

Personal Journal of Magnus Cornario

The Twenty-Eighth Day of April, in the Year of our Lord 1530

Mediterranean Sea, Venetian Galley Hercules

Dawn

I am writing this entry while on deck of the Venetian War Galley Hercules, as the hold is far too cramped for my liking. We are bound for Southern Greece. In the space of a mere twelve hours, I think the world has changed quite significantly.

Our party rested before preparing for the assault on General Zon. It was decided that using the entire party would be too risky. Instead a small group of us would attempt to bluff our way into or sneak into the headquarters. The rest would either assist in freeing prisoners still held in the city or aid the distraction that was to be provided by the cavalry.

Jean-Claude, Haldar, Tauron and Dangle lead the group attempting to free the prisoners. They were joined by the sixteen prisoners we had already freed. We equipped the ex-prisoners with the masterwork arms that we had recovered as well as all of the flasks of Greek fire and ordinary powder bombs and they marched off to the north and west. Personally, I had a small hope that might ignite a fire that would burn Kydonia to the ground. It was not to be, but they did liberate the prisoners.

Igos, Luna and Christshon took Luigi and snuck out of town, meaning to assist the cavalry.

The remainder of the team comprised the assault force upon General Zon: Wulfgar, Adam, Caliph, David, Sigurd and myself. Adam and I split the enchanted powder bombs between us, as none of the rest of the group had any desire to use them. I cast a long-lasting spell to protect myself against missile attacks as well as my usual spell of Arcane Armor. I saw Adam using a necromantic incantation to fill himself with unnatural vitality. He then invoked Ouroborean forces upon himself that caused his metal skin to become scaly and reddish in nature.

Shortly after midnight, we heard a great deal of noise and commotion outside of the armory. After waiting a couple of minutes, Adam cast a Greater Invocation of Gyges, whereupon he

and those close to him (Wulfgar, Sigurd & I) vanished from mortal sight. David and Caliph had stationed themselves outside of the area of effect of the spell. They were dressed in Turkish uniforms and were attempting to impersonate Turkish officers.

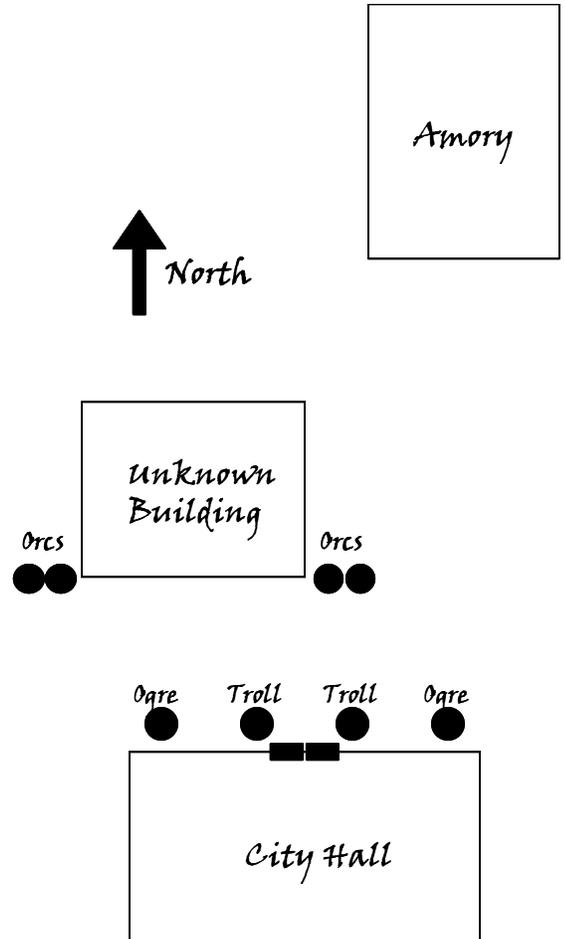
We headed south to City Hall. North of city hall, we saw four orcs standing guard next to an adjacent building. At City Hall proper, there were two trolls guarding the double doors leading into the building. Near each corner was an ogre.

