Right then, as you might guess from the title this is where I’ll be writing the script for Episode I. As usual, I welcome all your editing or if needed, rewriting of this script, whether to make it workable within the limitations of RPG Maker or simply to make it suck less.

**Opening scene #1: Blood Eagle headquarters, located beneath a tavern in a non-descript part of Ellis’ slums**

MC is sitting in the ‘war room’ of the Blood Eagle leadership, along with the other Blood Eagle lieutenants. The Blood Eagle leader Maurikios Byennios, a powerfully-built middle-aged man with graying hair and a missing eye who once served in the Imperial Guard of Ellis, sits at the head of the table. MC himself sits two chairs away from Byennios, with Byennios’ right-hand man and MC’s best friend Aegidios Skleros seated between them.

**Byennios:** The hour of our final victory is at hand, lads and lasses. On this day, we will wipe all of our enemies from the board – the Baianos Street Badgers, those Red Eagle renegades, Paulos Papsalas and his smuggling ring, the Spotted Jackal of Aruandanos and her lackeys, and Lieutenant Adrianos Karykes. For too long have these fools troubled us, eating away at our hard-won operations, stealing from us and murdering our faithful friends. No more.

He looks at each of his lieutenants and begins to issue the day’s orders, starting from his left and ending with MC & Byennios (who are sitting to his right, as is custom for one’s most trusted supporters).

**Byennios:** Metaxas, Raptis: you two are to exterminate the Badger infestation in the eastern Brown Quarter. Look for a man by the name of Kosmas Rhapsomates in the Dead Man’s Tavern on Baianos Street – he is our informant within the Badgers’ ranks, and will provide you with a map of all their hideouts and watering holes. Take eighty men with you and kill as many of them as you can, I expect you to feed at least their leaders to the fishes by tomorrow morning.

The two men to his left rise from their seats. Hilarion Metaxas, a flamboyant man in his early thirties who started out as a common pimp many years ago and now garbs himself in tacky extravagant clothing in an attempt to show off his status, boasts:

**Metaxas:** Have no fear boss, just last week I bought out some of the whorehouses their second-in-command and many of his underlings frequent. They won’t know what hit them…forget tomorrow, I swear by nightfall I’ll have a hundred Badger pelts for you.

**Byennios:** It is poor form to boast before actually performing any boast-worthy tasks, lad. Get out of here and do your duty first, then I will gladly suffer your bragging.

That certainly wipes the smirk off of Metaxas’ face, while the rest of the room is amused at him being rebuffed by their boss. He leaves without much fanfare, as does the other man Byennios was talking to: Haimon Raptis, a seedy-looking mage in a black cloak. Unlike Metaxas, Raptis doesn’t joke around or boast about how awesome & clever he is, he just nods silently to Byennios before turning and leaving. Byennios now addresses two more lieutenants:

**Byennios:** Marinos, Xanthos, Katsaros. I’m charging you three with eliminating the Red Eagles. Those renegades dared turn their backs on me and break away from our ranks six years ago, something I have neither forgotten nor forgiven. They have suffered a major loss in this past week, since we were able to isolate their leader Ouzas and bury a knife in his neck…a shame really, he had so much potential when I first took him under my wing, but he brought his fate on his own head with his treachery. And now, the rest of his men must pay that same price for their betrayal. Kill them all and ensure the Brown Quarter knows we did the deed, I will not have any more Blood Eagles turn on me.

The three people he was addressing are Eber Marinos, a stone-faced forty-something sailor; Aiolos Katsaros, who you know from the prototype as the youngest and least experienced of the Blood Eagle lieutenants, a kid who tends to write cheques he can’t cash with his mouth; and Yeina Xanthos, a curvy and flirtatious woman around the same age as the MC who was also MC’s on-and-off girlfriend in the past.

**Marinos:** It will be done, boss.

**Katsaros:** How hard could this job be? I’ve heard that since we took out Ouzas, his pet eagles have been busy tearing each other to pieces. Even if one of his lackeys has already defeated all the others, he should be so weak that we won’t have any problem putting him in the ground.

**Xanthos:** We won’t be long, boss. I look forward to seeing you all again once we’ve knocked the last of these Red Eagles off…and you most of all, [MC].

The three depart, with Xanthos blowing MC a kiss on the way out. Skleros smirks at MC.

**Skleros:** She still fancies you, you know. How long d’you think it will be before the two of you get back together? I just hope it’s permanent next time though, I will take the priest’s place and preside over your marriage ceremony myself if it means we’ll never again have to witness the same dramatic play that you mummers have gotten up to every time you sunder your ties.

