

## Steel 371

### *Chapter 371: Negotiations with the Byzantine Emperor*

Weeks passed as Berengar, and his newest brides began to plan for their weddings. As this was going on, Honoria had personally sent an invitation to her father and the rest of her family to visit Kufstein in an attempt to get to know Berengar better. There was also another matter that Berengar wanted to discuss with the Byzantine Emperor, one revolving around the debt that he owed Berengar.

While Berengar had absolved the man of a sizeable chunk of his debt, there remained a large portion of it, at least 25%, and that was worth billions of US Dollars from the Modern World. While the War in North Africa continued in the Byzantine's favor, and new land was acquired every day, one place in particular greatly interested Berengar.

As such, he had asked Honoria to invite her family out early so that Berengar could get to know them better and negotiate for the acquirement of a particular strip of land that was crucial for Berengar's plans. With this in mind, Berengar dressed in his most extravagant uniform, with all of his military accolades emblazoned upon it for the meeting that was currently taking place between the King of Austria and the Byzantine Emperor.

Vetranis gazed at Berengar, who held his daughter's hand with a loving smile on his face. Despite he feeling sick to his stomach while relenting to Berengar's previous demands. The rise in Austria's prowess was something he could no longer ignore; in fact, he was grateful that he could successfully wed Honoria off to a man whose power rivaled his own.

After having spent a considerable amount of time to cool down, and listen to the advice of some of his most prominent counsel, Vetranis had come to realize that having Austria as an ally was a far better option than having France as one. Though Austria would face some difficulties in the coming days, Vetranis truly believed that together they could overcome the might of the Catholic Church.

Berengar began the conversation by pulling out a map and placing it on the table; on this map was one specific strip of land highlighted; this land was nothing other than a useless desert. However, the part that interested

Berengar was that this land was the Suez Canal in his past life. Something Berengar was greatly interested in building in this timeline.? After gazing at the map for several minutes, Vetransis was unsure what Berengar was requesting of him and asked for clarification.

"What is it? You've highlighted a barren, useless area. Am I missing something?"

Berengar kept a calm facade as he began his negotiating terms.

"Give me this land, and I will consider all of your debt absolved."

Though the deal sounded too good to be true, Vetransis had no intention of giving a single inch of land conquered with the blood of his people to a foreign country, and as such, he frowned before making his intentions clear.

"I do not care if you are marrying my daughter; I will never yield Byzantine soil to a foreign power."

However, Berengar immediately began to wag his finger and click his tongue upon hearing Berengar's response.

"Tsk, ts, ts, ts... I am not asking for you to give this land to Austria; by all means, it should remain a part of your Empire and thus subject to your laws and taxes. I am asking you to give me this land personally; with it, I will build a canal from the Mediterranean to the red sea and open up a trade route to Asia. You will be able to set up a port and collect taxes on all goods that flow through, and I will have access to the eastern trade routes."

When Berengar said this, both Honoria and Vetransis gazed at him in shock; the idea dumbfounded them. The manpower needed to build such a thing was no small amount. Though Austria's workforce had increased vastly over the years, it was no easy means to ship tens of thousands of workers into the area. As such, Vetransis scoffed at Berengar's idealism before trying to inform him of the impossibility of fulfilling such a grand feat.

"Impossible, it would take decades, and tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of workers to accomplish such a thing, you would be wasting your

time. The expense for building such a thing would be worth more than the debt I still owe you."

However, Berengar was not dissuaded; in fact, he leaned back in his chair and cast an arm around Honoria's shoulder as he relaxed. After doing so, a smug smile appeared on his face as he presented yet another audacious claim.

"I will build it in 10 years or less. What isn't blasted to bits by dynamite will be dredged by machines. I will not need tens of thousands of men; I won't even need thousands of men. In ten years, this canal will be built, and with it, the trade will flow from the Iberian Peninsula to the East China Sea. You, as Emperor of the Byzantine Empire who rules over those lands, will be able to place a tax on any goods coming in or out of the canal, and people will still use it as the primary trade route."

Though Vetrans did not know what dynamite was or could even conceive of the machines, Berengar spoke of. The confidence in the Austrian King's tone and the glint in his eye thoroughly convinced the man. As such, he began to think upon this magnificent concept that Berengar proposed as if it were actually possible and what benefits it could provide to himself. Ultimately Vetrans sighed heavily before nodding his head in agreement.

"I must be crazy for even considering this, but very well I will accept your proposal; I will give you 15 years building this canal that you have so admirably boasted about, and if you cannot complete it within that timeframe, I will consider your objective unachievable and will reclaim those lands for the Byzantine Crown."

In response to this, Berengar chuckled before shaking the Emperor's hands; as he did so, he joked about the situation.

"Ten years was my maximum estimate; I could likely do it in less given enough resources. However, I'll accept your terms of fifteen years. Within a year, I will begin construction on it; for now, let us relax and enjoy the upcoming wedding. Speaking of, I think your daughter has something she wants to tell you..."

Berengar immediately grabbed a chalice from the table and filled it with fortified wine as Honoria stared at him in disbelief; she had wanted to inform her family of her pregnancy after she was married. Still, Berengar just had to force her hand. She honestly could not believe she was getting married to such a scoundrel; however, at the next moment, she sighed heavily and calmed her nerves before revealing the thought on her mind.

"Father, I'm pregnant..."

The moment Vetrans heard this, he was dumbfounded. Despite knowing that Berengar had already taken the girl's chastity; he didn't expect her to be pregnant already; as such, he looked at Berengar, who had a shit-eating grin on his face, and back at Honoria, who had a worrisome expression multiple times before breaking out in tears.

"I'm going to be a grandfather!?!"

After saying this, he grabbed ahold of his only daughter and hugged her tightly, which greatly astonished Honoria, she had only been embraced by her father once in her entire life, and that was when she was a young child. The raw emotions on the man's face had even shocked Berengar; he never suspected the Byzantine Emperor to get so emotional about such a thing.

Honoria smiled and nodded her head as she broke away from her father's tight grip, where the man immediately wiped the tears from his eyes and recovered the grace of an Emperor as he did so; he looked back at Berengar with a sudden glimpse of understanding.

"So that's why you set the wedding so close to your original one?"

Berengar chuckled and nodded as he answered the Emperor's question

"Yeah... She's not the only one pregnant, they all are, so I figured what the hell? I might as well have the weddings before it becomes visible. After all, I wouldn't want people to question the legitimacy of our offspring."

Vetrans shook his head and smiled as he complimented Berengar for the first time since they had initially met.

"I truly envy your youth..."

In response to this, Berengar chuckled once more before cracking a snarky remark.

"Want to change places?"

The moment he said this, the Emperor broke out in laughter, and Honoria glared at Berengar with a murderous gaze; as such, Berengar wrapped his arm around her once more and kissed the young princess on the cheek before making a snarky comment.

"Come on, babe, don't stare at me like that; it was a joke!"

Despite his justification for the inappropriate comment, Honoria continued to pout, and as such, Vetranis sighed heavily before commenting on their relationship.

"I can tell that you two have a great relationship; I look forward to what comes of it!"

In response to this, Berengar raised his chalice in the air with a smirk on his face as a pseudo-toast before taking another sip of the fortified wine contained within. Thus he spent the remainder of the day with Honoria and her father, getting to know the man that would soon be his father-in-law. As for how the rest of Honoria's family interacted with Berengar, that is a tale for another time.

### *Chapter 372: Dinner with the Byzantine Emperor*

While the preparations for the upcoming weddings to both Linde and Honoria were being fulfilled, the Byzantine Emperor Vetranis Palaiologos and his family were seated at Berengar's table, enjoying a feast that had been prepared for Austria's guests from the East.

An alliance between the Kingdom of Austria and the Byzantine Empire had been negotiated due to the upcoming marriage between Berengar and Honoria. Despite this fact, tonight was the first time that Berengar had entertained his young fiancée's family. Aside from Vetranis himself, he was meeting the members of Honoria's family for the first time.

Sitting beside the Byzantine Emperor was his wife, Empress Olympia Palaiologos, who was exceptionally beautiful in her own right. She looked like a mature version of her daughter, aside from the purple-dyed hair that Honoria had. Berengar was quite pleased with this, as it meant that when Honoria was her mother's age, she'd still be an exceptional beauty.

However, unlike Honoria, the Empress was utterly expressionless, almost as if she had a complete and utter disregard for her host and future son-in-law. Sitting beside the Empress was the eldest son of the Emperor and his Wife. Quintus Palaiologos was one of the candidates being propped up by the various factions within the Empire for a succession of the Imperial Throne.

Overall he was a wise and charismatic individual; in fact, there was a reason he was considered the favorite in the ongoing succession dispute. If not for the fact that he was somewhat of a pacifist, and the fears surrounding his meek attitude on foreign policy, Andronikos and his faction might have pledged their support to him.

Decentius, on the other hand, was not present for this occasion. In fact, he was currently within North Africa, continuing the campaign Arethas had started. As the second prince, he was the other primary candidate. He was a renowned commander and hawkish in foreign policy, which gained the support of many of the more battle-crazed supporters of the Emperor. However, in the eyes of Andronikos and his allies, the man simply had no mind for anything other than warfare. He would undoubtedly plunge Byzantium into debt and despair if he inherited the Throne.

