trust and another day to live. Fail, and you will die just as thurely as he will without your help.

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**Both paths converge here**

**MC:** Fine, fine! But how the hell am I supposed to get him out of Raptis' place?

**Zervis:** I have no earthly idea, but I will leave that up to you to figure out. You already have a plan to get in there, do you noth? Then improvising a second time should be no challenge.

**MC:** Very funny. And why can't you just storm the damn place with your men right now?

**Zervis:** And trap dozenth of innocenth, some from the higher Dishtricts, in the croshtfire in addition to risking severe property damage? That might have been how my predecethers did things, but I intend to rise above them. Besides, there's no way to control an ambusht, Atanathov could just leave his lackeyth behind to die on our spears and get away in the chaosh.

**Zervis:** Anywayth, now that we have settled on your objectives, I advise you to get moving immediately. [The invitation said/Katharoth told us] that the party begins in an hour from now. So - get out of here, and remember to bring me not just directions to wherever the hell Atanathov is going after the party, but my informant too.

MC leaves Zervis' office.

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From that point, the player can once again explore the atrium on his way out, which is more heavily populated than it was in the wee hours of the morning (the combat section). However, everyone's busy with their own jobs, so not a lot of people should stop to talk to the MC if he attempts to engage them in conversation. If possible, their dialogue should vary a little depending on whether you killed Katsaros or not in the combat section.

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

I heard there was quite a ruckus on Falcon Road. Was that your handiwork?

Well done on [killing/capturing] Katsaros, [MC]!

Good work out there.

You actually brought a Blood Eagle down [by yourself/with so little backup]? You've done in one morning what we couldn't for years.

Hmph. I guess it does take a rat to eliminate other rats after all.

Don't think what you did this morning makes us friends.

I'll concede this much - for a street rat, you can fight better than many of your friends, at least.

I'm still watching you, 'friend'.

Well, you're useful at least.

Been stuck here for the entire day. I could use a good fight, get the blood flowing again.

I can't say I like it when desperate criminals try to stab me. Not in the slightest.

We sure made quick work of those rats, eh? (if MC brought the guards along)

Save some of the insects for us next time, would you? (if MC stormed Katsaros' place alone)

Didn't the captain already give you new orders? I'd carry them out before letting the pride get to my head.

Why are you even still here?

What, do you want us to bake a cake and break open the wine-casks for you?

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Outside, as night is falling fast many shops have already closed up. Most 'respectable' folks have left the streets of the Brown Quarter to beggars, prostitutes, petty criminals, scum in general and of course, the ever-present guards.

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

Spare a copper or two? I haven't eaten for days!

Remember now, Yahrel taught us to be charitable to the needy. And hey, I'm one of the needy.

Have you got anything to spare for a man down on his luck?

Well hello there, handsome. Looking for company this fine evening?

Want to see what I'm cooking in my room, good-lookin'?

Five silvers and I'll make you holler!

I've got a potion made from powdered unicorn horn, leviathan's brains and the knuckle of a great sloth! I promise: it'll cure whatever ails you, or your money back!

Look at this, my good man: a sword of the finest tin - I mean steel, forged to perfection in Brel's hottest volcano and driven through a unicorn's heart for good luck. You'll never find anything like it anywhere else!

Teeth of Saint Hilarios and a strand of Holy Marae's hair, only five silvers each! What a bargain for the salvation of your eternal soul, am I right?

Bah, I should never have become a street cleaner. Now every day's a shitty day.

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

Fine night for a walk, citizen.

The night shift, my God. Marae help me get through this night…

\*yawns\* Oh, it's you. I heard from Sergeant Pappas that you cleaned up Falcon Street quite nicely.

Can you believe some filthy urchin tried to steal from me just now? Smashed him so hard with the butt of my spear that one of his eyes was left hanging outta its socket though, that should teach him good.

I can tell you from personal experience that none of the whores working tonight are worth whatever they're charging. Maybe half their prices, at best.

Look at that swindler trying to sell fake relics over there. What an idiot! Everyone knows you should start with the shrouds of martyrs, or nothing at all.

You know, my mother told me not to throw stones at panhandlers, but my father told me not to miss their heads. Well, it's not like anyone's going to miss them, right?

