

Steel 821

Chapter 821 The Kingdom of France Submits to the Reich

Over the next week, Berengar's family got to know the Danish Royal Family fairly well. During this time, more and more guests from across the Reich, and Europe, began visiting Kufstein, and paying their respects to the Kaiser. Many of them were housed within the royal palace for the duration of their stay.

The last King to arrive was one Berengar was not expecting to actually show up. If not, simply because of how poorly he had been treated in the past. King Aubry arrived with his siblings in tow. Not only did he have his sister Sibella by his side, but his younger brothers as well. When Berengar gazed upon the royal family of France, he could not help but wonder whether the seed of the former king was inherently flawed.

Aubry was a man in name only. Despite being an adult male, he was so feminine that he made most women look ugly. There likely wasn't even an ounce of testosterone in the French King's body. Sibilla, on the other hand, was a second-rate beauty who had a screw loose in her head. Violent and psychopathic tendencies had plagued the woman for her entire life, and now, thanks to her treatment in the German Labor Camps, she had severe PTSD.

Surely Aubry's other siblings would not be so defective? Or so Berengar had thought. However, it took one glance for the man to realize that the French Royal Family were truly cursed. Whatever the reason, Aubry's two brothers were the personification of their dominant character traits.

One of these brothers was a greedy coward, and as one would expect, he had the appearance of a rat. Not so much in his facial attributes, as he was at the very least mildly attractive. But more so in the way he moved and spoke. It could not so easily be explained other than the fact he just gave off the general vibe of a rat.

The other brother of Aubry was a round tub of lard, as if since the day he had been born he had done nothing but consume food and sit on his ass. It was truly remarkable that a man in this feudal era could be so fat.

From the moment this man had entered the German Palace, he had rudely pulled out a chair and sat in front of the snack table that was set up to greet the foreign monarchs and their families. Since then, he had done nothing but shove his face with the delicacies that Berengar had prepared for everyone. Just by looking at the man devour sweets, Berengar felt as if he was going to contract diabetes.

The French had a unique position in this ceremony. They had previously been a trading partner of Germany, but had also played a leading role in economic sanctions against the Reich as well as the crusade against the Byzantine Empire. However, unlike all the other defeated nations of Europe, they had not actually taken up arms against Germany and remained neutral during the brief, but bloody conflict.

Would they have done so if their army was actually capable of such a feat? Nobody was denying that, but by remaining neutral, France had fared better than their former allies and had even become the last bastion of Catholicism in Europe. Where the local clergy had made some vain attempts to preserve what little was left of their religion.

King Aubry was slightly unnerved with the meeting in Germany, and had grown quite fearful of Berengar. The last time they met, he attempted to seduce the man, and it had terrible results. Not only that, but the Kaiser had ruthlessly imprisoned his sister for a year for simply speaking out of turn, where unspeakable things had happened to the poor woman.

If that wasn't enough, Berengar had completely demolished Aubry's former lover, and rival Duke Renault de Burgundy. Even now, the French King had no idea where the man's body lie. It was for this reason that during the breakfast that was being held for all of Europe's monarchs, Aubry kowtowed onto the ground as low as possible, feeling as if by pressing his head to the floor, he would be able to gain some redemption in Berengar's eyes.

Even Berengar had to admit that seeing Aubry in such a submissive position was a bit of a turn on. The French King was cross-dressing as per usual and looked prettier than his sister, who gazed in shock at her brother's shameful actions. In a hyper-feminine voice, Aubry swore loyalty to Berengar and the Reich, an action that he was not being compelled to do by virtue of being a neutral actor.

"Oh Great Kaiser, Berengar von Kufstein. Please take pity on my petty Kingdom, and allow me King Aubry de Valois to swear my eternal loyalty and that of my dynasty to you and your sons. I promise that so long as my family reigns, the Kingdom of France will exist to serve you, and your desires, under the condition that your Empire act as our benevolent protector!"

Both Berengar and Linde reacted with surprise when they heard the French King speak these words, not just the two of them but everyone in the hall. However, for the Kaiser and his lovely wife, this act of submission threw a wrench into their plans. Berengar and Linde had long since conspired to balkanize France and destroy its cultural unity. For Berengar, this was an act of revenge for Versailles.

Since France had done everything in its power in his past life to divide the German people and steal their lands. Berengar intended to do the same to them in this life. It wasn't good enough for the French to find their natural place on their knees, servicing their German Masters.

To Berengar, this was a matter of pride. Germany needed to be avenged for the losses they suffered after the fall of the monarchy, and the failed experiment that was the third reich. Thus, it came as a surprise to everyone when he rejected King Aubry's request by spitting upon him.

"Do you really believe that your pathetic Kingdom is worthy of being subservient to the Reich? I have no intention of taking your sissy ass as my pet, nor do I plan to protect your people from the myriad of threats they face.

You have brought your downfall upon yourself, and now you must face the consequences of your actions and those of your forbearers. You, as King of France, are here in Kufstein to bear witness to a new era of prosperity, one that you and your Kingdom shall be excluded from. Enjoy your stay in my Palace, because I promise you these will be the last peaceful days that you shall see in your miserable life."

The Kaiser's response utterly dumbfounded Aubry and his siblings. But how could they understand the rage of a man whose homeland was taken from him before he was even born? Whose family was forced to flee the burning ruins of the greatest civilization the earth had ever seen? Whose heritage was spat

upon and denounced by the world over because of the actions of a succeeding government. One that was built upon the hatred the German people had for Versailles.

To Berengar, France was to blame for the pitiful state that Germany had become in his past life. A spiritual successor to the failed Weimar Republic, one that was every bit as degenerate and weak as its predecessor. Germany had become a shadow of the nation's former glory, one whose sole sense of pride came from its robust economy.

In this life, Berengar had created a true nation-state. One which had a shared sense of heritage and culture. A nation that was entirely self reliant, and capable of protecting its borders without foreign intervention. This was not something that could be said about the Germany from his past life, at least not in his last days, and to Berengar, this was the ultimate humiliation, especially when one considered the power and prestige the German nation once held as the Kaiserreich.

Despite the unprovoked scolding that Aubry had suffered, nobody in the room dared to speak up on behalf of France. The reason for this was obvious: Berengar was the most powerful man in Europe, perhaps the entire world. He had just spent the last few months smashing the armies of the nations present for this ceremony, and killing their previous monarchs.

However, perhaps equally as important of a factor was the simple fact that the men and women in this room were all Christians, many of which were steadfast in their religious beliefs, which is the primary reason this war was fought to begin with. Because of this, they had all long since held a sense of disdain for Aubry and his out-of-place character. Why bother provoking the Kaiser when they already hated the man for his sexual preferences?

Thus, France had offered submission to the Reich, and was thoroughly rejected. Though they did not know what Berengar had planned for them, the French delegates were in deep fear after the final words Berengar had spoken to them. One thing was certain: the Victory Day celebration had started with a bit of a rough start.

Chapter 822 Victory Day Celebration Part I

Nearly five hundred thousand people had gathered in the streets of Kufstein to witness the Victory Day Parade, which was being broadcasted across the Reich via radios that were gifted by the Crown to every major beer house.

The soldiers were lining up in their ceremonial uniforms, which were based upon the designs used during the German Unification Wars. The Black and gold outfits were on full display as the individual soldiers proudly marched through the streets.

Those who were high ranking had specialty plumed pickelhaube helmets, which swayed with the slight breeze on this warm summer's day. Each soldier had a Gewehr 25 shouldered in his arm, with its bayonet attached as they moved forward to the beat of the drums.

Many of the citizens of Kufstein recalled previous military parades that had been used to celebrate great victories. However, something was different this time around, something that shocked the city's inhabitants. As the Infantry passed by the crowds of people, some terrifying new devices followed them

A total of two Panther Tanks and two Fuchs IFVs drove behind the Infantry, displaying the next generation of warfare to the people of Germany and Europe's monarchs. More than one of the foreign Kings dropped their jaw when they saw the massive hunks of steel propel themselves through the streets.

Following behind these armored prototype vehicles was a fleet of five-ton trucks, which were equally as impressive as the armored vehicles. Why was this? Because each and every one of these trucks was towing the new artillery pieces behind them.

The people of Germany could see before their eyes the devices that Berengar would use to bring the world underneath his rule, and they could not help but cry out in cheers. Eventually, the Parade wended its way to the Reichstag, where the foreign Monarchs stood waiting for their host's arrival. They thought for sure he was taking part in the Parade, but there had been no sight of the Kaiser or his family until now.

The people of Germany were starting to become quite worried about the Kaiser's absence until they noticed the sky darken. For the entire day, so far, the weather had been bright and sunny without a cloud in sight. So why now was the sky darkening all of a sudden? Most people began to pull out their umbrellas, expecting a sudden storm. That is until a young boy in the audience pointed to the sky above and screamed as loud as he could.

"Oh my God! What is that!"

One by one, the crowds that had gathered around the city stared into the air to see what was blocking the sun. Only to find that the day was still as bright as ever, instead a behemoth of an airship was preventing the light from shining upon the city.

The miracle of flight was on full display as a rigid airship the size of the Graf Zeppelin flew proudly through the air. The people of Germany could hardly believe their eyes. Had Germany conquered the skies?

Among the guests who were in the city for the event was Sultan Salan of the Timurid Empire. He gazed upon the Zeppelin with complete and total fear in his heart. The words of the Kaiser flooded his mind as he recalled what Berengar had once said to him.

"I simply have superior artillery. In a world where man can not own the skies, artillery is the most important weapon on the battlefield."