Sitting beside Quintus and across from Henrietta was a young man, roughly Adela's age, who was Honoria's younger brother Aurelius Palaiologos; he had a charming appearance and a glib tongue; however,,, he was essentially the Byzantine equivalent of Berengar prior to his reincarnation. An indolent, childish drunk who had no leadership skills whatsoever. The only difference between him and Berengar before he had been gifted with the memories of Julian Weber was that Aurelius was also a massive lecher who screwed anyone he could.

This was immediately apparent to Berengar, especially when the boy started flirting with his little sister. Despite the fact that Berengar had yet to find a proper fiancée for Henrietta, he knew in his heart that Aurelius would be a

terrible choice. As such, he kept a close eye on the boy and his actions; if he so much as laid a hand on Henrietta or any of his Brides, he would have it removed.

Eventually, Quintus spoke up and struck a conversation about trade with Berengar; as a skilled administrator, the man was quite astute to matters of state, business, and development. As such, he was quite interested in the project he witnessed being constructed on during his travel from Trieste to Kufstein.

"King Berengar, I do apologize if I am speaking out of turn, but I am quite curious. On my journey to your Capital, I witnessed something peculiar; your peasants appeared to be constructing some form of the massive mound from Kufstein to Trieste. On top of this mound, they appear to be bolting steel into the ground! I was wondering if you could enlighten me on what purpose this serves?"

Berengar smiled when he heard this remark. The mounds that Quintus was the railway that was currently under construction. Even if Berengar explained how the railway functioned, the Byzantines could not replicate it, so he decided to be to entertain Quintus' curiosity.

"Firstly, allow me to correct you; those are not peasants, as I have liberated the common people from serfdom. They are citizens of my Kingdom who are being paid a living wage for their work. Secondly, those are not mounds but the foundation of something great that, in a few years, will allow rapid transit across my realm.

Not only will people be able to travel across all of Austria, Switzerland, and Bohemia, but various supplies will also be able to be transported across the realm. Including weapons and munitions that will ensure reinforcements and resupply to the border guard will be rapidly available in the event of some form of foreign incursion into my lands."

Quintus' interest was further peaked upon hearing this. Initially, he thought the construction of the so-called mounds was some form of tribute to the primitive ancestors of the Austrian people. However, now that he was aware of its true purpose, he desperately wanted one of his own. As such, he inquired about its construction.

"Tell me, King Berengar, is it possible to build one of these devices in the Empire? If so, how much would it cost?"

Honorio instantly eyed Berengar with curiosity; she did not know how he would respond to this. Of course, Berengar immediately declined the offer. He was more than happy, uplifting Byzantium ahead of their rivals; yet, he would never usher them into the Industrial age like he was doing for Germany.

"I apologize, Quintus, but the construction of the railway is a massive undertaking that requires a substantial degree of high carbon steel and advanced manufacturing equipment. I am unable to sell the tooling and resources necessary to construct such a thing to the Empire. In addition to this, the expense I am paying to undertake this initiative is no small sum, and it simply would not be profitable for me to help you build one across your vast Empire."

While Berengar and Quintus were discussing business Aurelius was busy flirting with Henrietta, which did not go unnoticed by Berengar or his women. Aurelius put on a charming smile as he attempted to converse with the shy princess of Austria.

"So, your name is Henrietta? That is a beautiful name. Tell me, Henrietta, what is your favorite type of wine?"

Henrietta, who had always been shy around strangers, found it challenging to speak in the presence of the Imperial family of the Byzantine Empire; as such, she quietly muttered a phrase that nobody besides herself could hear. After saying this, the lazy Prince immediately asked for clarification on what she had said.

"I'm sorry, what was that? I couldn't hear you."

In response, Henrietta slightly raised her voice which was still quiet but just enough for Aurelius to hear.

"I don't drink wine..."

After hearing this, a charming smile appeared on the boy's face as he hatched an idea which he thought was brilliant. As such, he handed his cup over to



Henrietta and encouraged her to drink from his chalice; his true intentions were far from generous.

"Well, there is a first time for everything; here, have some of my wine; I have to say I am growing quite fond of Austria's drinks."

Henrietta struggled to deal with the situation presented to her. She didn't enjoy the taste of wine, and she had seen what overindulging in the substance led to, especially in regards to Berengar and his women.

As such, she was hesitant to accept the Prince's offer. However, she also knew it would be rude to decline. Thus she slowly reached her hands out to grasp the chalice when she overheard an oppressive voice call out to her, immediately causing her to flinch.

"Henrietta! While it may be a special occasion, you did not ask permission from me, your King, as to whether or not I would permit you to drink wine."

Aurelius immediately glared at Berengar with wicked intent in his eye, which did not go unnoticed by the Austrian King. It took one moment for Berengar to correctly guess what this boy's plan was for his sister, and as such, the wrath inside him began to boil to the breaking point.

This scoundrel planned to get his precious little sister drunk and take advantage of her. Berengar would have him lined up in front of a firing squad if he were not a Prince of the Byzantine Empire. The Austrian monarch? was not the only one who noticed the boy's intent, both Vetrans and his wife were glaring at their son, so much so that the Empress spoke for the first time since she had sat down at Berengar's table.

"Aurelius, behave yourself!"

The pure look of disdain the woman had for her son was something Berengar had not seen in a mother's eyes before, at least not when gazing upon their child. The moment Aurelius realized that his plot had been revealed, he? immediately began to defend his actions, despite knowing that his mother had seen through them.

"Mother, I was only offering the girl a drink; how was I supposed to know that King Berengar was so strict about drinking wine?"

Emperor Vetransis was struggling to contain his fury; if it were any other monarch's table they were sitting at, he would not care if his son had outright drugged a princess. However, Berengar was different. The Kingdom of Austria was a rapidly rising power that was capable of dominating both land and sea. It was only a matter of time before they eclipsed the Byzantine Empire in terms of international influence.

Angering Berengar was not the same as provoking a King of another realm. The very idea that his son would so blatantly try to take advantage of Berengar's bloodline made the Emperor seethe with rage and instinctively want to beg for forgiveness, for he knew Berengar was a cruel man who did as he pleased.

The only reason Berengar had not done something drastic to the boy was that he was Honoria's brother. Without Honoria by his side, Berengar indeed would have had the Byzantine Prince executed, or at the very least, removed one of his limbs. In doing so, a war would break out with the Byzantine Empire. Luckily for everyone involved, Berengar was forced to calm his wrath and deal with this situation rationally.

Ultimately Berengar gazed at the boy with murderous intent; as he did so, an oppressive aura filled the air; eventually, Berengar took a bite from his jaeger schnitzel before placing his fork down in a seemingly calm manner. Despite his appearance on the outside, everyone present knew that Berengar was far from relaxed. After washing down the schnitzel with a swig of beer, Berengar finally broke his silence.

"Aurelius, if I catch you so much as glancing at my sister, or any of the women under my protection with a lustful gaze, I will have you castrated and throw your manhood to the pigs. This is your only warning; test my patience again, and see what happens!"

After saying this, Berengar began to ignore the boy and once more dig into his meal. Utter silence prevailed in the room; the only sound that could be heard was that of Berengar using his utensils to cut into the slab of meat before him.

As such, the remainder of the banquet was relatively quiet, for nobody dared to further provoke the ire of the man known as the Tyrant of Steel.

### *Chapter 373: The Second Royal Wedding*

The day had finally arrived for Berengar to marry one of his two lovers and officially make her his lawfully wedded bride. As Linde was the second wife in the harem's hierarchy, she would be the first to be married.

After this day was over, Berengar would have a week to spend with his new bride before sailing off to Constantinople where he would marry Honoria within the halls of the legendary Hagia Sophia. If it weren't for the importance that the Byzantines placed on Honoria's wedding, Berengar likely would have married both Linde and Honoria at the same time.

However, because of the Byzantine Emperor's request for his daughter's wedding to be held within the land of her birth, Berengar had placed Linde's marriage first and Honoria's shortly after. With this in mind, he would have today revolve entirely around Linde.

The guests had arrived for both brides, and unfortunately for Linde, her parents were long deceased; as such, she indeed had nobody to walk her down the aisle. Thus Berengar had arranged for her brother Liutbert to handle that part of the ceremony.

Once more, Berengar was garbed in his luxurious white military uniform, fully decorated in the various army accolades he had awarded himself for his courageous efforts on the battlefield as he stood at the altar for the second time in as many months. Standing beside him was none other than Ludolf, who was in a not-so-pleasant mood.

He was not a fan of Berengar's new polygamy law, but Berengar had cited solid biblical justification for such a thing, mainly quoting the old testament. As such, he had resolved himself to endure Austria's new laws and wed Berengar to his other wives.

If Adela's wedding gown was considered modest in design, then Linde's wedding dress was revealing to say the least. Linde had explicitly worked with the tailors to design her dress in a manner that showed off her upper assets.

As such, there were no sleeves on the dress. Instead, its bodice was cut in a v-neck style that heavily emphasized her unique bust and the impressive degree of cleavage she was showing off. The lower half of the dress was a pleated hoopskirt. Her alabaster skin practically glowed as the sunlight entered through the stained glass windows and showed down upon her entrance.

Linde had spent a great deal of effort on her hair; it was not in its usual style. Instead, her long strawberry-blonde locks were artificially curled and swept off to one side like that of an early 20th-century starlet from Berengar's past life.

Berengar gazed at her in silence, struggling to keep his jaw intact as he fawned upon the elegant beauty of his long-term lover. He had never expected that a simple change in hairstyle would so thoroughly change the image of the woman who had taken his virginity.

Typically Linde was beautiful, but in a far less glamorous way than she appeared today. It was as if Berengar's sight had been wholly stolen, and the only thing he could see was his gorgeous bride walking down the aisle.