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The next accessible area for the player should be the Carcharon: Ellis' eastern docks, or at least a small section of it where Raptis lives. Again, there should be a few folks (fishermen & sailors on the way home, probably) wandering the streets while some guards have taken up their night-shift posts, but there should be a new addition in the form of a few Thuriners: merchants, soldiers and ambassadors (well, not the last category for now) from the Thurinian Empire, the largest of the Northern Realms & this universe's equivalent to the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, whose foreign quarter is located in the Carcharon (though it obviously shouldn't be accessible to the player at this time).

**Possible lines for civilians in Carcharon:**

We caught a small whale today. Should sell for a good five hundred silvers to the rich folks uptown, or maybe the Brixians will take it for double that.

Brought in a large haul today, so large that the boss even let me keep some salmon. I just hope the lemons haven't rotted and we still have some olive oil at home, so I can properly treat m' wife and kids tonight…

Hey you, do I still stink of anchovy guts? God damn, I never realized handling *garum* would be so hard and smell so foul.

I hope they still have an empty seat at the Hookworm, I could use a pork chop and a jug of wine. No fish for me though, I've dealt with enough of them today.

**Possible lines for Thuriners:**

Your wein is weak and watery compared to der mighty drinks of my homeland, Ellisich. Pah, what I wouldn't do for a mug of real hefeweizen…

I do not like this city. It reeks of magic, bad wine, men in skirts and women wearing too much paint. And nobody knows how to cook pork properly!

Thurin mighty, Thurin ist unbesiegbar. All our setbacks so far, purely temporary. What happen when boar stomps on schwarzenlurche's head? Same thing that our wise Kaiser will do to puny Brelisch upstarts from the west.

Heil der Kaiser!

Sprichst du Thurisch? Nein? Na ja, das ist schade.

At the entrance to the Thuriner Quarter…

Thuriner Soldier: Halt, Ellisich! This is Thuriner Quarter. Entschuldigung…er, sorry, but no entry für du without pass unless sie sind selbst Thurisch - I mean, you are a Thuriner yourself.

(Dialogue option: But I'm a Thuriner./Come on now, I work for the city guard./Fine, fine…)

Chose 'But I'm a Thuriner'🡪Thuriner Soldier: Haha! You funny guy. I like you. If this was battlefield, I kill you last. Now really, get out of here.

Chose ' Come on now, I work for the city guard .'🡪Thuriner Soldier: Nein, das ist nicht relevant - I mean, that is irrelevant. Entschuldigung, but I was told to make no exceptions für anyone, even those who work for the Ellisian Crown. Now please leave.

Chose 'Fine, fine…'🡪Thuriner Soldier: Ja, sehr gut. Please do not return without pass.

**Possible lines for guards in Carcharon:**

Everything and everyone here smells of fish, bad alcohol, or both.

If only I had known that joining the city guard would be a disastrous career choice…

Damn those Thuriner barbarians! They come here and mock our wine, our manly skirts and our women but drink that brown swill they call beer, prance around in pants and won't let us anywhere near their blondes - what terrible guests, really. Though I'll grant that their women are prettier than anyone else's even without cosmetics, even if Brel's fiery redheads are real demonesses in bed.

None can deny our navy is a shadow of what it used to be in our glory days. \*sighs\* I just hope the Umari don't attack us by sea.

**Special encounters (interacting with either one is needed to access the party)**

**Encounter 1, puking man:**

A well-dressed man is vomiting on the side of a street. MC can approach and interact with him for the opportunity to buy an invitation to Raptis' party.

**Vomiting man:** Bleurgh! \*vomits\* What did Aikaterine put in that stew?…! \*heaves\*

**MC:** Uh…do you need help there?

**Vomiting man:** No, I'm f-fi-\*vomits\* I am never eating at the Hookworm again, Marae help me. There's no way I can go to Akakios' party like this!

**MC:** Oh, were you invited to Raptis' party? I heard he was moving up in the world.

**Vomiting man:** You heard right. He's made enough money to buy a place for himself and his family in the Copper District, and the paperwork for his move finally went through the *Maistorion* this morning. Now he's throwing a party to celebrate his last night here in the Brown District with us, his friends and - \*pukes\*

**MC:** \*slightly backs away\* Well, if you can't come, I could go there in your stead and send him your regards.

**Vomiting man:** Hah, very funny. You look like a street rat to me, not the company he keeps. Were you hoping to help yourself to some roast rack of lamb and a cup or two of real wine, not that watered-down piss they sell in most taverns 'round here? You've got a point though, I really can't come tonight. Tell you what, I'll sell you my invitation for a hundred coppers.

