

Steel 471

Chapter 471 - Securing The Teutonic State

While Berengar and his marines were engaging in a one-sided massacre on the other side of the world, the Austro-Bohemian Army had finally arrived within Marienburg. The current Grandmaster of the Teutonic order was a man named Hennek von Rotenburg and had greeted Eckhard and his soldiers with open arms. After all, the current state of the Teutonic Order was not exactly enviable.

Immediately upon making contact with the Teutonic Order, Eckhard handed the Grandmaster a list of demands from King Berengar von Kufstein. After a night of intense negotiation, the terms that the Austrian Monarch had presented were agreed to by the Teutonic State and its various leaders.

The first of these conditions was that the Teutonic State, all of its territories, and claims were to be annexed by the Kingdom of Austria starting immediately. This was something that the Teutonic Leaders had already agreed to some time ago.

However, the second condition was far less forgiving. Berengar demanded that the Teutonic Order disband its military component and become a chivalric order within the Austrian state, whose membership would be conferred to those who had served valiantly on the field of battle within Austria's armed forces.

It would retain its nature as a religious organization. However, it was demanded that they convert to the German Reformation and publically Disvow the Catholic Church and the Pope. This was a stipulation that the members of the Teutonic Order fiercely debated. However, they had no choice but to accept these demands in the end.

After all, not only could they no longer defend their borders, but they had a hundred thousand Austrian and Bohemian soldiers temporarily settled in their lands; by accepting these soldiers into the Teutonic State during their negotiations with the Field Marshal of Austria, they had essentially given away any power that they had to negotiate for themselves.

Eckhard's first act as the newly crowned military governor over the Teutonic Region was to send an ultimatum to the forces of the Eastern Coalition. Under the terms presented by Eckhard, they were given three months to remove all military, and political presence from the lands claimed by the Austrian Crown or face a full-scale invasion.

The Leaders of the Eastern Coalition did not take these demands lightly and responded by immediately invading what remained of the Teutonic State. A bold move, and one that Eckhard had entirely expected. Thus the aging Field Marshal currently stood atop a castle on the Eastern Front.

This once proud Teutonic fortress was nothing more than an obsolete structure in the eyes of the Austrian Field Marshal, though it, and other castles like it would serve as important cultural icons in the Kingdom of Austria and the future German Empire, its usefulness as an actual military structure was inferior to a star fortress, or even earthen fortifications.

Currently, as he stood atop this structure, his soldiers were firing their needle rifles and cannons into the Field below where the army of the enemy had gathered. Eckhard had split his army into much smaller units to protect the border from the enemy's invasion effectively. Thus, he merely commanded 5,000 men in defense of the current castle.

Despite being vastly outnumbered, the rapid-fire of the needle rifles and the support of the high explosive artillery was more than enough to ensure total victory in this battle against the forces of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. As the shells impacted upon the lines of iron-clad warriors, the enemy began to be filled with dread.

Just how were they supposed to siege a city against such a technologically superior foe? While Eckhard watched the ongoing carnage, a crossbow bolt flew by his head, narrowly missing his skull. Despite this threat to his existence, the man did not panic; in fact, not a single sign of excitement was visible from his appearance. Instead, he merely sighed heavily before ducking below the merlons.

As he sat by his soldiers, who fired their needle rifles into the gathered army below; the Austrian Field Marshal pulled out a pack of hemp cigarettes where he began to light one up and smoke during the ongoing battle. Such senseless slaughter, simply because the Eastern Coalition stubbornly refused to recognize that there was a new power in this world, one greater than their three nations combined. It was all so tiresome...

Gunshots echoed in the air as the Austrian and Bohemian soldiers poked their rifles through the castle's machicolations while they fired their weapons into the gathered mass of enemy soldiers. The .451 caliber bullets spiraled downrange and through the metallic armor plates that protected the enemy as if their expensive armor was completely and utterly worthless.

Blood spilled, and bones shattered after being impacted by these large lead projectiles, the sound of the bolts of these needle rifles could immediately be overheard as they were racked back in unison, and new rounds were chambered. Now and then, a soldier would place his rifle on the floor and eject a failed paper cartridge with the clearing rod before loading another round and firing into the horde.

