Chapter 23

The first senate election was scheduled for later in the year, December 1st, 1678. Their terms would begin after the solstice and Amelia would start her first term as president as well. We talked about her cabinet and she had six offices to fill. I told her not to let the number of people in the government get out of control. The president controlled the military which currently was 2400 French soldiers, 420 Rangers and 500 sailor/marines. The good news was of the 2400 French soldiers about 1/3 were also Avalon citizens now, either through marriage or request. We just were not big enough of a country to train our own army but I did have the training knowledge of my era. Amelia was to start training a standing army. All soldiers were to be taught to fight land and sea, marines. She was to build a fort in Pendragon and start recruiting 240 young men a year. I gave her the outline of a 12 month training program. Soldiers would serve 9 month tours for 20 years then received land and a pension. I would send her 6 knight magi to help get things going. The men would have a knife, hand axe, and single shot rifle. They would have a hardened chest plate and helm. That was all I would supply. The uniforms were up to Amelia. She should also build a naval academy for maybe 30 candidates a year, enough officers for two ships. The Rangers were more of a roving police force. But I had Amelia plan to build a Ranger school outside of Avalon as well.

In April of 1678 Amelia’s daughter, Daphne, cast her first spell. It was a weaker version of the plant growth spell. She was so happy making flowers grow 60 days in 60 seconds. Of course her success and attention made the other kids try to do the same. I wondered how the indian children were doing. They had all been moved to a secret village. Not two weeks after Daphne, Caleb had cast the shadow hop spell. Then Dana had cast pyrotechnic blast, basically a small firework. Things were getting interesting.

I needed to finish the Magi Tower. I had 350’ left to build and that would take me over a year, maybe two. Riona and I decided the Magi Academy would officially open January 1st 1679. Anyone who could successful cast a spell would be admitted in the first class. To graduate to a second year we decided they would have to evolve one spell. To go to a third year they would need to have 3 evolved spells. Fourth year required one spell to reach a second evolution. Fifth year required 3 spells with a second evolution. To be admitted to a sixth year a student needed to have five spells, all with second evolutions. Seventh year required a contribution to magical study, no spell requirements. Basically a research thesis. To enter the eighth year required seven spells and to pass all exams. To graduate eighth year required 8 spells with at least 2 evolutions each and pass the exams. Not everyone would be able to progress all the way and we decided a mage could only fail to advance twice in their time in the tower. So 10 years at most. We wanted students to enter between age 12 and 14 but if they had a spell earlier they were admitted.

I was juggling a lot from March to June of 1678. The tower grew and the kids were blossoming. Daphne was paid to grow trees in the orchard, she was guarded by two Magi knights when she traveled outside the walls. Dahlia who was not even 10 had transformed into a silver fox, literally a metal fox. Able was communing with plants. The Magi Tower was closing in on 800’ but that was just the shell. I hadn’t added floors yet on the upper floors. I introduced 56 of the greatest novels ever written under their original authors names. The Spanish tried to sneak twenty men in to kidnap a mage…it didn’t go well for them. There was war in Europe…Poland and Ottoman were testing each other, Spain was invading Africa, and Portugal was raiding English ships. History had definitely been upended. I worked hard getting the Magi Knights into pairs. I wanted every one of my children to have two permanent guards. Carina was pregnant again, by accident as she thought we were having sex outside of her fertility time. I think she was having triplets this time too which was a surprise. I had also stopped four different disease outbreaks. All seemed tied to Spain sending over plague ships to Camelot. The last event was the Ottoman trade ship bringing me 200 slaves and bolts of silk as a gift. I freed them and asked the vizor what he really wanted. They wanted help quelling the plague. They had lost tens of thousands of people.

I went into my mind scape and looked for the reason in history books why the Empire fell. World War I. This could be a good opportunity for me. After he exhausted himself pleading I told him I would think about it and give him my answer tomorrow. That night I talk with Colette, Amelia, Carina and Riona. They were my counsels and I talked about the offer of the Ottoman Empire. The discussion lasted well into the night. The biggest reason for helping was to have an ally against the Catholic church. The Pope in Rome was being swayed and may enact a crusade against Avalon. Collette thought the pressure of the Ottoman Empire on Rome would be good pressure to prevent that. The next day I met with the vizor and said I would travel to the Empire but only spend two months curing people. I gave him a book that talked about how disease spread and city sanitations. I told him I would arrive in Istanbul in four months. In return I wanted 200 slaves from his population of my choice and the ottomans to attack Italy if the Pope incited a Crusade against Avalon. It was a big ask and I had to add 200 light stones and promise to send a force to attack Rome as well. I figured it was a two week journey so I had 14 weeks before leaving on September 19th, 1678.