The Sultan, like many in the audience, could not help but mutter a silent prayer as he thought about what this meant. He had invested significant time and resources into the development of artillery. After hearing Berengar's words, and witnessing how effective artillery was in the recent Crusade, he was certain he could rebuild his army to rival any in the world. However, that dream was instantly dashed the moment he saw the Rigid Airship. Not only was the magnificent vessel blotting out the sky, but there was a notable painting on its sides.

On the left side of the airship was a painting which displayed the stunning beauty of the second Empress Linde von Kufstein, who took a glamorous pose. The people genuinely did not know how such a lifelike painting could be emblazoned on the side of such a massive vessel. However, those who were lucky

could witness a similar scene on the other side, depicting Kaiserin Adela von Kufstein in an equally alluring posture.

Aside from the two heaven defying beauties, there was the city of Kufstein and the Tyrolean Alps painted behind them. As if the two women were posing while overlooking the capital of the Reich. This painting was a true masterpiece of propaganda and the people could not cheer enough.

Eventually the Airship stopped above the Reichstag, where it was tied onto a nearby mooring station that had been established for the sake of the ceremony, and brought down to the ground, where the Kaiser and his family departed from inside the vessel.

The people of Germany continued to cheer, as Berengar waved to them all before stepping foot on the highest steps of the Reichstag, where the monarchs of Europe kneeled around him in a giant circle. One by one, he called them up to sign a treaty with him. In the end, all of Europe's Catholic Kings except for Aubry signed the treaty, officially bringing an end to the war that had been in a state of armistice for two months.

Once the last man had given his signature to the treaty which pertained to his country, Berengar stepped up to a podium where a microphone sat waiting for his speech. The words he spoke on this day would be remembered throughout history as the first recorded speech of any politician.

"I gaze upon you all, my people. The German people, and I can only smile at the thought of how far we have all come. Many of you already know this, but ten years ago I was nothing more than the spoiled son of a small time feudal noble. This city that we have all built together was but a small agricultural town ruled by my father, Baron Sieghard von Kufstein.

Yet, throughout the years, we have all worked together to build the greatest city in the world. One whose only rivals are seen throughout the rest of the Reich. It has been my dream, since that day I came so close to death near Wildschönau, to unite the German People into a single Empire, one that has no equal in this world or its history.

However, as I fought alongside the men you see here today in uniform, towards that purpose. The Papacy and their pawns sought to prevent our rise as a people at all costs. Through years of proxy wars, the Pope prepared to invade our lands, and butcher our people, and for what? Because we have a different interpretation of the bible? Surely that is the lie that the Church has said in the past. However, the reality was that our unification as one people, and one empire, posed a threat to the power that the Papacy as an institution had wielded for centuries.

Because of that, we have not only fought against each other, but also against all the Catholic Kingdoms of Europe. Culminating into the massive invasion of our borders that these men who stand before you today, and many others, have bravely prevented through the might of German steel and ingenuity!

For the first time in history, an army of a million men was gathered for a single purpose: to crush the reich, and yet despite their numerical advantage, our enemies could not step a single foot into our borders! We showed the world that a unified Germany has never been, nor shall ever be, defeated! The men you witnessed just now signing these treaties are the heirs of those foolish kings who marched their armies onto our lands, at the behest of the Pope.

However, the papacy is gone, and so too are its pawns. Now I am a merciful man, and because of that, the only lands I have taken in this campaign are those that rightfully belong to the German people! I could have marched my armies across all of Europe and put every man, woman, and child to the sword. But that is not who we are!

It is the dawn of a new era, a German era! Because of this, the old families who have fought and conspired against us all for the past decade are stepping down, and in their place, German houses, whose loyalty is to the Reich and its Kaiser, shall rule over the Kingdoms of Europe! Come, celebrate with me, as I reward the men who have made this reality possible through their blood, sweat, and tears!"

Upon hearing Berengar's epic speech, the crowd of German citizens erupted into thunderous applause. Every soldier in the parade threw up their salutes to the Kaiser and responded with their chants.

"For Kaiser and Fatherland!

After Berengar returned his soldier's salute and responded with a quick "Hail Victory!", he walked over to a nearby page and grabbed hold of the first box that was waiting for him. From this moment forward, he would begin providing medals to those who were most influential in this victory.

Chapter 823 Victory Day Celebration Part II

Berengar opened the small wooden box which contained a special medal where he gazed upon the nation's highest award. The Imperial Order of the House von Kufstein, an award Berengar specifically invented to reward his wife Linde for her years of faithful service. Though Linde held the title of Grandmaster within the Order, there were still Knights and Commander classes that could be awarded to others.

Berengar held back the tears that were forming in his eyes with a visible sign of discomfort, before taking his stance at the podium once more. The people of Germany had never seen the man look so vulnerable before, and were wondering just what was about to happen. Berengar took a moment to calm himself before recovering his signature stoic appearance, where he then spoke into the mic. His voice nearly breaking as he struggled to announce the words.

"It... It is with a heavy heart that I posthumously give out this first award to a man who has been a hero to the people of Germany for many years. There is something I have been keeping a secret until now, from the entire world. If not for the critical strategic value of this information, I would have revealed it to you all sooner.

Across the Atlantic Ocean are two whole continents of land filled with untapped resources that are critical to the development of the Reich. Over the past few years, I have established colonies in these lands and have sent men I trust to govern the regions.

One of these men was Field Marshal Arnulf von Thiersee. A man who has proven himself a loyal subject, and a close personal friend. Unfortunately for all of us, the Field Marshal was betrayed by a group of native savages who he tried to help. These barbarians betrayed Arnulf's trust, and attacked the hand that fed them, killing the man in cold blood as he tried to protect the colony from their onslaught.

For giving his life, in defense of German soil, an entire world away from the fatherland, I hereby award Field Marshal Arnulf von Thiersee with the highest honor within the Reich. The Commander's Cross of the Imperial Order of the House von Kufstein.

As you may be aware, Arnulf took no wife, and fathered no children before his untimely demise, and for that I will hand this award off to his younger brother to keep in his memory from this day until the end of days."

After saying this, a man dressed in the uniform of a colonel approached the Podium where Berengar handed off the medal to the man, along with a fine painting of Arnulf and a folded flag. Arnulf's little brother was in tears, and to comfort him, Berengar hugged the man and grabbed the back of his head while saying something to him that he would never forget.

"I loved your brother as if he were a member of my own family. If you need anything to help you process your grief, I am here for you and your family."

Arnulf's brother had grown up in the era of Berengar's rise to power. He was at least five years younger than his brother and practically worshipped both Arnulf and Berengar. Arnulf's family was made aware prior to this event that the Field Marshal had died, but it did not hurt any less. After the man thanked Berengar, he stepped down from the stage and sat at the side.

The crowd was astonished, and also depressed. It shocked them to hear that there was an entire other world across the atlantic filled with savages, but they were more disheartened than hopeful, and that was because Arnulf was a national hero who had been with Berengar since the very beginning. His prestige and fame throughout the reich were second only to Berengar and Eckhard.

A moment of silence was taken for the loss of one of Germany's greatest generals. After it was over, Berengar quickly transitioned to a more happy note. Where he handed off a Grand Cross of the Iron Cross to another officer who approached the podium.

"General Arnwald Gerwig, for your heroic actions in aiding in the Defense of the Kaiser's Pass, I hereby award you with the Grand Cross of the Iron Cross. You have proven yourself a capable General not only in the mountains of New Swabia, but in the Deserts of Egypt!"

The man saluted the Kaiser before allowing Berengar to wrap the medal around his collar. After it was over, Berengar saluted the man back. The following men to receive prestigious medals were Field Marshal Heimerich von Graz. General Willehelm Ritter von Krieger, Admiral Reitz Bettinger.

Admiral Reitz Ritter von Bettinger, as he would be known from now on, was awarded the Knight's Cross of The Imperial Order of the House von Kufstein for his efforts in defeating the Crusader Navy off the shores of Naples.

Berengar spent some time handing out awards to various General Officers before moving onto the commissioned officers. He had three separate military honors to issue to his first target. A man who had been in the ranks of his special operations since the very beginning.

"Major Andreas Jaeger, or should I say Colonel Andreas Ritter von Jaeger, for your clandestine operations behind enemy lines, and the heroism that you and your men showed in the face of battle, I award you with the following honors: A Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross, a Knight's Cross of the Order of

Saint George, and finally an Order of Merit! You have more than earned the honor and prestige associated with these awards!"

The crowds cheered for the veteran Jagdkommando who received his commendations, but he himself had a stoic expression on his face. He had been at the forefront of special operations since Berengar created them and had seen many horrific things in the line of duty. He did not care for fanciful titles, and garish medals, he cared only about defending the fatherland.

Andreas and his men had recently been issued a string of new toys to play with, and were even more deadly on the field of battle now that they had access to select fire and semi-automatic weapons. The battle-hardened veteran also knew by looking into the sky and witnessing the zeppelin that it was only a matter of time before he and his men began deploying from land, sea, and air.

However, that wasn't his concern for the time being. He was certain when the time came, Berengar would introduce new equipment that would allow him and his men to fulfill the task perfectly. Thus, he stood silently and waited for the Kaiser to wrap the medals around his neck and pin them to his chest.

After Andreas had received his medals, Berengar gazed at the next name on his list and was slightly surprised. When he spoke the youth's name, even Linde, who was standing nearby with a pretty smile, acted strangely.

"Lieutenant Herman von Habsburg, please step forward."