If there weren't so many enemy soldiers, the battle indeed would have been won by now. Yet, the Polish-Lithuanian men at arms desperately struggled to raise their ladders and ascend to the top of the castle's ramparts, where the Austro-Bohemian soldiers continued to rain down their projectiles onto them. If any man got close to the edge, he was either shot down or stabbed to death by the blade bayonets atop the needle rifles.

The battle continued for several hours before what remained Polish-Lithuanian forces were wholly decimated; any soldier worth their salt had routed long ago and many of them had done so; the rest of them lay piled below, the castle's ramparts, thousands, perhaps even tens of thousands of Polish-Lithuanian men lie dead on the ground. Yet, despite their efforts, they had utterly failed to breach the castle's walls or inflict severe casualties on the Austro-Bohemian defenders.

In the eyes of Eckhard, this was no battle but a synchronized sacrifice of young men at the behest of foolish noblemen who refused to admit that their primitive ways had come to an end. The Austrian Field Marshal was confident that Austrian Hegemony had been secured when Berengar defeated the Holy Roman Empire. Yet, now with an armed force that was deadlier than ever, there was indeed no force in the West that could challenge the Kingdom of Austria and its mighty army.

Despite this overwhelmingly obvious conclusion, Austria's neighbors continued to resist the winds of change. They would send wave after wave of young men into the guns of Austria, hoping to overwhelm the trained professionals that comprised its forces. In the end, it would always result in this senseless slaughter. Gazing upon the massive loss of life wrought by his command, Eckhard sighed before commenting to himself about his ever-changing views of warfare.

"Such a pointless waste of lives, here I stand on the field of battle witnessing the death and despair that my decree has caused, and yet I know that I have not seen the end of the war, for only in death can one truly escape the wicked nature of man."

Upon saying this, the man turned away from the gory scene and descended from the castle's walls. If he were going to continue this campaign to the Baltic, he would need a stiff drink to calm his nerves. Thus he entered the great hall by his lonesome and served himself a beer from the stockpile within the castle.

Unfortunately, the Teutonic Order was utterly lacking in the advanced brewing methods that Berengar had introduced to his Kingdom; thus, the veteran Field Marshal was forced to drink from the weak substance which proclaimed itself to be an ale with a disgruntled expression on his face.

For Eckhard, this war had only just begun, and yet he was already weary of it. Luckily for him, his King had agreed to his demand that this was the end of his military career. Or else he would not know how to face himself in the mirror for the rest of his days.

While the soldiers of Austria and Bohemia cleaned up the battlefield and prepared to march on Poland-Lithuania to reclaim the lands that once belonged to the Teutonic State, Eckhard drank himself to sleep. With such weak alcohol, it had taken a substantial sum of the substance to achieve this, but by force of sheer will, the man had swallowed enough of the swill to accomplish his goal for the night.

When he finally woke up the following day, he would be lying faced down in a pool of ale, yet there was no time to sulk; his army had to be on the march and finish this war as quickly as possible. Thus the aging Field Marshal dusted himself off and put on a stern expression, his ever-increasing battle fatigue would have to wait until after he had concluded with conflict.

Chapter 472 - Diplomacy At Its Finest

Berengar lie naked on a bed of furs in his cabin. He was in a half asleep state, most likely hungover from the night of celebration after a brilliant victory. The young king instinctively reached over to his side, only to realize that nobody was lying next to him. The fact that there wasn't at least one pair of soft mounds to greet him in the morning caused him to sober up greater than any coffee could.

After the glorious victory the day before, Berengar and his soldiers had over indulged in drinking what little alcohol supply they had brought with them for this journey. Now they were almost completely tapped out, leaving them in a state of sobriety for the next few weeks, until Honoria could arrive with a new shipment.

To Berengar, there was nothing more painful than being permanently sober. In fact, he figured that if hell truly existed, it would just be him sober for all eternity. With all the things he had witnessed in his past life, and this current one. He needed a bit of intoxication to calm his nerves after a stressful day. Unfortunately, all he had now been hemp cigarettes, and though they helped bring him a sense of calm, their lack of THC did not fix his issue with sobriety.

