

Steel 87

Chapter 87: Counter Conspiracy

Linde sat in her quarter's within the Castle of Kufstein; she received a letter which was written from her sister; in this letter, it described the scene in which Adelheid had witnessed and their father's treachery. The girl twirled a strand of her strawberry blonde hair in boredom as she read the words. She suspected sooner or later her father would betray her lover; it was only a matter of time before the Church offered him something he could not refuse.

After reading the words the Letter contained, Linde burned it before leaving her room, seeking out Berengar to inform him of the crucial issue at hand. Before long, she found Berengar in his father's study reviewing the ledgers on his grand infrastructure initiative. When Linde arrived in the study with a worried expression, he could guess that her sister had reported some troublesome news, and as such, he immediately inquired about the details.

"Well, don't keep me waiting..."

Linde immediately shut the door behind her and informed Berengar of the matters reported to her.

"The Bishop of Innsbruck has promised my father the Prince-Bisophric of Chur so long as he aids in the invasion of your realm when the time comes. He has accepted these terms, and thus in doing so, betrayed you."

Berengar contemplated what this meant for a few moments; the Teutonic Order was sure to send a large army to enter his lands, but with the Count of Tyrol, on the other hand, would at best send a small punitive task force. He had greater ambitions than to gain the city of Chur, and by the time the Teutonic Order could muster a force to attack Kufstein, the Kingdom would either be on the brink of civil war or fully engaged in it. This truly did not change Berengar's plans all that much. In fact, this could be considered a blessing in disguise; by betraying Berengar and the alliance they had formed, Count Lothar was giving him a justifiable reason to invade his territory as such, Berengar decided at that moment on his plans to usurp the County of Tyrol from Linde's father. A wicked grin spread across his face as he thought of such things, confusing Linde as that was not the reaction she was anticipating, forcing her to ask why he was behaving so oddly.

"Why the hell are you smiling? Isn't this a serious matter?"

Berengar could not help but further smile at Linde's response, but ultimately he decided to inform her of the changes to his plans.

"Actually quite the contrary, this is wonderful news!"

Linde looked at her lover and master as if he were a lunatic before expressing her doubts.

"How could this possibly be considered wonderful news?"

Berengar got up from his seat and approached Linde, where he began to rub her shoulders as he explained the depths of his plots.

"Your father will at most send a few hundred men to honor the alliance with the Church. The reason being is that he can't afford to lose many men here in Kufstein, he has already threatened me once, and I easily repelled the bluff by addressing this point. The safety of Kufstein will be secured either way. On the contrary, this gives me a justified reason to march on Innsbruck and usurp his title when he is off at war trying to usurp the Duchy!"

Linde's gaze shifted from one of looking at a madman to looking at a genius. She struggled to believe Berengar came up with such a diabolical scheme directly after hearing about the news she thought was disastrous. This was why he was the man she had chosen, gentle but firm to his loved ones while being utterly ruthless to his enemies as a true man should be!

At this point, Linde had no allegiance to her father, and if Count Lothar realized that his precious daughter had completely turned on him, he would do his damned to personally flay Berengar for warping her mind to such a degree. Berengar no longer questioned her loyalty; she had proven herself to be absolutely obedient to him on many occasions; as such, he merely hugged his favorite pet from behind and stroked her hair.

However, it was not long before he heard a knock on the door interrupting his fun, as such Berengar ceased his activities and answered the door where he saw the figure of Eckhard; the man immediately realized he was interrupted something by the cold gaze of Berengar, and the flushed expression on

Linde's cheeks. However, since he was already here, he decided to attempt to give his report.

"My Lord, may I have a minute?"

Berengar nodded and allowed Eckhard into the room, where he proceeded to sit down before the desk and pour a couple of glasses of wine. After taking a sip from the chalice, Berengar motioned for Eckhard to continue.

"Go on..."

as such, Eckhard stood at attention with a look of pride on his face.

"My liege, we have so many recruits joining our forces from the region of Kitzbühel that we have filled the artillery battalion, as such I require a directive on the where I should focus on the training of the troops next?"

Berengar thought about it for a moment before he issued his decree.

"We should focus on establishing a full battalion of Cuirassiers, a minimum of 800 men; any additional men should begin forming the 2nd Infantry Battalion. Send the expense report to me when it is drafted, and I will approve of it."

After hearing his Lord and Commander's orders, Eckhard pounded his chest in a salute and marched off after accepting the terms

"Yes, My Lord!"

Linde looked in shock as she realized that Berengar's military might would be greatly expanding soon; 800 Cavalrymen was no small amount, even by the standards of a viscount, luckily his population had doubled recently, and he could afford to draft so many men into his army. Knowing the technological edge in which his forces had, Linde could not help but think that Berengar's army would soon be the most capable in the world.

Berengar, on the other hand, was satisfied with the results of his recruitment drive. He was certain that before the Teutonic knights arrived, he would have 2 full battalions of infantry, roughly 2400 men in total, a full battalion of cavalry numbering anywhere between 800-1200 men, and a full artillery battalion

numbering a total of 450 men, and 18 field guns. All in all, his army would be capable of defeating whatever force the Teutonic Order brought down upon him, so long as it was not the full army, which he highly doubted they would do considering their position with their neighbors.

Just like this, a counter conspiracy to the Church's plots was put in place to destroy the enemies of Kufstein utterly, and by extension, it's Regent.