The name Habsburg caused rumors to spread among the older members of the audience. It had been years since anyone had heard that name. After all, the main line died off with the boy Conrad after Berengar had tossed him out the window. Although Linde had an elder brother named Liutbert, he was not exactly famous outside of his ancestral home of Innsbruck.

Herman walked forward and stood before the Kaiser while in his dress uniform. He had no major medals, and a stoic expression on his face. If Linde were to be gender bent, she would look exactly like this young man. Berengar could see the family resemblance and smiled before pinning an Iron Cross first class to his breast.

"For your heroic actions during the invasion of the lowlands, I hereby award you with the Iron Cross First Class. Keep up the good work, and perhaps one day you will be leading more than just a platoon of soldiers."

The young man refused to smile. After all, he had mixed feelings about Berengar and his sister. The Kaiser noticed this and shifted his gaze towards Linde, who seemed distressed at the sight of her younger brother, whom she had not seen in years. Upon seeing his wife in such a sorry state, the Kaiser decided to take the opportunity to shake the Herman's hand, where he pulled the boy in close and whispered something in his ear.

"You should forgive your sister already. What happened to your father was practically a lifetime ago, and well deserved. Life is too short for such hatred, especially against your own family."

Herman merely glared at Berengar before saluting him. He left behind a single word before stepping down from the stage.

"Betrayal can never be forgiven!"

Berengar could only sigh in defeat as the young man walked off, angrier than ever. He could not find fault with Herman's words, after all, he used the same reasoning to execute his friend Arnulf just weeks prior. After accepting this, he turned back to his list of names before calling out to the crowd.

"Sergeant Major Lach Wickten. Will you step forward, please?"

A man whose face was scarred from years of warfare stepped forward. He wore the uniform of a member of the Jaeger Corps. Meaning more often than not, he was deployed to the most heated war zones. It was no wonder that he had such a grizzled look on his face.

The man stepped forward and saluted Berengar before awaiting his award. His chest was already brimming with medals that he had earned through years of bloodshed. However, it had been a while since the Kaiser personally gave him a medal.

So much so that Lach truly believed Berengar had forgotten about him. Thus, it came as a surprise when the Kaiser wrapped a Commander's Cross of the Order of Saint George around his neck and reminded him of old times.

"Sergeant Major Lach Wickten or should I say Sergeant Major Lach Graf von Wickten... I remember you. You were that man who brought back a prototype weapon to the battlefield after returning to Italy from your injuries. Ludwig's first successful needle rifle. Am I right?"

Man, if it weren't for you, Ludwig would have waited until the end of the war to tell me about his newest invention, and we surely would have suffered dearly in the trenches outside Florence. Your actions saved many lives during the latter part of that war, and I haven't been able to reward you properly until now.

It appears you have been busy over the years. Getting promoted to a Sergeant Major in the Jaeger Corps. That is a very respectable position. You are the first non-commissioned officer to earn this honor, and it is thanks to your efforts that it is now available to NCOs. You have more than earned a title of nobility.

I present you with the Commander's Cross of the Order of Saint George. From this day forward, your descendents will be Counts. Not that nobility means what it once did a decade ago. However, you and your family can hold your heads high as members of the noble class going forward."

Lach nodded his head in understanding before shaking the hand of the Kaiser. He was honestly surprised that Berengar remembered who he was, but pleased nonetheless. The Sergeant Major was the last man to receive a medal during the Victory Day Celebration. What would come next was a night of feasting and a martial arts tournament.

Chapter 824 Killzone

While Berengar was hosting his victory day celebration for the people of Germany, Itami was neck deep in the Taebaek Mountains. Her army had advanced beyond the limits of the southern half of the peninsula with little difficulty.

Having defeated the Joseon Army in Busan, Itami and her soldiers faced little resistance as they pushed further north towards the capital of Pyongyang, where the Joseon King sat in defiance of the Japanese annexation of his kingdom.

While the remnants of the Joseon Army tried on several occasions to ambush Itami and her forces, their attempts thus far had failed miserably. Thus, the albino beauty had a smug smile on her pretty face as she rode on horseback through the mountains of Northern Korea, as if she herself were completely untouchable.

The young Empress of Japan was completely unaware that the Ming had betrayed her, and gone to Germany in a desperate attempt to pit the two emerging superpowers against one another. Because of this, she could not anticipate the ambush she and her army were walking right into.

A German Jagdkommando lay prone on a ridge across from Itami and her army. He was approximately three hundred meters away, but was dressed in a splinter camo smock, with a ghillie hood over his m35 pattern Stahlhelm. Lying in front of this soldier was his Mg 27(t) light machine gun, which was supported on a bipod as he aimed down the sights towards the Japanese soldiers who were unknowingly walking into an ambush.

By his side were the members of his fireteam, one of which had a g27 sniper rifle equipped with a 4x magnified optic modelled after the WW2 era Zfg 4 optic, while the others had STG 27s which were equipped with the WW2 era Zfg 42 1.5x magnified optic. With the introduction of the newest weapons systems to his army, Berengar had instituted a policy that every sniper and rifleman be equipped with an optic on their weapon.

The sniper of the fireteam gazed through his scope, and onto the advancing Japanese Army with a hint of surprise on his face. When he had heard from his superiors that his unit would be travelling to the far east to fight against an enemy which was nearly on par with the Reich, he did not honestly believe them. However, the evidence was as clear as day. He quickly called out to the other soldiers of his fireteam as they lied in wait for the attack.

"Are you seeing this shit? Bolt action rifles, breechloading artillery, revolving cannons, and Schmidt guns. Where the hell did these yellow bastards get these weapons? As far as I'm aware, the Kaiser has not sold weapons to the east!"

One of the rifleman in the fireteam gazed down his 1.5x magnified optic, and could just barely make out what he was seeing. He too was surprised as he expressed his shock through the use of colorful wordplay.

"Well, I be dipped in shit. These jungle monkeys actually have modern weapons! No wonder the Kaiser sent us here to train the local rabble to fight against them. Shit, it seems to me that we might actually have a fight on our hands, instead of the usual massacre... Or so I would say if these fuckers weren't so foolishly about to walk into an ambush."

From the moment Berengar had received word about another reincarnator attempting to invade Korea, he had dispatched his Jagdkommandos to the region. They arrived by the Bohai Sea in Northeast China, and made their way across the border into the Joseon Kingdom with carriages, which were filled with weapons and munitions for the sole intent to arm the Joseon peasants into a capable guerilla force.

With the assurances of Prince Zhu Zhi of the Ming Dynasty, Berengar did not wait for the emperor's approval. After all, time was of the essence. Thus, over the past month or so, these men had been training the northern villages of Korea into a proper insurgency.

Now that Itami and her army were stepping foot into the northern half of the peninsula for the first time, they were about to feel the sting of German steel. The Jagdkommandos continued to blather away while waiting for the signal to attack. Sure enough, as Itami's forces crossed through the mountains, an explosion went off, and smoke filled the air as the Korean militias opened fire on the invaders. With this signal, the NCO in charge of the fire team gave the order to attack.

"Alright boys, light them up!"

A torrent of automatic fire followed after the initial attack, as thousands of Japanese soldiers came under fire from the front of their lines and from the right flank.

Itami was thrown from her horse and onto the muddy ground below as her steed reeled in fright upon hearing the explosion up ahead. The Japanese empress was stunned. She did not know what possibly could have caused such an explosive blast. The woman was just about to ask her subordinates whether there was a weapon's malfunction when she heard the chugging of machine guns fire upon her army.

A bullet ripped past Itami's face and tore through a strand of her dirty hair as the German sniper just missed his target. As a woman who was never deployed to a modern battlefield in her past life, she quite literally pissed herself in terror when such a distant threat almost effortlessly claimed her life. The mighty war goddess of Japan broke then and there as she fell to her knees and covered her head in fear of death.

The German sniper cursed as he realized he just barely missed his target, and quickly modified his aim so that his crosshairs were directly on Itami's bountiful chest, specifically her heart. Just when he squeezed the trigger, one of the Japanese soldiers jumped in front of his empress, and pushed her out of the way as the bullet passed through his chest as if it were a knife cutting through butter. The sight of her men sacrificing their lives for her drew Itami out of her shock, and she quickly barked orders to the soldiers nearby.

"The enemy is up on that ridge! Form ranks and open fire!"

As she said this, the Japanese soldiers bravely loaded their weapons, and fired a volley towards the location of the German fireteam. Though their shots missed, it was enough to prove that the Jagdkommandos location was compromised, causing the fireteam of battle-hardened veterans to abandon their position in search of another area to strike from.

Itami breathed a heavy sigh as the pressure she was facing was temporarily relieved. Now all she had to do was muster her forces to attack whoever was in the front. At the front lines of the battle between the Japanese soldiers and the militia, the Japanese Army opened fire on the Korean rebels who hid behind rocks.

After a few brief exchanges of fire, the peasant insurgents broke ranks and fled the scene of their attack. One month of training may be enough to teach someone how to shoot adequately, but it was not enough to instill the discipline necessary to stare down the rifle fire of a well-trained army.

Thus, the insurgents fled the scene of their crime just as quickly as they had made their attack. Though the Japanese wanted to pursue them, Itami called them off. If not for the muzzle flash on the g27 sniper rifle, she never would have spotted the Jagdkommandos. She did not know who the enemy was, or where they had gotten such advanced hardware, but she could make an educated guess. Thus, she rallied her forces to her, and gave the command to press investigate the scene of the attack.

"Do not chase after them. We don't know how many there are, or what weapons they wield. I want to know who was up against! I need a team to investigate the corpses of the men we have killed while the rest of you stay on watch and maintain the perimeter!"