**Dialogue choice: Deal./No deal.**

**'Deal.'🡪MC:** You've got yourself a deal.

**Vomiting man:** Very good. Here you go, frie - ugh! \*vomits\*

MC acquires the invitation, then promptly leaves the man to continue puking.

OR

**'No deal.'--?MC:** You know what, I think I'll try to get myself an invitation from someone whose clothes and hands *aren't* drenched with vomit.

**Vomiting man:** Oh? Well fuck you too, 'friend'…ugh! \*pukes\*

MC promptly leaves the scene.

If MC has already interacted with the well-dressed woman and secured her aid, the vomiting man will have nothing to say but this:

**Vomiting man:** \*heaves\* Ugh, Marae preserve me…you there, just leave me alone…\*retches\*

**Encounter 2, well-dressed woman:**

An unusually well-dressed woman, clearly higher up the social food chain of the empire than the slum-dwellers of the Brown Quarter, is standing at a street corner, facing a wall. She appears to be fully focused on a stack of scrolls she's carrying in her arms and isn't paying attention to her surroundings.

**MC:** Excuse me…

**Well-dressed woman:** Eep!

The startled woman jumps and whirls around to face MC, but drops her scrolls in the process.

**Well-dressed woman:** Oh no!

Though those scrolls are now stained with the filth one might expect to find on the streets of a busy port directly neighboring the city slums, she doesn't wait for a servant to pick them up for her or command MC to do that for her, but instead bends over to do the job herself. No sneering aristocrat or lily-livered merchant, this girl.

**MC:** [Help her./Walk away.]

**Chose 'Help her.'🡪MC:** Here, let me help you. And I apologize for inconveniencing you like this.

**Well-dressed woman:** Thank you. You just frightened me, but it is I who should not have been so easily shaken. It's just that this is the first time I have entered the Brown Quarter, and I have heard nothing but terrible things about this place and your people.

**MC:** Really? What do they say about us where you come from?

**Well-dressed woman:** Well, back in the Copper District they say that you are given to criminality and loose morals from birth - men like you will more often than not grow up to be pickpockets, smugglers and murderers who lack even the slightest semblance of civility and honor, while your women soil their own virtue at an early age and will spend the rest of their lives as prostitutes. My own father says that he would not trust any of you to guard his shops, hence why he hires men from our neighborhood to do that.

**MC:** …well, I appreciate your honesty. But I assure you that many, perhaps even most, of us are not half as bad as your father thinks. If he pays us a fair wage and treats us right, we'd guard his shops just as vigilantly as any man from the Copper District, and would sooner remove our own hands than steal from him.

**Well-dressed woman:** Heh, if you think that what the merchants and craftsmen of the Copper District think of you is unfair, then I hope you never encounter one of the highborn from the Golden or Silver Districts. According to my aunt, who is married to a nobleman's second son, they consider the people of the Brown Quarter little more than animals who will waste their coppers on beard dirt and tattered caps. But you at least have proven them all wrong in my eyes, even if I cannot say the same of every other man I've seen here so far.

The two finish gathering up the woman's scrolls.

**Well-dressed woman:** Thank you once again. Now, if you will excuse me, I must make my way to a party being hosted by one Akakios Raptis…

**MC:** Oh, Raptis you say? I've heard of him.

**Well-dressed woman:** Have you now? I do not like the man much, I find him to be crass and far too quick to take to drink, but he is one of my father's partners in this Quarter. Indeed, my father was the one who endorsed his move to the Copper District before a magistrate six months ago.

**MC:** I need to see him at once. He…owes me something, and I would like to negotiate terms of its return before he leaves for the Copper District. If it's not too much trouble, might I ask you to help me get into that party?

**Well-dressed woman:** Well, you did just aid me when most of your peers would have likely just walked away, so it is only fair that I return the favor. I also need a companion to guide me through these unfamiliar streets, and this invitation does say that we can take one guest with us…yes, I believe I can help you after all. Come with me, my good…hm, I don't believe I've learned your name?

**MC:** [Insert MC's first name here]. Thank you, my lady…?

**Well-dressed woman:** \*laughs\* Oh, you need not extend that courtesy to me. I am no noble lady, however much I may have dreamed of it when I was a little girl. A pity we do not live in Brel, their King wed a merchant's daughter like myself for love and fought wars against all who tried to come between them. But I am Euphemia, and you can just call me by my name.