This time Eckhard was granted a reprieve from his duties in Bohemia and was allowed to return to Kufstein to take part in the ceremony as Berengar's best man. The General stood in the standard black, white, and gold dress uniform that the Austrian Generals now wore for formal occasions.

He wore many of the same medals that Berengar had awarded himself for his actions in combat, and as such, aside from the color differences, the Uniforms were quite similar. After all King Berengar, and Marshal Eckhard had done more for the Austrian war efforts than any other officers in the entire Military.

As for Linde's bridesmaids, they included Adela and Honoria as well as Linde's half-sister Adelheid, who had been working as a field agent in Austrian Royal Intelligence. She specialized in counter-espionage, and thus she spent most of her time within the borders of Austria, hunting other nations' spies.

Berengar's father and mother were sitting in the front row gazing upon their son having a second wedding, to a second wife, nearly two months after marrying the first one. There was a glimpse of pride in his father's eyes while

his mother was glaring at him with an otherwise happy expression plastered on her face.

If it weren't for the vindictive nature of her stare, Berengar would think she was wholly accepting of his polygamous lifestyle; funnily enough, his parent's sentiments in this life mirrored what he believed those of his past life would have at this moment.

Berengar and Linde's two children Hans and Helga, were seated in the front row as they watched their father marry their mother with pride. Helga was too young to know what was going on and did not have the superior intellect of her elder brother; as such, she was smiling while remaining quiet.

Eventually, Linde reached the altar standing across from Berengar, where Ludolf once more began the speech nearly identical to what he had said within this very Cathedral almost two months prior.

"Dearly beloved, we are gathered here today to join this man and women in holy matrimony.

King Berengar von Kufstein, do you take this woman to be your wife, to live together in holy matrimony, to love her, to honor her, to comfort her, and to keep her in sickness and in health? for as long as you both shall live?"

Berengar smiled and nodded his head in response to this before saying the words on his mind.

"I do."

Ludolf then shifted his gaze over to Linde as he began to address her in a similar manner that he had just done to Berengar.

"Linde von Habsburg, do you take this man to be your husband, to live together in holy matrimony, to love him, to honor him, to comfort him, and to keep him in sickness and in health, forsaking all others, as long as you both shall live?"

Just as Berengar had done, Linde smiled warmly and nodded her head before responding to the question.

"I do."

Ludolf then began to speak once more as he first addressed the groom.

"Repeat after me

I, Berengar von Kufstein, take you, Linde von Habsburg, 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."

Berengar immediately repeated the words with perfect articulation before Ludolf repeated a similar phrase to Linde, where she quickly responded with the following vows.

"I, Linde von Habsburg, 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."

The rings were brought forward, where Ludolf immediately asked Berengar to place one of them on Linde's finger while repeating the following.

"I give you this ring as a token and pledge of our constant faith and abiding love."

After doing this, Linde followed the same process and repeated the exact phrase. Berengar and Linde then joined hands with broad smiles on their faces. After seeing this, Ludolf grinned before declaring for the entire audience to hear.

"By the power vested in me under the laws of the Kingdom of Austria, I now pronounce you husband and wife! You may kiss the bride."

After hearing this, Berengar grabbed ahold of Linde's flawless face and buried his lips into her own, sliding his tongue into her mouth and twirling it around hers as he did so. After a passionate kiss, he broke away from her while holding her hand, the young couple smiling emphatically as they basked in the audience's overwhelming applause.

After the ceremony was over, Berengar and his second wife returned to the palace and his guests, where they once more participated in a massive reception. As the primary wife and now High Queen of Austria, Adela was present throughout the whole wedding.

Surprisingly enough to the many spectators, the High Queen seemed accepting of the whole occasion; even though Berengar was paying more attention to Linde than herself. Nonetheless, he still paid heed to his first wife, in doing so creating an atmosphere that polygamy was quite wholesome, despite what the naysayers might preach.

Berengar had skipped the dance with the parents at the reception for Linde's sake. After all, both of her parents were deceased; instead, he waltzed with her for the entire duration. After prancing around for some time, Berengar and Linde sat at the head of the table where the meal was prepared. On his right side was Adela, while Linde sat on his left.

It was quite a peculiar sight to the guests who were gathered, as polygamy had not been legal in the German-speaking regions for centuries. Despite this, Berengar had shown to all the traditionalists among his guests that there was indeed nothing wicked or sinful about the occasion.

The traditionalist's biggest complaint about the whole occasion would be Linde's rather revealing dress, as it was the only thing they could remotely find fault with. Aside from that, the wedding reception went as smoothly as the previous one, and before long, Berengar and Linde found themselves alone in bed with one another, where they spent the remainder of their waking hours making love once more. A perfect conclusion to an otherwise perfect day.

#### *Chapter 374: Just Another Day in Paradise*

Unlike Berengar's usual routine, today, he had awoken much later than normal. In fact, by the time he had managed to pry his eyes open and stare at the ceiling above, it was well past afternoon. The night prior, he had married Linde as his second wife, and even though she was already pregnant, the young couple had desperately struggled against biology to add yet another child into the mix.

Ultimately their efforts were futile. However, it did result in a highly pleasurable experience, one that Berengar would remember for the rest of his life. Unlike

Adela, whose first time was taken on her wedding night, Berengar and Linde had been accustomed to one another's bodies for years now. As such, they knew just what made each other tick.

Despite the fact that she had already having given birth to two children, Berengar never once got sick of making love to Linde, and the proof of this was the number of times he climaxed inside of her on their wedding night. This morning he was feeling not only fatigued but physically drained as well.

When he finally shifted his view over to where Linde should be sleeping, he noticed that she was not within his bed. Was she seriously in better shape than he was? He could hardly believe this; however, at the very next moment, he heard the door open and saw Linde, dressed in nothing but a sky blue silk robe, carrying a plate filled with a cheese and spinach omelet with a side of bacon and sausage.

Berengar gazed at the plate with a famished expression on his face. Despite having a massive meal the night before, he was practically starving at the moment. However, right before he dug in, he noticed something was missing, and as such, Berengar instantly asked the question on his mind.

"Where is the milk?"

Upon hearing this, Linde had a sultry smile spread across her immaculate lips, where she placed the tray down on the bed before loosening her robe to reveal her substantial bust. Berengar immediately noticed the collar that she wore around her graceful neck. As such, Linde prostrated herself before Berengar as she made an indecent request of him.

"If master desires, he can drink from my breast..."

Berengar honestly did not know what to say; for whatever reason, Linde had developed a breastfeeding fetish; he inwardly told himself that he could not be blamed for such behavior, while in reality, it was likely his fault.

After submitting herself before him like a proper slave, Berengar would not refuse the offer. As such, he lied back in bed and dragged his newlywed wife upon his lap, where he began to breastfeed from her bountiful bosom while eating from the tray of food she had brought to him.



By the end of the experience, Berengar had a wide grin on his face, he knew he was a bit perverted, but he honestly didn't care. He was a King, and a King could do as he damn well pleased, especially if they had the power and wealth to back their actions.

After finishing his meal, Berengar rose out of bed, where Linde gave him a morning kiss; as she did so, she slowly began to get dressed. Like Berengar, she was too exhausted from the previous night's activities to go for a morning round. As such, she decided to defuse the tension by making a joke.

"It is going to be dreadfully boring for the next nine months, no hookah, no alcohol, whatever shall you do?"

Berengar also began to get dressed as he chuckled in response to Linde's remark.

"I don't know; maybe I'll start a war; war is always fun!"

Linde did not seem to find his joke funny; in fact, she was practically scowling at Berengar as he said this. Instead of laughing, she immediately wrapped her arms around him and held her head tightly to his bare chest before revealing her thoughts on the matter.

"Don't joke like that... I am always worried sick whenever you march off to war; I can't imagine what I'd do if anything happened to you..."

Berengar immediately kissed the girl's forehead while hugging her back; as he did so, he smiled before responding to her claims.

"You don't need to worry so much; times have changed... We are now entering a new era of industry, and with it, machines beyond your wildest dreams will come into existence. Over these next few years of peace, I will create weapons so advanced that even if my enemies outnumber me ten to one, my army will be able to slaughter them with minimal effort.

When the crusaders arrive at our borders, we will have an army the likes this world has never seen before. We will effortlessly sweep aside the Catholic Church and use the crusade as an excuse to conquer the German realms and unite our people into a single cohesive Empire under our Dynasty."

In response to this, Linde chuckled lightly; she was amazed at the level of ambition Berengar had. She had grown up around ambitious men like her father. Yet Berengar's aspirations soared above them all, and unlike the others, he had the means to achieve it.

If she hadn't rashly tried to drug Berengar the night they had first laid eyes upon one another, she wondered what cruel fate she would have followed. She would likely be dead like her father and Lambert. In her mind, even if it did not end the way she had planned, it was the most excellent decision she had ever made in her entire life.

After assuring Linde that he would be alright, the couple proceeded down the stairs, where Adela and Honoria were waiting for the two of them. Adela had a smug expression on her face while Honoria was pouting. She was incredibly envious of Linde for having her wedding first.

Noticing she was in an unpleasant mood, Berengar approached the young princess from the east and picked her up into the air before kissing her. After doing so, he placed her back down onto the ground, slapping her rear.

In doing so, Honoria began to flush with embarrassment. However, she did not dislike the treatment, and as such, she kept her mouth shut rather than berate Berengar for his actions. Seeing that he had uplifted her spirits, Berengar decided to lighten the mood further with a joke.