Despite the engagement lasting less than a minute, nearly a thousand Japanese soldiers had lost their lives or were seriously wounded. The overwhelming volume of automatic fire, as well as the proximity of the marching army, allowed for a literal kill zone who the Jagdkommandos, which sat on a ridge above their enemy's position, expertly made use of.

In the end, General Shiba approached Itami with a distressed look on his face, before handing two weapons over to the young empress and declaring his findings. The two weapons were an old G22 Rifle whose markings were scrubbed, and a stick grenade.

Though Itami could not directly trace the rifles back to Germany, due to the scrubbed markings, she could tell by the style of the weapons that they were in fact German weapons, or at least manufactured by a reincarnator who had a penchant for German weaponry.

When combined with the fact that she already knew there was a reincarnator in Germany, Itami could easily surmise that Berengar was responsible for this attack. Thus, she quickly interrogated Shiba for more information.

"There is no way such piss poor quality weapons could have such an overwhelming volume of fire. Are there any corpses of the enemy left behind?"

Initially, Shiba did not know what Itami was referring to as throughout the brief conflict, he oversaw the defense at the frontline. It took only a moment for the man to gaze around at the sheer volume of dead bodies beside Itami's position and quickly deduced that this was a two pronged attack.

"I can't say for the men who attacked you, but in the front they appear to be locals, armed with these weapons. Where and how they could get such advanced armaments, I do not know. Perhaps the Korean people have a war god of their own?"

Itami bit her lip in frustration as she shook her head. There was no reincarnator in Korea. If there was, the Joseon Army would have been armed with such weapons from the start. Clearly, the reach of this Kaiser Berengar von Kufstein was far further than she had initially anticipated.

If that was the case, she knew she was in for a long and brutal campaign in her attempt to conquer the Koran Peninsula, something she did not have time for. Before she could educate her General on her

findings, the man sniffed in the air, and looked around in confusion before asking the question on his mind.

"What's that smell?"

It was only now that Itami realized her panties were soaked with piss, causing her to flush in embarrassment before denying the reality she found herself in.

"It's not me, okay!"

Upon seeing the young woman hold her skirt down, as well as her reddened cheeks, Shiba could take a guess at what happened, and decided to speak of this little incident no further. Instead, he made sure the Army tended to their wounded before marching further north into the lion's den.

As for the Jagdkommandos, they sent a radio-telegraph on their portable device to the reconnaissance vessel that lie in the Bohai Sea informing the fatherland of the success of their first operation, before regrouping with the insurgents and preparing for their next attack.

Chapter 825 victory Day Tournament Part I

Berengar sat in a VIP booth overlooking the Kufstein Town Square. In the center of the city was a boxing ring, with an awning above it, providing cover from the elements should they turn sour. A series of bleachers were constructed around the stage, allowing for thousands of people to be seated.

The rest could stand and witness the event. Attendance was free, and alcohol was served at no cost. Because of this, as many of the people as possible crowded into the town center to witness the spectacular event in person.

While people across the reich were feasting and celebrating the first ever Victory Day. Two fighters had gathered for the first match of the event. As Veterans of the Army, and men who had trained religiously over the past few years in mixed martial arts, these men were representing their individual states of the Reich, as they flew their local flags.

One man held the banner of Bavaria, while another held the flag of Austria over his back. The Bavarian fighter approached the ring as the theme of the event played in the background. An orchestra was nearby and played a tune that was remarkably similar to the one which the biggest MMA promotion in Japan during Berengar's past life had.

The Bavarian fighter stood at 195cm and weighed in at 120 kilos. He was a monstrous man of pure muscle who had trained his body and mind to fight in the ring for fame and fortune. While he walked his way towards the stage, an announcer spoke through a microphone, which was broadcasted throughout the entirety of the reich.

"Heinz Nefen currently is undefeated with a professional record of twelve wins, and zero losses. He is also the current heavyweight champion of the Bavarian Fighting Championship, a state sponsored promotion located in the Kingdom of Bavaria. He was chosen for this tournament specifically because of his size and record. If he wins the Victory Day Tournament, you can bet you will be seeing him on the national circuit soon enough!"

The moment Heinz entered the ring, he threw off his shirt and flexed his muscles in an attempt to intimidate his opponent, who was just now walking out. The man he was fighting against was an Austrian fighter by the name of Harthman Sackweber. He was significantly smaller than Heinz as he was 187cm tall and 90 kilos in weight. The announcer quickly began describing the fighter and his record to the people of the Empire.

"Harthman Sackweber is currently walking out. You can tell just by looking at him that he is clearly outclassed, at least in terms of height and weight. Most of you may already know this, but Harthman has a professional record of twenty-one wins and three losses. He is a current top contender for the National Title in the open weight division. That's right, Harthman has always fought guys bigger than himself, and tonight is no exception. We will see if he will be able to emerge victorious against the new up and comer!"

After saying this, Harthman stepped into the ring and threw off his shirt. He was an athletic man, with muscles much bigger than Berengar's. If Berengar had a prince's physique, then this man had that of an elite level wrestler. However, compared to his opponent, he came off as somewhat lacking in stature.

The two men stared each other down in the ring as the ref relayed the rules to them. In the sport of Kampf, which was what Mixed Martial Arts was called in this world, there were only three rules: no biting, no eye gouging, and no groin shots. Everything else was fair game. The fighters didn't even wear gloves, but instead wore gauze and tape.

To put it simply, this was a bareknuckle fight to the finish. After explaining the details, the men touched hands, before walking back to their respective corners of the ring where the fight began. Hans was sitting next to his father, and gazed upon the scene of the fight with excitement in his eyes, though he had trained in the martial arts himself, he had never seen a professional fight in person, largely because his mother considered the sport too violent for a kid his age.

However, his father insisted that the boy be front and present for the event, so even if Linde had not shown up to witness the tournament, Berengar and his eldest son were eagerly anticipating the fight. As the father and son watched the spectacle together, they witnessed the two fighters meet each other in the center of the ring.

Harthman was the smaller man, and because of this, he used his teep kick to keep his opponent at a distance. All while battering his legs with lightning fast leg kicks. Heinz responded to these leg kicks by attempting to check them with his shin, but Harthman was too fast, thus he decided to go for a different strategy. In the next moment, Harthman threw a solid combination, a jab, a cross, and a modified teep that was referred to as the monkey kick.

Heinz skillfully moved out of the way of the punches, but ended up eating the kick. Despite this, he charged forward with a flurry of strikes of his own. A Jab, a cross, and a hook, before throwing a body kick. Most of which were masterfully evaded by his opponent and effectively countered.

The two men were exchanging blows on the feet, neither of which was attempting a takedown. Ultimately, Heinz would throw an uppercut elbow which missed, though he followed it with a downward elbow that found its mark, where it tore open his opponent's forehead, and spilled blood on the floor. The sight of which ignited the crowd into a violent symphony.

Heinz Did not let the elbow go to waste and quickly grabbed hold of his opponent's head with a plumb grip where here proceeded to knee and elbow the man against the ropes. Despite the brutal assault that Harthman was receiving, he did not go down, and instead threw a shovel punch into Heinz's liver, causing the man to wince in pain as he slowly collapsed backwards.

One solid shot had sent the giant to his knees. As the man was falling back, Harthman grabbed hold of his head and forcefully stood him up, where he threw an elbow to the temple, followed by three consecutive headbutts. Heinz, realizing he was in a bad position, mustered his strength, and attempted a double leg takedown. However, Harthman masterfully sprawled and put his opponent in a front headlock, where he kned him in the cranium thrice, before the larger man collapsed to the ground, completely unconscious.

Despite this obvious defeat, Harthman proceeded to the throw fists onto his down opponent's skull and managed to land three of them before he was pulled off by the ref, where the bout was officially ended. The crowd roared with thunderous applause. Though the fight was brief, only being one round, both men came barrelling out at the start, and assaulted their opponents with everything they had. It was a true display of the warrior spirit that the German people had as a martial society.

Berengar had to admit, if either of the men, simply wrestled the other to the ground, and laid on top of them for twenty-five minutes, he would have walked out on the fight, and brought great dishonor to the participants, something he felt they would ultimately deserve.

In the sport of mixed martial arts, at least in his past life, there were too many competitors who played it safe and used such a boring tactic to grind out a decision on victory. Berengar would be lying if he said that he did not hate those fights, and those fighters who became champions using such a dull strategy.

The victor was declared for all to see, and eventually Heinz rose to his fee after such a brutal knockout, where he suffered his first loss like a man. Shaking hands with the victor, and briefly hugging him, all while congratulating the man on his victory, and wishing him good luck in the remainder of the tournament.

In Berengar's Germany, there was no need for the pro wrestling antics of shit talking, disrespect, and poor sportsmanship. In fact, if a fighter acted in such a way, they would be fined, and possibly suspended from fighting. These men were warriors, not clowns, and they respected each other's strength, honor, and integrity. Most of all, after the two men stood side by side, they threw up their salutes to the Kaiser and paid their respects to the man.

"For Kaiser and fatherland!"

The battle cry was mimicked by the crowd as the first fight of the night came to an end. Hans gazed upon the scene with a newfound respect for those who fought for fame and fortune. Perhaps, one day, he too could step in the ring. He looked up at his father, who stood from his seat and saluted the men who had fought for his, and all of Germany's, entertainment on this day of celebration. Wondering when one day he too could be so beloved by the people.

