

Story of St. Hilarion Castle and Queen Regaena

“Welcome to St. Hilarion, step forward into Queen Regaena’s chamber to receive your pay for your hard work and dedication!” As I step through the doorway, there is the alluring Queen Regaena just inside the open window of her chamber. I cross the room, and I unexpectedly feel the guards’ presence close in behind me. Suddenly, they grab me and force me through the open window. As the guards push me from the precipice outside the window, “Thank you again,” are the last words I hear, as I fall to my death in the valley below.

The fairy tale-looking castle of St. Hilarion was built by the Byzantine queen, Regaena, the end of the 11th century. Queen Regaena was the most beautiful lady in the land of Cyprus, alas; she was also the most heartless and cruel. She was a greedy woman and desired to have the most beautiful and elaborate castle in all of Cyprus.

Queen Regaena insisted on overseeing the construction of the castle herself. No detail was to be overlooked. In planning such a large and magnificent castle, Queen Regaena knew that she would need a large workforce. She gathered a large number of sturdy men from near and far and forced them to build her castle. She required the men to form lines, standing side by side, and pass the materials from man to man until they reached their assigned destination. This was difficult work since most of the materials had to be transported from the valley to the summit of the mountain. But goal was to complete the castle in Regaena’s lifetime so she could enjoy it. Finally, the glorious castle was completed and she named it St. Hilarion Castle. Its unsurpassed grandeur impressed all who beheld it. Queen Regaena should have been joyful at the completion of St. Hilarion, however, she was worried.

Over the years, Queen Regaena had amassed a large fortune of gold and wealth in her family treasury. Her greatest fear was that the workers who constructed the castle would remember the hidden location of the royal treasure room. She sat in a chamber in

the western wing of the castle and thought of a plan to prevent possible robbery. This particular chamber had a window which opened onto an enormous precipice and had a breathtaking view of the valley far below. Sitting at this window, she devised an evil plan to protect her treasure. One afternoon, she told her soldiers to call all of the men together that had worked on the castle. They were to come to the castle to receive their pay for their dedication to the queen and the work they had so conscientiously performed on the castle. Once they arrived, Queen Regaena posted guards at the entrance of the western chamber wing and ordered them to call the workers into her chamber one by one to receive their pay. No one, however, came out. Heartless Queen Regaena ordered the guards to kill the workers by throwing them off the cliff outside her chamber. This method of death kept the plan of the castle and its treasure safe and protected forever.

Story Location Clue: St. Hilarion Castle is located in the northern part of Cyprus and sits atop a summit in the western part of the Kyrenia mountain range. It is located directly south of Kyrenia and west of the Karpas peninsula. To date, the whereabouts of Queen Regaena's treasure remains unknown.

** Queen Regaena named the castle after the revered St. Hilarion, a popular religious man in Palestine.*