

# Steel 681

## Chapter 681 - An Unexpected Attack

While Berengar was managing affairs in Granada, Pope Julius was in the midst of a heated conversation. Today was an important day. The College of Cardinals had gathered in Rome for a single purpose. To discuss the rise of a certain heretic and his regency in the disputed territory of Iberia.

Invited to this meeting were members of the Iberian Church, who had come under pressure from the Sultanate of Al-Andalus now that Berengar was at its helm. Unlike in Germany, Berengar had not stripped the Iberian church of its land, wealth, and resources. Instead, he simply passed laws requiring the Catholic Church to pay heavy taxes under the new Muslim dominated regime.

Under the reign of the previous sultan, the Muslims had not bothered picking a fight with the Catholics whom they had conquered, and opted for a route of peaceful compromise. This did not work out well for the Hasan, whose lax attitude towards his Catholic subjects had caused fierce resistance both in peaceful protests and in violent uprising. These uprisings were now in full effect with Hasan's death, and the ascension of the boy Ghazi to the throne of a united Iberia.

Unsurprisingly, the Catholic Church was the culprit behind this rebellious movement. However, there was one major point of contention among the men gathered in this room, and a man representing the Anglo-Saxon Church was quick to voice his objection.

"Our forces in the holy land require gunpowder if they are to defeat the heretics and their Saracen allies. We can not afford to be shipping what little black powder we have to Iberia in the hope that the locals can successfully resist a German occupation. We never expected Berengar the Accursed to detonate the saltpeter mine, and because of this action, we have to rely on trade routes from the east.

Our current trade routes cross through the Golden Horde and we are forced to pay a heavy price for this saltpeter. If we wish to supply the Iberian rebels, then we need to search for new trade routes to India! We simply can not import enough saltpeter through our current methods to make the black powder required for two wars!"

Julius nodded his head in agreement with this statement. They were paying a heavy price to import their current saltpeter supplies. The Golden Horde had charged a king's ransom when they realized that the Catholic Kingdoms were becoming increasingly reliant on the saltpeter trade. Of course, since the Papacy had no other alternative sources, now that Berengar had destroyed one of the few natural saltpeter deposits in Europe, they had no choice but to pay whatever price the Golden Horde requested.

The Pope merely rested his head in the palm of his hand. He could not believe how quickly Berengar had risen to power. He knew in his heart that his eventual crusade for Germany would be a slaughter, but if the Church sat back and did nothing, then they would lose all influence over the Catholic Kingdoms.

What he needed was a victory in the holy land, to fill the crusaders with the morale necessary to march them into German borders. Julius had heard rumors of the border defenses that Berengar had established around Germany and was terrified at the prospect of challenging them. Only by convincing his men that God was truly on their side would these men be willing to so suicidally charge against such extensive fortifications.

However, if he wanted the slightest chance at victory, his men needed to be equipped with muskets, and for that, they needed a bigger saltpeter supply. Thus, he quickly announced his approval of this plan.

"With the way to India blocked by the Byzantine and Timurid empires, it is imperative that we discover new trade routes to the east. Especially if this next generation of warfare is reliant on black powder. Since all of our efforts to investigate Germany's methods of procurement have been met with failure, we have no choice but to seek out alternatives.

Send out word to all explorers. The Papacy will fund their expeditions in search of new trade routes to the east. I will grant anyone who discovers an alternative route to India a substantial fortune."

The Cardinals all agreed with this course of action, and did not speak up in objection. Seeing that this new motion had carried, the Pope sighed heavily before discussing the other major point of contention that needed to be said.

"How goes the plan to assassinate the new Sultan? Are the rebels in a position to strike?"

It was at this moment that a representative from the Iberian Church spoke up on the matter.

"We have supplied them with weapons and training. The plan is to start a riot among the people, and use that as a means to sneak into the Royal Palace. After all, the forces of Granada and Germany are severely depleted right now. Berengar will be forced to send what little soldiers he has to stop the chaos in the capital. Then our assassin will shoot the child dead. A despicable deed, but a necessary one."

Pope Julius had a mad look in his eyes as he smiled upon hearing this news. For too long, he had suffered at the hands of Berengar. The heretic was always one step ahead of him and had always played him like a fiddle. No longer would that be the case. In his temporary insanity, Julius voiced his true thoughts aloud in front of all the Cardinals.

"Finally, you will pay the price for your affront to God. Berengar the Accursed, for your defiance, you shall lose your son!"

It was only after Julius had said this that a member of the Iberian delegation stood up from his spot. It appeared as if he had something to say. The man was a curious one. He had the light skin of a Spaniard, but the swarthy features of a moor. Until now, he had gone totally unnoticed. Everyone looked at him with confusion in their eyes. That is until he tore off his robe to reveal a chest rig and a bandolier which contained a substantial amount of dynamite wired to a handheld detonator. The man in question spoke in the Arabic tongue as he screamed the words.

"Long Live the Sultan!"

Before anyone could stop him, he pressed the detonator, which ignited the two dozen pounds of TNT he had strapped to his chest. The result was a total massacre. The entire college of cardinals was shredded to pieces in the explosive blast.

Despite this sudden attack, a single man survived the explosion. This man was Pope Julius himself. If one were to see Julius right now, it would convince them the grace of God spared him. Julius could only gaze in disbelief as the bedrock that formed Papal Power in this world was blasted into mincemeat before his very eyes.

He then shifted his gaze and noticed that his white robes were not the slightest bit stained in gore as he witnessed a golden light fade away from his personage. In that moment, the Pope lost control of his legs and fell to his knees as he spoke his words of prayer to the lord God almighty. Frightened to the core of his being over what had just transpired.

The explosion had rocked the seat of Papal Power, and the guards of the Pope quickly rushed to the scene, where they witnessed a gory sight. Despite the many bodies that had been blown to pieces, the Pope was perfectly unscathed, as he stared towards the heavens above while speaking in tongues.

Everyone besides him had perished in the attack, an attack which they were not expecting. It was truly a miracle that anyone survived this mess. The words the suicide bomber had spoken resounded in the pope's mind over and over again while his guards gazed at him in awe.

"Long live the Sultan! Long Live the Sultan!"

As if reaching sudden divine inspiration, Julius cursed out the name of the culprit he knew in his heart to be responsible for this atrocity.

"BERENGAR!!!!!!!"

News of this attack would make its way to the fatherland almost immediately after being carried out. The German Reformation would use this incident in propaganda against the Catholic Church. The exact words they would use would describe the scene as a divine intervention against a demonic plan to assassinate the young boy Ghazi who had rightfully succeeded his uncle in the throne of Al-Andalus. God Smites the Wicked would be the major headline in all the Reich's newspapers in the days following this attack.

As for the Catholic Church itself, they would paint this event in a very different light. God Saves the Pope from the wicked would be the propaganda that would make its way across the Catholic World. Every true believer would see Al-Andalus, and the German Empire, as their most heinous of enemies. Naturally Berengar would deflect the blame, stating he had nothing to do with the attack, and to insinuate it was slander.

Ultimately, this conflict would only be resolved with bloodshed. However, one thing was certain: those who knew about the plan to assassinate Ghazi would think twice before entertaining the idea of harming a member of Berengar's family. Lest they suffer a similar tragedy. As for the Pope himself, he was now more determined than ever to kill Berengar's son.

### **Chapter 682 - Political Purges in Iberia**

Berengar gazed at a report which had been set upon the desk he was using while he was acting as the Regent of Al-Andalus. The attack on the college of cardinals had been a success, still he did not anticipate his suicide bomber to strike while the Pope was in the room. Nor did he believe anyone would survive the explosion.

While the German Newspapers reported it as an act of divine vengeance upon the wicked souls of the Papacy, it made no mention of a Moorish suicide bomber who had heroically given his life to send a message to the Catholic World.

Instead, the paper made it abundantly clear that the Papacy was planning to assassinate the three-year-old child, Ghazi Al-Fadl. All forms of evidence gathered by Imperial Intelligence supported these claims. Berengar read through the papers that were being issued from in the fatherland, with a wide smile on his face.

He could practically hear the song "what a wonderful world" in his mind as he carefully studied each line of text within the paper. He knew full well what was occurring across Iberia as he sat back and relaxed while humming the tune.

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In Toledo, a young girl, no older than seventeen, was rushing through the streets, no longer caring about what anyone thought about her frantic state. She forced her way through the crowds at the dismay of the many of the men who were walking through the streets. If she wasn't such a pretty young woman, then perhaps they would scold her for her reckless actions.

This girl was a diehard catholic and worked as a page for the local mayor who acted on behalf of the new regime. However, she had abandoned her duties and headed to the slums of the city after hearing the latest report from the soldiers of the garrison. She quickly rushed to the headquarters of the rebel group she was secretly a part of to warn them about the upcoming raid.

However, the closer she got to her destination, the more she witnessed smoke rising from the building where her allies hid. The sounds of gunshots rippled through the air. Causing her to run faster than she had ever done before. A single thought entered her mind as she lamented her poor speed and athleticism.

Am I too late?

When she turned finally around the corner, her worst fears were realized. Several men and women were being led out of the complex while bound in chains. They were being closely guarded by the heavily armed German troops, who poked and prodded the captives with their bayonets while jeering at them.