He gazed over at the vacant spot next to him with a hint of remorse. Just why exactly did he send Honoria to lead the fleet back to the fatherland? There were dozens of naval officers who could easily fulfill such a task. Unlike a usual deployment, he could bring one of his wives with him this time, and yet at the first opportunity he told her to leave his side. There was a word for such a decision, idiotic, and Berengar felt it right now.

If Honoria were here, he would have probably slept with her after the battle; after all, from his perspective, there was nothing better than making love after a good fight. However, she had been dispatched to ferry supplies and men from the Fatherland to this new military outpost.

Thus, not only was he now sober for the next week or two, but he also had blue balls. He was thinking that coming to the other side of the world, in the dead of winter, was not the brightest idea he had ever devised in his creative mind. While he was lamenting every life choice that brought him to this point, a knock resounded on his door.

Because of this, he quickly got out from under his fur covers and put on a pair of trousers. After doing so, he shuffled towards the crude wooden door, and opened it, revealing the mohawk chieftain's young daughter, who had an excited expression on her face.

Since the battle the night before, she had been overenthusiastic about serving his needs, to the point where Berengar was fairly certain that she had offered to sleep with him in her own language. Despite such a tempting offer, he refused. After all, he could not tell whether she had syphilis. The last thing Berengar wanted to do was make the same mistake as the explorers from his past life, and bring that horrible disease back to the fatherland.

Because of this, he had strictly forbidden his soldiers from having relations with the native women, not that there were any in the camp besides Kahwihta. The punishment for such a thing was a long-term quarantine. Berengar was serious when it came to the spread of diseases to his people.

Besides, if Berengar had actually taken advantage of the poor girl, he could only imagine the screeching that would resound across America's universities in his past life should they become aware of his actions in this one.

All the pink-haired land whales would scream about the Austrian Monarch's so-called "crimes against humanity" and any other form of nonsense that their instructors fed to their vacant minds. He internally swore that he would never allow his own universities to become such an absent minded cesspool of humanity's worst aspects.

After thinking about such pointless things for a few seconds, Berengar allowed the young woman to enter his cabin. After she did so, she sat down at his table as if it were the most natural thing to do. Berengar ignored her actions and instead brewed himself some coffee. If he was going to be sober for the next few weeks, then he was at least going to have some caffeine in his blood.

As Berengar brewed the coffee, Kahwihta gazed at him with reverence. Since the battle the day before, her brother had made her vow to do everything in her power to seduce him so that they could establish an alliance with these gods from across the great sea.

Despite agreeing to her brother's request, Kahwihta was completely inexperienced when it came to dealing with the opposite sex. Even though she was renowned across the region as a great beauty, her father's fearsome reputation had scared away any potential suitors.

Thus, until now, she had not even kissed a man, let alone seduced once into her bed. On top of all of this there was simply not enough time that had passed for the two of them to communicate, and though Berengar had learned some of the Iroquois languages, and Kahwihta had learned some German, there was still an enormous gap between them before they could actually understand each other.

As he thought about this, Berengar had finished brewing the coffee, and brought it over to the table, where he handed a cup to the chieftain's daughter. Unfortunately, he was not able to bring fresh milk on his journey, and thus he was forced to drink it black. Which, though, was tolerable. Was not his preferred way to consume coffee.

As for Kahwihta, she could not help herself from spitting out the bitter substance the moment it hit her tongue. When Berengar saw this, he laughed before taking a sip of his own. The chieftain's daughter could not understand how this man had consumed such a disgusting drink.

Eventually, Berengar pulled open a map and pointed towards a blank space. This action shocked Kahwihta, as she understood his intent. After establishing friendly ties with her people, Berengar desired to meet with her father. Thus, she calmed her heart before she nodded her head in response.

Berengar saw the serious expression on her face and spoke in German as he attempted to communicate further with the women despite her limited knowledge of his language.

"I look forward to establishing trading ties to your village!"

However, most of what he said was gibberish to Kahwihta, and thus the young woman looked at him with a forced smile as she nodded her head, pretending as if she knew what he was saying. With this plan established, Berengar brought Kahwihta and her people to the square of the outpost, where he gathered a small squad of men. The Austrian King did not waste time and immediately gave the soldiers their orders.

