

## Steel 341

### *Chapter 341: Coronation of a King Part II*

While Emperor Vetranis was calming his nerves in the courtyard of the Royal Palace of Austria, Berengar was comforting Honoria after she had learned the troubling news of Arethas' death. He latched onto the beautiful young woman like a lamprey as he stroked her silky white hair. While he did so, he whispered into the Princess's ear.

"Don't worry; everything will be fine. I promise that I will convince your father to allow us to be together!"

Honoria looked up at Berengar with an appreciative glance. Without Berengar here to comfort her, she had no idea how she would handle the news of Arethas' death. Aside from Heraclius, her godfather was her only friend growing up, hearing that he had passed away while still being so young shook the girl to her core.

It was only after Berengar had helped calm the princess's nerves that the young King addressed the crowd of nobility who had gathered to witness his coronation with a calm and confident tone.

"I apologize for the scene just now; we will be moving onto the Coronation shortly, so I suggest you take your fill of food and wine before it is no longer being distributed."

After saying this, Berengar returned his attention to the people who were gathered by his side. Marquess Otto von Graz, who was the father of Adela had also approached Berengar during this time and began to speak to him.

"Your Majesty, I have to ask, will everything be alright between you and our allies to the East? It appears that Princess Honoria's presence has now become known to everyone present..."

Berengar smiled in response to this and nodded his head before addressing his Chancellor's concerns.

"Everything will be fine Otto, after my coronation, I intend to have a long discussion with the Byzantine Emperor about the future of our two realms. For now, you should enjoy yourself; the Ceremony will begin soon enough."

After seeing the confident expression on Berengar's face, Otto felt somewhat relieved. The King knew what he was doing, even if it may not have seemed that way from the initial encounter. As such, he nodded his head and smiled before responding to Berengar's remarks.

"I will do as you suggested."

With that said, Marquess Otto took his leave and began to mingle with the other guests. Before long, the Emperor returned to the event after some thorough convincing from the mysterious nobleman from the east.

After doing so, Berengar instructed the food and wine to be taken back to the kitchen, and the Ceremony had begun. Ludolf, who was the head of the Reformist Church, held onto a purple pillow with golden embroidery; upon this pillow was a crown fit for a King. This Crown was gold with black garnet gemstones embedded within its surface and contained a black velvet lining.

As such, Berengar spoke towards the crowd that had gathered to witness this occasion with an authoritative voice as he said the words that would be etched into history.

"I King Berengar von Kufstein, first of my name hereby declare that I am crowned by God, not by the Church as my power is divine in nature! It is under his will that no man alive or dead commands me on this great Earth, for I answer solely to the Lord God almighty!"

After saying this short, but precise speech Berengar grabbed ahold of the gilded Crown and placed it on his head. The moment he did so, Marquess Otto von Graz, the Chancellor of Austria, ordered every Austrian man, woman, and child present.

"Kneel before your King!"

The moment he said this, the entire crowd gathered, aside from the diplomats of foreign Kingdoms kneeled before Berengar and bowed their heads in respect to the man that would one day lead Austria to boundless glory.

When Berengar saw this, a smug smile carved itself upon his flawless face, he had waited years for this day, and it had finally come true. Though the road to the Crown was complete, the road to power had only just begun.

His ambitions were far more significant than simply being King of Austria and Switzerland. He planned many conquests in the years to come and had already begun to draft the documents necessary to fund expeditions across the world in search of lands with valuable resources ripe for colonization.

However, for now, such things were still unachievable. As a matter of principle, he had several tasks at hand that prevented such actions. Firstly, Berengar had to take care of his relations with the Empire to the East. Then he would have to marry his darling fiancée and sire some offspring; after that, he would have to begin the process of industrialization. It was not until Berengar had achieved the results he desired that he would fund an expedition to the new world and start his wars of unification.

Berengar kept this fact in mind as he spent the rest of the day entertaining his guests, many of which had traveled across Austria and Europe itself to witness the monumental occasion. After spending several hours mingling with the noblemen and women of the western world, Berengar finally ended the Coronation Ceremony.

After the hundreds of guests had dispersed from his palace, the young Monarch took his first steps on his long journey towards unification. As such, Berengar approached the Emperor and his counsel with a pleasant smile on his face.

The two men had waited silently until this moment, knowing that there were important matters that needed to be discussed between their two realms. Now that the Coronation ceremony was completed, Berengar was required to mend the temporary rift between himself and the Byzantines. As such, he approached the Emperor of the East with a friendly smile before expressing his thoughts.

"I apologize for the wait Emperor Vetrans; I believe that you and I have some important matters to discuss; if you and your friend would follow me to someplace more private, I would very much like to have a conversation with you."

The Byzantine Emperor eyed Berengar with suspicion. However, the mysterious Byzantine nobleman by his side nodded his head in approval, signaling to the Emperor that it would be acceptable to do so; as such, Emperor Vetrans and his counsel followed Berengar to his study where Honoria was already waiting for their discussion.

She had a nervous smile on her otherwise perfect face as she witnessed her lover and father enter the room together; she knew this discussion would seal her fate; either she could continue to live with Berengar and enjoy the life of a privateer, or she would be dragged back to Constantinople and be forced to marry some prince where she would live her life in servitude.

Regardless of the risks, she trusted Berengar with every fiber of his being to properly negotiate with her father about a potential marriage between herself and her lover. It was with this in mind that she greeted her estranged father with a pleasant but forced smile.

"Father, it is good to see that you are still in exceptional health."

Vetrans did not respond to this and merely snubbed his daughter; only after the doors were sealed and, absolute privacy was ensured did Emperor Vetrans speak his mind about the whole ordeal.

"Tell me, King Berengar, how long has my daughter been living with you?"

Berengar saw no reason to lie about such a thing, and as such, he quickly revealed the information.

"I suppose it has been roughly two years now? Maybe longer..."

Emperor Vetrans nodded his head before speaking his thoughts on the matter.

"I must thank you for keeping her safe during this time. However, I am still confused about the nature of your relationship with my daughter. I understand that you already have a fiancée, and your wedding is set not long from now. So tell me, what intentions do you have for my daughter, now that you know she is the Princess of the Byzantine Empire?"

Berengar smiled when he heard this question; for years now, he had been trying to think of a way to convince the Emperor to allow him to marry Honoria as his third wife, and now that the time had come, he refused to let the chance slip from his grasp. As such, he quickly grabbed ahold of Honoria's hand before bringing it to his lips, where he kissed it in an intimate display. After doing so, he revealed his thoughts to the Emperor, who was standing in shock.

"The fact that Valeria is the missing Princess Honoria does not change how I feel about her. The truth is we are in love and have been for some time. If anything, this presents an opportunity, one that could guarantee the prosperity of our two realms for years to come..."

Vetranis instantly frowned when he heard this; his worst fears had been realized; Berengar was nothing more than a womanizer who had taken his only daughter as a member of his harem. He had heard rumors that Berengar kept several mistresses by his side, but he never suspected that his daughter was one of them until now. As such, he was naturally inclined to reject any offer that Berengar was about to present.

However, before he could refuse to listen to such absurdity, the mysterious nobleman accompanying the Byzantine Emperor immediately spoke out with a friendly tone.

"Do tell, King Berengar, what kind of arrangement did you have in mind?"

After hearing this, a smug smile etched itself upon Berengar's immaculate features as he revealed the plot he had in mind ever since Honoria's arrival in Kufstein.

"Well, that is quite simple; I intend to Marry Honoria as my third wife; in doing so, I will absolve your Empire of all debts that you currently hold to the Austrian Crown and establish an alliance between our two realms for the

foreseeable future. So tell me, Emperor Vetrans? Are you willing to marry your daughter to a German King?"

The room was utterly silent as the young Monarch spoke these words to the Emperor from the East. Berengar's offer was simply outrageous, as such, it took some time for the man to calm his nerves. What came next would be an intense negotiation that would alter the course of the world's history for the foreseeable future.

*Chapter 342: Aggressive Negotiations with the Byzantine Emperor*

Berengar stared down Vetrans with a gaze of utter confidence; the Byzantine Emperor was visibly shaking from the rage building up within himself. This minor nobleman from the west who had risen to the status of a King had won his only daughter's heart and most likely taken her virtue with it. This was a massive blow to the prestige of the Byzantine Imperial Family; after all, Berengar may be the most powerful man in Europe at the moment, but he was still of a lesser pedigree.

As such, those who had come from dynasties that had ruled over Kingdoms and Empires for centuries still tended to look down upon him as nothing more than an upstart. Vetrans was one of these men. Austria may be exceptionally wealthy and hold supreme martial power compared to its neighbors, but it was a rising star.

Meanwhile, Constantinople had been the gem of the east since the days of Rome. Such past glories blinded Vetrans with hubris when dealing with this upstart King of the West. Especially when considering this young monarch had just blatantly stated he wanted to take Honoria as his third wife.

Vetrans gazed at his errant daughter's flushed appearance as the girl heard Berengar's words, and noticed that Honoria was utterly entranced with the Austrian King. To think that his daughter would fall head over heels for a filthy German was an insult to the Emperor's allegedly pure Roman heritage.

The German States had come a long way in terms of advancement and civilization since the days of their barbarian ancestors. Despite this, the stigma surrounding the Germans as savage and brutal people never entirely faded from the perspective of the Byzantines.

After all, the Greco-Roman population of the Eastern Empire still claimed a lineage to the Ancient Romans, or at the very least, the nobility did so. With all of this in mind, the Emperor nearly erupted at Berengar and his claims; however, Vetrans choked back his anger and behaved with semi-civil conduct as he addressed Berengar's conditions.