"Catholic scum! You dare conspire against the Kaiser's son! You're nothing but filthy savages!"

"Now you will learn the wrath of the Reich!"

"How evil must you be to target a three-year-old child! You will be shown no mercy for your crimes!"

The German soldiers were ruthless in their taunts, as they led the prisoners into the middle of the street. Plenty of onlookers had gathered to witness the scene. Completely unaware of what the Germans had planned for these rebels. After leaving a serious of cuts on the prisoners, the captain in charge of the Company that was used to ambush the rebels in their own homes raised his hand in the air, and gave the order.

"Quit fucking with the prisoners. You know your orders. There is no reason to waste anymore time!"

The German soldiers were quick to fall in line as they raised their G22 Bolt action rifles and pointed them at the captives. With the commands issued by the captain, the German soldiers squeezed their triggers,

and sent their .45-70 projectiles down range and into the torsos of the rebels, executing them on the spot.

The girl gazed in horror as she witnessed her friends and family so ruthlessly gunned down in the street. It was as if the world had slowed down when she saw the bodies collapse to the wayside with lifeless expressions on their faces. Words could not express the guilt she felt in her heart at that moment. If she had just been a few minutes quicker, then perhaps she could have saved her comrades.

Unfortunately, reality was cruel, and there was nothing she could do now. She just wanted to find a quiet place to die alone. As such horrendous thoughts flooded her mind, a firm hand gripped her shoulder. The girl quickly turned around to see a German officer in a trench coat smile fiercely at her. He spoke in the local dialect, albeit very poorly as he stared the young girl in the eyes.

"María Rosa, I presume? Curious isn't it? As far as our records show, you should be at the Mayor's office right now. Do you mind explaining to me why you have come to this rebel safe house? After all, these men and women were planning to assassinate the young sultan and it would be a pity if you were involved with them..."

The young woman was defiant as she refused to answer. She knew the German Officer was lying. Though she was part of a rebel cell, they were not planning to assassinate the Sultan. Perhaps there were some other groups out there with such bold ideals, but she and her comrades weren't associated with them.

This group that had been so mercilessly gunned down in the streets of Toledo were not violent revolutionaries, but the peaceful resistance against German occupation, and the unification of Spanish territories under the banner of the Moors.

They were rebellious in spirit, but not armed insurgents. To lump them in with more extreme groups was just a tactic the overlords were using to get rid of them all. Upon seeing that her friends were dead, the young woman, whose pretty face was filled with tears, found her resolve and spat on the German Officer's cheek before expressing her ideals.

"Go to hell, you German bastard!"

The officer sighed heavily before wiping the spit off his face with a handkerchief. After doing so, he pulled out his revolver, pointed it at the girl's forehead and pulled the trigger, ending her life on the spot.

After killing the girl, the officer sighed once more before he shook his head.

"Such a pity. She was really quite beautiful. It is such a waste that she chose to die with her friends..."

After saying this, the officer called out to the company of soldiers who had eliminated the rebels in this region.

"What are you bastards dawdling for? There are more cells in this city, and we have our orders. Get to work!"

After saying this, the infantry company reloaded their weapons before running off to the next area that Intelligence had marked for them.

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On the other side of the continent in Portugal, a young German Jaeger held his rifle in his hands. He had come under fire after kicking down the door to a suspected Rebel safe house. Over the past few years, Portugal had been reduced to a state of nationwide insurgency. After the warlords domains were crushed and brought into the fold by Hasan's forces, the people broke out in rebellion.

This man had spent his entire military career operating beside the Andalusian Royal Guard, previously known as the Granadan Royal Guard, in gendarmerie operations. By now, he was used to kicking down doors and getting shot at.

As per usual, the Portuguese resistance was stiff, supplied by papacy with matchlock weaponry. It had become quite common to face gun fire the moment one entered a building. Luckily, these insurgents lacked repeating fire, or his job would be a lot more dangerous.

The moment he had entered the building, a lead ball struck his body armor. The ceramic plate easily absorbed the projectile, though it still hurt like hell. Despite this pain he was suffering, the Jaeger raised his rifle and fired a shot directly into the man's chest, before rapidly reloading his weapon and firing another in the dying man's head. A nearby Jaeger quickly checked on the man's condition while the other members of his squad cleared the rest of the building.

"Fritz, are you alright?"

The man named Fritz nodded his head in response, albeit with a painful expression on his face.

"I'm fine. He got me on the plate. Keep going, I'll be right behind you!"

The man quickly nodded his head, and rushed into the building, clearing the area alongside the other Jaegers with perfect synergy. These men had been through enough urban warfare to know how to properly clear a building by now.

Quickly, the men entered a room where another gunshot echoed in the air. This time, the projectile missed the three men entirely. In retaliation the Jaegers fired a volley of projectiles into the room and towards the plume of smoke responsible for the previous shot. The bullets of the soldiers mercilessly shredded whoever was wielding the matchlock.

The soldiers quickly reloaded their weapons before checking the room for other hostiles. There was nobody else in the room, however. The wielder of the firearm was a young boy, no older than eight. Despite this, the German Jaegers did not care in the slightest. They had killed many children over the past few years.

For whatever reason the Portuguese parents would arm boys and girls with weapons and instruct them to fire on German and Andalusian fireteams, it had caused quite a few casualties among the German and Andalusian forces, as few men were cold-hearted enough to pull the trigger on young children. Over time, though, the soldiers who dealt with this brutal urban warfare had become callous.

By now, killing children was as common as killing men, and they considered anyone armed to be an enemy combatant. They did not worry about how old their victims were. An enemy deserved no mercy. By taking up arms, these child insurgents had become a threat and needed to be neutralized.

Shortly after this exchange of gunfire, the building was cleared, and the German Jaegers did not waste anymore time. They regrouped with the rest of their unit and continued to kick down doors throughout the small village.

If the Pope were to have his way, all of Iberia would turn into a hotbed for urban warfare. Something the German soldiers dreaded. Thus, while Berengar was busy enacting reforms across Iberia that would help aid in prosperity, his soldiers were purging political dissidents in the tens of thousands.

### **Chapter 683 - Fleeing the Empire**

Night fell over the clear Indian sky, a full moon accompanied by a sea of stars illuminated the capital of the Anangpur Empire as two siblings met in secret. The Princess of the Empire, Priya Tomara, lies sickly in her bed. Over the past year, her condition had grown substantially worse, to the point that she was now bedridden.

Her brother Dharya, the Emperor, was nothing more than a puppet to his uncle's whims, and try as he might to build a loyal faction that could help him overthrow his regent, he had utterly failed in doing so. Now, with his sister on the brink of the death, the boy was filled with despair.

"I'm sorry Priya. I don't know what is wrong with you. Not even the court physician understands why your health is failing. There is nothing I can do but sit here by your side..."

The girl had a weak voice as she tried to rise from her lying position. Despite her best attempts, she was too feeble to properly sit up without support. Ultimately, she coughed, before speaking the words on her mind.

"It is I who am sorry dear brother, it appears my time has come and I can no longer keep you company... I only ask one thing of you before I pass from this world... Can you please take me to the Kingdom in the west that you spoke of? I know it is a lot to ask, but I wish to see the Grand City of Kufstein with my own eyes before I enter the cycle of reincarnation once more!"

Dharya bit his lower lip in distress as he heard this request from his beloved little sister. With the girl's current condition, he did not believe she would survive the trip. Still, it was her dying wish, and he wanted nothing more than to make the girl's dream come true. With a heavy sigh, he nodded his head before agreeing to the girl's request.

"Alright... I will take you to Austria. If it is the last thing I do, I will fulfill your wish!"

As if the heavens were answering his prayers, a knock resounded on the door, with the voice of his cousin appearing from behind the door.

"Dharya, open the door right now. I have something urgent to talk to you about, it concerns the princess..."

Shocked by this news, Dharya quickly opened the door to reveal his older cousin Ishwar. The man carefully searched his surroundings before forcing his way inside and bolting the door behind him. He had a panicked expression on his face as he held a scroll in his hands. Dharya was curious why the man was acting so strange and quickly prodded him for an answer.

"Dharya, why do you look like you have just run a mile?"

The man was panting heavily as he scolded the little brat for making fun of him.

"Do you have any idea what I have been through this past hour?"

After saying this, the man shook his head before calming his nerves and informing the Emperor of what he had found out.

"Dharya, my father plots against you. I overheard him speaking with one of his ministers. The reason your sister's health is failing is because he is poisoning her. He has been doing it for quite some time."

This news shocked the boy Emperor. However, his fists quickly trembled as he felt like killing his uncle on the spot. He lunged for the door but was quickly stopped by his cousin, who thrust the scroll into the boy's hands.

"Dharya, calm down! Take a deep breath and listen to me! My father is convinced that your sister is part of an ancient prophesy that foretells the end of our civilization. It is utter madness, but he desires to kill her before she can summon a warlord from the west who will invade our lands and subject us all to a thousand years of darkness. The madman has actually convinced your entire court to act against your sister. I'm here to get the two of you to safety. If he's willing to kill Priya, then what will he do to you?"