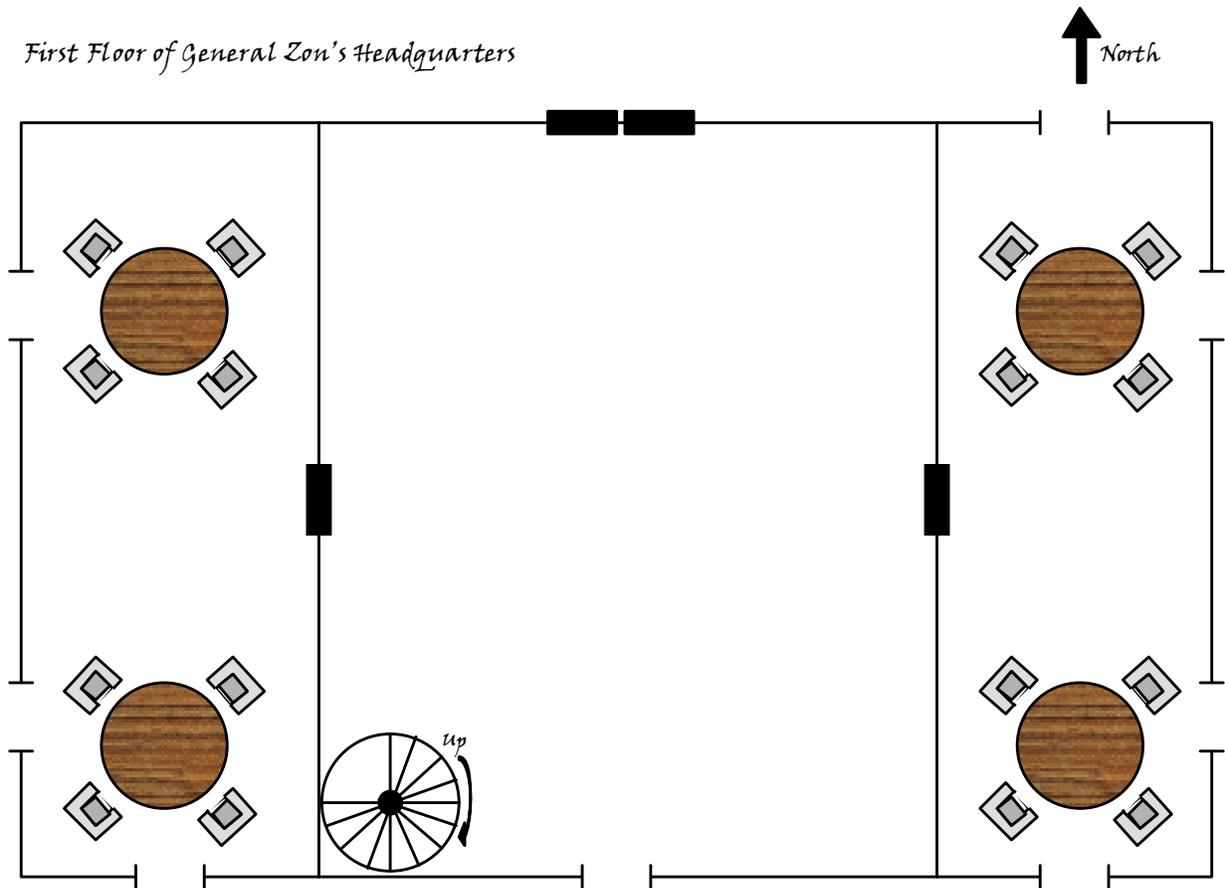
David stopped for a moment and asked the eastern orcs on the status of the scouts that were sent out; had they reported back? The orcs seemed somewhat surprised, but replied that the scouts had not reported back yet as they had just left.

Under the cover of the diversion made by David and Caliph, the invisible group bypassed the orcs, the trolls and ogres. We made our way to the south side of City Hall, which was about sixty to seventy feet away from the city wall.

The City Hall building had obviously seen better days. It was a large, two-story building. There were windows on all sides, but the glass in them had long since been broken. There were some half-hearted efforts made to board up the windows on the first floor, although it was easy enough to peer through the cracks and see inside. The second floor windows were not boarded up at all.