**MC:** [Dialogue options]:

* A: ‘We are not getting back together, ever.’
* B: ‘I’ll advance upon her again at the end of this week. We both have much to do in the meantime.’
* C: [Punch Skleros in the arm]

**Skleros:**

* If A was chosen: ‘And how many times in the past have you said that, only to get back together with her anyway? I’ve lost count. Never say never when it comes to women, old friend.’
* If B was chosen: ‘I expected as much. The two of you have never been able to stay away from each other for long.’
* If C was chosen: Skleros laughs. ‘You know I speak true, old friend. The two of you have never been able to stay away from each other for long. And truth be told, everyone is getting tired of the same song and dance between the periods where you two sit as a contentious couple.’

**Byennios:** Ahem! We are not here to discuss your love lives, lads.

**Skleros:** My apologies, Master Byennios.

**MC:** Aye.

**Byennios:** Back to the matter at hand…you two are my closest and most trusted lieutenants, and I would entrust this mission to no other. I need the both of you to eliminate Adrianos Karykes. That city watchman’s an upjumped gutter rat, but one that has proven especially dangerous to us. He has personally led raids on half a dozen of our dens in the past six weeks, one every week. Just two nights ago, Skleros here revealed to me that one of our own has been selling secrets to Karykes and the city guard, hence their recent successes.

**MC:** And what would you have us do, Master Byennios?

**Byennios:** That depends. Skleros, what have you to say on the present situation?

**Skleros:** My spies inform me that Karykes and his informant, Paulos Paulikianos, will be meeting tonight at the city guard’s precinct utpost in the heart of the Brown District.

**Byennios:** And are your men already in place for a strike?

**Skleros:** They are. Forty of my best killers, hidden in taverns and homes all around the outpost. That hovel is manned by a quarter of that number at the most, we absolutely expect fierce resistance but I for one do not see any way this can end in anything other than a total defeat for the city guard.

**Byennios:** Then here is the plan: tonight, when they meet, you will eliminate them both, as well as any guards and witnesses. Do not use poison, or some other gentler way of murder: cut both Karykes and Paulikianos down, so that the entire city may see what the Blood Eagles do to troublesome foes and traitors. We’ll see if Captain Zervis still has the nerve to attack our dens then.

**Byennios:** And as for you, [MC], you will be supporting Byennios. Take twenty men with you, so that combined you will outnumber the watchmen at that outpost six to one, and help him in eliminating not just these two thorns in our side, but any who might witness the carnage as well. Skleros will release a raven with a bloody piece of meat in its beak to signal the beginning of the assault.

**Skleros & MC:** Understood, Master Byennios.

The two depart, leaving Byennios alone in his ‘office’. The player would have the ability to explore the Blood Eagle compound at this point, chatting with various Blood Eagle members and their various lieutenants & also meeting up with the gang’s trainers for a tutorial section.

-------------------Alternative start: The attack on Karykes’ outpost is already underway--------------

It’s a dark and rainy night. MC and his twenty good men, one of whom is no man at all but rather his younger sister, have massed to attack a precinct outpost of the city guard in the central slums, where the guard sergeant Karykes and a Blood Eagle informant are meeting. While MC prepares to storm the front door, Byennios is set to attack the place from behind with twice as many men. There aren’t many guards present, perhaps ten to fifteen at the most.

**MC:** Here we are, sister. Now remember the plan we had worked out with Skleros: we will attack this outpost from the west, while he and his men assail it from the east. Between the two of us we have sixty men, while our mark has only ten to fifteen to defend him.

**MC’s sister;** Sounds straightforward enough, [MC]. I know we have to kill his informant, but what should we do with Karykes when we catch him?

**MC:** Slit his throat and be done with it.

**MC’s sister:** He’s an officer of the city watch, brother. Killing him is likely to provoke his sworn brothers into cracking down even harder on us, not to go soft as our Master seems to think.

**MC:** \*shrugs\* It is not our place to question Master Byennios, [MC’s sister]. He took us in when we were but orphaned children with nothing but the clothes on our backs, not even the protections afforded by our noble name.

**MC’s sister:** I do not question what the Master has done for us, only what he means to accomplish with this strike.

The siblings’ conversation is broken when a raven noisily takes flight from the other end of the outpost. Blood drips from a strip of rat meat in its beak.

**MC:** I’ll hear no more of this, not yet at least. The time to act is now…

MC, his sister and their men rapidly advance on the outpost, their hands on the hilts of their daggers or their bows. As they approach, they enter the light of the two torches burning on either side of the outpost’s front door, sheltered from the rain by the thatch roof over it. One of the two guardsmen at the door notices their advance and cries out to them.