Chapter 826 Sabotage

Itami and her army soon found themselves at a village which they decided to occupy and use as a base of operations for their next push into the north. What was supposed to be a swift and easy conquest

had now turned into a massive headache for the young Japanese Empress, who was deeply disturbed by the fact that her plans for expansion of her armed forces were met with a newfound difficulty.

At the moment, she was in a small bathtub, soaking off the dirt and grime that had accumulated from the previous battle. Her mind was blank as she desperately tried to wash away the fear that had taken control of her heart.

Itami had assumed that she would be fighting against a medieval army when she planned for this invasion, one who would not be able to touch her. However, now she realized that she would be fighting against an enemy armed with modern weapons, and that terrified her.

Though Itami had fought on the feudal battlefields of Japan, exchanging blows with men much larger than her, the threat of death was never truly present. After all, she had always been protected by capable warriors, and was armored so well that neither arquebus nor arrow could penetrate her vitals and claim her life.

However, in the face of modern weapons such as semiautomatic sniper rifles, battle rifles, and light machine guns, there was truly nothing she could create that would protect her against such advanced weapons, at least not at the moment.

Itami had unknowingly made herself the prime target for this new insurgency. By wearing such flashy medals and garish colors, she was a sitting duck on the battlefield, and yet she had personally led her army into the Joseon Kingdom. Had she known her rival, who lie a world away, would arm her enemies, she never would have come here herself.

Still, Itami did not know how this Kaiser in the west had learned of her activities. Clearly, this was retaliation for selling modern weapons to the Bengal Emperor, which meant that at the very least, Berengar's influence stretched to the Indian subcontinent. However, what she could not understand was how her rival had learned of her invasion of Korea.

Then again, her landing in Busan had also been leaked to the Joseon Army. It was clear that one of her ministers was conspiring against her, but the list of potential traitors was so large, she did not know where to begin in the process of identifying them. She supposed a more pressing concern was just how did this traitor manage to contact Germany? Itami could only sink back in the bathtub and sulk as she expressed her thoughts aloud.

"Berengar von Kufstein, just who are you?"

While Itami was soaking in the tub of the village chief's home. A small fireteam of Jagdkommandos had gathered in the nearby hills. Their jobs weren't only to train the insurgents, they were also instructed to conduct reconnaissance and sabotage operations.

These men's faces were painted in a woodland pattern, which, when combined with their camouflage uniforms and ghillie hoods, these German soldiers were practically invisible to the Japanese sentries during the twilight hours of the night.

Though the leader of the fireteam knew that his men understood the plan, he went over it one more time, specifically because one of his soldiers had deviated from their orders during the ambush earlier that day. He had a stern tone in his voice as he addressed the soldiers under his command.

"Normally, I would not do this, but I feel I need to clarify something after what happened earlier. Our objective is not to kill the Empress. That would only embolden the Japanese resolve to fight us. The orders we have been given are to bog down the Japanese forces in these mountains for as long as possible and force them to withdraw southward. So, to make this clear, you are not to harm the Empress, though her officers are fair game.

Now this operation is to be done with as few enemy casualties as possible. We are to infiltrate the camp and set fire to their supplies. That is it. Once we have succeeded in the task, we are to silently withdraw back to the closest cell. If you must eliminate someone, do it covertly, with your boot knife. Is that understood?"

The soldiers nodded their heads before responding to their NCO in the affirmative.

"Yes, sir!"

Upon hearing this, the Sergeant smiled before issuing the order to begin the operation.

"Alright, let's do this!"

The Jagdkommando fireteam silently made their way down the hill, as if they were stalking their prey. The Japanese sentries could not even see them as they slowly approached the makeshift defenses of the village. Itami had surrounded the village with her wagons, and in doing so built a primitive fortification. Though such a thing was easily breached, especially by the elite soldiers of the Reich.

After approaching the perimeter of the defenses, the Jagdkommandos split up into separate roles. The Sniper, accompanied by the light machine gunner, took an over watch position on the hill above, while the riflemen slung their weapons and unsheathed their boot knives. These men split up as they breached the defenses and silently took out the Japanese sentries by slicing their throats and covering their mouths.

The sniper watched from afar as he saw his comrades enter the village and make their way through the streets. All the while remaining unseen. Eventually, he lost sight of the men as they began entering into buildings, searching for the enemy's supplies. He could only say a silent prayer for his fellow soldiers, as he no longer had the ability to protect them from potential threats.

"Saint Berengar the Blessed, protect my brothers in arms so that they may carry out your will!"

As for the NCO, he had picked the lock to the door of a building and forced his way inside. It became abundantly clear that this was the enemy's food stockpile, or at least one of several locations. However, there was only one problem: there were two enemy soldiers guarding the supplies. Luckily for him, they did not notice his presence. Thus, he slithered through the halls like a sneaky snake, going entirely unnoticed.

One of the Japanese guards walked off from his post. For what reason, the NCO did not know, but he followed the sentry nonetheless. After stalking the man outside the building, he noticed that the Japanese guard was pissing on the wall of the building, taking the opportunity that was given to him, the

Jagdkommando covered the man's mouth from behind, and repeatedly stabbed into his kidneys with the knife, silently ending the man's life. He proceeded to hide the corpse in a nearby cask before continuing his attack.

After taking care of one guard, the NCO covertly made his way back in side where he approached the other. The man was quite obviously bored out of his mind and was impatiently waiting for his friend to return. The veteran Jagdkommando saw this as an opportunity, and hid behind a wall which the enemy would have to pass by to get to the door that the other guard left through.

After a few minutes, the man began to shout in his local tongue. Though the NCO could not understand him, he knew the man was cursing out his friend for taking too long. The Japanese guard carelessly walked past the Jagdkommando, and the moment he did, a blade found its way buried in his neck, piercing through the carotid artery as if it were gelatin.

Once the last of the two sentries was eliminated, the german NCO proceeded down the halls and towards the food stockpile, where he stashed away his knife and took out an incendiary grenade from his load bearing equipment. After pulling the pin, he tossed it on the wooden crates which housed the Japanese Army's rations, and immediately bounced, not wanting to be in the building when the thermite caught fire.

Within seconds, the grenade exploded, causing flames to rapidly spread, consuming the entire building in its hunger. By then, the NCO had withdrawn and was already heading back to regroup with his unit. Bells rang throughout the village as three distinctive fires simultaneously occurred within the camp. However, by the time the Japanese Army could respond, the Jagdkommandos had already absconded into the night.

As Itami was enjoying her bath, the door swung open and revealed the panicked expression on General Shiba's face. Itami was both surprised and furious that her precious bath time had been intruded upon, and instantly covered her sensitive parts with her hands, while scolding the General for his actions.

"You dare disturb my bath. Why I ought to-"

Before she could finish reprimanded the man for his actions, he interrupted her with a single word.

"Sabotage!"

pa(nd)a novel Itami's fury faded as she soon understood what was happening. The guerillas had struck again. She instantly gave out an order with a hint of rage in her blood-red eyes.

"Give me a moment..."

It was only now that General Shiba realized he was gazing upon something he shouldn't be, and quickly lowered his head before withdrawing. Once he was gone, Itami got out of her bath and sighed heavily before gazing out the window and seeing the flames rising within the village. She could only curse herself for stepping on the Eagle's tail feathers. She swore in her heart at that moment that she would get back at Germany for their intervention in Korea.

Chapter 827 Victory Day Tournament Part II

Hours had passed since the tournament began, and currently Harthman was fighting in the finals against the man who held the National Openweight Title. These two men were bound to square off sooner or later, but only one would emerge victorious and claim the vaunted Victory Day championship belt.

Harthman was pinned on the ground, and suffering from a barrage of strikes on his face. He tried to cover with his hands, but there was only so much that could be done. Fists, elbows, and headbutts all rained down upon his face as the referee watched closely, about to call off the fight. A verbal warning was given to the man just to make this point clear.

"Fight back!"

With this said, Harthman knew defeat was imminent. Thus, he decided to go all out. He grabbed hold of one of his opponent's arms with both hands and pinned it to his chest. While simultaneously blocking the man's leg, and knee with his elbow, and leg. After suffering a few more headshots, he bridged his hips into the air, and rolled over into a reversed position with what was called the upa escape.

After doing so, Harthman got out of his opponent's guard, and stood up where he landed an axe kick on his rival's face, before stomping it repeatedly. The crowd was going wild at the sudden reversal of fortune. After taking a few shots to the head, while he was lying on the ground, the opponent struggled to get to his feet with a technical standup, however he was instantly countered with a roundhouse kick to the head which sent him tumbling back to the ground.

To finish the fight, Harthman landed a well-placed soccer kick to his opponent's head, which knocked the man out completely. The ref immediately got in Harthman's way and called off the fight. Causing Harthman to roar like a lion and punched his chest like an ape as the thousands of German citizens cried out and cheered for him. The man had showed true heart by snatching victory from the jaws of defeat and the audience knew it.

Even Hans was impressed by this performance, and cheered for the man from his VIP booth. As the boy looked up at his father, he saw Berengar standing up from his spot, and descending down from the staircase before entering the ring himself. Beautiful ring girls surrounded the champion, as the Kaiser took the stage with the exquisite championship belt in his hand.

The belt was made of fine black crocodile leather, solid gold, and platinum. In the center was an ornate golden plaque which had an additional hexagonal plaque in the center, which was made of platinum with diamond edges. In the middle of this hexagon was a pair of diamond eagle wings, with a solid letter S in the middle, that was made out of rubies. The S stood for Sieg, or in other words, Victory.