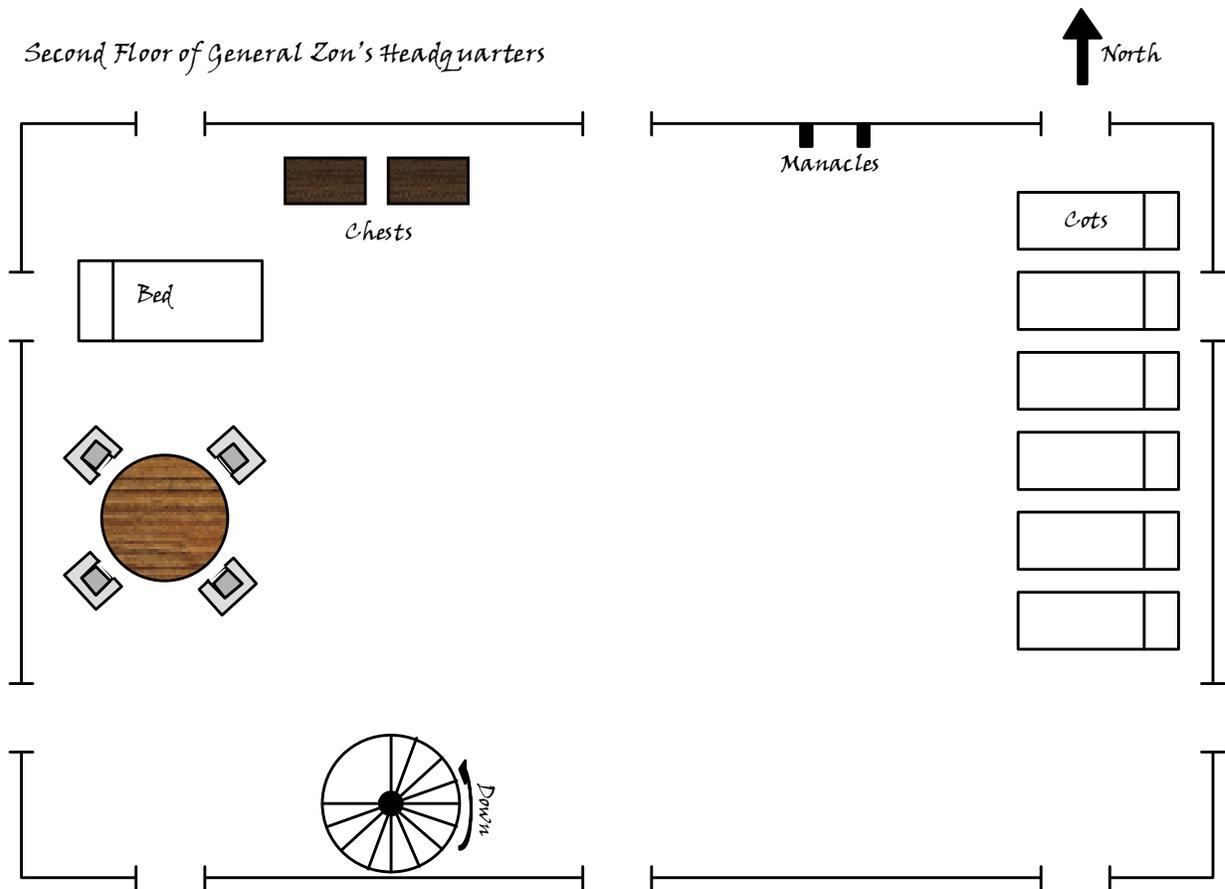
The invisible group did a quick reconnaissance of the outside of the building. We also peered through some of the windows. The first floor was divided into three rooms. The west and east rooms contained a total of six men, working at tables. They were dressed in full plate and their insignia was the Turkish equivalent of a Lieutenant. The central room was a guard post of some kind. An even ten men dressed in plate were lounging about. In the southwest corner was a circular wooden stairway leading to the second floor.



