

*Pieces maneuvered on the board. The King falls, but the game continues while the Judge is still in play.*

*The Duchess Valetta sends Lady Czorgan, a Death Knight under the control of the codex mortis to threaten the Knights of the Word if they do not produce an artifact recovered from Ringwell.*

*Lord Prospero Alvaro sits and watches, wondering if he'll be congratulating Twelve Dragons, or condemning them as rogue agents. Will the Red Falcons surrender? Or die?*

*Lord Marco Vorona waits to see which way the game will go. Ready to back whoever is most prepared to win. While Lady Shirome waits and wonders, will Vorona stop her from defending the Stays, or side with House Navarr and start a war over the island?*

*Capital prepares for civil war. Thousands will die. Their only hope, a new Prince emerges to unite the city before Ajax arrives. Meanwhile the hardbitten officers of the Chain of Acheron prepare to fight death...with death.*

## Winchester Spendthrift

The Word's lieutenant contacts the heroes.

Spendthrift is a *bureaucrat*, a pencil-pusher. A producer. :D He's second-in-command of the Word but only because Zorj relies on him so much to clean up after him. Zorj hates paperwork, hates the expectation he know the laws of the city. Zorj polices Collinsill like it's a dwarven epic. He knows right from wrong and he's passionately dedicated to stopping thievery and protecting the people. The Law is his passion, but the law is tedious. Spendthrift! By the Gods there must be some law says we can arrest this imbecile!

"Gentlemen my commanding officer is convinced that you have whatever it is this death knight wants. And it's a fool's errand to try to convince Zorj of...well, of anything. :)

Maybe if you didn't carry those seals. Maybe if she'd asked nicely. But now? I know my man. He won't give an inch. He'll act like he has no idea you have this Rod and he'll get himself killed before he gives in to *her*. Out of some misplaced dwarven notion of honor. Or maybe it's this city. It does strange things to people.

Technically if Commander Zorj dies, I become Commander of the Word and I'm really not cut out for that. I'd like to keep him alive another 30 or 40 years if that's at all possible.

And the fact that the Prince's Men throughout the city are...maybe the only thing stopping is from falling into all out civil war. I don't suppose there's anything you people can do...help?

There is, but the heroes don't know that yet.

## Duke Marco Vorona

### The Manor House

I don't remember if the players have ever visited a great house's manor thusfar, but regardless this is both a good opportunity to show them where the ruling class live and work, and give them a taste of the Heist Job.

The Vorona Estate is called Catchtree Square and it's the HQ of the Imperial Navy. It's on a hill near the sea. It looks like a very rich college campus. There are marines guarding everything and an eclectic selection of riojan professionals and nobles going to and from the different buildings.

The walls of the estate are red brick, there are watchtowers. There are **canons**. The players are stopped at the gate by marines who ask their business. The Marines carry **muskets**. Their seals will get them in, a lot of the people coming in show off papers, but they're not closely inspected, the guards know more of people who work and live here.

A marine escorts them to the Admiralty Building, known as Trident House for an obscure reason related to the fraternity Vorona sponsors.

The heroes see Vorona's mansion on a hill in the distance, it's huge and well guarded. Like a castle.

Inside Trident House, the heroes are led to Operations, a large room, well lit with huge windows. There's a huge table in the middle of the room, very oddly shaped, sort of like an elongated I or a sideways H.

It's painted deep blue and has dotted lines etched into it revealing gold. The lines represent trade winds. There are small model ships scattered across it, representing the various fleets of the world. It takes a second to recognize the two tables are the two great seas of Orden the north and south. And the empty space between the tables represents all the land that the navy doesn't care about, so it's literally missing. It's a map of the world in negative space.

Most of the model fleets are in Higara where Ajax's navy (comprised mostly of Vaslorian and Khemite ships) is facing off against the Immortal Empress's fleet. House Vorona isn't in the battle yet, but they're protecting Higara's ships so the Empress can still supply her people. Higara and Rioja have a lot in common, both are thin strips of land bounded by sea and mountains.

His Grace Marco, Lord Vorona is tall, thin, silver haired, and well into his 70s. He is blocky and angular. Looks made out of muscle and sinew. He is olive-complected, an ethnic Riojan. He has a large, bushy mustache. He wears the Blue and Gold

"Ah, Capital! Capital! Wondering when you'd come by, gave you enough hints, what?"