"Bah, you think you can marry my daughter as your third wife? I know you may not be Catholic, but surely the German Reformation does not allow polygamy!?!"

In response to this, the smug grin on Berengar's face failed to vanish as he boldly addressed the Emperor's first point of contention.

"The German Reformation and its adherents believe what I tell them to believe. If you were to actually study the word of God, and go back to the Old Testament, then you would see proof of polygamy as a common practice among the Heavenly Father's most favored children. As for the new testament, only a few verses mention polygamy, and it is strictly regarding members of the clergy.

As for whether or not it is culturally compatible with the German way of life, the ancestors of my people practiced polygamy in a limited capacity. Usually, it was only men of great status who took multiple wives, but we live in different times, and I see no reason a common man cannot take up more than one bride if he can provide for them and his children with them."

Vetrans did not know how to refute Berengar's claims when it came to his arguments; he was neither a biblical scholar nor a historian capable of presenting counter-evidence. As such, he merely resorted to childish insults in regards to Berengar's heritage.

"Your ancestors were nothing more than filthy barbarians!"

When Honoria heard this, she frowned before commenting on her father's rude remarks.

"Father! How-"

However, before she could finish her statement, Berengar smiled cruelly and responded with a witty retort.

"And your ancestors were a bunch of wicked degenerates, but I suppose both of our people have come a long way in terms of civilization. I would ask you to refrain from insulting my heritage. After all, soon enough, your grandchildren will share it."

Vetranis nearly snapped when he heard the last part of Berengar's remark. However, the mysterious nobleman nearby attempted to calm the Emperor's nerves as he whispered in his ear some words that only the two men could hear. After hearing the advice of his minister, Vetranis calmly responded to Berengar's claims with a forced smile on his face.

"You truly believe that, don't you?"

The smug grin spread across Berengar's face never faded, as it only increased in size every time he heard the Emperor speak, this did not go unnoticed by his guests, and it only acted as a means to stoke the fire in Vetranis' heart.

Berengar did not respond to this question, at least not verbally; he merely nodded his head in silence, knowing that such an action would further provoke the Emperor. His assumptions proved correct as Vetranis practically had steam coming out of his ears as he continued to press Berengar on his claims.

"Tell me, King Berengar, why are you so positive that I will agree to allow you to marry my daughter?"

In response to this, Berengar raised four of his fingers before calmly responding to the Emperor's question.

"There are four reasons why I know for a fact that you will wed your daughter to me. Firstly, now that your alliance with France has faltered due to Honoria's disappearance, you need a powerful ally to the west. I can provide a far more stable alliance than my pathetic neighbor to the west.



Secondly, I have already taken your daughter's chastity, which means finding an alternative option for her to marry will be nigh impossible, especially when your other options hear that it is the mighty King Berengar who has taken the girl's first time.

Thirdly, you do not have the power to compel me to give her up, and I am more than willing to wage war for her hand in marriage, but of course, that would be my last option, and I would greatly prefer a peacefully alternative."

After saying this, silence prevailed in the room; the only sound that could be heard was the grinding of the Emperor's teeth as he struggled to come to terms with Berengar's words. It was only after a few moments where the minister who had accompanied Vetrans spoke up on the matter.

"You mention four reasons for why the Emperor will give in to your demands; what is the final one?"

In response to this, Berengar's smile finally disappeared as a grave expression appeared across his pristine face. As he did so, an oppressive aura filled the room as Berengar spoke with the authority of a Tyrant.

"Lastly, you owe me a substantial debt, one that would be difficult to pay even with your newly acquired territory. I would be more than happy to forgive a sizable portion of that account in return for the Princess's hand in marriage. You can consider it the bride price."

When the minister heard this last remark, he knew that Berengar had negotiated his terms masterfully; the young monarch had started with three solid, albeit harsh justifications for why he would get his way, only to end with an option that greatly favored the other party.

As such, the mysterious minister began to whisper his council into the Emperor's ear. A marriage with Honoria greatly favored the minister's faction and was one of their most important goals. He could consider it the fortune of heaven for himself being picked to accompany the Emperor on this journey to Kufstein.

As such, he did everything he could to convince the Emperor to accept Berengar's terms, especially since Berengar was using debt-trap diplomacy to seal the deal. The Emperor and his minister conversed in hushed tones for several minutes until they finally returned to the negotiating table, where Berengar and Honoria sat in silence. The Emperor made one final demand before ending the negotiations.

"It would appear that you have made a convincing argument; my minister seems to support your decision. However, I have a single point of contention that I think needs to be addressed. My daughter is an Imperial Princess, while your other brides-to-be are far lower ranked in the noble hierarchy. Make my daughter your first wife and the lawful Queen of Austria, and I will accept your demands."

The Emperor saw this as a reasonable request and did not expect Berengar to refuse. However, as Berengar had stated, he held all the cards in this negotiation, and he would not relent on the issue.

"I refuse... Honoria will be my third wife, and that is final."

Vetranis nearly jumped out of his seat as he heard such a brash remark. However, he looked over at his minister's gaze before gritting his teeth and asking politely why Berengar would refuse such a demand.

"Why? It is a perfectly reasonable request!"

Berengar merely chuckled as he allowed Honoria to speak for the first time in the negotiation.

"Ask your daughter how she feels about ruling as the primary Queen of Austria..."

When Vetranis looked over at Honoria, he was surprised to see she was completely unphased by Berengar's remarks. As such, Honoria expressed her desires to her father openly and clearly.

"I have no intention to rule as the High Queen beside Berengar. It is a task I am not suited to; Adela is a far better candidate for such a position. Berengar

has given me the freedom to live my life as I see fit, and the affairs of the court are dreadful, to say the least."

Before Vetranis could respond, Berengar opted to inform Vetranis of the format he had decided to make for his polygamous structure.

"Your daughter will have the official title of Queen, which means she is a secondary wife. There will only be one High Queen of Austria who rules by my side, and that is my fiancée Adela von Graz. In exchange for this, I offer a matrilineal marriage so that Honoria's children are members of your dynasty.

An alliance will be established between our two Realms, one that I am sure will last the test of time, and I am willing to absolve you and your Empire of 75% of its debt. As for the payment of the remainder 25%, it can be negotiated at a later date.

So what do you say? Do you agree to my terms?"

Vetranis asked Honoria one last question to his only daughter before coming to a decision.

"Is this really what you want, Honoria?"

In response to this, Honoria nodded her head with a beautiful smile on her face before answering her father's inquiry.

"More than anything!"

The Emperor sighed heavily before nodding his head.

"Very well. I agree to betrothed my daughter to you, King Berengar; you have truly left me with no other option. I must say, you truly know how to get what you want..."

Berengar responded to the Emperor's words with a genuine smile on his face.

"Thank you, Emperor Vetranis, or should I call you father-in-law?"

However, Vetranis shook his head and stood up when he heard this. He said one final word before departing the room.

"That wasn't meant to be a compliment..."

After saying this, Vetrans left his daughter and her new fiance alone in the room; he had a massive headache after the aggressive negotiations he had just dealt with. As for Berengar, he immediately began to make out with Honoria after her father left. What the two would get up to while alone in the Royal Palace's study only they would know.

#### *Chapter 343: Discussing Military Intervention in Granada*

After successfully negotiating his future marriage to Honoria, Berengar returned to the great hall of his royal palace, where another guest was sitting and drinking, surrounded by his two wives and his beautiful sister. This guest was none other than Sultan Hasan Al-Fadl.

Though nearly all of the guests had long since vanished from the scene, Hasan had stayed behind to ask a favor of Berengar. When Berengar saw the man sitting next to the three beauties, he decided to sit alongside them. As he did so, Hasan made a toast in Berengar's honor.

"To King Berengar, long may he reign!"

Berengar smiled as he heard this and took a sip from the chalice filled with the fortified wine. After doing so, he gazed over at Yasmin, who he could tell was an astounding beauty. Berengar decided to check out the young woman and was highly impressed with the Moorish princess's divine physique. However, before Berengar could finish inspecting the woman, he heard Hasan's voice call out to him.

"So, you are interested in my sister after all?"

Berengar snapped back to attention after hearing this and sighed before responding.

"I'd be lying if I said she was not beautiful. However, I have enough women at the moment, and I'm pretty sure they will castrate me in my sleep if I were to take in another."

When Berengar said this, Yasmin looked at him with a sad glance; she had grown quite fond of Berengar during her brief stay in Kufstein, even though

they had rarely communicated. Berengar's exquisite appearance and natural charisma had taken hold of the girl's affections. Despite Berengar's words, Hasan remained undeterred and made one final remark.

"I am certain you will come around to the idea sooner or later..."

After saying this, he glanced over at his sister and his wives before commenting.

"girls, if you will excuse us, I have some important matters to discuss with my friend."

After saying this, Yasmin nodded and led her little brother's wives from the scene. After the women disappeared, Hasan looked around to ensure that he and Berengar were truly alone. It was only after he confirmed such a thing did his confident facade begin to crack.

"Berengar, I need your help; the war with the Iberian Union is not going as planned; they have defeated my armies on multiple occasions and captured many of the weapons you have sold me. They have already retaken the land I have seized in this conflict and have begun to push into the heart of my Kingdom. You said in our alliance that you would guarantee our independence! I have come to ask for you to honor your words..."

Berengar took a sip from his chalice before sighing heavily. He had just finished a war and did not want to engage in another. Though he did not desire to go to war so quickly after returning home, certain events were unavoidable.