"We are departing for the village that Kahwihta hails from. We have a simple goal: to establish trade with them and see if we can further enhance our communication. I won't lie to you. We are severely lacking in intelligence, and at the moment, her tribe is the only friendly force we have encountered.

For all, we know we are surrounded by hostiles on all sides, and while we may have superior equipment and training, we are relying entirely on imports from the fatherland to maintain our presence here in Vinland. Some local support would go a long way towards our long-term goals.

Thus, it is your duty to accompany me to the village and provide the protection to ensure that trade can be established between our two people. Remember, we are a long way from home, with only ourselves to rely on. So treat this mission as seriously as you would any other. Do not let our victory yesterday cloud your judgment. We are still in a precarious position for the time being."

The soldiers threw up their Roman salutes in unison before responding to their King in the affirmative.

"Hail victory!"

With this said, Berengar threw up his own salute in response.

"Hail victory!"

Kahwihta gazed upon this strange gesture with curiosity in her deep brown eyes. She did not know what a salute was, or what this gesture represented. Innocently enough, she followed suit and threw up a Roman salute, while poorly pronouncing the words that the golden-haired gods had stated.

The Marines gazed upon the woman with a stern expression, while Berengar looked at her with affection. He did not know why, but seeing an indigenous woman innocently throw up this symbol which was associated with German Racial Supremacy from his past life, brought a smile to his face. Her naivety was endearing in many ways.

After saying this, Berengar whistled, and in doing so, a member of the Battalion brought forth a wagon pulled by two draft horses. The mounts were brought with them from across the Atlantic. As for the wagon, it had been entirely constructed here in the new world by the engineers.

It closely resembled that used by the US Army during the 19th century, complete with its canvas covering. Kahwihta gazed upon this magnificent device with awe in her eyes. Not only was she astounded by the existence of Horses, but the wheels attached to the large land canoe were also something she had never seen before.

To Berengar, this wagon was a simple tool, which his Army used for logistics. It was an utterly primitive design, and he desired to replace it with trucks powered by diesel engines. Unfortunately, he was still lacking in the technology and manufacturing capacity to produce such vehicles.

However, to this indigenous woman, this wagon was the most magnificent feat of engineering she had ever laid eyes on. With the ability to conjure thunder and command the beasts of a foreign land, the young woman was more than ever convinced of the divine nature of the golden-haired invaders. Berengar noticed the awestruck expression in her deep brown eyes and chuckled to himself; it was entertaining to see such reverence for him and his people.

Berengar entered the back of the wagon and dragged the indigenous beauty up into it to sit alongside him. Afterward, the rest of the delegation followed them inside before the Austrian marines piled into the wagon. Only two marines sat up front to pilot the device and protect it with their rifles.

After they were ready to head out, the gates to the fortress opened, and the wagon departed, heading towards the Mohawk village. Berengar gazed at the girl next to him with a complicated expression. Though it had not become apparent yet, he and his men brought diseases from the old world that the native populace lacked immunity to.

This would undoubtedly one day devastate the local population, which would aid towards his colonization efforts. However, he would feel regretful if this beautiful young woman who revered him as a god ended up passing away as a result.

Hopefully, such a scenario would not come to pass. Though his Kingdom may be relatively advanced in terms of medicine, it was still far from the ability to prevent such a natural disaster from befalling the native Americans.

Thus, he observed this girl closely; he hoped that she would be able to endure what was now a certainty.. Without knowing it, Kahwihta was about to bring a plague to her people that would one day spread from coast to coast, killing millions in the process.

Chapter 473 - Attack On The Conspirators

While Berengar was off in the New World overseeing a diplomatic mission with the Mohawk Tribe, and while Honoria was at sea, journeying back to the fatherland so that she could bring more men and supplies back to the outpost to ensure its long-term stability. There was a group of men gathered in the city of Antioch.

Decentius, Dalmatius, and a group of other conspirators who had engaged in a botched covert operation to assassinate the Byzantine Princess were standing around a table in a secluded room. Several heads that belonged to the freelance assassins who had made an attempt on Honoria's life were on this table.