"You're next, princess!"

Honoria immediately knew what he was referring to, and it wasn't simply the wedding. As such, she looked away from Berengar and bit her lip slightly; she was greatly anticipating her wedding night where she would be all alone with Berengar, much like Adela and Linde had been on theirs.

After entertaining his girls for a bit, Berengar returned to his study, where he saw a file waiting on his desk. The file contained information regarding the construction of two prototype weapons based upon the revolver designs he had sent to Ludwig.

One full-sized 1422 Service Revolver and one snub nose 1422 Agency Revolver had been created. The documents listed that the weapons had

succeeded in a basic test of function and would be submitted for further testing by the Department of Defense, as well as the cartridges they were chambered for.

This brought a smile to Berengar's face; despite the fact that pistols were rarely used in combat, at least in comparison to other weapons; they were excellent personal defense weapons for officers and rear echelon troops. As such, he looked forward to the continued testing of these weapons.

After seeing that weapons testing was going well, Berengar looked through his other documents to find the report of the progress in constructing the new artillery pieces. With his current production rate, The Austrian Royal Army could field a new piece every week. As for the munitions they utilized, they could produce a fair degree of shells.

It would appear that he would be able to replace the majority, if not all, of his current 1417 12 lb Field Guns by the time the crusade arrived, leaving the Fatherland in safe hands. The units that received the first of these new artillery pieces would be the battery with the most experience in combat.

As Berengar gazed through the various documents on his desk, a satisfied smile appeared on his face. Things were progressing smoothly; Kufstein's Armory would be fully equipped with the newest machinery in a matter of months. With it, Berengar would start using steam engines to help industrialize his other industries.

Upon seeing this, Berengar sat back and relaxed within his recliner as he thought about how far he had come during these past five years. Within the next five years, the land beneath his rule would undergo a massive shift and become the world's foremost power. He began to wonder how long it would take him to fully industrialize the Fatherland after his wars of unification were finished.

Truly, his work was never finished; as such, he snapped out of his daze and began going over the paperwork that had piled itself upon his desk. He unsealed his fountain pen and began signing his name onto the documents with a smile on his face. As he did so, he could not help but express his thoughts aloud.

"Just another day in paradise..."

### *Chapter 375: Fall of the Teutonic State*

Deep within the region known as Pomerania stood the last vestiges of the Teutonic State. For years they had given their all to hold out against the coalition forces of Poland-Lithuania, the various Rus states, and the Golden Horde.

In the Castle of Marienburg, also known as Malbork, the last surviving leaders of the Teutonic Order stood gathered around a table. Their expressions were grim as they came to a realization. The war was lost, and the tiny remaining territory they clutched to would soon fall to their enemies.

The armies of the German states were busily embroiled in a war with one another and could not assist the predominantly German Military Order. As such, they were left with one last option to ensure the survival of their Order, even if it went against every instinct they had as Catholics.

The current Grand Master was named Hennek von Rotenburg; he was a Count from lower Saxony who had dedicated his life to the Teutonic Order. If not for the crisis that the Order currently faced, he would have never risen to such a renowned position within it.

After the death of the previous Grand Master in defense of the easternmost portion of the Teutonic State, various men had risen to his position only to martyr themselves in the battle against the Order's enemies. Currently, the Teutonic Order was a Rump State holding on to a fraction of their former territory in the west.

One of his Commanders by the name of Ebert Reimers had just uttered the unthinkable, and as such, there was a stern expression on Hennek's face as he spoke the words on his mind.

"Can you repeat what you just said?"

The room was silent as the various heads of state glared at the man; despite this, he remained confident in his proposition and thus reuttered his plan without the slightest bit of hesitation in his voice.

"We should submit to the Kingdom of Austria and become reformists. King Berengar is the only one with the power and wealth to help us survive! If we were to be annexed by the Austrian Kingdom and convert to the German Reformation, our Order could very well survive!"

A year ago, if Ebert had suggested this, he would immediately be burned at stake. Yet, now circumstances were different. The Teutonic State was on the verge of collapse, and their enemies were at the gates. It was because of this that the various Heads of State entertained his proposition, even if none openly declared support.

To many of the members of the Teutonic Order, the Kingdom of Austria, and the German Reformation, which had spread like wildfire across the German States, was something that the Catholic Church could not prevail against. Its attempt to engage in a crusade against them was sure to end bloody.

As such, the room was in silence for several moments as every man present began to consider the option as a valid alternative; after all, if they continued as they were, the Teutonic Order would be annihilated. Despite this being their only chance to survive as a Chivalric Order, various council members were reluctant to accept such a proposition. Eventually, one man broke the silence.

"What you are saying is Heresy! If we submit ourselves to Austria and its so-called King, we will be forced to convert to the Berengar Heresy! As such, we will be full-fledged Heretics! I, for one, would rather die in battle against the enemies of the Church than convert to Heresy to save my skin!"

Three other men instantly nodded their heads in agreement with this assertion. It was becoming increasingly clear that the surviving leaders of the Teutonic Order were split on this issue. Other men immediately began to side with the Commander who had suggested the action.

"Our enemies are at the gates! If we do not submit to the Austrian Crown, we will be annihilated! This is the only way for our Order and centuries of tradition to survive!"

Instantly the chamber began to erupt in furious debate as the two sides began to bicker. The Grand Master watched with a wary expression as he saw what

remained of his Order tearing itself apart. If things continued in such a manner, there would not be an order to preserve, for the members would have destroyed themselves in the face of extinction.? Ultimately the man sighed heavily as he came to a decision; after doing so, he yelled at the top of his lungs so that the foolish men around him would stop bickering.

"Silence! I have come to a decision!"

After saying this, the chamber became so quiet that not even a mouse could be heard scurrying in the background. All council members that made up the remaining leaders of the Order stared at Grand Master von Rotenburg with complicated expressions. What he said next would either save the Order or doom it to extinction. After gazing upon the men gathered before him, the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order made his decree.

"We will send word to King Berengar of Austria, informing him that we are willing to submit to his authority and be annexed by his Kingdom in exchange for protection against our enemies! Anything else can be left up to negotiations!"

The moment he said these words, the council was split in two. Many had a relieved expression, but others were scowling. Some even tore off their regalia and barged out of the room, signaling that they had abandoned the Order then and there. They would genuinely rather die than embrace any perceived heresy.

After making his declaration known to the surviving leaders of the Order, Hennek dismissed his council as they went about their business. Whether or not the Order would survive came down to the negotiations that he would personally make with King Berengar von Kufstein.

Eventually, only the Grand Master and the Commander who had suggested such a drastic course of action remained within the Council Chambers, where they began to speak in secrecy. Hennek proceeded to pour two chalices of wine before handing one over to the Ebert. As he did so, he began to thank the man.

"My friend, I thank you for presenting this argument to the Council on my behalf; if I had been the one to say it, then we would truly be doomed as a brotherhood..."

After saying this, he took a swig from his chalice while the Commander did the same. After wiping his mouth with his sleeve, Ebert began to question their next course of action.

"So what now? Surely half of the Order will defect because of this announcement!"

The Grand Master spat on the floor before expressing his discontent with the fanatics among their ranks.

"Let those Catholic Bastards run away to their deaths. The German Reformation is not just about the accurate representation of the word of Christ; it is about something far grander. The German Reformation is about unifying the German people under one religion and one Empire. Make no mistake, we are a German Order, and a new Empire is rising in Austria.

The days of the Holy Roman Empire and the dominance of the Catholic Church are coming to an end. In its place, a German Empire will rise that will dominate the politics of our world for centuries to come. This is not the end of our Order; instead, it is the dawn of a new golden era! Besides, I think you are underestimating how many of our brothers have been reading Ludolf's thesis in secret."

A grin appeared on the Ebert's face as he heard this; after a while, he broke his silence on the matter and asked the next question on his mind.

"So you will be going to Kufstein then?"

The Grand Master nodded in response to this. After doing so, he approached Ebert and laid a hand upon his shoulder before whispering to him.

"Indeed, while I am away, I am going to need you to oversee the transition here in Marienburg. Hold the line, and make sure the Catholics among our ranks don't do anything foolish that will jeopardize our annexation."

After hearing his orders, the Commander nodded his head before responding affirmatively.

"You can rest easy; the Order will be in good hands. I will make sure that we have a peaceful and stable transition while you are away!"

After hearing this, Hennek smiled before finishing the rest of his wine. After doing so, he departed from the council chambers, leaving behind one final phrase to his Commander Ebert, who would be in charge of the Teutonic Order while he was away.

"I have faith in your abilities, my friend, do not disappoint me!"

With this said, a letter was drafted and sent to Kufstein informing Berengar of the Teutonic Order's intentions. The Teutonic Order that had stood for centuries and was a symbol of German Nationalism in Berengar's previous life was at the precipice. It was now up to the young King of Austria's whim as to whether or not they would survive.

#### *Chapter 376: Plans for the Future of France*

Within the royal palace of Austria, Berengar sat upon his throne. Standing before him was none other than Ludecke von Dürnstein, his Ambassador to France, and the man tasked with the efforts of Austrian Royal Intelligence to interfere with the Hundred Years' War.

At the moment, Austria sought to supply the French Crown with arms against their rivals publically. This would further drag the de Valois dynasty's name into the mud. Associating with Berengar and his heretical Kingdom had become a strict taboo ever since the Crusade was declared. To the Catholic population of France, accepting arms from a heretic would never be acceptable, thus allowing Berengar's agents to foster dissent against the Crown.