Thus Berengar began to hatch a plan, one where he could utilize General Arnulf to oversee the war effort in his stead. If things still did not turn out well, only then would he take up the mantle. With this in mind, Berengar tapped the armrest on the sofa thrice before responding to Hasan's remarks.

"How the hell did you manage to fuck up this badly? I gave you arms, training, and advisors, and you still could not lead your men to victory?"

Hasan had a downcast expression as he stared at the ground, too afraid to look Berengar in the eye. Noticing his ally's behavior, Berengar sighed once more before speaking up on the matter.

"I suppose I should not be too hard on you..."

As soon as Berengar said this, Hasan looked up at him with surprise on his face. However, Berengar ignored this and continued his train of thought.

"Truthfully, even with the advantages I have given you, I did not believe you would win this conflict by yourself. There are too many factors working against you. You are vastly outnumbered by your enemies and surrounded but the south.

You lack the means to produce the arms and munitions that your Army is equipped with and thus rely heavily on imports to sustain your military. You also lack the means to conscript a large number of forces without it adversely affecting your economy.

I knew this day would come; I just did not expect it to be so soon. Alright, I will send 10,000 men from my Army to intervene on your behalf. However, I will need a few months to field them, we have just gotten out of our war for independence, and my Army needs time to lick their wounds.

I assume you can hold out for half a year; after all, it takes the Iberians a couple of months to successfully siege a single castle, let alone a city. If you can last six months, I promise you my armies will ensure your victory in this conflict. Who knows, we might even see a restoration of Al-Andalus..."

Hasan knew it would take some time for Berengar to deploy his forces, but he did not expect half a year. Nevertheless, the young Sultan knew there was no chance of convincing Berengar to send his troops early; after all, the reputation of the Austrian King was one of overwhelming dominance. With this in mind, he sighed once more before responding to Berengar's remarks.

"Very well, I will hold the line until your forces can appear. I hope your Army does not arrive too late."

When Berengar heard this remark, he smiled and grasped ahold of Hasan's shoulder before comforting the man.

"Do not worry, my friend; by the time my forces arrive in Granada, not even an army of 100,000 men will be able to defeat our alliance!"

Hasan had little faith in Berengar's bold claims, but he knew that Berengar's Army tended to annihilate any hostile force they came across. As such, he was not entirely without hope. Little did he know of Berengar's newest weapons, nor the weapons he planned to build during the allotted timeframe.

The Age of Industry would soon be upon Austria, and Berengar planned to upgrade his artillery within the next few months. The needle rifle itself was a massive advantage over his enemies, but Berengar needed rifled breech-loaders.

As such, Berengar planned to use the next six months to industrialize as much of his Kingdom as he could while mass equipping his Army with the new weapons and tactics needed to annihilate his enemies. With this in mind, Berengar finished his wine before placing the chalice on the table; as he did so, he gave the Moorish Sultan a bit of friendly advice before departing.

"Have faith, my friend; you have chosen your friends wisely; now is the time to put some trust into our alliance. Before long, the Catholic Church and its minions will crumble beneath our feet; their days of supremacy are coming to an end. A new world awaits on the horizon, and we will stand at the top of it."

After saying this, Berengar departed from the room, leaving Hasan to drink by himself; he had much to think about; if what Berengar said was true, he may be a powerful monarch within the Iberian peninsula one day, not just a minor player.

The very idea that Al-Andalus could see a resurgence brought a bitter smile to the man's face as he drank from his cup of wine. After a while, his sister returned, where she began to inquire about the contents of his meeting with the King of Austria. She noticed the complicated expression on her brother's face and dragged his head into her mighty bust. Where she proceeded to stroke Hasan's chocolate hair while comforting him.

"That bad, huh?"

Hasan continued to drink from his chalice before responding to his older sister.

"He wants us to hold on for six more months; after that, he will send an army to intervene on our behalf. I don't know if he wants us to be desperate and sink more money into his weapons trade, thus increasing our debt to him. Or if he genuinely needs the six months to prepare his forces."

Yasmin thought about the complexity of the topic for several moments before responding to her little brother.

"He just got out of a war for independence; his troops are likely weary of battle and need time to rest. He also needs to manufacture new munitions for his army; I heard about what he did to Florence; they say he bombarded the city for two months, launching hundreds of thousands of shells onto the town, leaving it entirely in ruin.

I don't know about you, but that requires a lot of firepower; his artillery is probably drained of resources and needs to recover. He is only asking for six months to prepare for intervention into our conflict, which means he must be confident in his manufacturing capabilities. Have faith, brother; we will win this war!"

After hearing his sister's words of wisdom, Hasan thanked her before departing; he and his family were provided rooms within the Royal Palace during their stay in Kufstein. As such, he dusted himself off and returned to his room, where he began to sleep.

#### *Chapter 344: Industry and Conspiracy*

Days passed, and with it, all of Berengar's guests returned to their homes. Berengar had successfully crowned himself King, pledged his support to Granada in their ongoing conflict with their neighbors, and negotiated with the Byzantine Emperor for Honoria's hand in marriage.

With those things out of the way, Berengar now had a long list of tasks that needed to be taken care of. First and foremost, Berengar was required to prepare for his wedding with Adela; now that he was home from war and she



was of age, it was time for such a merry occasion. However, not much preparation was needed on Berengar's part as he had already planned the wedding years in advance. As such, he left the remaining plans to Adela and her underlings.

While the preparations were being completed, Berengar quickly set himself to task with an important objective. Now that he had bought himself a few years of peace, he would make sure to take full advantage of the situation.

The time had come; the era of steam and steel awaited him. While Berengar had no plans to change his methods of steel production, for the time being, it was becoming increasingly clear that he had advanced to the pinnacle of what a pre-industrial society could muster. With this in mind, Berengar had a single thought in his head as he began to scribble out blueprints for an important tool that could be used to increase production by a wide margin.

Though Berengar desired to create Steam Engines, he realized he would first need a more efficient means of riveting if he were to begin the mass implementation of steam-based machinery. The first item he intended to invent for his new industrial age was essential to Austria's industrialization.

The Pneumatic rivet gun was a device that utilized compressed air to propel a rivet into the targeted area after the operators pressed the trigger. Without something like welding coming into existence, Berengar would need rivets to manufacture his machinery; as such, he figured the most efficient means would be this simple but effective tool. Thus, he began to draft plans to set up a facility to make compressed air cans so that the rivet guns could always be functional.

After spending many hours drafting up the necessary plans for producing these tools, Berengar had finally finished his task. As he reclined in his office chair and sighed, he noticed a warm ceramic mug touch his cheek.

Looking over towards the origins of this strange phenomenon, Berengar saw his future wife, Adela staring at him with a gorgeous smile on her doll-like face. In her hands was a cup of coffee brewed for Berengar's consumption.

Seeing that Adela was in a good mood, the young monarch smiled before accepting the gift. After taking a sip from the mug, Berengar complimented the pretty young woman who had instantly sat in his lap.

"Well, Adela, I must say, you do know how to brew a cup of coffee!"

Adela nodded silently while staring at the various plans Berengar had drafted on the table. It was not just Pneumatic rivet guns and their production facilities; there were also designs for more advanced lathes that used peddle-driven power to operate. The precision needed to create steam engines, advanced artillery, and superior rifles could be achieved with this invention.

When the young woman noticed these plans, she could not contain her curiosity and immediately inquired about their uses.

"Berengar? What are these blueprints for?"

The young monarch wrapped his arm around his loving fiancée and placed his mug of coffee down upon his desk. After doing so, he fidgeted through the papers and began to explain their uses to Adela.

"I have decided to begin the process of industrialization, which means we will be manufacturing more advanced machines and the means to power them. This will increase productivity and lead to the rapid development of technology. To do this, I am creating a few tools that will be extremely helpful in the early stages."

Though Adela did not have the faintest idea of how these tools functioned, the summary Berengar had given her was enough for her to understand their intended purpose. As such she smiled, before sipping from her cup of coffee. As she did so, Berengar stroked her silky golden hair while drinking from his mug.

The couple stayed in silence for some time before Adela finally lifted herself from Berengar's lap. After doing so, she departed with the empty cups of coffee in her hands, where she would proceed to bring them back to the kitchen for cleaning.

As for Berengar, he decided that he had done enough work for the day and followed Adela out of his study with his plans in hand. After reaching a certain point in his palace, he noticed one of his servants and handed the man the papers with strict instructions.

"Bring these to Ludwig in the Industrial district; he will know what to do with them. If he has any questions, he can visit the palace personally."

After saying this, the servant bowed respectfully before disappearing from Berengar's sight. With the servant gone, Berengar entered the dining room, where he began to drink beer. As he sat in silence for some time, Linde approached him with a dossier in her hands. The information contained inside of it was classified intelligence that her field agents within France had received.

After tossing the folder to Berengar, she sat down next to him with a sultry smile on her face; as she did so, she leaned towards Berengar and whispered in his ear.

"There's some important information about the Crown Prince of France in there; you might want to take a look."

After saying that, Linde ordered a glass of wine for herself, where she began to drink while Berengar researched the document. His spies had retrieved some valuable intel; the illicit relationship between Prince Aubry of France and his various lovers was contained within the dossier. When Berengar saw this, he immediately halted his attempt to drink his beer and placed it down on the counter.

After doing so, he looked over at Linde, who was still smiling at him before asking the question on his mind.

"Is this confirmed?"

Linde did not respond vocally. Instead, she silently nodded her head. As she did so, Berengar flipped through the pages once more before a smile spread across his face. As he did so, a curious thought crossed his mind.