**MC:** Then well met, Euphemia. Now, let's depart for that party before old Raptis drinks every last drop of wine he has, shall we?

The two leave.

OR

**Chose 'Walk away.'🡪MC:** \*quietly leaves the scene\*

The merchant's daughter will not respond to further attempts to interact with her.

If MC has already bought an invitation from the puking man, the merchant's daughter will have only one line when he tries to interact with her:

**Well-dressed woman:** Excuse me, I will depart shortly.

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At Raptis' front door…

**Door guard:** Stop! This party is open to invited guests only. If you don't have an invitation penned by the hand of Master Raptis, scram.

**If you got an invitation from the puking man:**

**MC:** I've got mine right here.

**Door guard:** Let me see that.

The guardsman takes the invitation and reads through it quickly, then nods and opens Raptis' door.

**Door guard:** Alright, you're clear. Enjoy the festivities, friend.

**If you came with the well-dressed woman:**

**Euphemia:** He's with me.

**Door guard:** And who might you be, young woman?

**Euphemia:** I am Euphemia Rhangabe, daughter of Theophylaktos Rhangabe. My father is a close partner of your Master Raptis. Alas, he is far too busy with his own coin to come tonight, so he has sent me in his stead.

**Door guard:** Ah yes, Master Rhangabe. As I recall, he's the only reason Master Raptis is even celebrating tonight. Your invitation if you please, Mistress Rhangabe?...

Euphemia hands the door guard her invitation.

**Door guard:** Everything seems to be in order. Enjoy the festivities, you two.

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Inside Raptis' house, on the ground floor, if Euphemia is with you then:

**Euphemia:** Well, here we are, [MC]. If you'll excuse me, I will be helping myself to the fried prawns, and I think I recognize some of the women over there as well. I hope you will find whatever it is you're looking for.

**MC:** Thank you for all your help, Euphemia.

If MC enters alone, the above exchange obviously doesn't happen and you can skip straight to exploring. There are two things you have to do in Raptis' house: find out where Atanasov is going after the party, and break Zervis' informant out of captivity. The player can accomplish both objectives in any order.

**Possible lines for the party guests:**

I would be lying if I said I didn't envy Raptis. He's finally leaving this cesspit behind, such a pity that we can't come with him - not yet, anyway.

Have you tried the blessed thistle with lamb? Simply divine.

Raptis must have been very lucky to secure that contract with the Meravian burghers. Look at those lily-shaped apple cakes and stuffed pigeons with rose-petal sauce they brought for him!

I wonder how much it cost to bring those rabbits in almond gravy and the lamp chops in honey & cloves over from Brel.

This spiced white bread is delectable, though I hope Raptis didn't drive himself to bankruptcy securing the ingredients for it.

Try the hippocras, my good man.

----------------------------------------------Rescuing the informant------------------------------------------

There are two ways to distract the guards guarding the cellar door:

1) Engage one of the guests in a drinking contest.

**Guest:** Hey you, over there! Look at what Raptis bought for us: a cask of fine Thuriner beer! Why don't you have a seat and see who can drink more of this stuff?

**MC:** [Agree./Refuse.]

**If 'Agree.'🡪MC:** You're on, friend.

**Guest:** That's the spirit. Alright Leon, pour two mugs.

**Guest's servant:** At once.

The servant pours two cups of beer, which MC and the guest both drink quickly.

**Guest:** Well, that hit the spot. But don't tell me you're going to quit after just one? We'll have another round, Leon!

This continues until the two are on their sixth round. The guest is clearly quite drunk by this point, but being a hardened criminal who's had much worse than this and lived, MC is still fine.

**Guest:** Urk…\*belches\* I gotta hand it to you friend, you're pretty good at this. But I'll be damned before I let some rat off the streets drink me under the table. Leon, another!

**Servant:** Master Simon, I think you have had quite enough…

**Guest:** What did you jus' say, Leon? I decide when I've had enough! Now pour.

**MC:** Your servant might be on to something, Simon. You're turning green and you almost slipped off your chair more than once -

**Guest:** Oh shut up, you're just sayin' that 'cause you know you're losing. Leon! Mug, beer, now!

**Servant:** Master, you were on the verge of vomiting last round -

**Guest:** Oh shut it, will you boy? I'm not paying you to give me advice when I din' ask for it.

**Other, clearly also inebriated guest:** Your servant and friend are right man, you have had enough. More than enough for an obvious lightweight, I'd say.