First Floor of General Zon's Headquarters

The second floor was a single large chamber. There was a table on the west side, with a man in plate mail going over some papers, apparently maps. We assumed (correctly) that this was General Zon. North of the table was a bed and against the northern wall on the west side were two chests. Against the east wall were half-a-dozen cots. We saw a prisoner manacled near the north wall, just west of the cots. He appeared to be in very bad shape.

We held a whispered conference about our battle plan. We decided that the best plan of action would be to assault General Zon via the simple method of climbing through the second story windows on the southern side. I would cast a spell that would upon the demons of his inner mind. If successful, it would slay him outright. While the chances of this succeeding were slim, it would have the advantage of being quick and quiet. The rest of the party would utilize more physical methods to accomplish our goal.



Adam cast a short term spell to give himself the agility and celerity of a cat, while I murmured an incantation that enhanced my powers of intellect, with the express goal of making my spell to slay General Zon harder to resist. Sigurd cast a spell of Enlargement upon himself, becoming the size of an ogre.

Our preparations complete, Adam invoked an enchantment of Celerity upon the entire party. Thus empowered with unnatural speed, Caliph climbed through the southwest window, tumbled over a chair and leaped across the table to land behind the General. Caliph grappled the Zon in an attempt to silence him. Sigurd boosted Wulfgar into the room via the middle window on the south side. Wulfgar drew his greatsword as he charged the general, invoking the power of his enchanted scabbard to cause his blade to seek the Turk's vitals.

Wulfgar neared the general and his face grew twisted and bloodshot. The Frenzy of Odin was upon him. The amulet I forged activated and Wulfgar became a towering engine of destruction. Wulfgar swung his greatsword, cleaving a mighty gash into the side our foe.

From the look of shock and surprise upon General Zon's face, I thought he might expire upon the spot.

I then cast my Incantation, calling the general's worst fears to life in a phantasm only he could perceive. Unfortunately, the general's Will was too strong and he resisted the effects of my spell.

Sigurd boosted David into the room, who then went to the front of the stairs and readied an incantation to use upon any guards coming up. Finally, Sigurd himself climbed into the room, squeezing his vast bulk through the window. Sigurd then called upon unusual arcane forces, causing his bow to hum and vibrate.

Adam climbed through the western window. Thinking that Wulfgar and Caliph had the situation in hand, decided to watch the stairs with David. General Zon wrenched himself free of Caliph's grasp, drew a gleaming falchion from his back, and struck a vicious blow upon Wulfgar, all the while screaming for the guards. Wulfgar, subsumed in the Frenzy, seemed to take no notice of the blow. Caliph then hit the general, inflicting a minor wound. Wulfgar's blade again tasted of Zon's blood, as the my friend cut another vicious wound into the Turk's flesh.

I attempted the Incantation again upon the general. This time he seemed to see the phantasm I called forth as a look of terror flashed momentarily upon his visage, but it did not slay him. Still, General Zon began bleeding from the nose and mouth after my spell was cast, so it might have had some deleterious effect. More likely it was just internally bleeding from the wounds Wulfgar had already inflicted.

Sigurd shot an arrow into the side of the general. The arrow seemed to vibrate with a lethal frequency as it burrowed into Zon's vitals.

Zon apparently was in mortal fear for his life, as he turned tail and ran like a coward, leaping out the nearest window to fall to the street below. Caliph leapt out after him, grabbing the prone Zon in a stranglehold. Wulfgar then tore through the window, his greatsword in both hands, falling upon Zon and pinning him to the ground with the sword. It was very similar to

the manner in which a student of natural philosophy might pin an insect to a piece of paper for study, except there was more blood. Also, some people object to putting pins in insects.

Zon was dead, but we heard the sounds of guards coming up the stairs. Adam tossed one of the magic powder bombs upon the guards, burning several quite nicely. I positioned myself so that I could cast into the room below, whereupon I tossed a Ball of Abysmal Flame into the midst of the guards.

The guards were stilling rushing up into the room, when David muttered a quick incantation, causing them to trip and fall back down the stairs. Adam tossed two more magical powder bombs and I used my second Ball of Abysmal Flame. The guards quit trying to ascend the stairs as the fire had made them look quite unstable.

While we were doing that, Caliph climbed back into the room. Wulfgar, rejoined us also, tossing the body of General Zon upon the bed on the western side of the room.