So the Joan of Arc of this world is nothing more than a slutty twink, and the French Prince at that? So much for a feminist icon...

After thinking this, Berengar began to contemplate the best way to use this information. After all, a united France that lie upon his eventual western border was not something Berengar desired; as such, he instantly began to scheme a way to balkanize the region into smaller, weaker, independent Duchies and Kingdoms.

When Linde saw the devious smile on her lover's lips, she immediately questioned him about his intentions.

"So tell me? What's the plan? You seem to have thought of something..."

When Berengar heard this, he handed the dossier back to Linde; as he did so, he took a sip from his beer. Only after he finished, did he begin to speak about the conspiracy he had started to hatch within his mind.

"I think it is about time we get involved in France's little war. I want our agents to contact the French and English Crowns. Supply both sides with firearms, and the munitions necessary to use them. As for the Duke of Burgundy, supply his uprising as well. With this, I will ensure that their war wages on for decades to come. In the end, there will no longer be a unified France sitting on my future borders."

When Linde heard this, she was pretty shocked and asked for clarification on the issue at hand.

"You want to dismantle the Kingdom of France?"

After hearing this, Berengar took a sip from his beer once more before answering his lover's question. A wicked grin etched itself upon his immaculate visage as he did so.

"Indeed..."

Upon hearing this, Linde smiled before approaching Berengar; as she did so, she began to kiss him passionately; it was only after a few minutes of making out, did the couple part ways in silence. Linde would relay the King's orders to

her field agents, and Berengar would continue to drink by his lonesome. The conspiracy to undermine the authority of the French Crown had just begun.

#### *Chapter 345: Declaration of a Crusade*

Pope Julius was standing upon the balcony of his Palace within the Vatican. Tens of thousands of his supporters were gathered in the holy city to listen to the Vicar of Christ's decree. For many of the rulers of Christendom, what he was about to say came as no surprise. Yet to the common people, his words were shocking, to say the least.

The Holy Father gazed at the massive crowd gathered before him as he uttered the words from his mouth; the speech he gave would not be expected of God's representative on Earth. Instead, his tone was filled with vitriol and hatred.

"Berengar the Accursed! I am confident this is a name that every one of you gathered here today is familiar with. If I am the Vicar of Christ, then this man, the self-proclaimed King of Austria, is the Avatar of Satan!

Through vile sorcery, he has conjured technology that has been destructive not only to the warriors of Christ but the citizens of Christendom! I am sure you are all familiar with the fate of Florence, for Berengar and his Army of Apostates have thoroughly destroyed the city! In the process, they mercilessly slaughtered everyone gathered within it by conjuring the fires of hell upon the faithful!

This was no simple act of war but a criminal act against all of God's children on this Earth! Thus in response to this crime against humanity, I hereby declare a Crusade against the Kingdom of Austria and the Berengar Heresy as a whole! I call upon every faithful Christian to take arms against this demonic scion and his heretical followers! For so long as Berengar the Accursed is allowed to remain in a position of power, the souls of every Christian are at the risk of damnation! God wills it!"

The moment the Pope said these words, the crowd of tens of thousands of Catholics began to chant the final words in unison.

"God wills it! God wills it! God wills it!"

The sight of which brought a wicked grin to Pope Julius' aging face; after witnessing the mob gathered before him, he knew that he would have an army capable of invading Austria within a few years. As such, he gave one final decree to the gathered crowd before departing towards the interior of his Palace.

"Go now, and make your preparations; it will be some time before the Armies of Christ are capable of waging war against the hellspawn that is the Army of Austria but make no mistake, we will muster the entire might of the Christian world against our foes!"

Having said this, Julius returned to the interior of his Palace, where he was immediately confronted by a variety of Cardinals who had watched his speech from inside. Among them was a man known for being against Julius' predecessor's harsh actions against Berengar.

"Your Holiness, declaring a Crusade against King Berengar is unwise. You know as well as I that the Austrian Army has seized the assets of the Medici Bank, and in doing so, left us destitute. We don't have the funds to build an army capable of such a thing!"

In response to this, Pope Julius spat on the ground before lecturing the Cardinal for his remarks.

"King Berengar, is it? Funny, I don't remember placing a Crown on the man's head. If I were you, I would be cautious about the words I choose, for legitimizing the Avatar of Satan is in itself an act of heresy!"

When the Cardinal heard this, his mouth dropped agape before questioning the Pope's sanity.

"You don't honestly believe the words from your speech, do you? Berengar can't possibly be the incarnation of Satan. I will admit he is a powerful adversary of the Church, but to think that he is some Hellspawn is truly insanity!"

Upon hearing his sanity questioned, Julius backhanded the Cardinal with his ring hand, leaving a bloody lip on the man who had so brazenly rebuked his words.

"You think it is such an impossibility? Then Explain to me where he gets the technology he has created! The man is either the greatest genius in history, or he has struck an accord with the devil! There is no other conceivable explanation! He is a lowly baron's son, and yet he has advanced Austria in agriculture, industry, weaponry, maritime technology, and every other metric I can think of beyond the scopes of what we know to be reality!"

The Cardinal wiped his bloody lip and hung his head in silence; he had no retort to the Pope's words. Certainly, there was something strange about the man known as Berengar the Accursed; despite his humble origins, he had single-handedly led Austria to be the most advanced Kingdom on the planet.

Berengar also seemed to be profoundly knowledgeable about scripture despite having no background with the clergy. He was so educated on the word of God that it was enough to translate the entire Bible into German and distribute it across his realm.

This had proven to be a great point of contention for the Catholic Church as many of their traditions and teachings had no biblical basis. Ultimately the Cardinal switched the topic. It was clear that Julius was enraged by the outcome of the Austrian War of Independence; as such, the Cardinal attempted to inquire about how the Pope intended to fund the Crusade.

"Your Holiness, with all due respect, you have called this Crusade too early; we have lost our most essential financial supporters! Without the backing of the Medici Bank, it will take years to gather the funds to create an army capable of storming Austria! How do you even plan to do this?"

Julius gazed at the Cardinal with contempt; in his eyes, this man was not suited towards matters of the State. As such, the Pope outlined his plan perfectly so that even a simpleton could understand his reasoning.

"There are two reasons for calling this Crusade, years in advance of the actual invasion. First and most importantly, it gives us a reason to sell indulgences to the people en masse. Catholics from all walks of life will be lining up to provide us with their gold and silver in exchange for a few years off purgatory. We can quickly gather the necessary funds in at most two years by doing this.

Secondly, by declaring a Crusade against Austria and the Berengar Heresy, we are making it known that they are enemies of Christendom, as many such Kingdoms will be hesitant to trade with Berengar in the future. Though he will still have trade with the Muslims and the Orthodox, the overwhelming majority of his trade networks throughout Europe will come to a grinding halt!"

However, the Cardinal was not convinced by the Pope's plans; he knew that by now, the Austrian Thaler and Gulden had become a common currency in international trade. It would not be easy to persuade Austria's neighbors to halt their transactions with Berengar simply because he was an enemy of the Vatican.

Despite his reservations, the Cardinal chose to keep silent on the issue; he was starting to realize that it was highly likely that the Crusaders would lose this war, and in doing so, end the days of Papal supremacy in Europe. After all, Berengar remained undefeated in battle, and it was only a matter of time before he unleashed some ungodly weapon that would render their numbers completely useless.

As such, he sighed heavily before nodding his head; in doing so, he accepted his fate and that of the Catholic Church. With leadership like Simeon and Julius, it was only a matter of time before the era of Papal power came to an end. With this in mind, he put on an agreeable facade and spoke to Julius as if everything the man had said was inevitable.

"Thank you for explaining your reasoning to me. Your holiness is, as always, well informed on these matters, and I look forward to the day we bring God's wrath upon this Heretic and his followers. If you will excuse me, I have things I must attend to."

Julius nodded his head. Finally, he managed to talk some sense into this naysayer who had always spoken out against any direct action against Berengar and his Heresy. Little did he know that the Cardinal had utterly lost faith in the Papacy's ability to win this war and planned to defect to the German Reformation at the first opportunity.

As such, Julius had a malicious smile upon his lips as he thought about what he would do to Berengar after he got his hands on the young monarch. Berengar had caused too much trouble for the Papacy, because of this, the



punishment would be severe. Of course, such a fate could only be achieved if he and his crusaders were victorious in their future attempt to dethrone Berengar.

Whether the Catholic Church and all its might were capable of such a feat remained to be seen. While the Catholic Church began its attempt to gain the funds necessary to raise a feudal army with a size capable of invading Austria. Berengar had started the process of industrialization; by the time the Catholic Armies and their Allies invaded his realm, they would be fighting against a far more modern force than the world had previously seen.

### *Chapter 346: Double Proposal*

While the Papacy had openly declared its intent to wage a Crusade against the Kingdom of Austria and the regions affected by the German Reformation, Berengar was relaxing in his new Royal Palace. Even though the Palace was primarily based on Sch?nbrunn Palace from his previous life, there were a few changes.

For example, In the center of the massive complex, an additional floor was added to the structure; this small story was a penthouse that acted as Berengar's harem room. This Harem room had all of the luxuries needed for Berengar and his women to enjoy themselves in their usual hedonist behavior.

An opulent Bedroom was the main area, where it held a large mattress capable of fitting up to five people. This mattress had a silk canopy to hide its inhabitants' amorous activities from the outside world.

Outside of the bedroom was a small bar area filled with all kinds of alcohol for Berengar and his women to enjoy. This was the region of Berengar's Palace that he spent the most significant amount of his time in outside of his study.