Dharya read the scroll. It was cryptic and ancient. He did not know how the man could believe that Priya was the princess foretold to bring the Anangpur Empire's destruction. However, the thing that concerned him most was Ishwar's behavior. Was the man leading him into a trap? He had to investigate this matter further.

"Why are you helping me? Shouldn't you be siding with your father?"

Ishwar appeared to be offended by the question, however he did not get upset, or even defensive, instead he wore a bitter smile as he revealed his reasons for betraying his father's ambitions.

"Dharya, we are family. I have grown up looking after the two of you as if you are my own siblings. My father is driven by greed. I have known it for a long time, but I ignored it because he was not doing any harm to you, or Priya, and you are still a child who is not capable of ruling our lands. However, what I have just learned changes everything.

The fact that my father is willing to resort to poisoning his niece in order to maintain the power he has gained proves to me that he has long since abandoned his humanity. I will not sit idly by while the two of you are killed off as sacrificial pawns. None of that is important now. What matters is that we get you to safety. Come, I will help carry your sister. I have already arranged for you to travel to the German Empire in secret.

It is the only place I can think of that is powerful enough to protect you from my father's wrath and is far enough out of his sight that his agents can't get to you. When you arrive in the Reich, tell the Kaiser that I have sent you, and inform him of your circumstances. I am certain he will help you."

Dharya was unaware that Austria had formed into an empire and had many questions about this topic. He quickly protested, speaking to his cousin about his sister's dream to visit Kufstein.

"What? No! Priya wants to visit Kufstein. What even is this German Empire?"



This question stunned Ishwar, who was just now learning of the ignorance that the Emperor lived in all this time. He sighed heavily before educating his cousin on matters of international politics.

"Kufstein is the Capital of the German Empire. Over a year ago, the Kingdom of Austria united the German people into a large Empire. The fact that my father has not made you aware of this major event shows his true schemes. I must get you to safety quickly."

After saying this, the young man grabbed hold of the sickly girl and wrapped her in a blanket. He wore a pitiful smile on his face as he informed the girl that he was granting her request.

"Come Priya, I'm going to make sure you and your brother visit Kufstein. You will be going on a long vacation for a while, and I'm afraid we won't see each other for many years..."

The girl merely smiled. Despite being close to death, she simply nodded her head and responded with thanks.

"Thank you, cousin Ishwar!"

The trio fled through the halls of the palace in silence. Luckily, Ishwar had already calculated the routes of the patrols and knew the best ways out of the building. Once they had succeeded in sneaking out of the palace, Ishwar led the two kids to a merchant caravan, where he covertly placed them inside a wagon. After doing so, he bade them farewell.

"You two need to behave and, most importantly, whatever you do, you cannot tell anyone who you really are until you meet with Kaiser Berengar von Kufstein in person. Only the merchant in charge of this caravan knows your true identity, and he has been paid a handsome sum to keep it a secret. As far as anyone else is concerned, you are his children. Don't worry, I will work hard while you are away so that when you finally return to your homeland, you can take your rightful place as the Emperor!"

Dharya had tears in his eyes as he thanked his cousin one last time before parting ways.

"Thank you Ishwar, you have no idea how much I appreciate your help. I promise, when I am big and strong, I will return to the Anangpur Empire and reclaim my throne from my uncle. You have shown me the value of family with this act of kindness!"

With that said, the cousins parted ways, and before long, the Merchant Caravan had set off on a long and perilous journey to the Empire in the West. Without the poison regularly being administered into the girls' system, Priya would begin to recover from her feeble state, but it would be a difficult path for the girl to bear. Had Ishwar waited another day to enact this plan, the girl would likely be doomed to death.

#### **Chapter 684 - An Average Day While the Kaiser is Away**

"No! Stop it!"

Are the words that echoed through the halls of the Imperial Palace of Germany. Not many knew of the debauchery that was commonly practiced among Berengar and his harem. Let alone what transpired between the girls while their lover was away on international business. However, just because people were unaware of the scandalous activity that went on in the Imperial Family, does not mean that it did not exist.

At the moment Princess Henrietta had pinned down her cousin on the king-size mattress contained within the royal bedchamber. Adela had been particularly standoffish as of late, what with Linde paying attention to Yasmin. As a result, Henrietta had decided to give her precious cousin some comfort. Of course, Adela was shy and reserved as she normally was. Despite Adela's cries of protest, she did not shove Henrietta away. Instead, she spasmed in pleasure as the girl licked away at her nether regions.

A pretty smile was on Henrietta's puffy pink lips as she halted her activities and teased the tiny bud of her cousin with her fingers. While messaging the woman's clit, Henrietta whispered into her ear something that caused her victim to flush in embarrassment.

"You say that, but I don't see you resisting!"

Before Adela could formulate a proper response, Henrietta assaulted her lips with her own, and struck with her tongue, wrapping it around her cousin's as if the two appendages were soul mates. While engaging in her offensive operation, Henrietta inserted a finger, and then two, into Adela's moist cavern.

Adela had long since lost her prudish nature, and instead had her innocence corrupted by Berengar's influence, to the point where she now commonly found herself in the arms of another woman whenever her husband was at war. Of course, this had always been an activity she exclusively shared with her so called "mommy" Linde, never before had Henrietta approached her outside of group activities.

Upon seeing that Adela was at the height of her pleasure, Henrietta withdrew her fingers and licked them seductively before rubbing her puffy lower lips alongside Adela's. The Princess of Germany ground her hips into the Empress slowly at first. However, as time passed, the momentum picked up and the two girls found themselves in another realm beyond this mortal plane. The dynamic duo of busty blonde bombshells moaned in pleasure as they scissored each other's slits with much enthusiasm.

While the two were engaged in their amours delights, Adela sat up and adjusted her position so that she could suckle on Henrietta's teats. The girl had given birth to her brother's child a few months prior, and now her cousin was stealing the milk that belonged to her baby boy. Not that she minded, she could always produce more. Henrietta merely smiled as she goaded the girl on.

"Good girl, drink my milk. It'll make you grow big and strong..."

Adela flushed with embarrassment as she heard these words, grow big and strong? She was already an adult. It was not her fault she was so much smaller than the other women, seriously what had these girls been fed to grow so big? Despite her embarrassment, Adela did not stop suckling at Henrietta's breasts. She even pushed the two of them together and sucked both nipples at the same time.

Such a sensation caused Henrietta to climax on the spot, spraying all over her cousin's nether regions. The sight of which caused her cheeks to become beat red. She could not believe she had finished before her cousin. Adela saw this as an opportune moment to counterattack. She quickly pinned the larger woman down on the bed and reached into the nearby drawer where she got a hold of a new toy.

This toy was modelled after their husband's shaft, but was double-sided. When Henrietta saw this, she panicked. However, before she could react, her tight cave was stuffed full of the toy. Causing her to moan in pleasure, she was already sensitive from cumming moments ago, yet Adela had so ruthlessly assaulted her. Adela had an uncharacteristically sadist expression as she whispered into her cousin's ears.

"It's your turn to be the bitch now!"

After saying this, the girl shoved the toy in and out of Henrietta's tight hole. Once it was as deep as it could go, she inserted the opposite side into her own moist cave, moaning as it filled up her innards. The two girls continued to press their hips into one another until they had both climaxed all over the royal bedsheets.

In the end, Adela had won this battle. She removed the toys from their slits, before tossing it aside to be washed for later use. After doing so, she latched onto Henrietta, who was recovering, and kissed her passionately before whispering in her ears.

"Any time you want to go another round, let me know, dearest cousin..."

Unbeknownst to the two young women, an onlooker had watched the whole scene. Honoria was in the doorway, playing with her own slit the entire time. She could not believe that the two girls would engage in their own play without Linde's approval.

Linde kept a tight leash over the members of Berengar's harem while the man was away from home, but her attention at the moment was focused on helping Yasmin overcome her grief, and because of this, Henrietta had snuck in and plucked away one of her slaves. As a result, Honoria felt compelled to warn her mistress about these changes.

After the duo was finished, she was quick to retrieve her hand from her panties before running off toward Linde. Who was in the middle of Berengar's study, sitting in his seat while panting heavily. When the redheaded beauty noticed Honoria's intrusion, a wicked smile formed on her face as she greeted the girl.

"Just in time, sitting here, and smelling Berengar's leftover scent, got me dreadfully excited. Come play with mommy for a bit."

Though she had four children, Linde had kept her physique in perfect condition. Despite her position as the director of Imperial Intelligence, and a mother of four, she made sure that she had enough time to work out every day. After all, she would not let her figure go just because she was married.

Currently, she was dressed in a grey field uniform, loosely based upon the Stasi from Berengar's past life. However, she was wearing a short skirt and a pair of stockings. She was so wet from her husband's lingering scent that her thong was soaked through. Honoria was astonished at first, but quickly obeyed. She had long since been conditioned by Linde into being an obedient slave while they were alone.

The princess of the Byzantine Empire got on both of her knees and gazed up at her mistress with her mint green eyes before she shoved her head under the redheaded vixen's skirt, and licked away at the woman's moist slit, despite being covered by stockings, or perhaps because of it, Linde was quick to grab the girl's purple hair and press her face deeper, all while whispering words of encouragement.

"That is mommy's good girl..."

