

Fernando de Casanegra

Duke of Hightower

Brotherhood of the Radiance

AC 1014

By Michael Berry

'religion is for those who fear the abyss... spirituality is for those that have been there'

I. Appearance

Fernando cuts a fine if short figure standing at five and a half feet and weighing in at a svelte 115 pounds and is a rarity among Belcadiz men who often sport circle beards and goatees in that he prefers to be clean shaven. He is the very picture of a stylish suave and debonair Glantrian nobleman when he appears in public. He is the main patron of Sindhian tailor Akshani Bhojana and prefers her black tailored silk suits over wizard robes that accentuate his physique and silver hair. Fernando is unlike many of his fellow nobles in that he does not flaunt his wealth and status with displays of jewelry but instead is adored tastefully with several magical trinkets.

II. Personality & Quirks

Casanegra is considered by his fellow nobles to be rather low key and soft spoken except for one particular topic of conservation. Fernando is a passionate believer and defender of the Magocracy and of the Philosophy of Rad. Fernando prefers to split his time between his home in Glantri City and his estate in Hightower. He rarely attends social events while living in the city and spends his time when there involved in research needing the extensive resources available only in the city.

Fernando is a passionate believer in the Philosophy of Rad and shares the militant anti-Clerical, anti-Immortal beliefs of many wizards in Glantri. One of his great passions is furthering the education of mundaners within his dominions. He sponsors poor yet promising students with strong latent magical ability to receive magical training as well as investing heavily in the basic education of his subjects.

Two of Fernando's greatest passions vie for his time and energy. He is one of the foremost Radiance Wizards and is responsible for the discovery of several powerful and unique spells based on the Radiance. All his personal research is focused on exploring additional uses of the Radiance and is his one and only intellectual interest at this stage in his life. The other great passion of Fernando's life is dotting upon his son Rafael. Fernando is loyal to his 2nd wife Yolanda and that loyalty is returned as she has provided a steady anchor in his life and used her upbringing to help free Fernando from more mundane tasks to pursue his magical studies and research. Yet while Fernando loves Yolanda and the two make a solid team together the marriage lacks the passion and fire and closeness he enjoyed with the love of his life and soul mate, his 1st wife Pilar.

III. History & Background

Fernando de Casanegra was born in 794 in the small hamlet of Montila located in the wine producing hills east of New Alvar and was the 3rd child of Antonio and Conchita de Casanegra. The de Casanegra family was very tight knit, and Fernando grew up in a loving household and idolized his older brother César. His parents were potters of some note locally and brought in a nice income that while not wealthy ensured that the de Casanegra family wanted for nothing. In 806 upon the entry of the Belcadiz into the 40 Years War César left home and joined the forces of King Fernando de Belcadiz and the young Fernando himself dreamed of glory and honor on the battlefield as his brother would surely find. Fate decreed otherwise however and in 821 César was killed at the battle of Lugu Lakes. The young Fernando was devastated by the death of his older brother and forever lost his idealistic notions of martial glory.

Fernando spent the following decades at home learning the trade of his parents and was becoming quite proficient as a potter. His future path seemed clear to him in eventually taking over his parents' business and taking care of them as grew older however Fernando's life forever changed and was set upon a new course by a chance meeting in 896 during a family trip to Glantri City. The de Casanegra family was extended an invitation to attend a party at the city mansion of the Prince of Belcadiz to celebrate Prince Fernando's ascension to the title of Grand Master of the Great School of Magic. Feeling a bit overwhelmed in the company of such famous Glantrians Fernando was admiring the Prince's collection of Belcadizan art when he was greeted by a stranger who by his dress was obviously a Shepherd of Rad, but he was not just any Shepherd of Rad but the High Shepherd himself. A long and fulfilling discussion that night about the meaning of life and Fernando's place in it turned into a friendship through many letters and occasional visits over the years. A real thirst for knowledge grew in Fernando and he grew less happy with the life of a potter. He felt honor bound to his family though and not until his father and then finally the passing of his mother in 926 did he feel free to live for himself.

Leaving behind his home village of Montila and selling off his family home and business Fernando enrolled at the Great School of Magic and easily passed his entrance exam. He was quickly recognized by his school master as possessing a sharp intelligence and quick mind. Fernando graduated The Great School with honors in 935 and upon graduating took a position in the Ministry of Interior providing assistance and guidance to Temples of Rad throughout Glantri for the magical education of magically inclined commoners. Fernando's life as Glantrian bureaucrat was yet again set upon a different course in 942 by a chance meeting, this time at a lecture sponsored by the Scholar's Fraternity in which he met the daughter of the Countess of Soth-Kabree, Pilar de Blanca. The elves found they had much in common and Fernando began a long courtship of Pilar. Fernando had never possessed much interest in Glantrian politics but found an interest kindled by Pilar and her mother's passion for it. On behalf of her potential son in law Constanza introduced Fernando to influential nobles and hinted that he should explore the possibility of becoming a noble. When the Barony of Adlerturm came open for an Awards Festival in 956 Fernando tossed his hat into the ring and with the considerable help of Constanza, now the Marquesa of Satolas, as well as Prince Alfonso of Belcadiz he won the open Barony and became the Baron of Adlerturm. Fernando and Pilar married the next year and welcomed their only child to the world, a son named Rafael, in 959.