These severed heads were cleaned out, and on their foreheads was the mark of the Austrian Crown. The delivery of these heads to the conspirators was a blatant act of aggression by Austrian Royal Intelligence. More importantly, it served as a reminder that Austria had its claws embedded in every Nation around the Mediterranean.

There was nowhere that these men could flee for safety now that the Austrian Crown was aware of their involvement in the conspiracy to claim Honoria's life. Dalmatius was, of course, the most nervous out of all the men present, as this was his residence where these severed heads had been delivered. He was anxiously biting his fingernails as he desperately sought a solution from his co-conspirators; chief among them was the second prince of the Empire.

"Your majesty! What should I do? Now that the Agents of the Austrian Crown know of my involvement, they will stop at nothing to hunt me down and eliminate me!"

As the man violently shook the prince, Decentius remained unresponsive; the truth was he was greatly concerned for his safety. Though he was fairly certain that Austria and its Agents would not directly retaliate against him, his family was an entirely different matter.

After all, his wife was currently with his child, and he knew how devious Austria's intelligence agents could be. Though it was unknown to those outside of the Austrian Court who acted as Berengar's spymaster, what was a certainty was that whoever this mysterious individual was, they were vindictive beyond belief.

There were more than a few rumors that Austria's agents would harm their targets' families if thoroughly provoked. It was unknown whether these orders were given by the King of Austria or his mysterious spymaster. However, one thing was sure; he had attempted to assassinate the Tyrant's wife and, in doing so, ensured the most vicious reprisal for his actions.

Since the Austrians had found out that Dalmatius was responsible for hiring the assassins, it was highly likely that they knew of the man's connection to the Second Prince. Decentius was beginning to regret his actions, as now it was all but guaranteed that his family would be targeted after Austria made an example out of Dalmatius.

While he was reflecting on this, the man named Dalmatius was having a mental breakdown and began inspecting the heads for whatever reason. Initially, Decentius ignored this detail until his subordinate said something that caused a chill to go down his spine.

"What the hell is this? The head has been hollowed out! Wait, there's something in here!"

Immediately, Decentius panicked as he cried out to Dalmatius,

"Wait! St-"

However, it was too late; the Strategos had pulled on the drawstring, which ignited an explosive compound packed within the skull of the severed heads; immediately, an explosion took place in the room, which tore the nearest conspirators, including Dalmatius, to bits.

When the explosive within that skull went off, it ignited those embedded within the other severed heads, causing a chain reaction to take place, which blasted apart the conspirators as if they were nothing more than chunks of meat.

Decentius felt a searing pain across multiple aspects of his body while his ears were ringing as he struggled to regain control over his blurry vision. When he finally became aware of his surroundings, he began to scream in agony.

Not only were several of the more prominent figureheads who supported his claim to the throne turned into mincemeat, but he was missing both his right hand and the lower half of his left leg as they began to bleed profusely onto the floor. He would be truly and utterly dead if he did not stop the bleeding soon.

Luckily for the Second Prince of Byzantium, the guards outside the door heard the explosion and came into the room, where they immediately began to take action. A leather belt was placed in the mouth of the Second Prince, as one of the guards stuck his sword into the open hearth; after it was glowing red, he pressed the steel blade against the prince's wounds, searing his flesh, and causing the man to howl in his suffering.

If not for the leather belt in his mouth, he may very well have bitten off his tongue and caused his death to be ensured. Yet, such a scenario did not occur. Instead, his wounds were rapidly treated by the Royal Guards, where they swiftly carried the prince back to the local Palace's physician. The Second Prince of the Byzantine Empire would be under intensive medical care; whether or not he would survive was up to the Lord God Almighty.

As for this attack on the Byzantine Royal Family, it was carefully observed by the Austrian Agent who had conducted the raid. Not only had they delivered the heads packed with the highly explosive compound known as TNT, but they also stuck around to see just how many of the conspirators had been killed. They never expected the Second Prince to arrive at this meeting personally; in fact, it was a bonus that he was so grievously wounded in the attack.

However, it added a layer of risk; if it were to become discovered that Austria was responsible for the attack, it could harm relations between the two nations. As such, the veteran field agent immediately got to task cleaning up any evidence of his Kingdom's involvement.