Below this Winged S symbol, was the words Victory Day National Grand Prix Openweight Champion engraved into the golden plaque. Outside of this hexagon was an outline of diamonds which took the same shape,

On the sides of this center plaque were a total of two smaller rectangular plaques per side, each took the same style as the center plaque, though instead of a Winged S, they had the shape of the fatherland carved out of solid gold, and imposed upon a hexagon of platinum. The overall inspiration for the belt design was one from Berengar's past life, that belonged to an organization that was bought out in 2011 by the world's biggest MMA promotion, and shut down in 2013.

The people gazed upon this exquisite belt and cheered for the man who had earned it. As a result, Berengar raised his hand to calm them down before taking the microphone from the announcer and saying a few words about the event.

"Harthman Sackweber, you put on a performance tonight that few men in this world are capable of. You have more than earned the right to call yourself the Victory Day National Grand Prix champion, and it is my esteemed honor to present you with this championship belt. How are you feeling right now?"

The fighter, who had fought through five opponents in one night, was exhausted beyond measure, and panted heavily into the microphone, as he answered Berengar's question with overwhelming pride displayed on his face and a cheeky grin.

"If I'm being honest, I feel a little lightheaded. But that's probably just from the sheer amount of punches I took to the head tonight. So nothing serious, right?"

In response to this, Berengar chuckled, as did the entire audience. It was good to see that the champion had a sense of humor. Berengar looked into his eyes to make sure he was truly okay, and the man seemed fine. Thus, he wrapped the belt around Harthman's waist and thanked him for his performance.

"On behalf of all of Germany, I want to thank you for the performance you put on tonight, as well as all of our athletes who participated in this monumental event. For the people who take this man's words seriously, do not worry, there are doctors on standby, ready to treat all the fighters here tonight. Now to all the brave men who have displayed their strength, honor, and courage on this night, go and rest, you have more than earned it!

As for the People of Germany, I hope you all celebrate the rest of this night with some fine cooking. I know in the city of Kufstein, as well as the other major urban areas, there are an ongoing feasts that will continue well into the night. Where you can all enjoy some fine German cuisine at my expense. So enjoy yourselves!"

After saying this, Berengar shook hands with the tournament winner, before departing towards his palace with his son, and guards in tow. With the tournament over, he would have to entertain his many guests. Most of which were unbelievably shocked by what they witnessed in the parade.

To no one's surprise, upon returning to the Palace, Berengar was surrounded by his guests. Among them was his father-in-law, Emperor Vetrans, who had a happy smile on his face as he approached the Kaiser before anyone else could gather his attention.

Though the man was smiling, he was far from happy. In fact, he was utterly terrified by what he had witnessed during the day. Airships and armored vehicles. The idea that Germany now controlled the Land, sea, and skies was truly a frightening prospect. Though he kept such thoughts to himself and instead asked for a minute of Berengar's time.

"It was a wonderful ceremony. I can tell you put a lot of work into this, and I assure you, that the Byzantine Empire has no ideas about settling this new world that you revealed to exist across the atlantic. We wouldn't want to step on the toes of our favorite ally. If you have a minute, I'd like to speak with you about something important regarding the future of our two realms. It will only take a minute."

Berengar smiled and nodded his head while he gripped Vetranis's shoulder in a display of dominance. Whatever the Byzantine Emperor was about to request of him, it was going to be big, and thus, Berengar had to show from the start that he was the man in charge. Thus, he led the man into a secluded area where they could discuss their business together.

After sitting down, a servant poured the two men a couple of drinks. Which Berengar tasted before asking what was on his father-in-law's mind.

"So, what could possibly be so important that you must take me away from my beloved guests? I suppose this is about Egypt and Palestine, is it not?"

Vetranis had a guilty look on his face as he nodded his head in silence. It appeared that Berengar had seen through him entirely, and thus he was about to speak his terms when Berengar raised one finger to silence the man.

Like a beaten dog, Vetranis quickly obeyed. After all, Germany had decimated the crusader forces, who he had surrendered to a few months prior. If Germany could devastate the entire Catholic World to such a degree, what hope did Byzantium have to compete? As for Berengar, once Vetranis was obedient, he stated his terms.

"I will return Egypt and Palestine to your rule, with the exception of the Sinai Peninsula under two conditions. For starters, I want you to evacuate Cyprus and hand it over to the Reich. This condition is non-negotiable.

Second, you must establish the region of Syria-Palestine as an autonomous zone, which allows the peaceful co-existence of Christians and Muslims alike. The last thing I need is for you to find yourself in another war with your Muslim neighbors. If you agree to these terms, you can consider the aforementioned regions a part of the Byzantine Empire once more. What do you say? Do we have a deal?"

Vetranis thought about these conditions in silence for several moments. When compared with Egypt and Palestine, Cyprus was an insignificant region. However, it was clear to the man that Berengar wanted to create a naval base there and possibly an air base if such a thing could exist.

This would undoubtedly be quite troublesome for the Byzantine Empire. However, if Berengar truly desired the island, he could simply occupy it with force, and there was really nothing Vetranis could do about it. Thus, after several moments of contemplation, the Byzantine emperor nodded his head and submitted to Berengar's demands.

"Very well. If that is the price I must pay, so be it..."

Upon hearing this, Berengar smiled, and patted the man on the back, before standing up from his seat. There was much to celebrate, and he did not want to spend any more time secluded in this tiny room with his father-in-law.

"Come, enjoy the festivities. There is much conversation to be had, and little time to do it in. I trust you will enjoy yourself."

With this said, Berengar and Vetranis returned to the feast. Cyprus would be evacuated in the coming days, where a naval base and an air base would be established, which would secure Berengar's absolute

dominance over the Mediterranean. As for Egypt and Palestine, they would return to the hands of the Byzantine Empire, with a small section on the Sinai Peninsula under the control of the Reich.

Chapter 828 Rejected

While Berengar was negotiating with the Byzantine Emperor over the rights to Egypt, Palestine, and Cyprus, one of his many guests was on the prowl. Robert Stuart, the Crown Prince of Scotland, had accompanied his father to the Reich after being invited to witness the victory day celebrations.

The Kingdom of Scotland had little direct interaction with the German Empire, however, their markets were dominated by German goods. Why was this? Because of their trade with the Kalmar Union.

The King of Scotland, a man by the name of Charles, had cordial relations with the King of Denmark who had warned him not to get involved with Germany's affairs after it rose to the status of a Great Power.

A warning Charles took to heart. Because of this, Scotland was one of two Catholic kingdoms that had not suffered at the hands of the Reich during the brief war that saw the downfall of the Papacy and most of Europe's royal families.

From the moment Charles and his son Robert stepped foot in the borders of the Reich, they could tell that they were, in fact, living a different world than the German people. If the train ride over to the German Capital wasn't shocking enough, then the airship, and the city's lights were truly marvels that boggled the mind.

Because of this, Robert seemed interested in taking a German woman as a wife, if only for the sake of bragging rights. After all, it was well known that German women struggled and competed with one another to marry the best of the German Men. They had even developed a reputation for being cold to foreigners.

This was definitely the case, as Robert chatted with a Princess of Bavaria. Anne von Wittelsbach was the youngest daughter of the Bavarian King. The once infamous Duke Dietger von Wittelsbach had been elevated to the status of King of Bavaria after the unification of the German Empire. Anne was a stunning beauty, and was not yet of marriageable age, thus the Prince of Scotland thought that perhaps he could gain her interest.

However, as he spoke about Scotland, and the battles he had fought in, the girl seemed entirely disinterested, as if she were talking to a country bumpkin. The young beauty rolled her eyes before not so politely telling the Scottish Prince to go fuck himself.

"I'm sorry, Prince Robert, was it? I'm sure your intentions are genuine, but I have no interest in marrying a foreign man. If you don't mind, I have more important matters to attend to. It was a pleasure to meet you, though."

Robert was shocked to hear this. He was a Prince, and he was handsome to boot. Why would the Bavarian Princess react so snobbishly towards him? Just who did she think she was? Her Kingdom wasn't even independent, it was a subordinate state to Austria! He wanted to curse the woman out, but he noticed the stares he was being given.

This was the third German Princess he had attempted to talk to, and the only one nice enough to even give him the time of day. He could hardly believe why these women were treating him in such a way.

Though as he gazed around the room, he could tell that it wasn't just him. Other foreign princes and dukes were having an equally difficult time approaching the German Princesses.

Ultimately, the man decided that if he couldn't gain the attention of a German Princess, he would have to go lower on the noble hierarchy. Though it stained his pride, he approached the daughter of a German Duke. Whose appearance was pretty, but not stunning.

"Hello, I am Prince Robert Stuart of Scotland. It would be my honor if I could have the name of a beautiful young woman such as yourself."

The Duchess took two looks at the man and scoffed before returning to her conversation with another German noblewoman. This action stunned Robert. He was clearly better looking than the woman and was a Prince on top of that. Why would she not be interested in him? He had to find out the answer to this question, and once more tried to pry into the girl's conversation.

"Excuse me? Did you not hear me? I am a Prince! Shouldn't you show me some respect?"

The woman did not even spare Robert a glance. She completely ignored the man as if he were invisible. Such a rude gesture almost made Robert want to slap the bitch across her face. However, with the multitude of armed guards present in this chamber, let alone the palace as a whole, he knew he would be kicked out of the venue were he to do such a thing. Thus, he could only take a deep breath and sigh heavily before trying his luck with another girl.

After ten minutes, Robert had approached four duchesses, two countesses, and even a baroness, none of which were willing to give him the time of the day. Having suffered multiple strikeouts, he ended up at the bar drinking away his sorrows, where the other foreign noblemen who were in a similar position gathered together in depression.