The years that followed were filled with happiness for the elven couple as they shared their love of scholarship and their other mutual interests and formed an effective partnership as Fernando started working his way up the ladder of Glantrian nobility becoming Viscount of Nathrat in 981 and Count of Wylon in 991. Soon after becoming the Count of Wylon the couple was called to see the Duchess of Hightower. Constanza announced her plan to formally declare her daughter her heir. An intense and

animated discussion ensued where Pilar absolutely refused her mother to be formally declared the heir of Hightower. Now both in tears she explained that no daughter could be no prouder than her of her mother she considered herself her husbands' wife and not her mother's heir. She took as much pride in her husband's rise and their rise would be together and earned with their talents and deeds. Fernando concurred and said he had worked hard for everything he had got in his life and would not accept being declared Constanza's heir either. It was agreed that their son Rafael, Constanza's grandson, would become heir to Constanza and heir to her noble title upon his graduation from the Great School.

Tragedy struck in 992 when while having dinner together in Glantri City Dona Pilar collapsed at the table and when resuscitation proved unsuccessful was declared dead by a Shepherd of Rad. A shocked Fernando sank into a deep depression that lasted for years until pleas from his son and a realization that the state he had fallen into would have disappointed Pilar. Slowly Fernando resumed his magical studies and ruing Wylon.

When Constanza de Blanca passed away in 997 Fernando was called to appear before the Council and formally declined the title of Duke of Hightower thus the Council declared the Duchy vacant and open to an Awards Festival. In the resulting Awards Festivals created by the open Duchy Fernando won the Awards Festival for the open Marquisate of Satolas. However, when Fernando and Rafael were removing her personal items which were bequeathed to Rafael, including her personal library from Hightower, Fernando discovered a hidden area in which Constanza had placed several old, perhaps ancient tomes. Upon reading them Fernando discovered that they were treaties on the possible origins of the Radiance. Launching himself into learning all he could about the Radiance, he soon confirmed the very existence of the Radiance and was accepted into the Brotherhood of the Radiance in 998. The same year Fernando met Princess Carnelia's Aunt, Dona Yolanda de Belcadiz who was the Master of Politics at the Great School of Magic, and they hit it off and started to see each other and were married the next year.

In the year 1000 dark clouds arrived over Glantri as Rad came to the Brotherhood with a vague warning of a dire threat to Glantri and commanded the Brotherhood to seek ways in which the Radiance could be used to defend Glantri. Though still new to the Brotherhood and still learning how to fully use the Radiance Fernando took Rad's warning to heart and furthered his study of the Radiance and made great personal strides in his mastery of the mysterious yet powerful force. The creation of the Principality of Sablestone in 1004 opened the Archduchy of Westheath and set off a large chain reaction of Awards Festivals. With John Beaumarys-Moorcroft becoming the new Archduke of Westheath the Duchy of Hightower became free and Fernando competed for it along with Eachainn McDougall. The Council approved Don Fernando de Casanegra and rejected Sir Eachainn McDougall thus Fernando became the new Duke of Hightower. Fernando immediately turned to trying to correct the neglect his predecessor had shown the people of Hightower and created several new schools of learning and created a new Scholarship program for promising students to attend the Universidad de Belcadiz in New Alvar. However, not a year later Alpathia declared war on Glantri and the Great War with Alpathia and Fernando and his fellow Brothers of the Radiance finally became aware of the threat Rad had spoken of years previously and he doubled his efforts into the Radiance and spent most of his waking hours in his tower researching its possible uses to help defend Glantri. In 1006 he made his first great Radiance discovery when he discovered the Radiance could temporarily neutralize the Maga-Cromagamorons in the targets bloodstream rendering them magic-less and incapable of casting spells or using magical items such as wands and staves.

Fernando's Radiance studies were interrupted when Glantri was taken completely by surprise when Thar launched his attack upon Glantri with over 50,000 humanoids on the 3rd of Yarthmont 1007. Fernando and his wife were in Glantri City at the time attending an important Parliamentary session when Thar attacked with complete surprise. Precious days were wasted as reports of the scope, size, and direction of the attacks were fragmented and contradictory and Glantri was for days paralyzed by a dysfunctional and politicized command structure at the Council of Princes that in large part led to the post war reorganization of the Grand Army and the creation of a professional, not political, command structure. The Council and Parliament were bitterly divided upon how to proceed, most assuming Thar would move westward against Caurenze not against the whole of Glantri. It was not until scouts confirmed that the main mass of Thar's Army was not moving west but was crossing the Red River north into Hightower towards Glantri City did the true threat to Glantri emerge to the Council of Princes. A motion by Princess Carlolina, herself fighting off an attack by an estimated 8,000 humanoids, was passed giving Prince Jaggar full control over the Glantrian Army. By the time de Casanegra left Glantri City his Duchy was already as good as lost and his people were already dying in droves under the teeth and blades of the invading humanoids. Fernando was able to marshal some residents of the northernmost settlements of Hightower at his estate and was preparing to see them off safely out of Thar's way when a force of Orcs was sighting heading straight for them. A barrage of Fernando's most powerful and lethal spells, including Radiance spells, killed Orcs by the hundreds and set the survivors fleeing in sheer panic. He was able to move off the survivors of his dominion to safety to the west.