Of course, it did not take a rocket scientist to understand just who was responsible for such an explosive attack. Yet, as long as they could maintain plausible deniability, Austria would never admit to it. Thus, a new and thorny era of Austro-Byzantine relations was about to take place, and during this crisis, the King of Austria was inexplicably missing.

After all, he was on the other side of the world, in a continent that was utterly unknown to the entirety of the old world. When Berengar finally returned to the fatherland months later, he would have to construct a much more delicate cover for his absence than he had initially planned.

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It did not take long for word of this attack to reach Palladius' spy network and, by extension, Austrian Royal Intelligence. Back in Austria, Linde was within the headquarters of the department, where she was dressed in her service uniform. She could not believe the report in her hands; as such, she was pretty vocal as she scolded her deputy director.

"Did I not explicitly state to abort the operation if Decentius was involved? How the hell did this happen? I warned you, that if this operation was not conducted properly, it would set back our diplomacy with the Byzantine Empire by decades! How did your operative botch this mission so badly?"

Hemma was silent as she stared down at the floor, unwilling to meet Linde's gaze. Though she had informed the agents of the proper measures that were to be taken to conduct this operation, the responsibility for this massive failure still fell on her shoulders. She struggled to come up with an excuse that would not further outrage her boss.

"Your highness... We did not know that the Second Prince would be at the meeting. Somehow, he had arrived without being identified by our field agent. However, we eliminated the conspirators. With their deaths, we could easily leak the evidence for their wrongdoing to the Byzantine Crown."

Linde was far from pleased despite this reasoning, and she continued to berate her subordinate.

"So let me understand this, somehow, someway, the Second Prince of the Byzantine Empire slipped past our detection and entered the kill zone without our knowledge. I want to know how our agents failed to identify his presence. The moment Decentius arrived in the area, this operation should have been aborted!

I want the names of everyone involved in this plot, especially that of whoever was the agent in command of this operation. Our King is absent on a critical diplomatic mission. While he is away, you idiots have single-handedly set back the diplomacy between our Kingdom and our greatest ally by decades! Do you have any idea how hard our monarch has had to work to build the relationship he currently has with the Byzantine Empire?

Somebody needs to be held responsible for this; you have grievously wounded the Second Prince of the Empire; if you assholes can not pin this attack on somebody else, then I will make sure that heads roll, do I make myself clear!"

Hemma immediately saluted her superior before responding in the affirmative.

"Yes, ma'am!"

After hearing this, Linde looked disgusted at the woman she had appointed to help her lead the Department of Intelligence. She left one last comment before departing back to the Palace.

"Clean up your fucking mess and do it quickly!"

Having said this, Linde departed from the headquarters of Royal Intelligence; as for her Deputy Director, the woman quickly got to work creating a scapegoat for this attack, and she knew just who to blame.. Whether she could convince the Byzantine Emperor that Austria had no involvement with this attack would not only determine her future, but that of the Austro-Byzantine Alliance.

Chapter 474 - Arriving In The Mohawk Village

After several hours of riding in the wagon, Berengar, Kahwihta, and the Austrian Marines arrived at their destination. The Austrian King poked his head out from under the canvas and examined The Mohawk village, which was relatively sizable. Various longhouses were spread throughout the town and surrounded by a primitive wooden palisade that acted as a defense against hostile tribes.

If Berengar had to guess, this village could entirely sustain hundreds of people. This was reasonably impressive when considering the severe technological limitations that the native peoples of North America had when compared to their old-world counterparts. Nothing exemplified this stark contrast greater than when the Mohawk people laid eyes on the Austrian wagon.

They were in as great a shock as Kahwihta was when she first witnessed the foreign beasts that powered the device. This simple supply wagon was beyond the limited understanding of transportation for a people who lacked beasts of burden and the wheel.

The village guards gazed upon the pale skin riders at the front of the wagon with trepidation in their eyes, as they did not know how to react to this strange occurrence. However, when Berengar stepped out of the back of the wagon with Kahwihta and her brother by his side, they immediately relaxed and greeted their Chieftain's children in their native tongue.

"Kahwihta, Shosheowa it is good to see you return; your father was worried when we heard that you had not yet returned even after the Algonquin's attacked the foreigners village."