**Guardsman #1:** Halt! Who comes?

**MC:** Your death.

The guard, alarmed, reaches for his spear and opens his mouth to shout a warning, but one of MC’s men promptly puts an arrow through his throat. His fellow guardsman at least manages to rush to the door and scream something before being shot in the back and collapsing, dying.

**Guardsman #2:** We’re under attack! They’ve killed Kallinikos – ugh!

**MC:** Philaretos, grab your axe and break this door down. [MC’s sister], take four men, smash the window to our left and enter that way. Boethios, take three men and do the same with the window to our right. The rest of you, with me! Kill every last iron-booted grunt inside, and leave no witnesses!

A battle ensues within the guard outpost. MC should have three places to deploy: the main hallway just past the front door where the MC must be deployed, the small kitchen to the left where MC’s sister is, and a lounge to the right. The opposition are outnumbered and scattered; five men have rushed into the main hall to form a phalanx with their shields & spears and block MC’s progress, but they have foolishly formed this phalanx in front of two doors leading to the lounge and kitchen. MC’s sister and his men on the right wing face, respectively, three and two men, and once they’ve dealt with their outnumbered opponents they can easily slip out the doors and attack the main guard phalanx from behind. This battle will be the tutorial section as well, teaching the player the various functions of the tactical battle system.

Once all the guards on the first floor have been killed off, Karykes and Paulikianos come downstairs with two elite guardsmen.

**Karykes:** What is the meaning of this madness?!

**Paulikianos:** Oh shit, it’s the Blood Eagles! They must’ve come here for the two of us!

**MC’s sister:** You guessed right, Pauly.

Another fight ensues, between Karykes’ men & Paulikianos vs. the MC, his sister and any men they might have left over. Once it’s all over however, instead of being greeted by the reinforcements under Skleros, more guardsmen start storming in through the front door.

**Guardsman #3:** You are all under arrest for breaching the Empress’ peace and the murder of multiple officers of her law! Lay down your arms and come quietly or we will kill you all like rats, here and now!

**MC’s sister:** What the hell?! Where’d they come from, and why didn’t Skleros stop them or even warn us?

**MC:** The guard must have run him off. We can’t go out the way we came, we’ve got to head upstairs. Artemios, Pyrros, Tryphon, keep them at bay! The rest of you, with me!

**Thieves #1-3:** We’ll do what we can, boss! Go now!

While his three chosen henchmen are left behind to mount a last stand against the swarm of guards pouring into the cramped main hallway, MC, MC’s sister and the rest of their men flee upstairs. They attempt to escape out a window to the back of the outpost, using rope carried by one of the other thieves. However, upon landing back on the ground they find their escape routes blocked off by more phalanxes of guardsmen.

**MC:** Where in the hell is Skleros? He should have been guarding these approaches!

**MC’s sister:** I don’t think those men care, and they’re our problem now! How do we get out of here, [MC]?

**MC:** There’s far more of them than there are of us, but they’re spread thin to cover every road and alley leading out of here. We’ve got to stay together and break through one of these points with all our remaining strength, if we split up they’ll slaughter us. Let’s move!

There should be another tutorial battle here, now dispensing tactical tips such as having your characters gang up on one or a few targets when outnumbered by the opposition. The player will be directed to throw everything they have at one of the alleyway exits and wipe out the guards manning that exit before the rest of their comrades reach the party & wipe the MC and friends out. Once one exit has been cleared, the MC and his sister must both escape the map by moving into the tiles the guards there had previously been standing on.

Cut to MC, his sister and a few surviving thieves (two or three I’d say) fleeing through the alleys, back towards the Blood Eagle headquarters. The guards give chase for a time, killing the other thieves with arrows or javelins in the back, but eventually lose the MC & sister in the maze of narrow streets and grim slums.

(when the first thief falls from a javelin) **Thief #4:** How much further until w – AHH!

**MC’s sister:** Himerios! Oh, God’s blood…

**MC:** Keep moving! There’s nothing we can do for him now!

(when the second thief falls, shot in the neck) **Thief #5:** I think we’ve finally lost them…\*hurk\*

**MC:** We most certainly have not, obviously! Keep moving!

(when the third thief takes an arrow to the leg and slows to a limp behind MC & the sister)

**MC’s sister:** Pankratios is still alive, the arrow just got him in the leg, we can still save him [MC]!

**MC:** No we can’t, do you see how slow he’s moving and how close the guards are? If we go back for him, we are all dead and done. We go forward, only forward!