I spent 4 weeks making the 5 shot versions of the rifles, completing 400, and tying up other loose ends. I packed up 24 rifles and 10000 rounds of ammo. The rest were given to the Magi Knights. If I didn’t return or if there was an attack the weapons would be invaluable. I decided to take just the 6 Pantheon golems. I travelled to Camelot with the golems and weapons. I had 10 weeks before departure. I first got 24 of the best shooting marines and got them trained on the rifles, burning up 2000 rounds. I also completed the breaker wall for the mayor since they had the stone gathered nearby. My last act I could do was to expand the 4 batteries and increase the barracks at each to 600. I also reinforced a northern and southern tower they had built on the road, this was easy as I just added a hardened coat of stone on the exterior. Each tower could house 120 men. I stopped in the shipyard and found I had 300 employees now with 3 ships being built. The profits they were making were pretty good. I paved the courtyard and made some stone upgrades. I also had Arden take 30% of my profits and give it to the workers, he could claim as much as 10% of that for himself. It was time to leave.

I boarded the steam ship. I had 98 marines and 40 sailors on board. I recognized most of the men from previous trips, apparently 9 had come out of retirement to join me. They always got a big bonus when we returned so were eager.

As we steamed across the ocean I completed the 200 light stones and made two more Pantheon golems, Hades and Hera. I just had a bad feeling about this trip. When we entered the Mediterranean sea all ships kept their distance. The entire trip to Istanbul took 12 days. We were giving the best dock in the place and I left with my golems to meet the Emperor. We had a meal and entertainment. I gave him the chest of light stones. I learned I had a 60 day tour of cities ahead of me. The sick would be brought to areas so I could heal them in groups. With meditation I could cast the cure spell about 140 times a day, curing 25 at a time, so 3500 a day over 60 days meant I could cure 200,000. We worked out the logistics of my trip. So that was my next days spending a few days in a city and healing the people who had paid the Emperor for healing. I was a little sick of being used so. The good news was I was being exposed to hundreds of thousand of people. Finding people with magic wasn’t difficult. The mathematicians in the university had estimated that 1 in 10,000 women had the double recessive trait based on the data I gave them. It was possibly racial as the Japanese had so few people while the Irish had higher. The days blurred and I pulled girls from their family over and over again. I gave them compensation of paid for the freedom of teir parents if they were slaves. In the end I had 318 girls age 4 to 17 from 14 different ethnicities. I had 145 boys that were brothers. If it was a recessive trait the brothers might have it on their X gene so I thought it would be a good way to bring magic genes to Avalon. The emperor didn’t seem to care I had passed the original 200 agreed. Hell he had bent the agreement by having people pay for my healing. When the 60 days was over I spent 3 more days in Istanbul curing the poor. The people I had healed also gave me numerous gifts, usually of greater value than what they paid the emperor. During the last night in the palace the Emperor gave me numerous gifts as well including a slave dance troupe of 20 athletic women that I had been impressed with on the first night two months ago. Then came the trap.

The emperor explained that he had learned my ship and its crew compliment had been leaked and there were some 200 ships from Spain and the Church waiting for me. He then generously offered a palace for me to stay in for the next year. I made a sign of looking distressed. I returned to my ship with the dancers and all the gifts from the Emperor. I learned two of the dancers were actually daughters of the Emperor but were slaves since they had had sex with common men. He had planned to never let me leave. I checked with my captain and we had about 6 weeks worth of food for everyone. I thought that if what the Emperor said was true then the Spanish and Church ships would have come up countermeasures. I thought about what they could do and spent a few days making upgrades to the steamship, I made each entrance sealable from smoke and all entrances lockable with reinforced stone. I added a cage around the two large props. I made sure my riflemen had positions the could fire from and seal themselves in after. I added a hatch in the stern near the water line I could enter and leave from. The 8 golems got alcoves on the deck that they could secure themselves in until needed. I didn’t want any of them getting knocked into the water by a cannon ball. I felt that was the best I could do. We pulled away from the dock. The ship was cramped with kids everywhere. It was fortunate the light stones allowed them to be active below deck.