As Robert took his drink from the bartender, he noticed she was a particularly good-looking young woman. After all, Berengar enjoyed looking at beautiful women, and because of this, the palace staff was filled with them. Naturally, his personal bartender was no exception.

After a few drinks, Robert decided to try his luck with a common girl. Obviously, he did not intend to marry a woman of low birth, but if she could ease his pain for some time, it would be something to brag about back home. Thus, he spit out the first line he could think of, expecting the woman to throw herself at him simply because he was a good-looking Prince.

"Has anyone ever told you that you have the most gorgeous eyes?"

The woman only sighed in annoyance as she cleaned an empty glass with a rag. Robert was just one of many guys she had seen strike out throughout the celebration, and she felt these idiots would continue in their ways until some girl told them the honest truth. Thus she did not show the Prince the respect a man of his position was usually afforded, and instead responded bluntly to his advances.

"You should know that you are the seventh foreign prince so far tonight to try to pick me up. Believe me when I say, I have heard better lines from better looking guys and have turned them all down. Since you guys are having such troubles with the ladies, allow me to explain to you exactly why you will never be able to court a German noblewoman.

Here, in the Reich, we live a life of such luxury and convenience that even a bartender like me can claim with the utmost certainty that I live in a life of greater comfort than you. In fact, my boss, the Kaiser, pays me exceptionally well to pour him drinks and listen to his problems. So much so that I likely have greater wealth than you, the Prince of Scotland, do.

To these noblewomen, whose families' fortunes are above and beyond what I could ever dream of making, you foreign princes are a worse potential match than a German commoner. Because if they were to ever marry you, they would be forced to leave the wealth and prosperity of the Reich, and in doing so, live a life worse than our poorest citizens do, as the Princess of your backwards Kingdom.

If I'm being brutally honest, you would be hard pressed to find any German woman who would be willing to marry you for the same reasons. Sure, they may gain the prestige of being a "Princess" but their lives would be worse off if they were ever to make such a foolish decision.

Let me ask you something. You have partaken of the food that has been offered by the palace, yes? Are you aware that these are dishes that even commoners can afford to eat regularly? Sure, the cooks are more skillful here in the palace, but you can find a similar level of quality in restaurants across the reich.

The common people of Germany have ready access to luxuries that even your most wealthy nobleman would struggle to afford daily. Aside from the luxury and convenience that we have access to, we Germans also live in a safe society with the confidence of knowing that no foreign army may enter our lands.

Aside from our National defenses, we also have a robust legal system, which punishes criminals severely. Because of that, we don't have to worry about pickpockets, or highwaymen, or murderers, and rapists. Can you say that your Kingdom is devoid of such crime?

So before you get pissed off at all the woman who have turned you down, perhaps you should understand that their reasons for doing so are perfectly valid. The fact of the matter is, you offer less as a potential partner than a German commoner does and that is why you will never be able to successfully court a German Woman. So please, take this drink and enjoy the evening, instead of sulking like a child because you were rejected."

Robert could hardly believe his ears when he heard all of this, and he was not alone, all of the foreign nobleman who had sought to get friendly with the German noblewomen were stunned to hear all of this. Then again, when they thought about the marvels they had seen since they first visited the Reich, perhaps these bartenders' harsh words were true?

Chapter 829 A Chilling Toast

Berengar sat at the head of his table. Throughout the dining hall of his palace, many tables had been set up for his important guests from across the Reich, Europe, and the Mediterranean. He had spoken with many of them up until this point, but now, as the food was brought out to the tables, he had decided to make a proper toast for all to hear.

With the clink of a glass, the room was silenced, as all eyes gazed upon the Kaiser, who was dressed in his most regal attire. A smiled curved upon his lips, as he gazed upon the rulers of the western world, as if they were all beneath him. Because, in fact, they all were. It was this aura of confidence that prevailed throughout the entirety of his toast.

"If I could have all of your attention, I would like to make a toast. It has been ten years since I was first given any semblance of power in my life, and in a single decade, I have done more for this world than any man who has ever come before me. From a pitiful Baron, I have created an empire that has no rival in this world. Or so I would like to say...

I wish I could tell you all that the Reich had no true equal in this world. That from this day forward, we shall exist in a new era of peace and prosperity, not having to worry about things like external threats. However, this is not reality. Today I wish to announce that my agents have discovered a rising Empire on the other side of the world called Japan.

This is not an Empire built upon the outdated system of feudalism. Nor is this an Empire whose soldiers wield primitive weapons like swords and bows. No, this is an Empire whose military capability is at a near-peer level to the Reich.

Bolt action rifles, revolving cannons, breechloading artillery, steam powered warships, all the things that we have used to unite our Empire, and dominate the world, are in the hands of this Oriental Empire who is as we speak conquering their neighbors in a bid of military expansion.

On an Island in the far east, a woman was born during a time of war to a minor noble household. Through her own ingenuity and inventions, she had guaranteed peace and prosperity for her home, which attracted the greedy eyes of powerful men. In a series of wars, this young girl fought these men, which ultimately resulted in the unification of her people within a single Empire beneath her banner.

It sounds familiar, doesn't it? For the very same thing happened here in Kufstein throughout this past decade. Almost inconceivable that two people would rise to prominence in their sections of the world at the exact same time, through similar methods. I will tell you all something important. This woman is aware of our existence and has already shown signs of hostility to us.

Should this Empire bare their fangs against the Reich, it will result in a war with casualties the likes of which this world has never seen. It is because of this threat, veiled deep behind the fog of war, that I am announcing an immediate military expansion in this time of peace that we now have available to us.

Previously, the laws of conscription were established to ensure that the German Army was always capable of contending with any threat the Reich may face. However, I have been lax on these laws, primarily because I believed that there was no force on this Great Earth that could ever challenge our Empire.

However, with this news of an emerging industrial power in the far east, I have no choice but to fully enact conscription. Hence forth, every man aged 18-21 shall be conscripted into the Armed Forces of the Reich for a total of four years. We shall also be accepting volunteers aged 14-18 to serve part time in the armed forces should they choose to do so.

There are those of you here today who thought that by ending the threat of the Papacy and the stranglehold they had over Europe, we would be able to spend less on our military and focus on peaceful ventures instead. I am here to inform you that you are dead wrong. For the foreseeable future, I am increasing the spending of our national military budget on the Military from 10% to 15%.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is the end of an era. The horse, as an instrument of war, has become obsolete. To the cavalry that we have spent a decade and considerable cost raising. We shall disband their

regiments, and incorporate them into the Infantry, who shall not march into battle on foot, but ride into the flames of war in the back of armored vehicles.

Our marines shall not row to the shores on wooden boats, but deploy on large assault craft, designed explicitly to carry men and vehicles onto the shores of our enemies. Germany shall own the land, sea, and skies of this world, and any challenger to the lands that we have claimed shall be laid to waste!

This means the new world, the entirety of it, is off limits to those petty monarchs here who think they have a chance to expand now that the papacy is out of the way. And to all of you, who think that because a rival to Germany has appeared in this world, that you can just switch sides and gain the support of the Japanese Empire. I want you to know that should you engage in such foolish action, I shall not stop until you and your people are crushed beneath the boot of the Reich."

After making this speech the room as silent, the news of a new, and powerful rival did not bode well for the Germans in the audience, and the threats that Berengar had issued to the other Kingdoms was enough to turn anyone's stomach sour, especially after they all knew the might of the reich.

Linde, who sat next to Berengar, glared fiercely at the man. Did he really have to go and sour a day of celebration by telling everyone that the peace they had fought a decade to achieve was only temporary?

The redheaded beauty could only sigh and take a sip of her wine. She was already aware of Berengar's strategies to counter Itami's rapid rise to power. However, that was not important, at the moment she decided to take the opportunity to inform Berengar that she had already cleaned up Arnulf's mess.

"You should know, the issue in the new world has already been taken care of..."

Berengar looked over at Linde with a hint of surprise on his face before asking for clarification.

"What do you mean? How did you take care of it?"

Linde ate a piece of her schnitzel with the graceful demeanor of an empress before informing her husband about what she had done while he was busy orchestrating today's event.

"It is simple. Nobody really knows what has happened, so in order to control the narrative, I dispatched my agents to the New World. The official story is that Arnulf was manipulated by the natives into attacking the Citizens of Berenwalde.

The savages lied to the man, and informed him that the Colony of Berenwalde was preparing to attack New Vienna, forcing Arnulf to send troops to investigate these claims until he could receive proper orders from you.

In order to close up this little lie, I informed the survivors of Berenwalde the only way to absolve themselves from the crimes of attacking peaceful soldiers of the crown was to corroborate my story, and to claim that the natives had given them false intelligence suggesting that New Vienna had planned to annihilate their colony.

As we speak, the citizens of Berenwalde are spreading the rumor that the Natives had planned from the start to instigate conflict between the two colonies, and that the only reason they survived was because you had given the order to retreat.

The survivors are also saying that Arnulf was betrayed by the savages and killed in cold blood. Before long, the anti-native sentiment will spread, and the people of New Vienna will be lining up to join the Colonial Army, so that they can personally avenge their fallen governor."

Berengar wore a handsome smile as he kissed Linde on the lips in front of the entire audience. None of them had heard what she had said, as there were a thousand conversations taking place, and she was particularly quiet as she spoke of her schemes. However, after kissing the woman, Berengar whispered something in her ears that only she could hear.

"I love how much of a devious little bitch you can be. As a special thanks for cleaning up my mess, I will reward you in any way you so desire after the celebration is over."