Ludecke had returned from his journey to the Kingdom of France with the intent to inform Berengar of the progress he had made. As such, he knelt before his King with a solemn gaze as he announced the slow progress he was making.



"Your majesty, King Gilles de Valois appeared to be hesitant to accept your gifts. He likely will not make use of such weapons unless he becomes desperate enough to do so."

Berengar frowned when he heard this, where he then shifted his attention to Linde, who was sitting obediently in his lap, with her head resting against his chest. He began to stroke her silky strawberry blonde hair as he pressed her for an answer.

"What is the progress that the Iberians are making in reverse-engineering the captured Arkebuses?"

Linde instantly gazed up at Berengar with her sky blue eyes while prodding his chest with her fingers; she began to whisper in his ears the secrets that her agents in Catholic Iberia had uncovered.

"It is slow but steady; they have been dedicating all their resources to reproducing it. They should soon have a functional prototype; though it will be crude and made of cast iron, it will be the basis for future developments in firearms technology."

Berengar nodded his head with a smile on his face; after doing so, he asked her another question regarding his enemy's progress on reverse-engineering his technology.

"What about the Catholic Church? The Italians seized some of my army's flintlock rifles. Is there any progress in that regard?"

Linde immediately shook her head as she heard this before responding to the question.

"It is too advanced; the spring steel required to create the action is beyond Italy or the Papacy's ability to recreate. It will be decades before they make any form of progress on reverse engineering your rifled muskets."

Berengar smiled even more fiercely as he heard this report and petted Linde's head in response, which caused her to close her eyes in joy and enjoy the warmth of her husband as she clung to him. After hearing this report, Berengar made a decree.

"When the Iberians have begun to produce the arkebuse in considerable numbers, I want you and your agents to supply the enemies of the French Crown with similar designs. Pretend that you are agents of the Iberian Kingdoms, giving aid to the English, Aquitaine, and Burgundian forces.

When the enemies of France have begun to utilize firearms on the field of battle, King Gilles will beg me for assistance, and when he does, he will become a known collaborator with a heretic. Causing the French people to mistrust his dynasty greatly."

Ludecke bowed in response to Berengar's orders in the affirmative.

"It will be done, your Majesty!"

After saying this, Berengar eyed the man with curiosity; there seemed to be a complicated expression on his face. As if he had something to say but was afraid it might offend him. As such, Berengar pressed the man for the truth.

"Is there something else you wish to tell me, Ludecke?"

Upon hearing this, Ludecke's bones practically jumped out of his skin. However, he managed to calm his nerves before responding to Berengar's line of questioning.

"It is nothing important, your majesty; it is just that the Crown Prince of France informed me to give you a message on his behalf..."

Berengar instinctively chuckled when he heard this; he could not get over the fact that the Joan of Arc of this timeline was a slutty trap who just so happened to be the Prince of France. As such, he was immediately curious about what that boy could have to say to him.

"I'm listening..."

Ludecke instantly shifted his gaze to his surroundings to make sure that Princess Honoria was nowhere to be found; it was only after he had confirmed her absence that he dared to repeat the words that Aubry had spoken to him.

"Prince Aubry de Valois has requested that I tell you the following. In his exact words, he has said that if you ever grow tired of the foolish princess, he would be more than happy to entertain you..."

When Berengar and Linde heard these words, they were shocked, especially Berengar. He had never even met this Prince, and yet the boy was already trying to seduce him. Just what crazy level of pervert was he?

It took a few moments for Berengar to realize precisely what the French Prince was trying to tell him; the more he came to a proper understanding, the more his expression began to shift from confused to disgust, ultimately resulting in a state that expressed the horror he felt deep inside. Linde immediately found his expression to be cute, and as such, she began to tease him with a vindictive smile on her face.

"Well, aren't you popular? Not only have you managed to charm a princess into your bed, but even a prince is lining up for a chance to satisfy you..."

The moment Berengar heard his wife tease him in such a manner, he felt like he was going to throw up. The very idea of sleeping with the French Prince filled him with an overwhelming sense of revulsion. As such, it took him a moment to regain the dignity a monarch should have. After settling his stomach, Berengar gazed sternly upon his ambassador before questioning him further.

"Is that all?"

Having seen the complicated series of expressions on Berengar's face when he heard this news, Ludecke decided it would be unwise to discuss the interest that Princess Sibilla had shown towards meeting him and nodded his head in silence.

Seeing that there was nothing left to report, Berengar dismissed Ludecke; it was only after the man had disappeared from his great hall that Berengar began to relax; after taking a moment to himself, Berengar flicked Linde on the nose before chastising her.

"That was not funny! You made my stomach churn with your naughty thoughts!"

Linde did not pout. Instead, she wore a sultry smile as she began to kiss him on the neck; in doing so, she whispered into his ear with a seductive voice.

"Allow me to make it up to you!"

However, Berengar was dreadfully busy and did not have the time to play with his wife; as such, he pressed the palm of his hand against his wife's face while slowly pushing her away. As he did so, he began to scold her once more.

"Linde, be a good girl, I have a lot of work to do, and your enticement is getting in the way of that. I will satisfy you later in the evening."

This remark instantly caused Linde to pout as she stood up from Berengar's lap and began to walk away. Eventually, she looked back at her husband and stuck out her tongue before getting back to work herself.

As for Berengar, He sat upon this throne in contemplation; his plans for France would last decades and could not be rushed; he had only begun his preparations to fracture the unified Kingdom. As for his other business, things were progressing slowly but steadily as he industrialized Austria.

As for what the young King did next, he had to draft more plans for new technology critical to his growing infrastructure. His primitive factories were already introducing steam power and advanced machine tooling.

However, the process was slower than he desired it to be. As such, he began to draft copies of his plans for steam engines and the advanced machinery currently being implemented throughout Kufstein's industrial sector.

He intended to send these blueprints with armed convoys to the cities across Austria such as Innsbruck, Vienna, Graz, and Trieste that were primarily responsible for his current industrial output, where he would empower local nobles and wealthy merchants to invest in factories of their own that utilize such technology to rapidly produce the goods that his society had begun to rely upon.

Austria was on the verge of becoming an Industrial Power, and despite its vast wealth, it was not good for long-term stability if all of the major industries were controlled by the government. By sending the blueprints to trusted

noblemen and merchants, Berengar would create private enterprises resulting in competition between Austrian companies, thus fostering innovation in his market.

It was about time that the people of Austria began using the education that Berengar had been giving them for something other than being cogs in the machine. Berengar hoped that by aiding in the development of private companies, he could gain some unrecognized talent, capable of leading Austria into its future beneath his rule.

### *Chapter 377: Establishing the Bohemian Royal Army*

Berengar was sitting upon his leather recliner within the sanctity of his study. Within these walls, he was relatively free from all of the stresses of the outside world, even if he was surrounded by piles of paperwork that never seemed to end.

As much as Berengar hated doing paperwork, it had become such a common routine throughout his tenure as a ruler that it was one of the few ways he could relax nowadays. As the days passed since his wedding to Linde, Honoria had grown rather impatient for her own ceremony that was on the horizon.

Quite honestly, Berengar did not know what to make of it, the girl had begun to throw some childish tirades over the simplest things, the brief moment of sisterhood that existed between Berengar's harem was unraveling at the seams, and with it, his peaceful days were coming to an end.

These girls were roughly a month pregnant, maybe less, and they were already driving him insane. As the days passed, he spent more and more time in his study, burning off his stress by overindulging in the endless horde of paperwork that continuously found itself lying upon his desk.

At the moment, he was overlooking Eckhard's report on the current political situation within the Kingdom of Bohemia. After years of bloodshed at the hands of the Hussites, corruption at the hands of the previous monarch, and the ongoing misconduct of the Catholic Church; the Bohemian people were fed up with all factions present within the realm, and many, especially the ethnic Germans of the Sudetenland had begun to embrace Berengar and his Regime.

As such, the Hussite Radicals, Moderates, and the remaining Catholic Loyalists had all lost any form of support from the common people. These men and their factions had been neutered without the people backing them. Any form of resistance that sprang up following Berengar's seizure of the Crown was quickly put down by Eckhard and the army of battle-hardened Austrian veterans who accompanied him.

Under the provisional government established by Berengar in the wake of his ascension to the position of King of Bohemia, agricultural reforms had begun to be implemented across the realm. Though it would take many months, perhaps even years, to see the effects of such measures, undoubtedly, food would soon enough no longer be an issue for the average Bohemian.

On top of this, tens of thousands of young German men from Austria poured into the realm, claiming Bohemian wives and beginning work on reconstructing the infrastructure of the war-torn kingdom. Things were starting to get back to normal; however, there was one serious issue that Berengar needed to address.

He could not reasonably station his Austrian troops within the Kingdom for an extending period of time without his rule being seen as a foreign occupation. After all, Bohemia had not been annexed by the Kingdom of Austria. Instead, it remained a part of the Holy Roman Empire for the time being.

Interestingly enough, this meant that Berengar, as King of Bohemia, was now a Prince-Elector of the Holy Roman Empire, making him have a significant degree of influence over who the next Holy Roman Emperor would be, assuming the Empire still existed by the time of Balsamo Corsini's death.

With this in mind, Berengar needed to establish a local force capable of defending its borders but loyal to himself. Berengar began to draft a Royal Decree as King of Bohemia. Much like what had been done in Austria, Berengar would soon declare the right to levy troops by individual noblemen revoked. In its place, a national and professional Army would form.