We noticed a number of ships that tried to keep up with us but the steam boat was too fast. Soon we reached the Greek isles. It was still ottoman territory but we saw Spanish ships. They were signaling each other with mirrors and a quick flight in eagle form I found a fleet of more than 300 ships trying to create a blockade about 100 miles away. I noticed larger ships had chains on deck. They were going to try to wrap the props. A very smart move on their part. I returned to my ship and talked to captain. I had a plan. They were going to try and herd us between two ships that had chains, instead we were going to run into the wolf pack and blast through. They had underestimated the speed of our boat and were scrambling when we came toward them. They made a show of having a gap in their formation that we could rush through. Instead we turned and headed toward a group of medium ships. Cannon balls started hitting us. We fired our forward cannons then opened gunports and fired port and starboard cannons as we passed. We did significant damage to two small ships as we passed. The riflemen also all fired on one ship, trying for the captain of the medium sized warship and were successful. The enemy did throw flaming oil at us and a few barrels crashed on the deck. Fortunately the ship was designed to wash water off the deck and nothing got below deck. The kids were all huddled by hardened glass windows watching the action. We passed the blockade. There were a number of warships scattered after the blockade, probably set to attack us after we got stuck. Instead of avoiding them I aimed straight for them getting three salvos off with our forward guns and then strafing them. We hit three warships in this manner and even sank one. The riflemen were also certain they killed all three captions on the warships when we passed. I had the ship slow down and went eagle and tried to burn two other warships. But they were now prepared. The response from crews was fast and efficient. I was back on board the steamship and a second fleet of 40 ships was near the southern tip of Italy. We targeted the biggest ship and blasted through even though we could have easily gone around. We got too close and they grappled us. It turned the ship and swung us in an arc and causing us to ram another ship. We were now tied to a ship and stuck on anther. Below deck the abrupt stop might have hurt someone so I told half the golems to swarm the grappled ship and the forward guns to blast the impaled ship. I ran around healing wounded kids and marines. About six broken bones that I had to set then heal and four cracked skulls but no one died. Returning above and the grappled ship on starboard had been cleared and the golems returning. We hadn’t been able to disengage the impaled ship but it was pretty destroyed. The stern and port guns were holding the other ships at bay after the riflemen had killed three more captains. I really needed to put gears on this ship so we had a reverse setting. I ended up cutting the grapple ship off and burning the ship on the bow. The two hours it took to burn enough to slide off we were targeted by hundreds of cannon balls that all just bounced off the hull. The kids even said they were watching out the windows which were struck. With the ship cleared we steamed off.

From the point on we just used our forward guns on Spanish and church ships. At the straits of Gibraltar there were just two Spanish warships. We fired on one ship getting a few hits before entering the Atlantic. The trip to Camelot was just 7 days and we docked on December 18th, 1678. It took some time to get everything into the warehouse and I had to build eight large carts. The kids needed warmer clothes and I paid for them. My warehouse apartment couldn’t hold everyone so I had a number still on the ship. The first caravan with the enclosed carts being pulled by golems had 170 kids and the dancers and took 2 days. I made two repairs to the road on the way. I brought the dancers to the conservatory school of the university. The 150 girls went to Riona who was overwhelmed. The seven girls with the most potential with magic pools over 10 were in this group. It was 4 days later when I returned with the rest of the girls, Riona needed reinforcements. The final trip bringing the boys caused her even more of a headache. We ended moving the boys and the 132 girls with magic pools under 3 to the orphanage. My populace was very caring and within two weeks the orphanage was empty, everyone adopted. The seed of magic was now planted and it was time for the roots and tree to grow.

Carina has given birth to identical triplets, all boys, on December 3rd. Quin, Heart and James.

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| Quin | Carina | 12/3/1678 | 14 | 88 | Water, Fire, Earth, Air |
| Heart | Carina | 12/3/1678 | 18 | 90 | Darkness, Light |
| James | Carina | 12/3/1678 | 12 | 79 | Necromancy, Healing |

Their magic affinities were opposites. I joked with Carina about having more kids and she threatened to cut my dick off. I got on my knee and said what if I married her. She didn’t understand as I presented her a ring. Then her face made about twenty emotions before she lunged at me and kissed me. We didn’t have sex that night but I think once she recovered from the birth I would get lucky.

The goods were transferred in another trip to my under hill warehouse and I invited the curator of the museum to organize the mess and take what the museum could use. He was shocked at the wealth and items. It was beyond anything rationale. I added a few light stones and more shelves. I also dispatched two golems to go search for sunken treasures again. I was getting close to being able to have time to study the spear and wanted the sword. I did have to retaliate against the Spanish. March would be a good time so I had a message sent to the ship to prepare for a trip then. I asked to hire 200 French soldiers from the ambassador and also wanted 200 colonists ready as well. I planned to raid the Caribbean, sink Spanish warships and colonize just south of Panama Canal.