Linde merely smiled at the praise she had been given. Berengar often used words like bitch, slut, or cunt as terms of endearment towards Linde. As a hardcore masochist, she got off on it. However, if anyone else were to say such vile words to her, they would probably end up dying from a poison potato. Thus, Berengar and Linde enjoyed the rest of the celebration, before absconding towards their quarters and enjoying the night in each other's loving embrace.

Chapter 830 More Military Advancements

Berengar sat back in his office and sighed heavily as he took a large gulp of his beer. Weeks had passed since the Victory Day celebration ended, and the royal families of Europe had returned to their homes.

With one notable exception. During the feast that Berengar had hosted for his guests, he had negotiated with King Alvar for his young granddaughter Astrid to stay behind in Kufstein and receive a German education. Perhaps out of jealousy, Ingrid insisted that she do the same.

Berengar's reasoning for such an arrangement was two-fold: firstly, it ensured the continued loyalty of the Nordic Countries, and secondly it fostered a healthy relationship between his son Kristoffer and his little fiancée. Ingrid forcing her way into his house was an unexpected surprise, but a welcome one. Berengar could tell the girl planned to have Hans all to herself, and he wanted to see his son knock her down a peg.

As for what Berengar had been up to in the weeks since the celebration ended. He had been designing new weapons designs for the eventual conflict with the Japanese Empire. Itami was a wildcard, and because he did not know her the exact extent of her technological capabilities, or the extent of her knowledge as a reincarnator, he had opted to prepare for the worst-case scenario.

Though he had begun production of Panther Tanks, Marder IFVs, and modern infantry weapons. There were still some things he feared would be necessary in a conflict with a near peer adversary. Among the list of new weapons Berengar had designed over the past two weeks. One was a self-propelled 15cm artillery piece that was known in his past life as the Hummel. Berengar intended for the majority of his field artillery to be mechanized, so it could keep up with his other mechanized units.

Because of this, he had chosen the WWII self propelled artillery gun used by the Germans in his past life. The hummel was built on a special chassis known as the Geschützwagen III/IV. It blended the driving and steering system of the Panzer III with the suspension of the Panzer IV. It also made use of one of Berengar's more modern engines, and because of that, was both powerful and reliable.

Aside from the mechanics of the vehicle, it had a 15 cm sFH 18 field gun mounted on its back. Which Berengar also designed towable artillery of the same pattern to replace his existing 7.5cm FK 27 field guns, as well as the more powerful 10cm K 27 field guns. The 15 cm sFH 18 fired a 149 mm × 260 R Separate loading cased charge with a maximum firing range of 13,325 meters and a rate of fire of 4 shells per minute.

With both the towable, and self propelled 15cm artillery pieces deployed as standard to his Artillery Units, Berengar had a good feeling about the destructive power he would be able to unleash on the battlefield. However, there was another critical piece of battlefield equipment that Berengar had developed for use in his army.

Anti-Aircraft weapons were needed if Germany were to fight an opponent armed with aircraft. Though Berengar had already designed several of the smaller designs for use on his warships, he now needed a piece that could be towed into battle, made static for use in fortifications, and even self propelled via an armored chassis. For this option, Berengar chose the 12.8cm FlaK 40.

The 12.8cm FlaK 40 fired a 128 x 958mm R explosive shell which weighed 26 kilograms. It had an elevation of -3 to +88 degrees, and a maximum firing range of 14,800 m. Needless to say, as an anti-air weapon, it would be able to take out even his own aircraft.

Aside from the FlaK 40, which could not only be towed onto the battlefields by a five ton truck but also could be created into a self-propelled armored vehicle known as the Flakzwilling 40. Berengar had devised another self-propelled anti-aircraft piece. However, unlike the FlaK 40, which was designed for taking out aircraft at higher altitudes, the Flankpanzer IV Kugelblitz was specifically intended to take out low-flying aircraft.

The Kugelblitz made use of the Panzer IV chassis, which was modified to accept Berengar's superior engine designs. It had a dual mounted MK 103 30mm anti-aircraft auto-cannon inside a closed turret. Each gun was capable of firing 450 rounds a minute and made use of the 30x184B explosive shells. If a ground attack aircraft were to get anywhere close to this vehicle, it would be shot out of the sky with ease.

Aside from the anti-aircraft weapons and the new artillery pieces, Berengar made three additional pieces of infantry equipment. Specialty weapons, so to speak. The first was a flamethrower modelled after the Flammenwerfer 41. It was a lightweight, and relatively compact flamethrower that was capable of werfing flammen at a range of 32 meters.

The second specialty weapon that Berengar designed was the Panzerfaust 250, it was the last model of Panzerfaust issued to German troops during the second war of his past life, and was more akin to an RPG 2 than it was the older models of the Panzerfaust. Not only was the Panzerfaust 250 reloadable, but it was also capable of an effective range of 250 meters, while penetrating a maximum of 200m worth of armor.

Though Berengar did not know if Japan would have tanks by the time their armies met in battle, he felt that arming as many soldiers as possible with shoulder fired anti-tank launchers and anti-aircraft launchers was a good idea.

Thus, the third and final specialty weapon he designed was the Fliegerfaust B, which was a 20mm shoulder fired anti-aircraft launcher designed and issued to German troops in the final days of the war. Perhaps had such an innovative weapon been introduced earlier in the war, it would have made a significant impact on the German war effort. However, in reality it was introduced too late, and with too few numbers to have any real effect.

The Fliegerfaust B fired nine 20mm rocket propelled explosive shells with a wide spread in two separate bursts. Though its range was severely lacking compared to other means of anti-aircraft weapons, it could prove to be useful if fielded in large numbers, against low-flying aircraft, especially ground attack craft.

Thus, Berengar wanted as many soldiers to have either a Fliegerfaust or a Panzerfaust in the event of war against the Japanese Empire. These were all weapons that Berengar had made over the past few weeks. However, at the moment, he had just finished working on one very important type of ship.

If Berengar wanted to fight with Japan, he would need to establish colonies, or at the very least military bases in the Pacific, so he could rearm and refuel his war effort. This meant he would likely be fighting a war against Japan for control over the region. If that was the case, he needed a specialty landing craft to ferry his troops and vehicles into battle.

Naturally, he modeled this vessel after the Mark 8 Landing Craft Tank. Which was a large landing craft designed by the Americans to ferry tanks and other armored vehicles onto the shores of the Pacific islands. Though they could also be used to ferry troops.

The vessel was 225 feet long and could carry eight tanks, thirteen trucks, or 350 tons of cargo across a range of 4,000 nautical miles. It also had an armament of four MG 151 20mm auto cannons.

Having just now finished the blueprints for these designs, Berengar had earned himself a break. Which he was thoroughly enjoying until a knock resounded on the other side of his door, followed by a meek voice which he instantly recognized.

"Your majesty, are you busy?"

Berengar finished his beer and effortlessly chucked the bottle across the room and into the trash before responding to the girl who patiently waited on the other side of his office door.

"It's open Priya, you can enter."

With that said, the door opened to reveal the figure of the teenage Indian Princess. Whom had rapidly developed since her first arrival in Kufstein nearly a year ago. Priya had suffered from malnutrition for most of her life, and because of this, she was rather petite and slender when she first showed up in the Reich.

However, after nearly a year of not only proper nutrition, but regular exercise, she was now beginning to resemble a stunning young woman, and why wouldn't she? She was already fourteen years old.

Though the girl still had a few years before she was fully grown, Berengar was pleased with her progress. However, he did not let his inquisitive gaze show on his face, instead he merely rested his chin on his curled hands as something else caught his sight.

In Priya's hand was a tray filled with two plates. On these plates were what appeared to be Curry, and another staple of Indian cooking. Berengar was rather surprised that the girl had brought him the food of her homeland and was about to inquire about its origin when the girl spoke up with a proud smile on her face.

"I've recently gotten into cooking. It's something to pass the time when I'm here in the palace after school hours. There's some interesting books in the market about the culinary techniques of foreign countries.

Apparently German Merchants have travelled across the world, and recorded the recipes of various cultures which they now sell for profit. I particularly took a liking to my homeland's food. This is chicken pakora and curried goat. I was hoping to share a meal with you and congratulate you on your victory."

Berengar gazed cautiously at the girl sitting in front of him. He was deeply suspicious of her behavior. There were few things better in this world than having a pretty girl make you a home-cooked meal, and it was one of his weaknesses. He thought for sure the girl was after something as he shamelessly grabbed a piece of chicken from the plate and tasted it.

Priya, however, seemed keenly interested in how Berengar felt about her cooking, and innocently gazed at him with hope in her emerald eyes. Which ultimately forced Berengar to sigh in defeat and reveal his thoughts on the dish.

"It is really good. I forgot how much I missed Indian food..."

This statement confused Priya. From the sound of Berengar's tone, it was as if he was speaking as if he had eaten Indian food a long time ago, but trade between that region of the world and the Reich was relatively recent.

Despite her curiosity, she kept her mouth shut, not wanting to offend the mighty Kaiser. Berengar then took a bite of the curried goat, and exclaimed in pleasure as he pointed his fork at Priya and complimented her.

"Mmm! This is really good. You have a lot of talent as a chef. Keep this up, and one day you will make your husband a very happy man!"

Berengar had just casually said those words without putting much thought into them, but Priya had read into them more than he had intended, and immediately blushed while lowering her head. Too embarrassed to meet the Kaiser's gaze. Thus, she spent the rest of the meal in silence, taking great joy in the sight of Berengar enjoying her cooking.