Aside from the bar, there was a common area where a round table lay in the center. Atop this table was an exquisitely crafted hookah that sat in the middle. This hookah had four hoses so that multiple people could smoke from the device at the same time. Berengar usually smoked a mix of herbal shisha and locally cultivated hash from the device after a long day's work to help him relax.

Finally, there was a substantial private bathhouse built within the Penthouse Suite. This bathhouse was practically the size of a small swimming pool and was capable of containing multiple people. More often than not, Berengar would bathe with his beauties inside this bathhouse.

For security reasons, this area did not act as the Royal Bedchamber. Instead, it was just a luxurious area for Berengar and his future wives to enjoy themselves in debauchery. Of course, Adela refused to step foot in the room, at least for the time being.

At the moment, Berengar, Linde, and Honoria were gathered around the hookah, smoking cannabis from the device. Berengar himself took a long hit where he inhaled the smoke for some time before letting out a puff into the air.

Honoria looked quite different from her usual appearance; after revealing her identity to the Austrian Court during Berengar's coronation, she had decided to dye her hair Tyrian purple, which matched her pale skin, and mint eyes perfectly. She was dressed in a luxurious Tyrian purple and gold silk dress in the style of the Byzantine nobility.

She had an intoxicated expression on her face; much like Berengar, she had been partaking of the drug for over an hour now; as such, she had begun to space out completely. In doing so, she tilted her head and rested it on Berengar's shoulder. As she entered an entirely different realm within her mind, she asked the question that had been bugging her for some time.

"What do you plan to do about this Crusade? You just got out of a war, and now the Catholics want to drag you into another..."

Berengar began to chuckle when he heard this; as he did so, he wrapped his arm around Honoria and kissed her on the forehead. After doing so, he began to lie back upon the plushy pillows that surrounded the hookah area. As Berengar enjoyed the comfort he found himself in, he revealed his innermost thoughts on the subject without realizing how honest he was being.

"I'll sit back and wait. After seizing the Medici's fortune, the Vatican is beyond destitute. It will take years for them to gather the funds from their followers to afford an army capable of marching into Austria. By then, my Army will be equipped with weapons that will completely negate their numerical

advantages. It will be a slaughter the likes this world has never seen before. In the end, I will be victorious and will finally be able to explore the new world!"

Linde and Honoria looked over at Berengar with confused expressions; in his stoned state, Berengar had accidentally revealed the existence of the New World to his two lovers. Linde, not taking Berengar's words seriously, began to make fun of him.

"What new world? How high are you?"

In response to this, Berengar began to chuckle as he laughed off his mistake as if it was symbolic in nature.

"Not as high as I could be. Clearly, I was referring to the new world I will usher in, one free of the Church's influence, where science and reason prevail instead of faith and superstition. Obviously, I was not talking about a vast landmass on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean; how could I possibly know such a thing exists?"

With this said, Linde put her luscious lips against the hookah hose and took a long draw; after a while, she puffed out the smoke contained within her lungs and began to giggle at Berengar's comment.

"If such a thing truly existed, wouldn't we know it by now?"

After saying this, the trio began to break out into laughter. Berengar, of course, was laughing more fervently than his two women; after all, he knew that such a place existed, and the ignorance of the old world was truly laughable compared to his modern knowledge.

Honoria began to take a significant hit from the hookah; while she did so, Berengar moved close to Linde and began to make out with her. The sight of which made Honoria dreadfully jealous. As such, she completed her hit before grasping hold of Berengar and shifting his attention to her gem-like mint green eyes.

She then began to kiss Berengar passionately while Linde took a puff from the smoking device sitting on the table. After a passionate display, Honoria released her grip over Berengar and said the words on her mind.

"I love you!"

Berengar grasped ahold of the girl's cheeks as he looked into her eyes and responded to her proclamation with his innermost feelings with a snarky grin on his face.

"I know."

This response immediately made Honoria puff her cheeks as she pouted in silence. Seeing the adorable look on his lover's face reminded Berengar of something important that he had completely forgotten about. As such, he got up from his seat and swayed across the room towards the bar area. As he did so, he called out to the two girls sitting in the common area.

"I just remembered that I have something special for the two of you..."

After rummaging through the bar for some time, Berengar found two small cases where he brought them over to his two women. After sitting between them, he grabbed ahold of Linde's hand before placing a white gold and sky blue topaz ring on her finger. As he did so, he stared into Linde's sky blue eyes before asking the question on his mind.

"I've been meaning to ask for some time now, but Linde von Habsburg, will you marry me?"

Linde was stunned when she heard these words, she knew Berengar had mentioned polygamy in the past, but she did not think he would go through with it; after all, the cultural backlash from such a thing would by no means be slight. However, she did not care about any of that at the moment and merely stared at the luxurious ring on her finger as tears flowed from her eyes.

The beautiful young woman who had grown up as a Count's daughter nodded her head as she struggled to find the words to accept. After a while, she latched onto Berengar and kissed him passionately before answering with a sultry smile.

"I thought you would never ask!"

Honorio, who had witnessed the entire display, merely stared at Berengar and Linde while pouting. Even though Berengar had negotiated with her father for her hand in marriage, she had not received such a heartwarming proposal.

However, her disappointment soon ended as Berengar opened up another container that contained an equally luxurious golden ring fitted with a mint green gemstone known in the modern era as tourmaline. Berengar quickly placed it upon Honorio's finger, where he smiled at her and revealed the difficulty he had gone through to source the gemstone.

"I want you two to know just how difficult it was for me to acquire these gemstones. I had to establish trading ties to the Timurid Empire in the east. These stones are very precious and cost me a considerable amount of coin to get my hands on. If not for Honorio's old friend Agnellus, I would not have managed to acquire them."

Having heard the lengths, Berengar went to acquire the stones for their engagement rings; the two girls nearly broke out into tears as they grasped ahold of Berengar and began taking turns kissing him.

After a while, Berengar and the girls began to strip off their clothes where they proceeded to enter the large canopy bed that existed within the penthouse. It did not take long for the trio to begin their amorous activities. They would spend the next two hours enjoying the warmth of each other bodies.

Berengar had successfully managed to propose to two women shortly before his marriage to Adela took place. While his enemies were beginning the many preparations necessary to invade Austria, Berengar was enjoying the moment of peace to the best of his abilities.

#### *Chapter 347: An Awkward Family Dinner*

Having spent the evening getting high and drunk with two of his women and then engaging in intercourse, Berengar found the fatigue he felt from months of endless battle slowly wash away. To Berengar, war was an exhilarating activity, but if it went on for too long, it was capable of causing great anxiety and anguish.

After having fun with two of his women, Berengar rose from his bed and entered the bath, where they joined shortly after. Immediately he threw off his

towel and entered into the steaming water; as he did so, Honoria and Linde grabbed ahold of him and began to wash every part of his body with their own.

While this was ongoing, Berengar was drinking from a glass filled with beer; any semblance of his previously heightened nerves vanished under the exceptional service his girls provided to him. After a while, Linde, Honoria, and himself got out of the bath and dressed in nothing more than silk robes, where they proceeded to head down from the harem room and into the dining room where Adela, Henrietta, Hans, and Helga were currently sitting.

When Linde saw her two children sitting in their high seats, she walked over to them and picked them up, where she placed them on her lap. After doing so, she lowered her robe and began to breastfeed the two small children.

The sight of which greatly unnerved Adela, who gazed at the sight with a look of disgust on her face. She could not help herself from commenting on the issue.

"Ahem... Linde, we are at the dinner table. Can you please cover yourself up?"

Linde, wearing a pleasant smile, did not give into Adela's provocation and merely responded with a snarky tone.

"What? Can't I feed my babies? What would you suggest they eat?"

Berengar, who was sitting in between the two women, and their argument refused to comment on the situation at hand. Though Hans was already three years old, he was still breastfeeding, which Berengar thought to be unusual but not entirely uncommon from his modern sensibilities; however, sooner or later, he would need to talk with Linde about weaning the kid and introducing cow milk into his diet.

However, at the moment, he simply did not want to get involved in this conversation and, as such, began to shift his attention to his son, who was growing more by the day. After finishing his session with Linde, Hans was placed back into his seat by Berengar, where he began to dine on schnitzel and K?sesp?tze.

As the boy happily dined on his meal Berengar began to speak with his son; after all, it had been some time since he had a conversation with the little tyke.

"So Hans, I understand you have already begun your elementary education, and at such a young age too. Truly, one day you will be an inspiration for the Austrian people. Are there any questions you might have that I might be able to help with?"

Upon hearing this, Hans looked up from his plate and at the multiple women surrounding Berengar before asking the question bothering him for some time now.

"Tell me the truth, father, am I a bastard?"

When Berengar heard this, he dropped his fork onto his plate, sending a clanging sound resounding throughout the dining hall. Everyone present at the table looked at Hans with shocked expressions. Being the birth mother of Hans, Linde had her maternal instincts kick into overdrive and was the first to inquire about the origin of Hans's question.

"Hans! Where did you hear such a thing?"

The boy refused to look his mother in the eye as he admitted to how he had heard the term.

"I read about it in one of the books in a library, if a child is born to parents that are not married, then he is a bastard and is not able to inherit his father's position. Does that mean that despite being the firstborn, I won't be able to follow in father's footsteps?"

Linde looked at Hans with a gaze over overwhelming compassion; she felt terrible for Hans having such questions on his mind at his young age. After feeling bad for her son, she threw Adela a wicked glance while thinking to herself.

If it weren't for this woman, my son would not have to think so lowly of himself!