Caliph and Adam risked the stairs to go in the room below to deal with the remaining two guards. David searched General Zon for the key to free the prisoner from his manacles and found it. As David attempted to free the prisoner, two of the Lieutenants we had seen in the lower level leapt into the room through the eastern windows. They had been lifted up to the windows by the trolls we had seen.

Wulfgar charged one of the Turks, striking him. Sigurd then rushed the Turk like a bull. I cast a spell of Uncontrollable Laughter upon the other, rendering him incapable of any action other than engaging in hysterical fits of laughter. The third Turkish Lieutenant who came inside also fell victim to that spell.

Sigurd and Wulfgar engaged the Turks in melee, while I began lobbing some of the magical powder bombs upon them, driving off the trolls and killing the Turks. David sang.

Downstairs, Caliph realized that the magic amulet he is wearing heals him every time he wounds his foe. Between he and Adam, they finish off the Turks downstairs. Adam told me later that the Turks seemed to focus on him, even though Caliph was the one doing all of the

damage. Adam said that one of the Turks even commented on it to himself, shortly before expiring.

We finished off the last of the Turks. David spoke to the man we freed and he said that he was Prince Rupert of Austria.

Sigurd looked out of one of the north windows for the ogres and trolls. They were gone. The four orcs that we had seen earlier were lying on the ground, presumably dead.

Just as Sigurd pointed out the above, half-a-dozen armed men in dark cloaks came climbing through the windows. As they did not appear to be Turkish, we asked them who they were before hostilities could commence. One of them replied that they were the Venetian Rangers and were here to rescue Prince Rupert. I told them that I was Magnus of the House of Cornario and that they were too late: we had already rescued Prince Rupert.

Anyway, it appears that the Venetians had reclaimed the city, at least long enough for everyone to evacuate. Sigurd and Caliph replaced the Turkish flag with the Hapsburg flag that had flown over the city. They used the Turkish flag as a rope to hang General Zon's body from the flagpole. We made sure to properly gather up the spoils of war from City Hall, i.e. loot the place, before heading to the armory to pick up the remaining masterwork items that were left there.

Items we found:

- A chest containing 30,000 gold pieces.
- A magic falchion (General Zon's) bearing a standard combat enchantment of the third magnitude. I have never seen an item so heavily ensorcelled.
- General Zon's plate mail bearing a protective enchantment of the third magnitude.
- A protective amulet that armors the skin of the wearer. This was of the second magnitude and was also worn by General Zon
- A ring that calls of a creature called a Djinn from the elemental plane of Air. General Zon wore this; I do not know why he did not use it. It is possible that he did not know its true power.
- High detail maps of all of Crete, as well as troop rosters and lists of their command structures.

- A masterwork pistol inscribed with the words: "To General Frederick for Distinguished Service"

On the bodies of the lieutenants and ordinary guards we found the following:

- Six scimitars with a combat enchantment of the second magnitude.
- Six suits of plate with a protective enchantment of the second magnitude.
- Six heavy steel shields with a protective enchantment of the second magnitude.
- Ten scimitars with a combat enchantment of the first magnitude.
- Ten suits of plate with a protective enchantment of the first magnitude.
- Ten heavy steel shields with a protective enchantment of the first magnitude.

We went down to the docks where we rejoined the rest of our party. Jean-Claude and Haldar's expedition to free the prisoners went quite well. Captain Abellius was rescued, among many others. We boarded the Venetian War Galley Hercules. There we were led to the Captain's cabin to meet with Prince Roger of Austria, Prince Rupert's older brother. Prince Roger had an offer for us.

At the very least, we were to given 5,000 gold ducats each for our service to the Hapsburg crown. He also wished to ennoble us and offered us land grants in Morea, the newly liberated (by the Hapsburgs) area of southern Greece. When I discussed the inability of sorcery to work outside of Crete, Prince Roger said that soon magic would be returning to the entire world.

Prince Roger said that he and his staff still had to work out the details of the land grants. Until that time, he offered to let us stay in a keep south of Lakonia which is less than a hundred miles from Crete. Magic should still function in this area.