Knights and Noblemen were free to enlist, and upon graduating from the same Officer Training Program that existed in Austria for the time being, they would be granted a commission. As for what arms this Bohemian Royal Army would be equipped with. Berengar had a solution to this problem.

Warehouses were filled with muskets, and 12 lb field guns, that were beginning to be replaced in service by the newer Needle Rifles and Breech Loading Cannons. With each passing day, Berengar's stockpile of arms grew, and though he had sold some of these weapons to his allies, such as the Granadan Royal Guard and the Byzantine Balkan Army, there were still tens of thousands of muskets stockpiled, and dozens of cannons.

Most of his cannons had not even been replaced yet; with each passing week, more and more field guns were being replaced and added to the stockpile. As for the Schmidt Guns? They were already retired from service within the Austrian Royal Army in its entirety, Berengar had a proper replacement in mind for these weapons, but with the rate of fire and practical range of his needle rifles, the Schmidt gun was now dreadfully obsolete.

There was quite the stockpile of now obsolete weapons that Berengar could field among his Bohemian Army. The guns and the armor issued to Austrian troops in the past were lying around, gathering dust. Until a point where Berengar could fully annex Bohemia as part of his growing realm, it would have to remain a separate entity, with a different military under his command.

After signing the documents formally establishing the Bohemian Royal Army, Berengar sat back within his seat and began to rest his weary eye. At this point, he noticed a knock on his door, and he immediately froze in his spot.

The odds were that this was one of his women, coming to complain about how the other two were treating her. Upon realizing this, Berengar regained his composure and immediately lept beneath his desk, hoping desperately that he would not be found.

Instead, much to his surprise, when the door crept open, the sound of light footsteps could be heard. Whoever these belonged to was far smaller than any of his women, and as such, a guess immediately filled his mind. Ultimately his estimation was confirmed when he heard a soft voice appear within earshot.

"King Berengar? Are you here?"

Berengar immediately popped up from his desk, slamming his head underneath it as he did so. When he finally regained his stature, he rubbed his

cranium and winced in pain. Standing before him was little Veronika, who gazed at him with her mismatched eyes, filled with suspicion.

"King Berengar, why were you hiding under your desk?"

Berengar immediately laughed off the assertion that he, the mighty King of Austria, could be hiding beneath his desk and grabbed ahold of his pen with a broad smile on his face.

"I wasn't hiding; I merely dropped my pen and was retrieving it. Tell me, Veronika, why are you here in my study?"

Veronika was intelligent enough to realize that Berengar was full of shit despite his reasonable defense. Nevertheless, she did not come here to accuse him of hiding like a coward; she came here to ask Berengar a question that was on her mind. As such, she walked over to Berengar and gazed at him with her tiny, blue, and green eyes, and proceeded to inquire about the state of her home country.

"If you don't mind me asking, how is Bohemia faring? I've seen so many incredible things during my brief tenure here within Austria that I am concerned for the well-being of my people."

Berengar sighed as he once more sat down upon his leatherbound reclining chair. He poured himself a drink in his infamous skull chalice as he did so. He had long since delegated this cup explicitly for personal drinking within his study; after all, it was not exactly what one would call the most civilized piece of art. After taking a sip from the fortified wine, he placed the chalice upon his desk before revealing his thoughts on the matter.

"It is recovering, but the wounds of war take time to heal. Bohemia is in a rough state after years of bloodshed, and now I have to rebuild it. It may take years, but I promise you, one day within your lifetime, when you finally return to the land of your birth, it will be far grander than you remember."



Veronika smiled as she heard this, maybe it was because of the wealth and happiness she had witnessed throughout the ordinary people of Austria, but the little girl had faith that Berengar would be able to live up to his claims.

However, her next question came as a shock to Berengar; the girl had only been with him for a month max, and yet she seemed to be impatient.

"So, have you decided who my future husband will be?"

Berengar instantly choked on his wine as he heard this, to listen to a ten-year-old girl so blatantly speak about the prospect of marriage was something Berengar would never become accustomed to no matter how long he lived within this medieval world.

As such, he shook his head as he deflected the issue

"I'm sorry, Veronika, I've been much too busy to come to a proper conclusion on the matter. Besides, you're still young; you should enjoy your youth before thinking about such serious matters. It will probably be years before I find you a proper match, so enjoy your time here in Kufstein while you can."

Veronika began to pout as she heard this; truth be told, she was more worried about who Berengar might marry her off to than anything else regarding her personal life. The last thing she wanted was to be married to some old pervert. However, ultimately she nodded her head and ran up to Berengar, where she latched onto his side like a bit of lamprey, thanking him for the hospitality he had shown her thus far.

"Thank you, King Berengar, you have been most kind, and I look forward to the years where I shall live under your roof!"

Berengar had a bitter smile on his face; this girl was far too formal. Nevertheless, he quickly detached himself from her grasp and responded appropriately before shooing her from his study.

"You are most welcome, Princess Veronika, now. If you don't mind, I have some work to do, so please enjoy yourself. I'm sure Hans and Helga could use a proper playmate..."

In response to this, Veronika smiled and curtsied as she had been taught to do by Henrietta during her stay in Kufstein; after doing so, she left Berengar in his study. Where he proceeded to fill his chalice once more, he sighed heavily as he partook of the fortified wine before expressing his thoughts aloud.

"In six years, I wonder what the relationship between her and Hans will be. Hopefully, everything will go smoothly, and I can marry her off to my son. After all, I wouldn't mind having a cute daughter-in-law like her..."

After saying this, Berengar quickly got back to work, for the Kingdom would not run itself.

### *Chapter 378: You Reap What You Sow, Big Brother*

Out of all the empires in history, the Romans were one of Berengar's favorite. What they accomplished inspired numerous men to achieve a level of greatness similar to their own, yet few had ever succeeded in matching the glory of the Roman Empire.

The Byzantines were technically the surviving Eastern half of the Roman Empire after being split in two by Diocletian during the formation of his tetrarchy. In reality, by this point in history, the Byzantines were far more Greek than Roman.

Despite this, they still referred to themselves as Romans and touted the ancient lineage of Rome as their own. Much of its nobility spoke Latin as a secondary language, which was the primary reason why Berengar was able to communicate with Honoria during their first meeting so effectively.

In fact, by now, Berengar was fluent in three languages, German, Arabic, and Latin; if one included the modern English from his past life, then four, but that was a language only he could speak within this world.

The difference between late medieval English and the language Berengar spoke was so vast that if he dared to converse in the modern tongue to any Englishman of the era, neither of the two would remotely understand each other.

With this knowledge of the three languages, Berengar was able to communicate effectively with his allies. At the moment, Berengar was on

board a Clipper, not just any clipper; this was the Royal Clipper, Berengar had designed the ship based on some pictures he had seen on the internet of a cruise ship in his previous life.

This clipper was different than any other ship currently employed by Berengar's maritime forces. Its hull was entirely made of steel; it had five masts and 42 sails in total, with a fully rigged sail plan. Though Berengar had wanted to retrofit it with a triple expansion steam engine, as well four scotch boilers, the reality of the situation was that he did not have the means to manufacture such large and powerful maritime equipment; at least for the time being.

As such, this giant steel monster of a ship acted as the personal vessel of King Berengar von Kufstein. It had taken months at the Shipyard in Pula to create this vessel and was being worked on during the entirety of Austria's war for independence until relatively recently.

The ship had a length of 442 feet, which was two feet longer than the largest of the Ming Treasure Ships, officially making it the largest ship in the history of the world up until this point. While it was not armed, it was virtually impervious to any potential enemy attack because of its all-steel construction and the marines stationed onboard.

To make sure it was not attacked, an escort of five frigates flanked the sides of the ship; the sight of such monstrous vessels, when compared with the ships of the time, was a testament to Austrian maritime supremacy.

Berengar currently sat within the dining hall of the massive vessel; it was outfitted in the most luxurious furniture that his industry could devise. He sat next to his two wives, his fiancée, and his little sister as they shared drinks and dined upon the finest seafood.

Berengar had been eating his favorite seafood dish from his previous life; ironically, in this world, a German King introduced the modern Italian food known as alfredo, and with it, he had his chefs mix crab into the dish creating a delectable, creamy, seafood noodle dish.

It was so vastly different from any of the other cooking that the girls had tasted until this point that they initially had reservations about eating it. However,

when they tasted the creamy noodle dish, they instantly fell in love with it. Especially Honoria, who already loved the taste of crab. She had a broad smile on her face as she ate the crab-filled alfredo.

A noodle ended up sticking to the side of her cheek; it was so tempting that Berengar could not hold himself back. Instead, he instantly dove in and licked the noodle from her cheek before devouring it.

This inevitably caused Honoria to chastise him for his inherent greed.

"Hey! That was mine!"

However, in the next moment, before Berengar could properly tease the girl, Linde had plunged her fork into Honoria's bowl and stole a huge chunk of the delicacy, further causing the young princess to pout.

Because they were journeying to the Byzantine Empire for the young Princesses' marriage, the other two girls in Berengar's harem had begun to gang up on her and tease her in every possible way they could.

Luckily for Berengar, this was the most cordial the girls had been in nearly a week. He was happy to see they were getting along once more. Honoria appeared to be in a better mood as the day of her wedding drew ever closer.

Berengar swore that if he was stuck on this ship with the three girls, and they were still bickering over the slightest details, then he would hurl himself into the sea and pray for the mercy of the ancient god Poseidon.