However, in the next moment Honoria made a huge mistake. She ripped Linde's stockings apart and in a desperate attempt to taste the woman's bountiful juices. Unfortunately, this angered Linde, who kicked the girl aside and slapped her across the face. She had a scary expression as she shouted at Honoria.

"Who gave you permission to rip mommy's stockings! You need to be punished!"

Despite the cruel action, Honoria had an excited expression on her face as she leaned over the desk and flipped up her skirt, presenting her plump bottom for Linde to do with as she pleased. Upon seeing the girl practically begging for a spanking, Linde was delighted and quickly struck Honoria's bottom with her dainty, yet firm, hand, causing her victim to yelp. After every slap, Linde would grab a handful of the girl's ass and squeeze it tightly before leaving another handprint. Linde wore a pretty but frightening smile as she whispered into her victim's ear.

"You are mommy's favorite. Did you know that? But that doesn't mean you can just rip my stockings as you please!"

Honoria had a pleased expression on her face as she called out to Linde in a forced apology.

"I'm sorry mommy, I just wanted to taste you so bad!"

Upon hearing this, Linde smirked. Before taking off her stockings, she pushed Honoria onto the ground and sat on her face. However, the hole that Honoria desired to lick was not presented to her, instead it was the rear that was resting against Honoria's lips.

"If you want to taste me so badly, then go ahead, taste me!"

Despite being a different hole than the one she desired, Honoria did not resist the order and quickly began to insert her tongue into the woman's asshole. The two women continued to please each other, to the point that Honoria completely forgot her reason for visiting Linde to begin with.

One might think that this was an abnormal day for the wives of the Kaiser. However, in reality, this was normal for the Imperial Family, especially while the Kaiser was absent from the home. Luckily, Berengar had made the correct choice in marrying multiple women, or he would have to fear them cucking him while he was away.

## **Chapter 685 - Capturing the Enemy's Family**

Itami stood on the hills above the personal domain of the Mōri clan, with her sword in hand. She was dressed in a uniform that resembled that of a general in the Imperial Japanese Army, specifically from the Taisho era. Her soldiers were equipped in similar attire, albeit with the proper ranks for their position, while wearing type 90 based steel helmets.

The Self-Proclaimed Empress of Japan had yet to hear from her most loyal General who she dispatched to her homeland in an attempt to protect it from the main forces of the Rebel Army. It was an arduous task, but Itami had used the greatest defensive techniques she could think of when she built her family's territory into a massive fortress.

At the very least, she was confident that her soldiers could defend the land until she had succeeded in her aim. Dawn had yet to arrive on this day, and because of this, the darkness in the sky concealed her and her army from what few defenders remained in the enemy fortress. She did not hesitate to attack, instead the moment she arrived she issued orders to her followers to set up the new field guns.

Unlike Berengar, who had opted to mass produce the early Krupp Guns because of ease of manufacturing. Itami had opted to create a more complicated artillery piece from a later era of Japanese

history. Though she would have less of them early on, she figured she could use them for a greater period, and not bother having to replace them in five to ten years, when her manufacturing abilities became advanced enough to produce these pieces on a larger scale.

The artillery in question was heavily based upon the Type 38 75mm Field Gun used by Imperial Japanese forces during the Great War of her past life. Essentially, the Type 38 was nothing more than a Krupp 7.5 cm Model 1903 that had been licensed and produced by the Osaka Arsenal. The major difference between the two artillery pieces was the Japanese modified the breach block to make use of the interrupted screw pattern block, rather than the Horizontal sliding block. Was this an improvement? Far from it, but it was the type of action that Japanese troops were already familiar with.

These weapons were later modified in Itami's past life to return to the original sliding block design. Something Itami opted to make use of in this life from the get go. The other noticeable feature of this artillery piece was its hydro-spring recoil system. This was far more advanced than the 7.5cm FK 22 Rifled breechloaders currently in use by Berengar's army. However, when compared to the hydro-pneumatic recoil mechanism that was used by the new field guns Berengar planned to introduce in the coming years, it was obsolete.

The shells fired by this gun were the Fixed QF 75 x 294mm R, which had a rate of fire of 15 rounds per minute, with an effective range of 8,350m. Of course, due to the complexity of manufacturing, Itami was only able to create a single battery of these new artillery pieces. Still, it was more than enough to bring an end to the enemy's defenses. Thus, with a swing of her sword, the signal was given to the Artillery crews to fire a barrage onto the gates of the enemy castle.

The roar of thunder echoed in the air as the field guns fired their shots into the air and onto the enemy's gatehouse. With a single barrage of six shells, the gatehouse was torn apart. Though the men were about to load another shell, Itami gave them the order to cease fire.

"Cease fire!"

She had a limited number of artillery shells at the moment because of the severe lack of TNT she had available to her. Unlike the German Empire, which had long since established complex chemical manufacturing plants, and had spent years training its thousands of chemists, Itami's Japanese Empire was severely limited in its chemical manufacturing ability with only a few dozen properly trained chemists beneath her rule.

She was only now realizing how her conservative approach to science and engineering had limited her abilities to mass produce her newest weapons in the early years of her army's modernization. Perhaps if she were a man, her teachings of science would have become more widespread, unfortunately she was born as a woman in an era where women had few rights. It was a testament to her ability that she had managed to ascend to her current status.

The moment the shells detonated on the gatehouse, the guards of the castle were alerted, but it was no use, they were vastly outmatched by the single shot bolt action rifles in use by Itami's forces. The soldiers of the Empress stood on the hill above the Castle, and the town it protected, waiting for the soldiers of the Mōri clan to come rushing out at them.

It did not take long for the enemy to charge up the hillside, and towards the enemy, vastly underestimating the abilities of their enemy as they did so. The Imperial Japanese soldiers pulled their triggers, causing a plume of smoke to exit their barrels. Accompanying the black smokescreen were copper jacketed lead projectiles which flew down range and into the bodies of the enemy soldiers who were blasted apart by the superior munitions.

The first wave of enemy soldiers fell down as quickly as the Japanese soldiers had pulled the triggers. In the next moment, the men racked back their bolts, and placed a spare cartridge into the chamber before slamming the bolt homes. After doing this, they raised the muzzles of their rifles once more and fired yet another volley, cutting down the second line of ashigaru like wheat to the scythe.

For every crackle of gunfire, hundreds of men were gunned down as they charged up the hillside, until none remained standing. Blood soaked the grass as it spilled from the horde of corpses. There were only a few hundred men left behind to defend the Mōri Clan, seeing as how they never expected Itami to intercept their message and counter their plan with an offensive of her own. With the enemy garrison dead, Itami gave the order to storm the castle.

"The Castle is free for the taking! I want the prisoners captured alive, and unharmed! You may only use force if the people resist! Go!"

With this, 5,000 men screamed their battle cry into the air as they charged through the undefended town and rushed towards the castle above.

"Tennōheika Banzai!"

Itami merely smirked in arrogance as she witnessed her soldiers rush towards their objective with bayonets affixed. A small portion remained behind on the hill above to protect both Itami and the artillery battery. The rest stormed into the town and secured its residents before moving onto the castle.

Once the citizens of the Mōri Clan's domain were bound and gagged, Itami descended the hillside and walked through the town, her sword dangling from her belt as she gazed upon the scene with an arrogant expression on her pretty face. The pathway to the castle had been secured, and she did not need to personally lift a finger.

After climbing the steps of the Castle, and going through the destroyed gatehouse, whose rubble had been cleared by her soldiers, Itami strode forth into the interior of the castle where soldiers stood at attention throughout its halls, saluting their Empress the moment she appeared before them. Itami simply nodded her head as she passed by before entering the great hall, where the family of Mōri Nobuhisa sat in fear. Like the villagers, they were bound and gagged.

Itami stared at the family of the Rebel leader with an overwhelming sense of cruelty in her eyes. She unsheathed her sword and smacked a boy who was at the cusp of adolescence on the top of his head with the pommel before cutting the cloth that was tied around his mouth. The boy immediately coughed after being released from his gag before staring at Itami with a look of defiance in his dark eyes. Itami did not wait for a response and merely asked him a simple question.

"Are you Mōri Nobuyuri?"

The boy did not meet the beautiful older woman's gaze, and merely blushed as he turned his head to the side. Itami smiled viciously as she spoke her words softly.

"I'll take that as a yes... You're coming with me boy, I wonder what is more important to your father, your life, or his petty rebellion."

A hint of fear formed in the child's eyes, but he could not struggle. Instead, Itami's soldiers carried him away, where she was left facing the rest of Mōri Nobuhisa's family. After several moments of contemplation, Itami gave her orders to the rest of her soldiers.

"Take them with us. If that old fool does not yield, then we will need more than one hostage. As for the castle... destroy it!"

With these orders given, the Imperial Japanese Army quickly withdrew from the village with their captives, and evacuated the area before shelling the castle. With each shell's detonation, another piece of the magnificent fortress crumbled to the ground until all that remained were smouldering ruins.

With the family of Mōri Nobuhisa captured, Itami intended to return with her army to her homeland, and use them as bargaining chips to force the rebel army to surrender to her. If they did so, she would claim the heads of the leaders of the rebelling clans. Then enforce her rule over all of mainland Japan. If they resisted, then Itami planned to kill Mōri Nobuhisa's entire family, and encircle his forces on the battlefield outside her family's domain. Either way, she would be victorious.