**Guest:** What the - who the fuck are you and who d'you think I am, eh?

**Other guest:** A drunken animal who doesn't know when to stop racing off cliffs, clearly.

**Guest:** Well fuck you too, 'friend'! I see your whore mother never taught you to respect your betters, so I'll hafta educate you myself!

Simon pounces on the other guest, igniting a brawl that distracts the guards.

OR

2) Get Euphemia, by now clearly drunk and full of fried shrimp, to start a scene for you. (obviously, this is only possible if you came with her)

**MC:** Euphemia, I need your help.

**Euphemia:** Again? Well, what is it now [MC]?

**MC:** I need you to distract the guards by the cellar. The thing I'm looking for is down there.

**Euphemia:** Very well, but you owe me one for this. I was getting bored of these prawns anyway, and I think I see the daughter of one of my father's business rivals over there.

She drains her cup of wine and storms off to confront another, similarly well-dressed woman. It's clear that they are not fond of each other.

**Euphemia:** Oh hello Akantha, I wasn't expecting to see you here!

**Akantha:** Euphemia Rhangabe. What are you doing here? Come to rub your father's latest commercial triumph in my face?

**Euphemia:** Not at all! Actually, I wanted to know how you managed to afford that red dress you're wearing. I know your father fell on hard times since mine made sure he couldn't steal that contract with the Brelynn and Dolyans from us, so there's no way he could have bought it for you.

**Akantha:** Mind your own business.

**Euphemia:** Wait, don't tell me - you performed a favor or two for the tailor on Eirene's Street? Well, Xanthis always did have a liking for you…

**Akantha:** What - how drunk are you, woman? How dare you say such things!

**Euphemia:** Come now, we both know Xanthis never works for free. To paraphrase my father, he runs a business, not a charity. You can tell me, it'll be our secret! Perhaps I should have brought one of my old dolls so you can show me where Xanthis touched you, eh?

**Akantha:** You bitch, I'll make you pay for every one of those words!

Akantha promptly attacks Euphemia, causing a scene that distracts the guards. If spoken to again after the ruckus has settled down, Euphemia will have only one line to say:

**Euphemia:** Well, that was…surprisingly fun, to my surprise. It wasn't very ladylike, but then the bratty daughter of a pig who dares try to steal my father's contracts deserves no courtesy.

Once the guards are out of the way, MC can proceed into the cellar. The informant is there, tied up and blindfolded between barrels of wine. MC will of course proceed to untie him and take off his blindfold.

**Informant:** Thanks, friend - hey, wait a minute…you're the shit who caught me in the first place!

He swings at MC, catching him off-guard and striking him once, but MC is better prepared to catch his second punch.

**MC:** Calm down! I'm here to get you out of here on orders from Captain Zervis, you fool.

**Informant:** You really think I'm gonna believe that, when you saw to it that I'd spend the last couple months getting hanged upside down on top of having my hands smashed, holes drilled into my feet and my arms pulled outta their sockets? How am I s'posed to trust you to not just kill me the second I get out of this damn cellar?

**MC:** If I wanted you dead, I would've just killed you when you were still tied up and blindfolded.

**Informant:** Hmph. What's your brilliant idea to get me out of here anyway? You can't be so stupid as to think the guards will just let me leave without a fuss.

**MC:** I've got several ideas, actually. Wait here…

**Informant:** That won't be a problem, considering I can barely walk in my state. Idiot.

From there on, MC has two options: get a servant's spare clothes, or lure a guard downstairs and ambush him for his outfit.

If MC goes for the servant route, he'll need to head off into the hallway connecting the kitchen to the main hall & talk to the servant closest to the door.

**Servant:** Sorry, I can't stop to talk right now or Master Raptis will have my hide for sure.

**MC:** Wait! I need to borrow your clothes.

**Servant:** …wait, what did you just say? You want my clothes?

**MC:** Yes, yes I do.

**Servant:** For what, exactly? Yours don't appear to be soiled or anything.

**MC:** It's not important, just give me your clothes already.

**Servant:** Well obviously I can't give you what I'm wearing right now, but for a couple of silvers I could allow one of my spares to go missing…

**MC:** [Pay him./Don't pay him.]

**Chose 'Pay him.'🡪MC:** Alright fine, here's your money. Now where are your spare clothes?

**Servant:** Go to the other end of this hall and turn north. You'll find them in a chest in my room.

**Chose 'Don't pay him.'🡪MC:** …you know what, nevermind. There's no way your clothes could be worth that much silver.

**Servant:** Suit yourself.

The servant leaves either way, and cannot be interacted with further.