Of course, this would inevitably result in him cursing Poseidon for his complete and utter lack of mercy as he drowned in the depths of the Mediterranean. Still, it was a better fate than being stuck on a ship with three moody pregnant women.

Of course, Henrietta noticed the relatively gleeful expression Berengar had on his face as his girls playfully fought over food. Obviously, She could not let this stand; after all, there was no way she could reasonably allow her brother to be happy with the small harem he had created.

Considering Henrietta had entered her teenage years, she had been quite mischievous lately, using any chance she could to make Berengar's life a living hell, usually by instigating a fight between his three wives.

As such, the young Princess of Austria, who grew more beautiful by the day, put on an innocent expression as she looked at her brother with hopeful eyes while asking a question that was sure to stir the pot.

"Big brother?"

Berengar, who could never find fault with his darling little sister, remained completely unaware that she was responsible for a significant degree of the agony he had been suffering through over the past week; as such, he quickly played into her hands as he asked the young teenage girl what was on her mind.

"Yes, Henrietta?"

Seeing how her brother had taken the bait, Henrietta quickly asked the question she knew would cause his girls to briefly unite against him.

"Who do you think is prettier? Me or your wives?"

Berengar did not even sense the questionable gazes upon him as he took a bite from his alfredo before responding with the answer Henrietta knew he would say.

"You, of course, everyone knows that my darling little sister is the prettiest girl in the world!"

The moment he said this, his three women stared at him in disbelief; they could hardly believe that he had just uttered such words in front of them. Henrietta, of course, put on a joyful smile as she clapped her hands. Completely satisfied with the looks her brother was getting. After doing so, she walked over to Berengar's seat and hugged him tightly.

"Big brother is the best!"

After doing so, she returned to her seat, waiting for Berengar to notice the ferocious glares he was receiving from his three women. It took him a second to see, but when he did, he finally realized that Henrietta had set him up.

Before he could chastise her for pulling the prank, Honoria stood up from her seat with a furious appearance. She began to curse out Berengar for his comments as she did so.

"If you find your sister to be so pretty, why don't you marry her instead!"

After saying this, she ran off; however, before Berengar could chase after her to settle this foolish dispute, Linde and Adela had latched on to his shoulders with an increasingly tight grip. Berengar could feel as if his bones were shattering beneath their grasp as they began to condemn him for his words.

"Master... I'd like to have a word with you..."

"Darling, I know we may be somewhat related, but lusting after your sister is a grave sin..."

Obviously, Berengar was not attracted to his sister in such a way; he was merely entertaining Henrietta's whims like he usually did, and deep down, his women knew it. Still, to see him dismiss them without hesitation and side with the younger girl had greatly invoked their ire.

As such, Berengar gazed at his little sister with a pleading gaze, in return for this, she merely smirked at him before drinking the contents from his wine glass, after doing so, she placed the chalice on the table before walking by, as she did so she whispered something in his ear that the others did not catch.

"You reap what you sow, big brother..."

Thus Berengar spent the rest of his journey to Constantinople atoning for his sins.

### *Chapter 379: A Lesson in Obedience*

Berengar sat within the dining hall, his eyebrows were beginning to twitch, and there was a thoroughly exhausting expression plastered on his face; for the

past thirty minutes, he had been listening to Adela and Linde chew him out because he dared to say that Henrietta was prettiest of them all.

He did not remember a single word that either of his two women had stated. Instead, he was quite upset over the fact that Henrietta was purposely making his love life a living hell. After dwelling upon such a matter for some time, he had finally come to a rather important conclusion about his behavior.

With this in mind, he had completely lost his patience. He responded by kicking an empty chair over before standing up in a fit of fury. He gazed down upon his two women with a chilling gaze as they continued to criticize him.

"That's enough!"

The moment Berengar shouted at them in such a manner, the two women immediately silenced themselves and gazed at one another with trepidation in their eyes. Berengar had seldom spoken to them in such a manner before; as such, they were visibly frightened as the young man began to exclude his authority as King.

"It has become clear to me now that I have allowed all four of you far too much freedom! You two especially, where do you derive the authority to speak to me in such a hostile manner? You both know damn well that I have no such intents towards my sister and merely appeased her whims. Yet here you stand chastising me with such fury as if I had cheated on you! It is absurd, and it stops now!"

Linde immediately began to protest Berengar's relatively accurate assessment.

"But-"

However, before she could even utter a second word, Berengar had raised his hand and lightly but firmly backhanded her across the cheek. By doing this, the young King had gotten his point entirely across as Linde's conditioning immediately took over. The young beauty immediately knelt before him and lowered her head in silence as she took her husband's scolding passively and obediently.

"Do not talk back to me when I am scolding you! You will speak when you are spoken to!"

Berengar's glare immediately shifted over to Adela, who was so frightened by Berengar's change of character that she had collapsed to her knees. Seeing both women kneeling before him, Berengar lifted the chair he had kicked over and sat upon it with one leg bent over the other while resting his handsome face on his fist. After getting comfortable, Berengar immediately chastised the two women for their behavior.

"Now that I see you both have become obedient, allow me to educate you on the boundaries of our relationship. First and foremost, you do not get to dictate what I do, what I say, or who I decide to talk to. If I want to drag a fourth girl into this relationship, I will damn well do so! Your jealousy is unflattering to say the least..."

As for my second point of contention, where did you get the idea that you have the right to inflict violence upon me? Digging your nails into my shoulder? Tsk tsk tsk, you are undoubtedly lucky only one of you just got slapped. If any of you girls ever lay your hand on me again, or each other for that matter, I will not be afraid to respond in kind."

As Berengar spoke, Linde gazed at him with a sense of arousal; it had been far too long since he had last been this violent and forceful with her. As such, she gazed at him from her kneeling position with lust in her eyes, which did not go unnoticed by the young King.

On the other hand, Adela had never been treated in such a manner before, and for whatever reason, she had gotten the idea that she could walk all over Berengar. It was only now, after witnessing the wrath of her husband firsthand, that she understood the fear that his name invoked in the hearts of his enemies.

The young woman was paralyzed in terror as she gazed upon the oppressive appearance of the man she knew and loved. Until now, she had never truly believed the rumors of Berengar's cruelty. After all, he had never treated her in such a manner, nor had she witnessed him behave so cruelly to anyone else.



Yet now, she had become dreadfully aware that the rumors of how Berengar behaved when he was provoked were very real. She realized now that she had thoroughly stepped on the beast's tail and awoken the monster from his slumber. While Adela may be terrified, she was also profoundly entranced by the tyrannical aura that Berengar was exuding and in no way hated him for it.

Upon seeing the two women had become exceptionally submissive, Berengar decided to reward them for their behavior; as such, he leaned over from his position and placed a palm on the cheek of each of the girls while giving them a stern but loving gaze.

The moment the warmth of his firm hands touched the girls' cheeks, they instantly began to nuzzle up to it as they closed their eyes and accepted his control over the situation. It was as if the petty squabbles they had until now had disappeared entirely from the depths of their hearts. Berengar let out a sigh of relief now that the girls were behaving themselves before speaking up.

"Go fetch the others; I want to have a word with them as well. I'll give you thirty minutes to drag their ass back here; if you do not show up by then, I will severely punish the both of you!"

Immediately, the girls raised from the position and set off to find Honoria and Henrietta, both of which were in the confines of their rooms. Berengar had long since summoned the servers over to fill a glass of wine for him. By the time they arrived, he was already finished with two of them, and they only had a minute to spare.

Honoria had a pouting expression on her face; she was still somewhat upset from Berengar's comment. As for Henrietta, the moment she stood before Berengar, she could tell that he was not his usual kind persona. Instead, his tyrannical alter ego had taken over, which was something she deeply feared.

As such, the girl instantly dropped to her knees and began to plead with Berengar, which greatly shocked Honoria, as she had not expected such a thing to occur.

"I'm sorry, Big Brother, I shouldn't have played such a trick. It was wrong of me; please don't punish me!"

Berengar was rather amused with Henrietta's performance, as he had never once disciplined her for her actions. He realized now that was a mistake, and as such, a cruel smile appeared on his face as he asked the girl a question that had been bothering him for some time.

"My dear Henrietta, I must have been blind not to notice it, but these past few weeks since I have gotten married, you are the one at fault for causing these three bitches to bicker, are you not?"

The moment Berengar used such a word to refer to his women, Honoria began to scowl, and right as she was about to protest being called such a foul term, her mouth was covered by Linde, who whispered in her ear.

"Shhh... Master is speaking!"

Henrietta broke out into tears; the dread within her had wholly overwhelmed her senses as she nodded to Berengar. She had no idea what he had planned for her, but she knew how he treated people who invoked his ire. As such, she immediately confessed to her sins by nodding her head while sobbing.

Berengar immediately reached out his hand to the girl with a smile on his face, which caught her by surprise; she foolishly believed he had so easily forgiven her and grasped ahold of his hand. Unfortunately for her, she was immediately latched onto by Berengar's grip, and pulled into his lap, where he laid her down bottom up.

Linde immediately knew what Berengar was about to do to the girl and began pout; she was pretty upset that she was not receiving the same treatment. The very next sound was a loud slap and the painful cries of Henrietta as Berengar spanked the girl for her punishment in front of his three wives.

Honoria looked in shock at the wicked grin on Berengar's face as he swatted Henrietta's bottom repeatedly until he had concluded a total of ten spankings. After doing so, he pushed the girl off his lap, who was filled with tears, and admonished her for her actions.