### **Chapter 686 - Returning From Iberia**

Berengar stood within the office of the Sultan of Al-Andalus. He had commandeered the office as his own since he first arrived in the region. Over the past few weeks, he had enacted many policies that were designed to stabilize the ongoing crisis throughout Iberia. To an extent, many of the immediate issues had been resolved. Enough so that Berengar felt it was the right time to return to the fatherland.

One thing became increasingly clear throughout the extent of these political purges. Urban Warfare had become a significant problem for his forces in the region. Because of this, Berengar needed to give better weapons to his soldiers in Iberia. However, he could not produce them here in Granada. Thus, he decided to take advantage of the current peace that was settling and return to the fatherland to give his troops in the region a fighting edge.

This was just one of the many reasons Berengar wanted to return home and hand over operational control of the Iberian theatre to Adelbrand once more. His other reason was far more significant. The reality was Berengar could not stay in Iberia for long and act as its permanent regent. Though he held all power over the realm, he was also the Kaiser of Germany, and the fatherland was more important to him than Al-Andalus.

It was because of this that Berengar had summoned Field Marshal Adelbrand, and General Ziyad, to the office within the Granadan Royal Palace. The two men stood side by side, in their differing uniforms and at attention. The respect they showed Berengar was more than just common courtesy.

These men had fought for him either directly, or indirectly over the course of the past few years, and understood just how effective Berengar was as a ruler. This caused the man in question to stand up and speak with pride as he handed over the reins of Iberia to these two men.

"I Kaiser Berengar von Kufstein, First of my name, Emperor of Germany, and Regent of Al-Andalus hereby bestow upon you Duke Adelbrand von Salzburg, and you General Ziyad Ibn Ya'is, full authority to act on my behalf while I am aboard living in the fatherland.

The two of you combined shall act as Deputy Regents in my place. I give you Adelbrand sole authority over the German troops in the Iberian Theatre and give you Ziyad an equal position as leader of the Granadan Armed Forces. The two of you are to work side by side, and restore this Kingdom to its former glory as co-rulers in my absence.

Should either of you have questions on how to proceed, you can use the telegraph built in this palace to contact me, where I will convey my orders. As for the young Sultan, my son Ghazi Al-Fadl, he will return to Germany with me to receive a German education, and to be cared for by his mother, Princess Yasmin Al-Fadl."

After saying this, Berengar saluted to the two men who would act as Co-Rulers over the Sultanate of Granada in Berengar's stead. The two of them returned the salute before responding in affirmation of their orders.

"Yes, my Kaiser!"

"Yes, Sir!"

Berengar smiled and nodded before further informing the men of their responsibilities.

"I have drafted a bunch of reforms, and left you a guide on how to rule over the Kingdom most efficiently. It is up to the two of you to do what is best for Al-Andalus. Adelbrand, when the region is stable, and the Kingdom is prosperous, you may return to Kufstein to serve the role I previously offered you, until then work with Ziyad to ensure that things get better around these parts."

Adelbrand nodded his head in silence as he heard these words. With this said, Berengar placed his hand on the man's shoulder and bade him farewell for the time being.

"I look forward to your return."

After saying this, he departed from the office, leaving the two men alone to discuss their options. The reason Berengar had made Adelbrand co-ruler in his absence was because he knew the man would put German interests first, something Ziyad was not likely to do. The reason for Ziyad being made Co-ruler was to appease the Moors, so that they did not feel like they were a puppet to a foreign Empire. It was Berengar's belief that the two men would ultimately balance each other out while working together.

After giving Adelbrand and Ziyad their orders, Berengar entered the room that housed his son, the young Sultan Ghazi Al-Fadl. The boy was staring out the window with a frown on his face. He was made aware that they would depart for the fatherland today, and did not want to leave this foreign land which he had such fun in. Upon seeing that his son was depressed, Berengar walked over to the boy, and knelt down where he petted his golden hair.

"Ghazi, I know you have had fun during your stay, and that your cousins have been treating you well. However, it is time for us to return home. Mommy is waiting for you, and I know for a fact that she is heartbroken about her little man being so far away from home. Come, it's time to go..."



Though Ghazi was initially depressed about leaving this land so soon after arriving, the moment he heard his mother was waiting for him, a smile grew on his face. Though his aunts had treated him as if he were their own son, he missed his mommy, and not just Yasmin, he missed all of his mommies. Upon seeing that the young boy had recovered from his depressed state, Berengar smiled and lifted him up to the air, where he walked out of the palace.

The boy had already said his goodbyes, and Berengar did not need to say a word. Thus, he carried the boy into the armored stage coach, which would act as their means of transportation until they arrived at the German Naval Base located in Gibraltar. As for Berengar, he was quite anxious on the entire journey back to the fatherland. He had left Yasmin during her time of need, to go stabilize her late brother's Kingdom. It was a tough decision, but one that had to be made. He could only guess if the woman would forgive him for abandoning her to her grief.

Eventually, the ship arrived in Trieste, where the city was as bustling as it normally was. As the main trade city that was connected to the coast, Trieste was always transporting goods across the Empire through the ever-growing train networks. However, there was already a train on standby waiting for his arrival, and this was the Royal Train.

The luxurious train was decorated with gold accents, and was practically a mobile palace. Berengar sat back on a large black and gold sofa next to his son, who was busy playing with a toy that Berengar had given him. As for Berengar himself, he ordered a dirty martini and drank himself into a sense of calm. He would have to face Yasmin the moment he arrived at the Palace, and the idea that she would refuse to see him filled his heart with dread.

Upon arriving in Kufstein, Berengar and his son took a luxurious carriage back to the Palace. On the surface, the Royal Carriage that Berengar and his family commonly used to traverse through the city may look like a normal luxurious cabin. However, the carriage was made of armored steel and had bulletproof glass installed. It would protect the royal family against any small arms fire that might potentially attack it.

With this seemingly normal carriage, Berengar and his son enjoy a rather lavish journey back to the gates of the Royal Palace where his wives and children were waiting for him. The moment he stepped out of the carriage with Ghazi in his arms, Yasmin rushed over to the two of them, where she kissed her baby boy on the forehead and rubbed his cheek.

"Ghazi, were you a good boy while you were away?"

The boy quickly nodded his head while he was enjoying being spoiled by his mother. However, Berengar was the one to answer on his behalf.

"He was a very good boy..."

Though he put on a facade as if nothing had happened, there was a hint of worry at the tail end of his sentence. Yasmin noticed the conflict in his sapphire eye and grabbed hold of his face with her dainty hands before kissing him passionately. After the public display of affection was over, she rested her head on his shoulder before whispering in his ear.

"I forgive you..."

It shocked Berengar to hear this, as he did not expect the woman to forgive him so easily. Yet there was not a hint of malice in her eyes, only understanding. If there was one quality, this woman had that most of the other girls in his harem didn't, it was emotional maturity. Though she was hurt that he left her side at such a critical time, she knew that the reason for him departing was more important than her selfish desires.

After going through some grieving, she came to understand that. Berengar felt as if an enormous weight was lifted from his shoulders and exhaled heavily before kissing the woman on the forehead and telling her how he really felt.

"I love you... and I'm sorry..."

The Moorish beauty merely smiled and nodded. There was nothing more that needed to be said between the couple. As for the rest of the family, they ran over to greet the head of their house. Not much had happened in his absence, and they were surprised to see him return from Iberia so soon. Only a few weeks had passed since he departed. This was most likely the shortest trip he had taken since he first reincarnated into this world.

### **Chapter 687 - Adela's Personal Request**

Berengar sat within the confines of his office while holding a cup of coffee in one hand and a status report in the other. His office was clean and tidy, as per usual. Berengar was an incredibly organized man. In his mind, everything had its place, and to disrupt this order would cause him mental anguish.

An example of this was the mountain of paperwork that was neatly stacked on the side of his desk. Every morning, a page would come in and unload a pile of paperwork onto this exact corner. If it was placed anywhere else, Berengar would have an aneurysm and would be compelled by his own mind to put the stack of paper in its proper place before getting to work for the day.

Naturally, there was also a small coaster within his reach that acted as the house of his coffee mug. After taking a sip of the brew, Berengar smiled before placing the mug down in its proper place. He was reading over a document which was a report by the Gunther Merchant company about the ongoing progress of the Colony they had established in what was Cuba of his past life. While he was reading this report, a knock resounded on the door. Berengar calmly placed the paper on the top of the stack before answering the intrusion.

"You may enter..."

After saying this, the door opened to reveal the petite figure of Berengar's first wife, Adela. Berengar smiled when he saw the woman approach him. That is until she spoke of what was concerning her.

"Berengar, we need to talk about my sister Ava..."

Berengar had a single fond memory of Ava, and that was when he walked in on the woman's bath and saw her impressive bosom. However, in his experience, the woman was an enormous pain in the ass. The only reason he had allowed the bitch to take care of his children while he was away on his honeymoon was because Adela had insisted upon it. Though she performed her duties well, the woman's actions only slightly improved Berengar's impression of her. Thus, he sighed heavily before asking his wife to cut to the chase.

"What happened to the poor woman this time?"