Alternatively, MC can lure a guard downstairs and ambush him there.

**MC:** Hey, you! There's a commotion in the cellar!

**Guard:** How would you know that? The cellar's off-limits to everyone save for trusted members of Master Raptis' staff.

**MC:** Why don't you go and have a listen yourself?

**Guard:** Fine, come with me. If you're lying, then it should come as no surprise to you that I'll have you kicked out.

The two head off to the cellar. When the guardsman lifts the cellar door, he finds that it is unlocked.

**Guard:** Shit, door's not locked. Did you have anything to do with this?

**MC:** If I did, would I have come to you in the first place?

**Guard:** …hmph, good answer. Wait here, I'm going to check if anything's missing. Could be someone stole our wine, or a big rat escaped…

When the guard enters the cellar, MC automatically follows after him and shuts & locks the door behind him.

**Guard:** What the fuck?!

Cue a battle with this lone guard. Upon his death, MC can loot his clothes and hand them to the informant.

**Both paths converge here**

**Informant:** Huh, thanks. I guess you really did switch sides after all. But what exactly brought this on? What'd the captain offer you - gold, a nice house, a title?

**MC:** That's not a subject we can cover in the five or so minutes you have to get out of here, but no, your captain didn't offer me anything.

**Informant:** So you turned your cloak freely, then?

**MC:** Look, do you have a plan to get out of here from now on or not?

**Informant:** Yeah, yeah. When they were carrying me down here for the first time, I saw a passage leading to the back door. I'll head out that way.

**MC:** Well then, stop talking about it and get to it already! I'll help you out of here, but you'll need to get to the back door yourself. There's something else I have to do here.

MC helps the newly-disguised Informant to his feet and supports him all the way up to the main hall, where fortunately the guards and partygoers are too busy to notice them.

**MC:** I'll see you in the city watch's headquarters, I hope.

**Informant:** I could say the same to you. Thanks for getting me out of that damn cellar…even if you did help get me in it in the first place.

With that, the informant hobbles off-screen, concluding this half of the mission.

-----------------------------------------Eavesdropping on Atanasov------------------------------------------

There are three ways of overhearing Atanasov's plan: procure a mild poison from the cook to sicken Raptis' brother, get Euphemia to start a scene for you (not possible if you already had her do that while rescuing the informant)

**Getting the cook's help:**

MC must head to the kitchen (through the same hallway where he can get the servant's help in getting clothes for the informant) and speak to the head cook there.

**Cook:** You don't look like a cook to me. Who the hell are you and why are you even here?

**MC:** Forgive me for intruding, but I need your help.

**Cook:** \*laughs\* As you can see, I'm rather too busy with my own duties to help you. These gluttonous guests want food faster than we can make it.

**MC:** What if I told you that you could help me in a way that involves you doing your job?

**Cook:** Fine, I'll humor you. What is it you want me to do?

**MC:** I need you to create a distraction for me. Maybe cook up a rancid meal, or put a mild poison in your food -

**Cook:** WHAT?! Are you asking me to commit murder under my employer's roof?! Even if I didn't report you to the city watch right here, right now, and do what you ask of me, how long do you think it would be before Master Raptis takes my head for killing one of his guests?

**MC:** Not at all. I don't need you to kill anybody, just inconvenience them enough that the guards will be forced to respond. Surely you can think of someone, anyone, at this party who deserves a kick to the stomach?

**Cook:** Hm…well, I have never been fond of Master Raptis' brother. That cad has felt up my daughter more than once, to the point where I found it safer to keep her at home or in other lines of work than to permit her to continue serving Master Raptis, in addition to spitting in my cooking and throwing his drinks at the walls like a child when he isn't satisfied. But even if I were to agree to teach the fool a lesson, how can I guarantee my own safety when Master Raptis inevitably begins searching for the man who poisoned his brother?

**MC:** Oh, you need not fear Raptis. My…'friends' are very interested in his connection to the Blood Eagles, whose representative Atanasov so happens to be counted among his honored and exalted guests tonight.

**Cook:** Wait, you're working for the city guard?! Or one of the Blood Eagles' competitors?

**MC:** Hush! Not so damn loud. I can't tell you anything more, but rest assured that Raptis will be in no shape to trouble you if you aid me tonight.