The Chieftain's children gazed upon their brethren with a pitiful expression; they had not witnessed the incredible feats these golden-haired gods had achieved. Thus, they were unaware that the Austrians repelled the Algonquin without a single casualty. However, it was not their place to inform these sentries that hundreds of their enemies lie dead. Instead, Kahwihta merely demanded access to the village.

"I must speak with my father about something important regarding the future of our tribe. Swiftly open the gates!"

The two men looked at each other with awkward expressions before sighing heavily; after doing so, they pushed the gates open, allowing the Austrian Marines and the Mohawk delegation entry to the village. Berengar and the chieftain's children hopped back into the wagon as they continued up towards the Chief's Longhouse, which his daughter provided directions towards.

When they finally arrived, Kahwihta jumped out of the vehicle with a bitter expression on her face. She did not know how she was going to convince her father that all the things she witnessed were reality and not some strange fever dream.

However, she was determined to bring lasting peace between their two peoples after witnessing the destructive power that the Austrians wielded. Thus, she halted Berengar before entering the longhouse with her brother. She struggled to speak in the little German she understood.

"Wait here..."

In response to this, Berengar smiled and nodded his head; he was confident that she needed to discuss much with her father. Upon seeing his agreement, the girl smiled before entering the longhouse, where her father and sister were gathered with several of the veteran warriors of her tribe around a table that had a map sprawled out across its surface.

This map represented the Algonquin village responsible for the attack on the Austrian fortress; believing the Algonquin would be weakened after a significant victory against the foreigners, the Mohawk were now preparing to attack their enemy and claim their village's resources as their own.

Truthfully, the Chieftain had little faith in the Austrian's ability to hold their position. Though the fortifications seemed impressive at first glance, he did not know how effective they indeed were, nor did he know how advanced the Austrian weapons were.

By the sheer volume of numbers, he believed the mighty Algonquin warriors would quickly overrun the Austrians. Yet, right before he could complete his plan for attack, his son and daughter, who he thought to be dead, appeared before him.

When the aging chieftain witnessed his children's safe return, a broad smile appeared on his face as he walked over to her and hugged the two of them fiercely. As he did so, he immediately inquired about what events had transpired to lead her home.

"My sweet Kahwihta, tell me, how have you survived the Anishnabe's attack? We were certain that they would have driven out those pale-skinned foreigners by now!"

The Chieftain's daughter struggled to voice her thoughts; after all, had she not been there to witness their might, she never would have believed what the Austrians had managed to achieve. After a few moments of silence, Shosheowa was the one who spoke up to his father.

"Father! These foreigners are no mere mortals! They are, in fact, gods! We both act as a witness to their ability to control thunder and fire alike! Not only the two of us but also the entire delegation have seen them command beasts of the land with absolute authority!"

The Anishnabe attacked that day with well over a thousand men, and yet, with the forces of nature at their charge, these golden-haired gods repelled their enemies with ease, killing hundreds in the process and suffering no casualties!

Look outside your longhouse, and see the methods we have used to travel here! We must not make the mistake of our rivals! If we show the slightest sense of hostility to these deities from across the Great Sea, they will wipe us out as quickly as a man would swat a fly!"

The Chieftain was flabbergasted by his son's hysterical comments. Just what had the delegation witnessed to praise these foreigners to such an extent? He quickly gazed over to his daughter with a curious expression before asking for confirmation of her brother's wild tales.

"Kahwihta, is this true?"

The young woman nodded her head and responded without hesitation.

"It is, father. He is not lying. These foreign men must be gods, or at the very least the children of them, to conjure such forces of nature, and to command the beasts of the land. I implore you to greet them as guests, and treat them well. For even if our entire tribe were to fight against them, I fear as if we would be no match.

I would also like to remind you that this is a small host, likely a scouting party, sent to investigate these lands. If more of them were to arrive, it would be disastrous for our people if they were to become our enemies!"

The man could hardly believe his ears, but after witnessing both his son and daughter compliment these foreigners so greatly, he had no choice but to listen to them. Ultimately, he waved to the guards at the entrance of his longhouse to allow Berengar entry.