Adela had a bitter smile on her face. It said a lot about Ava's character that Berengar would automatically assume that the woman had caused some kind of incident and was now requesting help from her little sister. Though Adela didn't disagree with this presumption, she was quick to correct her husband and speak up on her sister's behalf.

"Apparently Ava's husband, Wolfgang, said something to upset father, and so he kicked the two of them out. He offered to look after the children, but Ava refused to be separated from her kids. She hasn't come asking for me for help just yet, but I decided to ask you for help on her behalf. Surely we have enough space to look after her family until they get back on their feet."

Berengar sighed heavily as he heard these words. He did not want to deal with the burden of looking after Ava and her family. Adela could see the hesitation on his face, and quickly tried to speak up on her sister's behalf once more.

"It won't be for long, besides what would the people say if they knew the great Kaiser of Germany turned away his nieces and nephews? Do you really want to be known as the monarch who abandoned his family to the streets?"

The bitter expression on Berengar's face grew worse as he heard Adela try to guilt trip him into accepting. He was about to speak up about his misgivings when Adela became flustered with his behavior. In the heat of the moment, she said something she shouldn't have.

"Is this because of your past engagement with my sister? You never speak about it, but it is clearly affecting your reasoning whenever my sister comes into conversation. Are you really not over her after all these years?"

Berengar was dumbfounded when he heard this. He had no memories of being engaged to Ava and looked at his wife as if she were a madwoman. He only had one question on his mind, which he was quick to voice.

"Adela... What the hell are you talking about?"

It was at this moment, when Adela gazed on Berengar's confused expression, that she realized he did not remember the past at all. She immediately cursed herself in her own mind for bringing up a topic that had internally bothered her for some time, without knowing how her husband felt about the matter. Thus, she was quick to deflect the issue.

"I... It's nothing. Forget I said anything."

She was about to leave the room to avoid explaining her previous question when Berengar grabbed hold of the girl's wrist and forced her to face him. He had a stern expression on his face as he spoke with authority.

"Adela... What do you know?"

Upon realizing that she had dug her own grave, Adela sighed heavily before taking a seat in front of Berengar's desk. She crossed her arms and legs before informing Berengar about the past that he did not remember.

"You seriously don't know? Here I thought you were just ignoring it... When you were a kid, my parents engaged my elder sister to you, in the hopes that you would one day succeed your father and they could manipulate you into giving up the iron resources of Kufstein to them. Of course, that's also the reason they had us engaged later on.

There were times where you would visit Graz and have play dates with Ava. As the years passed, your condition worsened and by the time Ava was nearing the age of marriage, she was convinced you were going to die soon. So she persuaded our parents to marry her off to the heir of a count. Ultimately, our parents broke the agreement with yours and married her off to Wolfgang von Salzburg. The rest you remember clearly."

It shocked Berengar to hear all of this. He truly had no recollection of it. Though he now understood why, Adela seemed frustrated with his hesitancy. He calmed himself with a deep breath before explaining his thought process to Adela.

"I honestly don't remember any of that. However, what I will say about my hesitancy regarding this matter is that your sister annoys the hell out of me. It is that simple. I don't know where you got the notion in your pretty little head, but I assure you there is nothing between me and Ava, and there never will be.

As for her husband, he is the type of man to seriously make me consider capital punishment as a viable option for dealing with stupidity. If the two of them were to live here for any extended period, I feel like my days would become much more tiresome."

Adela bowed her head after hearing Berengar's reasoning. It turned out that he just hated the couple's personalities and didn't want to be bothered to deal with them. Because of this, she found a sense of hope as she made a promise that she ultimately could not keep.

"I swear, neither Ava nor Wolfgang will approach you without your consent while they stay here. I will even make sure your office is off limits so you can have a space away from them if they become too much. Please, it won't be for long. Let my sister and her family stay here until they can get back on their feet!"

Adela's willingness to go so far for a sister she despised perplexed Berengar. He simply could not contain his thoughts on the matter any longer and thus voiced them aloud.

"Adela... Why the hell do you care? I thought you hated your sister?"

Adela sighed heavily as she admitted the truth of the matter to her husband.

"I did hate her for a long time, actually... However, things have changed between us. We are slowly becoming more cordial, and I want to help her get her life on track. I feel bad for her. She married such an incompetent dullard who keeps ruining her life.

If you were to ask me a few years ago if I would ever bother to help her, I would have immediately responded with a "fat chance". However, ever since Ava proved to me that she could be trusted by taking care of our children while we were away. We have been meeting regularly and slowly have been hashing out our differences. I now firmly believe it is my duty as a sister to help her now that she truly needs it."

Berengar could feel the passion in Adela's speech, and as such, he felt he had no choice but to agree to her request. He sighed heavily as he sat back in his chair and contemplated on the issue in silence for several minutes. During this period Adela became ever more depressed, expecting Berengar to deny her, despite how much she truly believed in this. Ultimately, he shocked her when he finally spoke.

"Fine... But if anything happens, I'm not to be blamed for it. This is my house, and if they think they can treat it as their own, they are sorely mistaken. Ava and her family will be our guests until you can help her back on his feet. However, make no mistake, I will have no part in it, so don't expect any additional kindness from me!"

Adela's frowned immediately turned upside down as she smiled with excitement. She could hardly believe that Berengar had accepted her request. Truthfully, she knew she was the least favorite of his women, and she also accepted the blame for that. However, when he agreed to her request, despite getting nothing out of it himself, the young woman immediately felt her heart flutter. She bowed her head gracefully before responding to the kindness that her husband had shown her.

"Thank you Berengar! I won't forget this!"

Berengar was utterly done with this conversation and waved the girl off.

"You can do as you wish, but don't expect me to give them a royal welcome. They may be our guests, but I will not treat them as if they are of significance. I will barely interact with them during their stay."

Adela merely nodded and kissed Berengar on the cheek before running off.

"I will let them know. Thank you so much!"

With that Adela quickly scurried off, and Berengar sat back in his chair, dreading every decision he had made in his life that had led to this point. He knew with Ava and her family arriving in the Royal Palace, things were going to be a massive headache for him. As a result, he pulled out a flask of distilled spirits and poured it into his coffee before taking a sip. After doing so, he expressed his true thoughts on the matter.

"I'm going to regret this, aren't I?"

### **Chapter 688 - Inventing the Shotgun**

Having agreed to Adela's request about letting her older sister stay in the royal palace, Berengar quickly turned his attention to his work, in particular the Iberian theatre. Over the past few years, urban warfare had become a significant problem that German troops faced during peacekeeping operations within the Kingdom of Portugal.

Recently, with the death of the previous Sultan, and the political purges under way, the scope of urban warfare now encompassed the entirety of the Iberian Peninsula. As a result of this, one thing became abundantly clear: the tools used by the German soldiers simply did not meet the demands of the job.

Thus, Berengar was forced to create a new weapon to contend with this new threat. Immediately, only one weapon design came to mind. The shotgun was among the most useful tools Berengar had ever encountered in his past life, especially in combat.

During the Great War, the American soldiers used the shotgun not only as a means of clearing enemy trenches but also as a way to shoot enemy grenades out of the air. It was so effective in trench warfare that Germany had protested its use and tried to get it banned after the war was over.

However, by the time Berengar entered combat nearly a century later, the weapon had been relegated almost exclusively to the role of the breaching buildings in urban warfare. Because of this, Berengar knew just how effective the weapon was in that role, as he had personally witnessed it.

The problem Berengar was having was deciding on a single shotgun design for use in his armed forces. Shotguns were a classification for a variety of weapon designs. Among these various designs were single shot shotguns, double barrel shotguns, pump action shotguns, lever action shotguns, semi-automatic shotguns, and even automatic shotgun designs.

Naturally, at the moment, The German Army did not have enough smokeless powder stockpiled to make a reliable semi-automatic, or automatic, shotgun. Thus, Berengar decided to use a pump-action shotgun as the basis of his new Trench Gun. However, there were dozens, if not hundreds, of pump action designs that came to mind. He was personally familiar with a few of the more popular pump-action tactical shotguns, as he owned a few during his past life.

Ultimately, after careful deliberation, Berengar decided on the model 870 shotgun that was manufactured by Remington in his past life. The 870 was a shotgun used around the globe by militaries and police forces alike. It was also licensed and copied by other companies. What made Berengar endeared to the 870 was its durability and reliability. Unlike many of its competitors, its receiver was made of steel, not aluminum, and he had never suffered a malfunction using the ones he owned during his past life.

The difference between Berengar's Model 1425 Trench Gun, and the model 870 was that although he used the mechanism of the 870 as the basis for the gun, the aesthetics were based upon the Winchester Model 12 Trench Gun, which was used by American forces in WWII. After all, it wasn't a proper trench gun if it did not have a barrel shroud, and a bayonet lug. Naturally, he designed the bayonet using the Model 12's bayonet as the basis.

He planned to implement the shotguns in a 12 gauge caliber, with double ought buckshot as the primary load to be utilized in the field. The shotgun shells Berengar had in mind were based on the mil spec standard in use by the US Military. Albeit for the time being with black instead of smokeless powder. This meant shell would use nine double ought pellets that would be fired out of the smoothbore barrel and create a spread that was lethal in close quarters.