Berengar, on the other hand, drank from his skull chalice filled with beer before answering the question to the best of his ability. Due to his son's hyper-

intelligence, he was able to converse more generally with the child. However, he still left out specific information to avoid creating an awkward scene.

"Well, you see, my son, technically, you are a bastard as your mother, and I are not yet married. However, the book you are reading is old and outdated. The laws of succession are no longer as such. I have made it, so the most competent of my children can take my position after my death. One day soon, I will marry your mother, and you will be a legitimate member of my Dynasty.

When that happens, you will be eligible to succeed in my throne if you meet the criteria as an efficient leader. Of course, if you desire such a thing, then you must work hard because I will have many children, and only the fittest to rule shall become King."

When Hans heard this answer, he was further confused; he inquired further about the issue at hand with an innocent expression on his face.

"I thought you were going to marry Miss Adela? How are you also going to marry Mommy?"

Berengar could feel the leering gazes of all three of his women set upon him as he struggled to come up with an answer to satisfy them all. As for Henrietta, she was silently eating her meal, trying to avoid getting involved in her brother's affairs. In her eyes, he had made his bed and now had to lie in it.

Adela was not precisely in the best of moods; she was entirely aware of the degree of hedonism that Berengar was engaging in with his two lovers upstairs for the past few hours. Though she disapproved of excessive drinking, drug use, and group sex. She also knew that Berengar had just come home from the horrors of war and needed a way to relax.

Of course, the real issue bothering her was that Honoria and Linde were now wearing their engagement rings, a tradition that Berengar had started with herself. She felt it was wildly inappropriate for Berengar to propose to the two women before she was married.



Thus Adela was staring at Berengar with a gaze filled with fury; However, she had forced herself to remain calm and wait for Berengar's explanation for such things. Now that her fiancée's son, who she also thought of as her own, broached such a question, she was more than curious to find out about the answer.? Berengar, of course, shrugged off the vicious gazes he was getting from his girls and began to explain the complexity of his relationship with them to his young son.

"You see, Hans, in the days of our ancestors, it was not uncommon for men of great wealth and power to have multiple wives. Though with the introduction of Catholicism, we accepted many foreign practices. One of these changes was the law that men could only have one wife. It is my intention as King of Austria to bring back the ways of our forefathers. So you can think of Adela and Honoria as your other mommies..."

The expressions on the girls' faces differed; for Linde and Honoria, they were happy with the result, and as such, they gazed lovingly at Berengar. However, Adela reacted far more poorly; she was greatly displeased that Berengar had neglected to mention her position as the first wife. She was also upset that her children would have to compete with Hans to succeed their father in the future. As such, she glared intensely at Berengar with the fury of a woman scorned.

While this silent battle between Berengar's harem was ongoing, Hans thought about his father's answer for a few moments before he blurted out the first thought that came to his mind.

"Does that mean I get to have milk from my other mommies too!?!"

When Adela heard this, she felt as if she had been struck by lightning and quickly flushed in embarrassment, looking away from Hans' innocently excited expression. Berengar, on the other hand, nearly choked on his food as he struggled to maintain his composure. Linde broke out in laughter; she had never even thought of the idea that her son would be as big as a playboy as his father until now. As for Honoria, she gazed at the kid as if he were the cutest child in the world; thus, she hatched a devilish plot as she began to tease Hans.

"Sure, kiddo, come over to mommy Honoria!"

When Hans heard this, he nearly jumped out of his seat at the opportunity he was presented, but Berengar stopped him before he was able to reach Honoria's open embrace.

"Hans, you've already eaten; we can talk about this later."

the young boy began to frown as he heard this and was about to object to his father. However, Berengar raised his hand, signaling the boy to be silent, and thus he began to pout in his chair at the cruelty of it all.

Henrietta was gazing at the whole scenario with an amused expression as she continued to eat in silence. She knew for a fact that this was a conversation she did not want to get involved in, and as such, she drank from her wine glass while watching Berengar slowly navigate through the minefield he had created.

The family ate in awkward silence for the rest of the dinner; However, Hans had many more questions about Berengar and his three mothers; despite this, his father had seemed to become uncomfortable and unwilling to discuss it further. As such, he would have to wait for a later date before he could inquire further about the complex nature of Berengar's harem.

### *Chapter 348: Industrial Innovations*

At the moment, Berengar was standing in Ludwig's workshop looking at what is arguably the most important invention that he had introduced thus far. Sitting in front of Berengar was a piece of technology that was critical to the industrial age.

This essential feat of engineering was the steam engine. The steam engine was a machine that operated using water and coal to produce steam; the steam created was then used to push a piston back and forth. This pushing force could then be used for work by attaching a connecting rod and flywheel.

With this piece of engineering, trains could be built, oil could be pumped, workshops could be powered, canals could be easily dredged, fields could be plowed without beasts of burden, etc. The limitations for such technology were far fewer than what he currently used to power his Kingdom's industry.

When Berengar saw the device standing in front of him, he clasped Ludwig on the shoulder and gave the man a thumbs up while smiling from ear to ear.

"Ludwig, my friend, you have truly outdone yourself this time. With this invention and all those that follow its principles, we will rule this world!"

Ludwig chuckled when he heard this exaggerated remark and shook off Berengar's grip before commenting on Berengar's words.

"My friend, without your designs, this never would have been possible! So what will you use this for?"

In response to this, Berengar walked over to the machine and activated it. Before long, it began to power up, and as it did, exhaust began to fill the air; after a few moments, Berengar deactivated the device before expressing his immediate plans for the future.

"Well, for starters, we are going to be upgrading all of our factories to operate with machines powered by these devices. After we do this, the amount of labor we will need will vastly decrease. We will be able to produce all of our products with increased precision and efficiency.

I want to upgrade the Arms factories first. I will be giving you a list of designs for weapons production equipment that operate under steam power. When you have upgraded your facilities, let me know, and I will give you some new blueprints to work with. We have a few years before the Crusaders invade, and I want my armies prepared for it!"

Ludwig nodded his head in agreement with Berengar's vision for the future. Though he was proud of his needle rifle, it would appear that Berengar was one step ahead of him. However, Berengar's following words caught him by surprise.

"Continue to manufacture the needle rifles to the best of your ability during this transition. We will likely be going to war again within the next six months. So I want all of our troops fielded with those weapons. You have no idea how much they helped in the final days of our War for Independence."

Ludwig immediately began to salute Berengar before responding in the affirmative.

"Yes, your Majesty!"

After saying this, Berengar laid out a series of blueprints for use in his arms factories. He had been working on these designs in his spare time for many years. Among these plans were advanced lathes, steam hammers, cold hammer-forging machines, among many other designs needed to make the arms and munitions for Austria's army.

Ludwig looked over all these plans in shock; he honestly did not know how Berengar continued to produce new technology every year, each one more advanced than the last. Despite his natural curiosity, he knew not to ask such a question and instead nodded his head as he studied the blueprints; while doing so, he commented on the ability to renovate their weapons and munitions factories.

"Give me a few months, and I will have all of Kufstein's military factories outfitted with such machinery. By the time you send your armies to war, they will be equipped with whatever new equipment you instruct me to produce!"

Upon hearing this, Berengar smiled and patted the older man on his back; after doing so, he changed the subject to something more casual.

"So, how about we go get a drink to celebrate? It has been a while since I have had the time to discuss matters of life with you."

In response to this Ludwig chuckled, before sighing heavily; after doing so, he shook his head; this action caught Berengar off guard, however after hearing the words that followed, Berengar felt bitter.

"Apologies, your majesty, but I have way too much work to handle. I am getting on in years, and I need to make sure my son can replace me when I decide to retire. After all, you need someone competent to manage your arms industry after I am long dead, and unfortunately, most of my management team is not up to the task."

When Berengar heard this. He smiled bitterly; too many of his friends were substantially older than himself. Not only was Ludwig considerably older than the young Monarch, but his Field Marshal Eckhard was also starting to age.

Out of all of his friends, they were two of the closest. When they finally retired or passed away, Berengar would be left without the support of the two capable men by his side. However, Berengar did not want to dwell on such a future and smiled before responding to Ludwig's comments.

"Alright, we will have to drink together some other time. I look forward to your progress; if you have any questions, please send word to the Palace. I will try to make time out of my busy schedule to aid you in your endeavors."

After hearing this, Ludwig nodded before responding to the young Monarch.

"I wish you all the best, your majesty..."

With this said, Berengar departed from the Industrial District of Kufstein and headed back to his Palace. Now that the steam engine was created, there were many other areas of industry that needed upgrading. Thus he immediately entered his study and began to search through the various blueprints he had developed over the years in his spare time.

After delving through his study's files as if it were a labyrinth, Berengar finally came across two critical blueprints that he had drafted some time ago. The steam-powered loom was the first essential component of his soon-to-be-established mechanized textile industry.

When combined with the self-acting mule, Berengar would vastly reduce the number of workers needed to manufacture textiles of all kinds. These employees could then be used in other required jobs within his newly industrialized society.

Berengar gazed upon these plans with a wide smile on his face. For now, he simply needed to know where they were located. He had no intentions to immediately hand these blueprints over to his garment district, after all, it would be some time before his arms factories were modernized, and the

number of steam engines he could field in the near future was small. Thus he had to prioritize which sectors would be mechanized first.

Berengar knew it would take months before Kufstein's weapons factories were fully mechanized and years before all of Austria followed its path. It was only after the former had been achieved that he intended to introduce these blueprints to his textile sector.

With this in mind, Berengar put his designs away in a safe and memorable place before departing from his study. The moment he did, so he saw Adela standing outside the door with a tray of cookies and milk in her hands. Berengar was surprised to see the young maiden at his study so late into the evening; despite his concerns, he immediately allowed her inside. It was clear that she had something on her mind to discuss.

