

Steel 90

Chapter 90: Ludolf's Reformation

Ludolf had been hard at work on his academic refutation of the church's corruption and abuse of power. So much so that his manifesto had grown even larger than Martin Luther's from Berengar's previous life. After collecting evidence of the Church's sins and its wrongful attempts to dominate secular affairs, Ludolf compiled it together in a well-written thesis completely disputing the Church and its insidious actions. He had spent nearly a month gathering what he needed in an attempt to reform the Church for the better. Now that he had finished writing his paper, the priest brought it to Berengar's attention for review and possible alterations.

Berengar smiled as he read through the manifesto, which spoke many of his ideals, and unlike Luther, he spent a large amount of time focusing on the necessity for Church and State. From an academic standpoint, the work was solid; from a theological standpoint, it was brilliant. After reading through the whole thing, Berengar placed down the paper and looked at Ludolf, who had been silently waiting in patience for Berengar to finish it as he sat upon the seat of power in Kufstein. After placing down the manifesto with great care, he approached Ludolf and patted the man on the shoulders.

"My friend, it is a work of brilliance; I am truly inspired after reading it. This must be distributed across the German-speaking regions and Europe as a whole. With my press, it can be mass-produced much like the bibles we have been distributing and spread to the hands of true believers everywhere!"

Ludolf smiled greatly upon hearing the massive praise he received; he too agreed that the work needed to be spread; as such, he did not hesitate to agree to Berengar's suggestion of mass producing and distributing it across the German-speaking regions of the world.

"Thank you, Berengar; I must say I would never have walked this path without your guidance. It is truly an honor to be your friend!"

Berengar grabbed the paper and placed it in Ludolf's hands before complimenting the man further.

"The pleasure is all mine; now shall we head to the press and begin the process?"

Ludolf nodded and agreed to Berengar's request once more, and as such, Berengar and Ludolf marched down to the press, which was now located within its own factory run by his propaganda department. Berengar's elite guards flanked the two men as they did so. Despite being in the safety of Kufstein, Berengar had made many enemies, and he could never be too careful when it came to his safety.

The average citizens looked upon the men as they marched into the city under construction and into the industrial district where they entered the press, where the foreman was more than happy to greet them. As always, the man was a boot licker and showered Berengar and his guest in compliments upon arrival.

"My Lord, it is an absolute pleasure to witness your immaculate visage enter the factory! Tell me, how can I help you on this glorious day?"

Berengar could not help but sneer at the man's remarks; he was not the kind of man who desired to be around sycophants, never the less the man was good at his job, and as such, Berengar kept him in place.

"I need a special production line dedicated to the mass production of this work. Can it be done?"

The foreman once more put on the air as he continued to compliment Berengar, which ultimately looped right back around to a simple agreement.

"Of course, my Lord, for your benevolence, I can make anything possible. As you know, we have expanded operations quite successfully lately, and as such, we can easily afford to dedicate full-time production to this work."

With that said, Berengar motioned for Ludolf to hand it over, after which the priest quickly did so. Berengar looked around the area and noticed that the security was lacking for this vital installation. As such, he looked over to the foreman and informed him of his decision.

"I will attach a security detail around this facility around the clock; it looks like the Garrison needs more forces."

With the influx of recruits to his army, Berengar established a significant garrison in Kufstein whose full-time job would be to defend the region and act as internal security. Essentially they would become the gendarmerie until he could establish a dedicated police force.

After saying that, Berengar left while trying to ignore the exaggerated praise from the foreman who could refrain himself from saying such flatteries. After Berengar and Ludolf returned to the Castle, he pulled out a pair of goblets before filling them with wine and handing one to Ludolf before saying a toast.

"To the Reformation, may the Church be purged of its corruption!"

The two men clinked glasses before taking a sip. Ludolf, of course, could not refrain from his excitement.

"I truly do hope something comes of my work; I can not sit idly by and allow the Church to be blighted by the amoral bishops and cardinals who turn a blind eye to the teachings of Christ in pursuit of their greed."

Berengar merely smiled and took a sip from his glass; he knew the possibility of the Catholic Church actually being reformed was very slim; what was most likely to happen from Ludolf's actions was the Church splitting off and forming the protestant movement. Though such an event would inevitably lead to chaos within the European sphere of influence, Berengar needed that chaos to transition the German world into a scientific and industrious way of thinking.

As the two men celebrated their achievement, only Berengar was aware of how things would turn out. The future would be filled with endless blood and destruction due to these two men's actions. Yet, it would allow Berengar to build one of the mightiest Empires in history. An achievement that would one day brand him as the Father of the German Nation. Among his many nicknames for which he would be known, this was the one of which he was most proud.