"Ahh Lady Shirome, you thought you were moving your King but it seems you've moved your Judge instead. Tell me, what did you make of the little lady who runs the big island?"

"Hear you're going to speak at the academy, what? Dashed good of you. Sure it'll do gobs of good for the cadets. Meet some real soldiers, what? Any idea what you're gonna talk about?"

He's really interested in the *Somnium Tenebris* and what it can do.

"Curious to know how you got from Blackbottom to Capital in two days. Should'a been ten, what? And you'd have to fly your ship apart!"

"What are those little cannon things you got all along her hull? My cousin said you had no balls or powder onboard, so you weren't in violation of any regulations but those things are cannons or I'm a goldfish!"

"Whatta you make of all this business on the Pellet. The Library, what? You got those dragon chaps and the fellas with the bird hats. What's the Chain see in all this, if you don't mind my asking?"

Duke Vorona is interested in sort of waiting and watching and making sure as many people owe him favors as possible, but House Alvaro and House Navarr are both making moves. On neutral territory he doesn't really care about, but he's not happy about the idea of Alvaro taking the Pellet, he sort of feels like that's his territory, it being an island. And Prospero knows he feels that way.

So he knows; de Corano is acting on his own, trying to earn some glory by swooping in and taking some territory. And he does not approve. He won't be supporting Alvaro, he doesn't think anyone will.

“Prospero’s happy to let De Corona fly about, doin’ as he pleases without so much as a ‘by your leave.’ He’s waitin’ to see how the public reacts to his knights fighting the Prince’s men. Ah. Maybe De Corano really is acting on his own. Probably is! But it’s not an accident he rides the blue dragon.”

If the heroes say anything to him about House Valetta or Lady Czorgan he’ll react strongly.

“We’ll that just not fair play, you lads haven’t done nothin’. Interfering with the Prince’s Men is really Not The Done Thing around here. It’s not Capital, I’ll tell you that.”

“Let me look into this, it’s all very well for Lenny to stay in her crumbling mansion collecting taxes and grumbling about her husband, but she can’t just send out her thugs to interfere in the Prince’s business, what? This is Capital! Not Blackbottom!”

He summons the captain of the Imperial Guard. Lord Carrasco. This dude is in bright red armor, red cloak, he comes in carrying a halberd.

“Find Gavotte. Have her report to me.”

House Vorona’s intelligence agency are the DNI, the Department of Naval Intelligence. They’re the oldest intelligence agency in Capital (but not the oldest in Orden, that title goes to the Immortal Empress’ *kiken danseï*, the Danger Men ) informally called *the circus* because their headquarters are in a cul-de-sac named Cambric Circus.

Gavotte comes in, she’s a slight, thin, woman of either Vanigar or Vaslorian descent. She has blonde hair tied in a pony tail. She is wearing expensive, well-fitted professional clothing, pants, vest, but apart from the custom cut and the patterning, very little ornamentation. She seems severe.

“What do you make of all this Gavotte? We gonna let young miss Lenore get away with this?”

Gavotte does not ask what he’s talking about. She knows.

“Well, Your Grace, if I were being threatened by a Gol Death Knight under the control of the *codex mortis...*,” she looks at Judge. “I’d hire a band of mercenaries to deal with it.”

“Kill her. It will be difficult, it may cost a few lives, but the *codex* does not have the power to maintain Lady Czorgan’s presence in this world on a permanent basis. It would be a **month** before the Duchess could summon her again. You ask my professional opinion? A month from now? I don’t think we’ll even recognize this city.”

# Lady Czorgan

Well they're probably going to fight Lady Czorgan! Spendthrift will suggest they convene at the Old Courthouse which is a small marble building, almost like a small roman temple, now in disuse. They're going to set it up as the Chain's station for their police activities.

Colinsill - This District

Purses - this neighborhood, because of the Mint.

King's Cross - the other neighborhood, named after the big Prison there.

## **Spies**

Demelza Mendano - Office of Exchange Integrity, Associate Director of Domestic Affairs

Orlandria de Gietti - Operator in the Chain's Intelligence Agency

Lord Lattimer - Station Chief for Capital in the Actian School's Intelligence Bureau.

Gavotte - Chief of Service for the Department of Naval Intelligence.

**Knight-commander** Lord Valerius de Corano, arrives on a Blue Dragon mount.

**Sir** Servius de Alvaro

**Sir** Livius de Nor'onde