While in his past life the US Military and law enforcement agencies adopted specialized breaching rounds that would pose no harm to a human life beyond the door, Berengar did not care in the slightest about such trivial matters. As far as he was concerned, civilian casualties were a part of war, especially when the insurgents in Iberia deliberately chose brutal urban warfare as their means of resistance.

After designing his new Model 1425 Trench Gun, Berengar stamped them with his approval. A secretary would later dispatch these designs to the Kufstein Armory, who would go about perfecting the design, manufacturing the prototypes, and testing the weapons before approving them for service. Then the weapons would either be made in house by the Kufstein Armory, or sent to one of the various other State Armories who would manufacture them for the German Army.

As of now, Berengar need not worry about the rest of the details, instead he sat back and relaxed in his chair. He figured he had done enough work for the day, and thus, after stretching himself for a few moments, he headed towards the door. Unfortunately, the moment he opened the door to the hallway, he saw someone he was not expecting to arrive so soon.

Several hours had passed since Berengar chatted with Adela, and with the railways connecting Kufstein and Graz, it did not take long for Ava and her family to arrive in Kufstein. Berengar immediately sighed as he gazed upon the busty milf and cursed out loud.

"God fucking dammit...."

Ava frowned when she heard Berengar's response. Though she wanted to lecture him on his manners, she realized he was not the little baron's son she had known growing up. Right now, he was the most wealthy and powerful man in the world. If she scolded him, she was sure to receive a severe punishment. With this in mind, she bowed her head and responded to Berengar's vulgarity with grace.

"Your Majesty, I just wanted to thank you for your benevolence. However, if my appearance displeases you to such an extent, I promise you won't hear another word from me, so long as I remain under your care."

Berengar did not even pretend to be polite, instead he nodded his head with a stern expression before responding to the woman.

"See to it that I don't..."

After saying this, Berengar shut his office door behind him and locked it before walking through the halls as if Ava did not even exist. The woman merely pouted after he was gone. Did he really despise her so much after all these years? She knew that she made his life difficult when he was a minor nobleman, but that was a long time ago, and much had changed. Besides, it was his fault for walking in on her while she was bathing.

However, she let the matter go and sighed heavily, defeated by Berengar's impression of her. If only she hadn't married Wolfgang, and instead stuck with Berengar, then she would be the Empress right now. Life wasn't fair, and Ava knew this all too well.

As for Berengar, he did not think upon Ava any longer after leaving her alone in the hallway, instead he sought out Adela to give her a good scolding. When he turned the corner, he saw the woman in question with a distressed look on her face. She could tell by the way Berengar carried himself that he was not pleased, which led her to the conclusion that she was too late.

"You saw her, didn't you?"

Berengar glared at Adela before mocking her for her lack of ability to keep her promises.

"That has got to be a record Adela, six, seven hours and already you have broken your promise to keep her away from me... I honestly don't know what to say about that..."

Adela could only hand her head low in shame. She had no idea that the moment Ava entered the palace, she'd go off searching for Berengar on her own. She could only apologize.

"I'm sorry... She ran off before I could tell her the conditions of her stay."

Berengar merely waved off the incident before responding to Adela's depressed state.

"It doesn't matter, just see to it that she keeps her distance. I do not want to have any more contact with the woman or her husband."

Adela instantly nodded her head in obedience before questioning Berengar's next move.

"So what now?"

Berengar wore a wry smile on his face as he responded to this question in a way that Adela was not expecting.

"Now... I think I'm going to go relieve some stress with my sister..."

Adela blushed when she heard this, but also felt great envy in her heart. Had she not fucked up so badly in her endeavor, then her husband would be "relieving" stress with her right now. Instead, he was disappointed with her, and went to find the woman in his harem that most closely resembled her out of spite.

After Berengar had disappeared from her sight, Adela cursed under her breath.

"God dammit Ava!"

But it was too late. Berengar had already decided who he was going to spend time with on this night.

### **Chapter 689 - A Prince's Schemes**

While Berengar may not be happy about Ava's presence in his home, that did not mean that everyone in his household agreed with his opinion of the woman. For example, the moment Hans witnessed his beautiful young aunt enter his home, he ran up to the woman for a hug. As for Ava, the troubled expression she had on her face instantly vanished when she saw the young boy running to her screaming.

"Aunty Ava!"

If there was one thing Hans disliked about his biological mother, it was how distant she was to the rest of her family. He did not understand the full circumstances that led to the callousness between Linde and her siblings, but she was not on speaking terms with either of her brothers, and her half-sister had been married off to a Westphalian nobleman, thus they rarely communicated by any means other than letters.

If there was one significant perk to the Polygynous system that Berengar had implemented across Germany, it was that children had multiple mothers to look after them, and because of that, Hans had a variety of aunts, uncles, and cousins who he could get along with. Hans had met most of his other relatives in passing, but the only one he had really spent any time with was Ava. Because of this, she was his favorite relative outside his immediate family.

For the record, Hans considered Henrietta one of his mommies. Even though she was his father's sister, the relationship between Berengar and Henrietta was apparent to the young boy, and because of this, he did not consider her an aunt, but a mother.



Ava spoiled Hans, especially during the time she looked after him while his parents were away, thus when she saw the little bugger running up to her, she instantly smiled and latched onto him, accepting his childish hug with enthusiasm.

"Hans, it is so good to see you!"

Hans was honestly a bit confused about why Ava was in the Royal Palace, and after nestling his head against the woman's substantial bosom, he looked up at her with his sapphire eyes and interrogated her.

"Why are you here Aunty Ava? Are my mommies and daddy going away on another trip?"

Ava stroked the boy's strawberry blonde hair with a smile on her face while she shook her head. She pinched his nose playfully before answering his question.

"Nothing of the sort. It is just that me and my family are going to be living with you for a while..."

When Hans heard these words, he was excited. He enjoyed his aunt's company and had previously thought of scheming to get his father and the woman together. He was just about to grab hold of the woman's hand and take her to meet his father when the woman's husband entered the room.

Wolfgang was a decently attractive man, though his appearance did not compare to Berengar's. The man's good looks were one of the few reasons Ava had agreed to marry him, that and the position he once held.

One could say that Wolfgang's appearance was his only redeeming quality, as the man's personality was beyond worthless. Not only was he arrogant, but he was incredibly foolish, and had a tendency of upsetting those in power. In fact, that is the exact reason Ava and her family were forced to move in with Adela to begin with.

Wolfgang gazed at the little brat who had his head buried in his wife's cleavage and instantly grew frustrated. Not only was he an arrogant idiot, but he had also recently become impotent, because of this he had an intense sense of jealousy towards any male who grew too close to his wife, believing they would snatch her away from him.

The man briskly walked over to his wife and was about to slap the unknown child who was in her clutches when the woman glared daggers at him, and smacked his hand away. She quickly scolded the fool for nearly laying his hands on the Prince who was most likely to succeed the Kaiser.

"Wolfgang, you fool! What the hell do you think you're doing!?! Do you have any idea who this child is!?!"

Wolfgang was so stupid, he did not realize that the child attached to his wife was the Kaiser's son. Ava wished she could say she was surprised. I mean seriously, the two of them were in the Royal Palace, a place only the von Kufstein Dynasty, their guests, and the staff were allowed to reside. Hans was clearly dressed in lavish clothing and seemed to know who Ava was. Could the man not use his brain for two seconds to guess the boy's identity?

Hans was a genius. Though he played the part of an adorable little tyke around his aunt, he knew very well what Wolfgang had just tried to do to him, but rather than establish his dominance, he continued to pretend like he was an ignorant child.

"Aunty Ava, who is this man? Why does he look so mean? Please make him go away!"

Wolfgang was surprised when the boy called his wife by the term aunt. Even though he was a dullard with a brain that operated at minimum capacity, he could still surmise the boy's identity after such an obvious statement. Ava wanted to strangle her husband at this moment and quickly scolded the man for his actions.

"Wolfgang, just leave us. I am trying to reunite with my nephew, and your stupidity has almost gotten the both of us in trouble yet again..."

Hans burrowed his head into Ava's chest once more, pretending to be scared of the glare the man was giving him. This caused Ava to snap at her husband once more.

"Do you have shit for brains? Did you not hear what I just said? Go!"

Wolfgang barely managed to contain his fury and simply scoffed before walking out. Once he was no longer within hearing distance, Hans put on an innocent facade as he asked his aunt a question.

"Aunty Ava, who was that man?"

Ava struggled to smile as she informed Hans about the identity of Wolfgang.

"Unfortunately, that man is my foolish husband..."

Hans' eyes grew wide in shock as he heard this, though he wasn't really surprised he planned to use this as the perfect moment to plant the seeds of betrayal in Ava's mind.

"Oh.... Aunty deserves better, how about father? Do you like him?"

Ava's face immediately flushed red in embarrassment when she heard these words. Hans knew at that moment that he had hit the mark. Clearly, Ava was at the very least attracted to his father. He was about to go in for the kill when Adela walked in on the two of them. She had a furious expression on her face. Evidently she had heard what Hans had said, and glared at him with menacing eyes.