**Cook:** …very well, I will do as you ask. But if this goes badly, I will track you down and cut your heart out with a ladle if it is the last thing Errai permits me to do.

**MC:** Thank you. And as I have said - you have nothing to fear. I have no intention of failing tonight.

Later…

Raptis' brother, a grossly obese man with a bald head and a beard, digs into a new meal brought before him, but it doesn't take long before he begins to turn green and keels over, falling out of his chair to the shock and disgust of everyone else in the room.

**Guest #1:** What's happening to him?

**Guest #2:** I think he's choking and…is he starting to foam at the mouth?!

**Guest #3:** Somebody help him!

**Guest #4:** Get a healer, NOW!

While the guards rush over to assist him, MC has a clear path upstairs.

**Getting Euphemia's help:**

This is only possible if the MC hasn't already gotten Euphemia to start a scene to clear his path to the cellar while rescuing the informant. If MC can still and does indeed seek her aid, she'll do the exact same thing she does if you got her to help get rid of the cellar guards, so we can just reuse the dialogue from pages 14-15.

**Bribing the guards directly**

This is only possible if the MC hasn't already spent his money on buying the invitation from the vomiting man or bribing the servant to give him a spare set of clothes for the informant. The MC just needs to walk up to the guard at the stairs up and speak to him.

**MC:** Excuse me. Can I pass? I must meet with our good host, Akakios.

**Guard:** Master Raptis is busy tending to his guests of honor upstairs. If you aren't one of them, you may not pass.

**MC:** Would a couple silvers change your mind?

**Guard:** I…how much silver are we talking about here?

**MC:** Enough to buy out an entire tavern's wine stores.

**Guard:** Well then, show it to me. You had better not think I'm so stupid as to disobey Master Raptis' orders and let you walk on through for a bag of hot air, now.

**MC:** Here you are, my good man.

**Guard:** …very good. I didn't see you, and you most certainly didn't see me. Get going, now.

**All three paths converge here**

Upstairs, the MC should have only one straightforward hallway to navigate, lined with locked doors. It's obvious that he should not be here, nor is Raptis expecting anyone up here. The door he wants is at the end of the corridor, and though it is still so securely locked that he can't pick it (nor should he want to, since if he enters everyone on the other side of the door will try to kill him) he can eavesdrop on the people talking inside…

**Atanasov:** …so, like I was saying, I'm planning to confront Kokinos two hours past midnight tonight outside of Areleous' fishery. Nobody is going to be there that early in the morning.

**Raptis:** Are you sure? Areleous won't be alone.

**Atanasov:** I won't be either, and I think we both know damn well that I can snap that fool in half like a twig while my boys will rip his to pieces like a pack of wolves set loose in the middle of a pigsty.

**Raptis:** Well, I can't stop you. But what about ME? You promised me your men will guard my shops even after I moved up to the Copper District.

**Atanasov:** Don't worry about that, old man. I'll still leave some of the boys behind to keep an eye on your shops. They're gonna have to be the runts of the litter, but they're still good enough to stick knives in the throats of any thieves who come knocking and we aren't expecting any serious trouble that I wouldn't trust them to handle in your part of Ellis, so you've got nothing to worry about.

**Raptis:** But what if -

**Atanasov:** I don't deal in what-ifs. You'll take the newest and leanest among my crew, or you'll have nobody at all.

**Raptis:** …fine. But if your men sleep on the job, or otherwise fuck up and cost me profits -

**Atanasov:** Then you can go running to Rhangabe, and I'll have to teach the boys some lessons. But like I said, I don't deal in 'what-ifs'. Until that actually happens, I consider any talk of what you're going to do afterwards to be a waste of our time. Now then, if we can get back to what we were talking about - my coming fight with Kokinos and the lily-livered girls he calls his 'men'…

**MC:** I've heard enough. Time to report back to Zervis.

MC turns and walks away.

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Two hours past midnight, Atanasov's Blood Eagles have gathered to confront Kokinos' smaller gang in the docks as promised.

**Atanasov:** Kokinos! I see you were enough of a man to actually face me. So, now you can go to your grave knowing you haven't lost your balls! I'm gonna show you that you can't play around in Blood Eagle turf and not expect to get your heart ripped out.

**Kokinos:** Atanasov! You think you and your boys are so tough, eh? That since you outnumber us this morn', there's no way you can lose? Well any one of my lads is worth ten of yours, and we're more than happy to prove that fact right here, right now!