Though responsible for saving hundreds of lives he felt as if he had failed his people for not having divined sooner that this was not a mere raid for booty and plunder but a full invasion and evacuated his people sooner. After seeing his people safely to Caurenze the Duke and his wife returned to Glantri City, where their son Rafael was a student at the Great School of Magic and assisted defending the city against the besieging humanoids. Upon finally driving Thar's army south and recapturing Hightower Fernando took charge of the little that was left of his dominion. In the immediate years after Thar was driven back into the Broken Lands Fernando worked tirelessly with his wife, neglected his own scholarly and magical interest to try to rebuild his shattered dominion. Soon enough however Fernando was called to resume his magical and Radiance activities and Dona Yolanda took a sabbatical from the Great School of Magic to oversee the rebuilding of Hightower. So far progress has been frustratingly slow, but signs of progress are to be found. Just last year a large group of over a hundred Belcadizan moved to Hightower and started to put down roots.

In the aftermath of the end of the war with Alphatia the Brotherhood of the Radiance noted that Rad no longer attended their quarterly meetings and left the group adrift as to how to proceed for several years. At the suggestion of one of the Brotherhood's newest members, Brother Osanna (Viscount of Amboise, Michel Leconte who unbeknownst to the Brotherhood was the only Brother to know exactly what happened to Rad having been a witness to his battle with Ixion and his disappearance with the 'Old One'), it was suggested that one and only one Brother should take over oversight and guidance of the Temple of Rad which was the glue of the Magocracy's hold over the population of Glantri. Fernando volunteered telling the Brotherhood he had a strong internet in the furthering of the education of Glantri and would enjoy guiding the Temple of Rad to continue that mission. The Brotherhood agreed and de Casanegra ended the long silence of 'Rad' to the Supreme Shepherd of Rad and resumed as the voice of 'Rad' sending regular visions of guidance and encouragement to her.

IV. Web of Intrigue

Fernando is highly regarded in intellectual circles in Glantri. He is a proud member of the Scholar's Fraternity and when in Glantri City will often teach classes on Glantrian law at the Great School. Fernando was deeply involved with his fellow Brotherhood of the Radiance members during the Great War and was partially responsible for developing some Radiance spells that were to have been used in case of a land attack by Alphatia that fortunately never came. Those spells were never used but exist up the sleeves of Glantri in case of a future invasion. In the eyes of the Brotherhood, Glantri was caught unprepared once but will never be again and Rad help the next country that invades Glantri.

His son Rafael is set to graduate the Great School of Magic next year and Fernando plans to make sure Rafael finds what was by all rights his to inherit, the tome on the Radiance that he found in Constanza de Bianca's tower and hopes his son will be able to connect the dots and join him in the Brotherhood of the Radiance. Rafael and Yolanda maintain a pleasant relationship but not one filled with any particular love or affection, though Rafael is appreciative of the support Yolanda has given his father after the death of his mother.

Politically Fernando rarely attends the House of Lords unless it pertains to a special interest of his or events of national importance. He almost always without fail follows the direction of Princess Carnelia and as such has the political allies of Belcadiz as well as their enemies. He has few personal enemies and due to his indulgence of the intellectual rather than the social has few friends, in his mind his wife is the only friend he really needs.

V. Statistics & Style of Magic

Statistics: 17th-level Elf-Mage, Member of the Brotherhood of the Radiance (Estocada); Str 11, Int 18, Wis 17, Dex 11, Con 9, Cha 14; AL - Lawful

Languages: Belcadizan, Thyatian (common), Ethengarian, Flaemish, Averogian

Weapon Proficiencies: Staff (skilled)

Skills: Alternative Magics (18), Alchemy (18), Knowledge of Glantrian Government (18), Elf History (18), Teaching (18), Knowledge of Glantrian Laws (18), Astronomy (18), Magical Engineering (18), Immortal Lore (18), Planar Geography (18), Knowledge of Glantri City (18)

Fernando is more a cultured scholar than a hardened killer but as proven to all during Thar's invasion he can more than handle himself in any fight due to his high level and knowledge of Radiance spells. He never bothered to advance his proficiencies with hand-to-hand weapons beyond basic skill levels with any weapon except for the staff which he considers an honorable weapon and one suited for non-lethal self-defense.

"that little runt knows something I don't, and I want to know it... find out what that spell was".

(Countess Sinaria Verlien to a high-priced private investigator)