After sitting back down at his desk, Berengar made space for the tray of the desert, where he instantly began to snack on a ginger snap. As he did so, he commented on Adela's arrival.

"What brings you to my study at this hour?"

Adela sat down next to Berengar and stared him in the eyes before uttering the words.

"We need to talk..."

Berengar swallowed the bit of cookie he had bitten into and drained it down with a gulp of milk before asking the question on his mind.

"What about?"

As Adela heard this, she instantly became fidgety as she played with her fingers. After doing so for several moments, she decided it would be best to blurt out her concerns and get it over with.

"Did you buy engagement rings for Linde and Honoria?"

When Berengar heard this, he instantly became aware of what Adela was afraid of, and as such, grasped ahold of her dainty hands and looked into her

deep sapphire eyes before nodding his head silently. After a few moments of silence, he began to explain his reasoning.

"The truth is, during the night of my coronation, I negotiated my marriage to Honoria with her father. Seeing that she and I are now officially engaged, I thought it was inappropriate for her to walk around without a symbol of our union."

Adela bit her lip ever so slightly as she heard this before nodding her head. She understood the reasons for doing so, though she wasn't happy about it. In her mind, The Byzantine Emperor discovering Honoria's presence forced Berengar to negotiate for their engagement. However, she still had her doubts about the situation at hand, and as such, asked the second thought she had on her mind.

"What about Linde? You gave her one too?"

In response to this, Berengar scratched the back of his neck and told Adela the truth of the matter behind his decision to do so.

"Since I had decided that I was going to give Honoria a ring, I knew that I added to give Linde one as well. After all, she is my second wife and the mother of my children. It would break her heart if I only got Honoria an engagement ring."

After saying this, Berengar grabbed ahold of Adela and shoved her into his embrace. While doing so, he stroked her golden hair gently before reassuring her of the position she held in his heart.

"You don't need to worry so much, my little Adela. You will always be my main wife. In a matter of days, we will be married, and you will be the High Queen of Austria, and when we do, I promise to spend our entire wedding night with you alone. By the time I marry Linde and Honoria as my second and third wives, we will already be man and wife for several months."

After hearing this, Adela began to smile; she liked the idea of lording this fact over her rivals' heads for a few months. As such, she wrapped her arms around Berengar's neck and began to kiss him passionately. It was only after

several moments did Adela break apart from Berengar's loving embrace, where she spoke in a playful tone.

"Okay... Since you said it, I am going to hold you to your words!"

Berengar smiled in response to his fiancée's determination before responding in an equally spirited tone.

"I wouldn't have it any other way!"

After saying that, Adela picked up the tray she had arrived with and left Berengar by his lonesome. Though she wanted to spend the night with him, she had made a promise to herself that she would only do so after they had gotten married. Besides, she had gotten the reassurance that she had needed.

Though Berengar had no way of knowing it, his words on this night would inspire Adela to take a more assertive approach to his other wives. As Berengar had said, Adela would be his primary wife, and she decided it was about time to act like it.

#### *Chapter 349: Redesigning the Fashion of Austria*

Berengar sat at his desk within his study; at the moment, he was drawing designs for a new era of fashion for his people. With his Nation advancing into the Industrial Age, Berengar wanted an appropriate sense of style for not only his civilians and the nobility but his military as well.

The puffy and superfluous attire of the renaissance, while aesthetically pleasing, was not nearly as functional as the designs he was hard at work at creating. Most importantly, he wanted a more modern attire for his upcoming wedding to his loving bride-to-be.

With this in mind, Berengar chose the Late Victorian and the Edwardian Eras of fashion as a basis for his new clothing style. Thus he was bringing a type of clothing and culture to Germany that was centuries more advanced than it currently had.

Suits, ties, dress shirts, and shoes would become the norm within his society for men. At the same time, the women would wear far more modern dresses



than what was currently available. As for the nobility, they would wear a clothing style similar to that of the European Nobility from the 1870s to 1918.

For the military Uniforms, he had decided to base them off the uniforms used by the Prussians in the Franco-Prussian war of his previous life, with a few minor adjustments. The tunic was cut in the form of an M35 Waffenrock where its colors were changed to black, with a dark grey collar and matching sleeve cuffs. If one was a high enough rank white rectangles would appear on the dark grey collars, and cuffs that would contain a golden rank insignia.

Secondly, the Uniforms utilized a standard-issue high carbon, quenched, and hardened steel cuirass based upon those used by 19th-century Cuirassiers from Berengar's previous life. These cuirasses were also painted black with a superior lacquer. The only Soldiers not issued these cuirasses were the ones in artillery or support roles.

Seeing as how Berengar's new artillery he planned to create and implement once his industry had reached the capability had such an exceptional range that his enemies could never harm them, it was a waste of resources to equip them with such unnecessary protective gear.

Thirdly, the Pickelhaube style helmets that his soldiers would be wearing were made of high carbon quenched and hardened steel, painted black, and had brass accents. On the front of the helmet beneath the brass spike was a brass double-headed eagle. The material it was made of ensured superior protection of his soldier's heads against the style of weapons they would be going up against.

As for the Navy, they would be issued uniforms based upon those used by the Imperial German Navy in the years leading up to the Great War. The primary difference was that they would follow the same color scheme as the Royal Austrian Army.

Now that he had established new military uniforms, Berengar began to create a series of medals and orders of merit for the men who served in his military to earn through exemplary means of service to the state. Particularly in the field of combat.

The first medal on his list would be the Iron Cross, a medal from his previous life, the German equivalent of the US Medal of Honor. Berengar planned to establish several grades, the Second Class, the First Class, The Knight's Cross, the Grand Cross, and the Star of the Grand Cross.

Other medals he began to design included what he would refer to as the Austrian Wound Medal, an award based upon the idea behind the American Purple Heart. It was awarded for courageously shedding blood on the field of battle in the name of the Fatherland. In other words, any member of the Austrian Armed Forces who were wounded or killed in combat would receive this medal.

This medal was in the form of a golden medallion, with Berengar's personage imprinted upon the center of it. The ribbon itself was rectangular and black, with multiple gold stripes that had white edges.

He also intended to design two other awards that were similar in purpose but awarded differently based upon whether one was a commissioned officer or an NCO/enlisted soldier. This would be the Austrian Military Merit Cross; and the Austrian Military Merit Order. These awards would be awarded to soldiers who proved their bravery and merit in the field of battle.

The Military Merit Cross was based upon the Prussian Military Merit Cross from Berengar's previous life. It was the highest award of bravery for non-commissioned officers and enlisted soldiers. It was also known as the Golden Military Merit Cross to distinguish it from the Military Honor Medal, which was an inferior medal awarded for bravery and valor.

The Order was based upon the Pour le Mérite, more commonly known as the Blue Max, from Berengar's past life. In essence, it was the highest military honor awarded to Commissioned Officers within the Austrian Royal Military. As for the physical award, there were some differences from the Blue Max; for example, the ribbon was black with gold stripes, instead of black with silver stripes

At the top of the medal was a golden oakleaf with crossed swords. Below that was the maltese cross which was white instead of blue, and it lacked the golden engraving of the words Pour le Mérite upon it. In between the golden

edges of the white maltese cross were a series of golden double-headed eagles, rather than the single-headed ones on the Blue Max from his past life.

Berengar also intended to establish a new Chivalric Order for his Kingdom, based upon one that the Habsburgs had created in his previous life. This Chivalric Order would become known as the Order of Saint George and would be awarded to outstanding soldiers who have proven their loyalty and valor on the field of battle.

Other military honors were established based upon various achievements in battle or support roles. However, Berengar's criteria for being awarded these medals and orders were relatively strict compared to many of the awards from his previous life.

It was considered a great honor to be awarded a medal rather than something given out for a particular chore fulfilled in the barracks, and only those who truly earned them would receive such a thing.

After spending nearly half a day designing various clothing, uniforms, and accessories, Berengar dispatched the plans to his garment district and his armory to begin production as soon as possible.

Before his wedding, Berengar wanted these clothing designs made for him and his bride. As for what followed afterward, he planned to begin a massive military parade where he would award the veterans of his army with the decorations they had earned in his various campaigns over the years.

After completing this task, Berengar returned to his Palace, where Linde immediately greeted him. Berengar walked over to his lover and hugged her, and she immediately began to kiss him passionately. After several moments Berengar released himself from her grip where he started to ask the question on his mind.

"Where are the kids?"

Linde had a sly smile on her face as she revealed what she had done.

"I sent them to bed early."

Berengar was astonished by this and immediately followed up with an interrogation.

"Why? Did the boy do something?"

Linde shook her head in response to this question as she wrapped her arms around Berengar's neck; she whispered in his ear with a seductive voice.

"No, I just didn't want them to interrupt us!"

After saying this, she began to kiss him once more; as things progressed, Berengar found himself pulling up Linde's dress and rubbing her thigh with his hand, moving his hand to her nether regions. It was not until the couple heard a distinctive sound from behind them that they broke apart. It was the sound of a young woman coughing.

"Ahem..."

Upon hearing this, Berengar turned around to see Adela staring at the two of them with a murderous gaze. As she did so, she immediately began to interrupt Berengar and Linde's session with an assertive voice.

"Linde, If you don't mind, I have important matters to discuss with my fiancée."

Linde stared curiously at the young woman who was not behaving like her usual self; in fact, there was not a hint of hesitation in her voice. Instead, she was staring at her with a cold and domineering gaze. Linde decided to tease the girl by grabbing ahold of Berengar's lower region and retorting to her.