**Thief #6:** It’s as your brother says [MC’s sister], I’d only slow you down. Get to Boss Byennios and tell him to avenge us, I’ll try to hold these bloody-minded bastards off for as long as I can!

As it turns out, the last thief wasn’t able to last very long on account of both being an untrained street criminal and having already taken an injury to his leg, and is quickly cut down by the pursuing guards without being able to kill or even seriously injure any of them in return. However, while he was making his futile last stand in the alley, MC and his sister were able to flee further & completely escape the guards’ pursuit. Cut to Captain Blasios Zervis, who is still at the ransacked precinct outpost. He has sent his guards out in force to chase down the remnants of MC’s Blood Eagle unit, and is now receiving hourly reports from the squad leaders he’s sent out in pursuit.

**Sergeant Pappas:** Captain, I am pleased to report that my men have an eighteenth corpse to add to the pile.

**Captain Blasios Zervis:** And you and Macholakos both agree that there were about twenty when this all began?

**Pappas:** Aye, sir.

**Zervis:** Any prisoners?

**Pappas:** None, sir. Every Blood Eagle we’ve tried to take in alive fought back so ferociously that the men were forced to kill them in self-defense.

**Zervis:** That’s strange…these men are naught but criminals, yet they fight with as much fury and zeal as the schismatic Northern Rite’s sworn knights. What on earth could their leader have done to command such loyalty from them?

**Pappas:** I know not, sir.

**Zervis:** Well, I suppose we can find out directly soon enough. Has Macholakos caught him yet?

At this point, Macholakos enters the scene.

**Macholakos:** I’m afraid not, Captain. The trail has gone cold, and neither my men nor our hounds were able to pick it up again. He and his last remaining companion may be lost to us –

Zervis suddenly slams his fist on his desk.

**Zervis:** That answer is unacceptable, Sergeant. These swine have murdered officers of the peace, MY officers, and they must be made an example of. Get back out there, and take Lieutenants Autoreianos’ and Kalaphates’ squads with you. Do not return here until you have both of them in your possession, dead or alive.

**Zervis:** Pappas, you and your men are to identify the corpses we do have. Help yourselves to their belongings if you’d like, dead men have no use for clothes or weapons or baubles. In addition, you are to inform our hangmen that I intend to have their bodies displayed in the square tomorrow morning as a warning to any other criminal outfit foolish enough to attack the Ellisian city watch like this.

The two sergeants exchange a nervous glance, but still wordlessly bow and leave to execute Zervis’ orders.

Elsewhere, MC and his sister are still stumbling through the slums. The rain has escalated to a torrential downpour and there are no lit torches in the vicinity, forcing them to slowly make their way through the dark streets blind as bats.

**MC’s sister:** How much further, [MC]?

**MC:** I think I saw the sign of the Black Horse Tavern a few minutes ago, so still quite far. Take heart little sister, at least they’re no longer on our trail.

**MC’s sister:** Yes, but the Black Horse Tavern is in the territory of the Hanged Cats. That gang’s never been on friendly terms with us Blood Eagles, and if they catch us here, alone and wounded as we are…

**MC:** They won’t catch us if you keep quiet. Lower your voice sister, before you wake the dead –

MC is cut off when a man emerges from the shadows and strikes him across the forehead with a heavy club, instantly knocking him to the ground. Others come forward as well, with other weapons in their hands. While MC is still dazed, his sister seems to recognize their leader…

**MC’s sister:** What in the hell – Skleros? Where were you when we needed you back at the guard outpost? And what do you think you’re doing now?!

Skleros does not answer. Instead, he silently steps forward with his sword drawn. MC’s sister steps forward with her own daggers drawn, ready to defend MC and fight Skleros one-on-one, but another of Skleros’ henchmen simply stabs her in the back with a short spear, sending her to her knees.

**MC’s sister:** Ahh! Why are you doing this, Skleros? You were like a second brother to –

The rest of her words are cut short when a different henchman comes up to pull her head back by the hair and slit her throat. She falls on top of MC, dying.

**Skleros:** We’re done here, boys. Time to head back and finish off Byennios before he wises up, our new friends should be in place around the compound by now.

**Henchman #1:** What about [MC], boss? I think he’s still breathing.

**Skleros:** Leave him, and [MC’s sister] too. The guards will want them, and with any luck we can escape blame for the slaughter of those men back at the outpost…which we would be right to, since only his men participated in the attack. Still, I don’t want him crawling off to warn Byennios of what happened here before we get back, which knowing how tough and determined he can be, he might very well be able to pull off. Gouzouniatos, put him to sleep.

The same man who had clubbed MC in the first place steps forward to bring his weapon down on MC’s head again, cut to black.