"Go to your room, and reflect on your actions. You would be wise to remember this unless you want it to happen again!"

Henrietta immediately ran out of the room, holding onto her visibly red bottom. She could not believe she had been tortured in such a manner. After she was gone, Berengar gazed at his three wives before calling out to Linde, who looked dreadfully aroused.

"Linde, you're next!"

Linde immediately walked over and presented her bare bottom for Berengar to spank; unlike Henrietta, who Berengar had spanked over her dress, Linde wanted skin-to-skin contact. After pulling down her panties and laying on Berengar's lap with her dress folded up, Linde had an amorous smile on her face as she said the words.

"Yes, master!"

Berengar was not even the slightest bit perplexed, as he had personally engrained such masochistic nature into Linde's mind. As such, he sighed heavily as he thought how this was more of a reward than punishment. Nevertheless, he gave her the same ten spankings he had given Henrietta.

Throughout the entire time, Linde had a pleased expression on her face and moaned in pleasure as Berengar swatted her behind; after it was over, she raised from his lap and walked over next to Honoria, holding the girl in place while teasing her.

"I believe it's your turn!"

Honoria began to panic, but Linde had pushed her forward and into Berengar's grasp. The next few minutes would be filled with the screams of both Honoria and Adela. He would follow the same treatment that Berengar had inflicted on the other two girls.

After it was over and all of his wives' bottoms were as red as an apple, Berengar once more began to chastise the trio.

"Now, in the future, I don't want any more nonsense out of you girls; if you act out in the future, prepare to be treated even more harshly. After saying this, Berengar raised from his seat and finished his glass of wine, where he gave one final order before departing.

"Adela, Linde, be a doll and inform Princess Honoria of the terms we have agreed to."

After saying this, Berengar left the room and returned to his bedroom. Though he had no idea how this night would change the dynamic between him and his harem, he was sure it would be for the better. After all, he had become far too lax with how he had treated them. It was time for his wives to understand their place in this world, which was beneath him.

### *Chapter 380: Arriving in Constantinople*

Days had passed, and the Royal Clipper had arrived within the boundaries of the City of Constantinople. The moment such a massive vessel came within the city's vicinity, it had caused a great commotion. Until now, nobody had ever seen such an enormous ship before. It was frankly defying what the people of the Byzantine Empire knew about shipbuilding.

Naturally, only one person within the Mediterranean could build such a massive vessel. With this in mind, Emperor Vetrans and his family personally traveled to the docks to meet Berengar and his host. However, the ports in Constantinople were not large enough to accommodate such a large ship, as such Berengar and his host used several of the rowboats on board to reach the docks, while the clipper was anchored further out at sea.

Berengar was first to step on the docks, and as he did so, Emperor Vetrans went up and shook his hand with an excited expression on his face.

"King Berengar, it is a pleasure to have you within my city. I hope your journey went without difficulties?"

Immediately after saying this, Honoria appeared and stood next to Berengar. After that fateful night where Berengar had disciplined her and the others, she was now far more submissive to her man—standing quietly by his side and latching onto his hand with a smile on her face. Berengar smiled in return when she approached and immediately answered her father's words.

"There were some minor difficulties, but nothing I couldn't handle, right, Honoria?"

Honorio immediately flinched when hearing this; the pain she had felt in her buttocks after Berengar had so viciously spanked her still resounded within her mind every time she thought about the incident. As such, she quickly and obediently nodded her head in response to Berengar's question.

"As Berengar has said, it was nothing we couldn't handle."

Vetranis smiled as he heard this while waiting for the rest of Berengar's host to depart from their rowboats. After all, had gathered, they began to reacquaint themselves with Honorio's family. Interestingly enough, there was one man present Berengar did not recognize; by process of elimination, he quickly surmised that this man who was roughly his age was none other than the second Prince Decentius.

Decentius glared at his sister with overwhelming hatred; if not for this girl and her actions, he would not have been forced into the corner that had caused his treasonous actions. While Honorio was hiding in Austria, getting railed by this Barbarian King, he had butchered his godfather and mentor in pursuit of power.

However, worst of all was the idea that his bloodline was being soiled by the descendent of barbarians who had destroyed the Western half of the ancient Empire centuries ago. It was because of this that he was far from courteous when he was given a chance to speak to Berengar face to face.

"So you are the barbarian who is fucking my bitch of a sister. Congratz, I hope she at least has tight pussy, because that is about the only thing that can make up for the trouble she will inevitably cause you!"

Berengar was astonished that a member of the Imperial Dynasty would speak in such an offensive manner to a foreign dignitary. He was not the only one who was enraged by Decentius's actions; the boy's father immediately raised his hand and struck the prince across the face, causing his lip to bleed as he began to chastise him.

"How dare you speak of your sister that way?! You call King Berengar a barbarian and yet speak in such a foul manner while greeting a foreign dignitary? You have spent too much time around common foot soldiers, so much so that you have forgotten your etiquette as a prince of the Empire!"

Decentius gazed at his father with fury; he could not fathom that the Emperor would strike his son in front of a Barbarian King from the West. In his eyes, It was simply disgraceful for Romans to lower their heads to the savage Germans.? Apparently, Decentius had not received the memo that the Kingdom of Austria was now every bit the Byzantine Empire's equal, if not superior. Either that or he was too proud to admit it.

Berengar instead had a calm expression on his face. He immediately began to respond to Decentiu's uncouth statement with the dignity of a monarch.

"I am a barbarian, am I? Well, maybe you should treat this barbarian with some respect. After all, it is my Kingdom that manufactures the weapons you have used to achieve your victory in North Africa."

While Berengar knew the truth about what had transpired in Cairo, he decided it would be wise not to reveal his hand and thus provoke Decentius into doing something stupid. At the same time, they stayed within the confines of the Imperial Palace. After all, Berengar did not want to spend his wedding looking over his shoulder for a potential assassination attempt.

Decentius' expression turned ugly when he heard this retort; he had never expected Berengar to respond in such a manner. Based upon his prejudices about the German people, he assumed Berengar would immediately slug him for his vulgarity.

Honorina, on the other hand, was not the slightest bit enraged by Decentius' behavior; throughout her entire life, she was never close with her siblings and was aware that her second brother had long since despised her. The fact that she ran away clearly did not help matters.

Seeing that the atmosphere was becoming tense, Vetranis tried immediately began to shift the conversation to the task at hand.

"Well then, King Berengar, if you and your host are ready, we will be departing for the palace now."

Upon hearing this, Berengar smiled and nodded before he led his family and his royal guards towards the Castle. Though the guards appeared unarmed, they each wielded a 1422 Snub-Nose Agency Revolver in their pockets, as

well as several dozen rounds of ammunition. They were also were equipped with a boot knife.

Though the weapons were still in the middle of testing as prototypes, Berengar was well aware of their capabilities and thoroughly trusted that Ludwig's manufacturing capabilities. As such, he had ordered a few of them built prior to this occasion. With this, his guards would have everything they needed to protect him and his family.

Eventually, the Austrian host reached the palace, where they were led to their rooms. Adela, Linde, and Henrietta received their own personal rooms, which were each protected by a unit of the Austrian Royal Guard. At the same time, Berengar would be spending his time in Constantinople within Honoria's old bed chambers.

The moment he and the Princess entered her old quarters. She threw herself onto the bed while her pet eagle Heraclius flew over and perched upon his old post. There was a look of joy on the duo's faces as they reminisced about the past.

Eventually, Honoria's joyous smile turned into a bitter one as she turned around and gazed upon her room. After a while, she finally broke her silence and revealed the thoughts on her mind.

"Everything is exactly the same as I left it..."

Berengar instinctively sat down next to the young Princess and began to comfort her; though he knew a bit about her past, she rarely spoke about it, and as such, he was now fully aware of everything she had to endure. Though he was not the greatest at comforting people when they were feeling down, he tried his best.

"I'm here if you want to talk about it."

On the other hand, Honoria merely nodded in silence as she rested her head on Berengar's chest. They liked that for some time until a wicked smile

appeared on Berengar's face; he decided to tease the girl about her punishment from a few nights prior.

"How are your buttocks feeling?"

Honorina immediately blushed and looked away from Berengar's one good eye. She was embarrassed every time she thought about what happened that night. Especially the look of pleasure on Linde's face when it was her turn. She could not understand how the girl's brain worked, considering that there was nothing pleasurable about the experience in her own mind.

Berengar immediately began to chuckle as he forced her to look in his eye; after he did so, his gaze turned solemn as he expressed the thoughts on his mind.

"You know I only did that because I care, right? You girls were out of control, and if I let it continue that way, someone was bound to get hurt. You should remember to behave yourself in the future and not allow your jealousy to take over."

Honorina silently nodded as she heard Berengar speak; she was not mad at him in the slightest; in fact, she was happy that he had taken control of the situation. After her punishment, she had a long time to think about her actions over the past month and realized that her jealousy and that of the others were reaching a breaking point.

It was like Berengar had said if he allowed his women to behave in such a manner for much longer, one of them was bound to hurt the others, or even worse, they might harm the man they loved out of sheer jealousy.

Upon seeing that Honorina had a glimpse of understanding in her eyes, Berengar gently kissed her on the lips for a few moments. After breaking apart, he said the words contained deep within his heart.

"I love you..."

Upon hearing this, Honorina threw away her reservations and pounced on top of Berengar, where she began to kiss him passionately; between her breaths, she managed to mutter the words.



"I love you too!"

What followed afterward only Berengar, Honoria, and Heraclius would know.