"I do mind, Berengar and I were in the middle of something equally important! Why don't you run along and play with your dolls, little girl."

However, to Linde's surprise, Adela did not budge in the slightest. Instead, she stared at Berengar with a chilling gaze and began to address him instead.

"Darling, would you please inform your mistress that your wife is speaking and that she should hold her venomous tongue."

Berengar realized he was put in an awkward situation; he had told Adela the night before that she was his primary wife and would always be the most

important of his women. She was most likely testing him to see if that were true; as such, he was forced to let go of Linde, where he sighed heavily before addressing his lover.

"Linde, I'm sorry, it appears that it must be something rather important; we can have our fun later."

Linde stared at Berengar with a questionable gaze; he had never been one to back down just because Adela was upset, yet now he was so quickly abiding by her wishes. Just what had happened between the two for him to give in so easily? Ultimately, she knew it was unwise to push the issue further. As such, she kissed Berengar on the cheek before departing; as she did so, she left him with a parting phrase.

"I will be waiting for you in the bedroom tonight!"

After Linde's departure, Berengar immediately switched his attention to Adela, glaring at him with an oppressive stare while having her arms crossed. It was only after Adela was confident that Linde was out of earshot that she dropped her tough facade and jumped into Berengar's embrace before kissing him intensely.

This wasn't one of her previous childish pecks on the lips but a far more adult kiss. After some time had passed, she broke apart from Berengar before recovering her elegant demeanor. As she did so, her cheeks flushed red. Berengar knew she wanted more but was holding herself back; as such, he changed the topic by asking the question on his mind.

"So... What did you need me for?"

Adela immediately recognized why she had first set out to find him and recovered from her lustful trance before asking the question on her mind.

"I was wondering when my wedding dress will be ready. Our wedding is only a few days from now!"

In response to this, Berengar smiled before revealing the changes he had just made.

"Do not worry, my dear, I have just sent new designs to the garment district; you and I will have custom-made attire for the occasion, I promise you, that you will be the most beautiful woman in the entire Cathedral on the day of our wedding!"

After hearing this, a broad smile appeared on Adela's face before she kissed Berengar on the cheek where Linde had left her mark; after doing so, she hugged him fervently before revealing the thoughts on her mind.

"I look forward to it!"

### *Chapter 350: The Royal Wedding Part I*

Days had passed since Berengar began to draft up new designs for fashion, and as they passed, his wedding rapidly approached. Eventually, the day of his marriage to Adela had arrived. This was a day he had been looking forward to for close to five years now. It just so happened to be the day of Christmas Eve.

Snow was falling outside of the Grand Cathedral where Berengar now stood within. All eyes were gazing upon him as he was dressed in far more exquisite attire than that of anyone else. He was equipped with a luxurious new style of fashion that made every man in the room seethe with envy.

Berengar was dressed in a white tunic based upon his military uniforms, the difference being the colors being reversed. The tunic was white with gold embroidery; on the collar and cuffs, this took the form of oak leaves. The trimming of the tunic was golden, with golden buttons in a single line down the middle.

Atop his shoulders were a pair of golden epaulets, with a golden shoulder cord on his right side, he also wore a golden sash. This sash was the symbol of the Grand Cross of the Order of Saint George, a Chivalric Order of Austria that he had recently established. It was considered one of the highest military honors, one that he had awarded himself for his various means of valor on the battlefield.

The sash had a medal tied to the end in the form of a white maltese cross with golden edges. In the center of this cross was a black circle; in this circle was a golden symbol of Saint George slaying the dragon from horseback.

Two breast stars on the left side of his tunic were pinned vertically to the jacket. The top star belonged to the Star of the Grand Cross of the Iron Cross, while the Bottom Star belonged to the First Class of the Order of Saint George. It looked nearly identical to the Star of the Grand Cross of the Iron Cross, but instead of the Iron Cross in the center, there was the Maltese Cross of the Order of Saint George.

Above these two breast stars were two horizontal medals; these medals were awarded for some of Berengar's other feats in the battle. For example, on the right side was the Austrian Wound Medal, on the left side was the medal that accompanied the sash for the First Class of the Order of Saint George.

Hanging from his collar were two exceptional medals. One was the Austrian Military Merit Order, which was the single highest honor of bravery a Commissioned Officer could receive. The other was a Grand Cross of the Iron Cross. Both of their ribbons were concealed beneath the collar itself.

Over his right eye was a new eyepatch; it was black with a golden lining much like the last one. However, in the center was an Iron Cross, unlike the previous filigree. He felt that this new eyepatch gave him a more militaristic appearance.

He wore a golden sash belt across his waist, followed by a pair of white trousers that were perfectly straight in design. These trousers had a golden stripe on the sides of the pant legs. At the same time, he wore a pair of knee-high, polished black leather officer boots.

His hair, as usual, was slicked back with pomade and glistened under the light of day shining through the stained glass windows of the cathedral. In a way, Berengar was the physical incarnation of regal authority as he stood at the altar waiting for his bride to arrive with a pleasant smile on his face.

At the head of the Altar was Ludolf, the German Reformist Church; he was dressed in white and gold vestments that were almost as embellished as Berengar's attire. Ludolf was a modest man and felt slightly out of place wearing such luxurious clothing.

Beside these two men was the best man of Berengar, who Berengar had a difficult time choosing. Because Eckhard was off at war in Bohemia, Arnulf

was also at war in Granada. Berengar had slim picking in terms of friends to choose from. Usually, he would choose one of the comrades he had shed blood and tears with on the battlefield to accompany him on this day. Yet, he was severely lacking in that regard at the moment.

As such, the man standing next to him was none other than Ludwig Schmidt, a man who had helped Berengar usher in all of his technological reforms and had earned himself a rank of minor nobility. The man was dressed in victorian style civilian formal wear. He had also groomed his hair and beard so much so that Berengar could hardly contain his laughter.

It was not that Ludwig looked goofy; on quite the contrary, he looked exceptional for his age. He was Kaiser Franz Joseph I's spitting image from Berengar's previous life. It was just that Berengar could never picture the older man so well-groomed and looking like a proper member of the aristocracy.

To avoid laughing at Ludwig's appearance Berengar began to gaze around the magnificent baroque-style cathedral created within Kufstein. After several years of development, the Grand Cathedral of Kufstein was finally completed, and it was beautiful beyond comprehension. It truly put any Catholic place of worship to shame. It was also the perfect place to host Berengar and Adela's wedding.

In the crowd within the front row seats were Adela's and Berengar's families and the other significant noblemen of the Kingdom of Austria and the various monarchs of other Kingdoms who had come to visit. Due to the recent crusade declared against Berengar by the Pope, the only diplomats who had bothered to visit were either Reformist, Muslim, or Orthodox.

After some time, the doors to the cathedral opened, and Adela von Graz and her father, Chancellor Otto von Graz; he was holding onto her arm as he walked the young bride down the aisle to give away her husband. The sound of the traditional music that Berengar had introduced into his society played in the background.

A veil covered Adela's face, but one look at her exquisite dress made Berengar's heart pump rapidly. It was an ivory silk dress with a floral pattern on it. The sleeves went from the top of the wrist until the bottom of the shoulder. The young woman's neckline was visible through a thin layer of



gossamer which ended at the neck where a choker-like collar of floral pattern silk wrapped around her graceful neck.

The bodice itself was cut in a v-neck pattern, which had an exceptionally frilly layer that extended to the sleeves. Below the torso was an extravagant pleated skirt embroidered in the same floral pattern as the rest of the dress. Though Berengar could not see it due to the length of the dress, Adela was wearing white leather slippers, and of course, her bridal lingerie underneath.

After arriving at the altar, Adela noticed that her bridesmaids were none other than Linde, Honoria, and her two sisters, who though stunning, paled in comparison to the beauty Adela herself was exuding on this day. As such, she smirked beneath her veil as she thought about how she had beaten Berengar's lovers on the day of her wedding.

After stepping up at the altar, Ludolf began his speech. After some time, Ludolf finally got to the vows where Berengar was the first to speak the traditional Catholic Vows from his previous life. He felt it was best to steal from Catholics when he could to add further insult to injury.

Not that the Catholics of this world would know what he was doing. Still, it was a moral victory for himself. As such, Berengar smiled as he grasped ahold of Adela's dainty hands before speaking the words from his memory.

"I, Berengar von Kufstein, take you, Adela von Graz, to be my lawfully wedded wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part."

After Berengar had said his vows, Adela said her own, virtually identical aside from a few minor differences.

"I, Adela von Graz, take you, Berengar von Kufstein, to be my lawfully wedded husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part."

Having said this, Ludolf looked at Berengar with a smile on his face before saying the words that would seal Berengar and Adela in marriage for life.

"You may now kiss the bride."

With this said, Berengar lifted Adela's veil and grabbed ahold of her before kissing her passionately. As he did so, the crowd that had gathered erupted into cheers. While Berengar was kissing Adela, a single train of thought crossed his mind.

I did it, mom and dad! Your son has finally gotten married, if only you were here to see it...

Berengar referred to his parents from his previous life back when he was known as Julian Webber. Luckily for him, the parents of his current life were here to witness the event, and they were gazing at him with proud smiles on their faces.

Adela herself had a pretty smile on her exquisite face as her heart thumped spectacularly. She clutched onto Berengar's hand tightly as she asked the question on her mind in a timid voice.

"So what now?"

Berengar gazed down at his loving wife with a cheery smile as he replied to her question with great anticipation in his heart.

"Now we host the reception!"