Before the conflict between the rival gangs can escalate beyond trash talk, they are interrupted by the sound of many footsteps marching in unison towards them and bows being drawn or crossbows being cocked on the rooftops above. City guardsmen armed with spears & shields emerge from all entrances to the scene, while their ranged counterparts are aiming their weapons at the gangsters from up on the rooftops of nearby buildings.

**Atanasov:** What the fuck is this shit?! I didn't know you were such a weakling that you'd sell out to the city guard to save your own skin, Kokinos!

**Kokinos:** If we weren't being surrounded by the guards I'd rip your throat out for that, Atanasov! I didn't have nothing to do with this.

Zervis steps out from one mass of guardsmen with MC, Pappas and Macholakos following closely.

**Zervis:** No, Atanathov, Kokioth did nothing. The man really rethponthible stands next to me.

**Atanasov:** …unbelievable. Is that you, [MC]? I thought you were dead!

**MC:** What can I say Atanasov, I'm a very hard man to kill. Even you and all of our friends together couldn't do much more than knock me out for a day. But you…I don't think you've got the same luck or iron constitution.

**Atanasov:** Oh really? Well why don't you step up here and put your words to the test. I'll make sure you stay dead this time, boy -

Atanasov begins to step forward, but without warning Pappas hurls a javelin in Atanasov's direction. The spear lands just an inch or two in front of him: a clear warning not to advance any further. The rest of Atanasov's gang flinch and take a step back, but the brute himself doesn't waver.

**Atanasov:** So what now? You want to take me in so you can beat some answers about the other Blood Eagle bigshots outta me, do you? Well go ahead and try. But I'll tell you this - I can take anything your worst have got, lisper. And when my friends come 'round to get me out of your dungeon, which they will, your wife an' kids better watch their backs!

**Zervis:** How stupid have you got to be to threaten the chief law enforcer of this cesspit when I've got your surrounded and outnumbered so heavily? But fine. Considering that it might be a waste of time to take you in alive after all, maybe I should just have you and your men killed right here and now before you can make good on those threats.

**MC:** [Intervene./Let Zervis kill Atanasov.]

**'Intervene.'🡪MC:** Wait, Zervis. I think he wants you to kill him here and now, so that you can't get any useful information out of him. We won't know whether your interrogators can crack him unless they get a chance to try, right? Besides, I think we all know that a quick death at the end of a spear or arrow would be a far kinder fate for him than an extended stay in the city dungeon.

**Zervis:** …you raise fair pointsh, [MC]. Right boys, clap them all in chainsh and march them to the dungeons, Athanatov's and Kokinoth's lads both. Kill anyone who reshists!

One of Atanasov's men bolts from the rest of the mob in a panic with knife in hand, but is immediately stabbed to death by the guards. The rest are promptly arrested and led away in chains, though Atanasov remains defiant the entire time.

**Atanasov:** Fuck all of you! I'll see you all lose your heads for this! I know where you all live! You, Zervis, when I get outta here I'll throw your little wife to my boys! And as for you, [MC], oh ho ho, when I get my hands on you you're gonna wish you stayed dead!

**Zervis:** Well, that went well. Let's go [MC], we've got many more scumbags to bring to heel after the shunrise.

Zervis and [MC] are among the last to leave the scene, the scenario ends here.

OR

**'Let Zervis kill Atanasov.'🡪MC:** \*stares silently\*

**Zervis:** Right, kill him and all of hish men. Leave no shurvivors, men!

Atanasov: Oi, fuck all of you -

Zervis nods to Pappas, who throws another javelin at Atanasov. This time, it is no warning: the spear goes through Atanasov's head, killing him instantly. The guards on the street promptly advance to slaughter his gangsters while those on the rooftops open fire before they can do so much as yell in protest, and the one-sided battle ends very quickly with the entirety of Atanasov's force butchered.

**Zervis:** Now, Kokinoth, are you going to come quietly or will we have to feed your remainsh to the fishes too?

**Kokinos:** Holy shit - I mean yeah, yeah, fine, we get the message, ya damn lisper. Stand down boys, we can still get out of this without getting ourselves killed!

While Kokinos' men are led away in chains, Zervis turns to MC.

**Zervis:** Well, that's a couple dozen more scum nobody will have to fear anymore. Let's go [MC], we've got many more scumbags to bring to heel after the shunrise.

Zervis and [MC] are among the last to leave the scene, the scenario ends here.