Adela was already in a foul mood after Berengar scolded her for not keeping her sister in check. Then her husband taunted her by declaring he was going to have a good time with his sister. Now she walked in on her sister, and Linde's scheming brat, who seemed to be trying to convince the woman to sleep with his father. She sighed heavily as she forced herself to calm down, before speaking towards the boy in a defeated tone.

"Hans, you really are your mother's child..."

Hans looked at Adela with a curious light. Had this little girl seen through his act? It was quite amusing that he would refer to as Adela as a little girl in his mind considering he himself was a small child. However, compared to all of his other mommies, who were taller and sported more curvy figures, Adela was indeed a little girl in his mind.

Truthfully, the German Prince had limited experience with normal women and their sizes. He would be surprised later in life to learn that Adela was also considered an exceptional beauty with an impressive figure.

Meanwhile, Ava gazed in confusion at the interaction between Adela and Hans. She did not know what Adela had meant by her statement, nor that she was being played by the boy. Despite Adela seeing through Hans' actions, she did not call him out on his game, as she was certain that Berengar despised Ava and would never sleep with the woman. Instead, she dismissed Hans from the area so she could have a private talk with her sister.

"Hans, your mother has made lunch for you. I think it is time that you go meet up with your siblings and have a family meal."

Hans smiled as he heard this before jumping out of Ava's arms. He had an innocent expression on his face as he responded to Adela's words.

"Okay, mommy Adela, I'll go do that, bye Auntie Ava!"

The boy waved towards his aunt as he ran off towards the dining hall to eat lunch. Once he was out of earshot Adela sighed heavily before commenting on Hans and his hyper intelligence.

"That boy has the bravery of his father, and the scheming mind of his mother. I dread the type of monarch he may one day become..."

Ava did not understand that she was being played by Hans the whole time and quickly spoke up on the boy's behalf.

"God, Adela, must you look at everyone with such paranoia? He's a sweet and innocent child. I don't know why you have to condemn the boy like that, just because he's not your son..."

Adela did not want to hear her sister's foolishness, it took a significant effort for her not to snap at the woman, instead she took a deep breath to calm her nerves before responding to the woman's slight.

"What would you know? Anyway, I'm only going to say this once. Stay away from Berengar..."

After saying this, Adela walked off, leaving Ava in a state of depression. She already realized she had fucked up by approaching the man of her own accord, even if it was to thank him. Now her own sister, who she was only just repairing her relationship with, was treating her like some sort of home wrecker. Why did everyone think so poorly of her?

## **Chapter 690 - Ending the Mori Rebellion**

Weeks had passed since Itami first conquered the Mōri clan. Currently, she was sitting on horseback as she and her army arrived at her home territory. The smell of smoke and blood filled the air, while the echoes of gunfire resounded throughout the vicinity. Evidently, the conflict was still ongoing as the sounds of battle flooded the valley. A wicked smile formed on the woman's pretty face as she gazed at the fortress she had built years ago.

The Itami clan's holdings were initially very minor. So much so that in the past, they could barely afford the taxes they owed. However, ever since Riyo reincarnated into the world, she had amassed a fortune

thanks to the knowledge she held from her previous life. In the early days of her rise to power, she invested in her homeland, building its fortifications to the extent she saw now.

This was the reason she was confident that she could leave the defense of her family's territory to her General, and the 10,000+ men beneath his command. Despite the enemy having a larger army, they could not break through the heavy defenses of the region. As if inspired by western castle doctrine, Itami designed her family's castle so that they would have to break through three separate gatehouses just to enter the courtyard where they would be surrounded by archers and arquebusiers.

The layout of the castle forced the enemy forces through a series of ravines that existed between gatehouses. The narrow pathway allowed for only three men to stand in a row. Such insignificant numbers were not enough to break down the gatehouse, instead they were slaughtered where they stood.

There were a grand total of fifty thousand men beneath Mōri Nobuhisa's command, and yet they could not breach the Second of the three gatehouses. The more men who were killed in the ravines, the more difficult it became for the Mōri soldiers to advance along the narrow path.

Itami gazed at the slaughter that was unfolding and decided to alert Mōri Nobuhisa of her arrival. With the swing of a sword, the order was given. The men beneath her command took a position on the hills above the battlefield and lined up their artillery battery with the enemy army in sight. The echo of artillery resounded in the air as a single barrage exploded among the ranks of the rebel army. Claiming the lives of dozens, if not hundreds, of enemy soldiers.

Mōri Nobuhisa immediately looked behind him to see he was flanked by a force of men dressed in unusual attire. At the head of these men was Itami Riyo, who had her sword in her hand while on horseback. She held the blade of her Katana to the neck of the rebel General's son and called out to him.

"Mōri Nobuhisa, I have your family. I suggest cease your hostilities and negotiate your surrender, or else I will chop off your little boy's head!"

It shocked Mōri Nobuhisa to see his eldest son in such a precarious situation. Initially he planned to refuse Itami's demands, knowing that he had several other boys who could take over, however in the next moment his entire family was lined up on the hill above, with rifles pointed to their backs. Upon seeing such a sight, the man had no choice but to order an end to his assault of the Itami Clan's home.

"Stand down!"

With this order, the warriors beneath Mōri Nobuhisa's command ceased their hostilities and exited the ravine of death, where so many of their comrades now lie dead. The two parties quickly got to task setting up neutral ground between both armies, where Itami and Mōri would meet up with one another to discuss the terms of the Rebel Army's surrender.

Sitting at one side of the table, Itami was flanked by her officers, aside from those dwelling within the Castle, while on the other side Mōri Nobuhisa was advised by his own. The young boy, who was the heir to the Mōri clan, sat obediently in Itami's lap as she refused to hand him over to his father until after negotiations were completed.

The boy glared at the beautiful woman with bitter hatred in his eyes, but refused to say anything for fear that the crazy bitch might take his life. Itami ignored the boy's hateful gaze and started the negotiations by outright taunting her rival with a threat.

"You have such a beautiful boy. It would be a shame if something happened to the kid."

The officers beneath Mōri Nobuhisa's command quickly stood up, enraged by the threat, however before they could do anything stupid, Mōri Nobuhisa raised his hand, silencing them. They quickly sat down and grumbled to themselves. Upon seeing the enemy being so obedient, Itami smiled before addressing her conditions.

"Let's cut to the chase. You already know my demands, but I will state them for the record. Strike your banners, order your armies to return home, and have your successors to swear their fealty to me. If you do that, I will show your rebellion mercy."

Mōri Nobuhisa did not believe a word the woman said. After all, she clearly stated that she wanted his successor to swear his loyalty to her instead of himself. Such a thing implied a death sentence. How was that a mercy!

"Mercy? Like hell I'd believe that!"

Itami had the eyes of a devil as she carefully outlined the cruelty of her mercy with a wicked grin on her face.

"I swear to all the Kami, that I Itami Riyo will show all of your Clans mercy despite your little rebellion. After all, I'm a woman of my word. I will be satisfied with just the heads of those who lead the rebelling clans. I shall spare everyone else."

The men in question were all present to witness this remark. They immediately protested this decision with various insults.

"You little slut! You think you have the power to force us to give up our lives? Guess again!"

"Fucking bitch, I'd like to see you claim my head!"

"The only woman who will take my life is Izanami!"

Itami was patient with the men in front of her and quickly issued another threat to silence them.

"If you deny my mercy, then I will be forced to kill all of your families, starting with this little boy here! Go on, child, tell your father and his friends how much you want to live! You do want to live, don't you?"

There were tears in the adolescent boy's eyes as he pleaded with his father to sacrifice his life for him.

"Father... please... I don't want to die!"

Being forced to choose between his death, or that of his children, that was a cruelty only a parent could truly understand. Upon seeing Itami raise the blade closer to the Boy's neck, Mōri Nobuhisa had no choice but to concede defeat. If he did not, then he was a monster who cared only for himself.

"Very well... if those are your terms, I surrender, but I can not guarantee that those beneath my command will do the same!"

The generals beneath Mōri Nobuhisa's command had bitter expressions. None of them wanted to die, but neither were they willing to condemn their entire bloodlines to extinction. As a result, they begrudgingly lowered their heads in defeat. Upon seeing this, a wicked smile curved itself upon Itami's puffy lips as she let the boy say goodbye to his father.

"Congratulations kid, it looks like it's your lucky day. Since I'm not heartless, I will permit you one last farewell to your old man!"

The boy had tears streaming down his eyes as he hugged his father, apologizing for his cowardice. Mōri Nobuhisa hugged his son and whispered something in his ear before being taken away by Itami's soldiers.

"I have failed you, my son. I give you this last piece of advice and that is to not follow my path. This woman is not to be underestimated. Bury your hatred and obey her, or you will one day share my fate, along with whatever children you may have.

After saying this, the leaders of the rebellion were arrested on the spot, they would be forced to commit Seppuku when they returned with Itami to the Capital. As for the Rebel Army, they broke ranks when their leaders declared their surrender, and returned to their homelands. If they stood and fought, they would only be dishonoring their masters.

As for Itami, she had outplayed her enemies and would take advantage of the fact that she was in her homeland to visit her family. She had not seen her darling little sister in some time. If she returned to the capital now, she would be forced to overhaul Japan, and would be plagued with work on modernization of the region for years to come. Her little sister would never forgive her if she did this, thus she decided to take a brief vacation.