As Berengar entered the longhouse, the Chieftain gazed upon him with a curious expression. Berengar was tall, far taller than their greatest warrior. However, the most striking part of his character was the eyepatch, and the scar concealed beneath it. The chieftain could tell by one glance at the foreigner's features he was a veteran of many battles.

From one warrior to another, the Mohawk chieftain treated Berengar with respect as he pulled out a peace pipe and offered Berengar a smoke. Kahwihta translated what few words she could between the two leaders.

"My father offers you a smoke from this pipe as a sign of peace between our two peoples."

Berengar instantly nodded his head and grabbed hold of the pipe, where he pulled out his lighter and took a long draft. He held the smoke in his lungs for several moments before blowing it out into the air. After doing so, he handed it back to the chieftain, who was still shocked to see the device that the Austrian King had used to light the pipe.

After taking a large hit of his own, the Chieftain exhaled a large plume of smoke no greater than the size which Berengar had released. Now that the two of them had smoked the peace pipe, negotiations could begin. Berengar immediately discussed his terms of trade that he wanted to establish between his encampment and their village.

"I would very much like to establish trade with your people. We are merely a forward outpost, and are relying entirely upon imports from our fatherland at the moment. However, our Kingdom is a great distance away, and it will take many days for our supplies to arrive. In exchange for food, I would be willing to trade you iron, which can be used to make superior weapons and tools."

Kahwihta could only really understand the gist of what Berengar was saying, and struggled to communicate his intent towards his father. In the end, Berengar was forced to resort to a more primitive means of communication. He grabbed a hold of a stalk of corn from the table nearby and took off his cuirass.

The chief looked at him with a questioning gaze, as Berengar motioned for Shosheowa to give him his flint dagger. After a brief exchange of glances, Shosheowa handed his weapon over to Berengar, where the Austrian King used all of his force to stab his cuirass with the stone dagger.

Upon impacting against the high carbon steel, the flint dagger broke apart, and the Mohawk chieftain, as well as his gathered warriors, stood in shock. It was at this moment they realized the value of steel. Of course, Berengar would not be willing to trade high carbon steel to the natives, but an iron breastplate would have the same effect.

With the durability of metal established, Berengar pulled out his own steel bayonet, and placed it next to his breastplate, trying to communicate that despite the difference in color, they were made of the same material.

"Iron, I give you iron for food, yes?"

Kahwihta suddenly understood what Berengar was trying to convey and immediately began to translate for her father.

"I think he is willing to give us this material, in exchange for food..."

The chieftain gazed at his daughter with confusion in his eyes. Why would they give away such a valuable material for mere food? When he asked her this question, Kahwihta shrugged her shoulders. She did not know. Thus, she tried to translate her father's question to Berengar.

"Father... wants to know... why you are trading iron for food?"

Berengar smiled, as he stocked the corn in to a giant pile, while leaving a single stalk of corn in a pile of its own. After doing so, he pointed to the two piles of corn and tried to communicate his thoughts to the native chieftain.

"I have a lot of iron! But I have very little food!"

After a few attempts, Kahwihta finally understood what Berengar meant and conveyed his thoughts to her father.

"He says he has a lot of the material, but very little food. Hence why he will trade it to us for something as simple as food."

With this being the case, the Mohawk chieftain immediately nodded his head in understanding and spoke to Berengar in his native tongue.

"Very well. We will accept your trade. We will provide you and your people with food in exchange for this so-called iron."

After Kahwihta had successfully translated her father's words, Berengar wore a wide smile before extending his hand in friendship.. It took the native chieftain a few moments to understand the gesture, but in the end Berengar and Kahwihta's father shook hands on the agreement, in doing so conducting the first recorded instance of trade between the old world, and the new world.

Having successfully conducted the first instance of trade between the old and new worlds. Berengar and his men immediately departed to prepare the goods they intended to exchange for food. Somehow, Kahwihta had convinced her father to allow her to stay in the Austrian outpost. She fully intended to master the German Language before she returned home to her family.

With not much work to be had, Berengar took time out of his schedule to teach the native girl the German language, not just in verbalization but also in reading and writing its script. Despite her humble origins, the woman was a quick learner. After studying the language of her newfound gods for some time, she could now communicate with her benefactor to some degree.

By now, she had learned Berengar's name and the origin of his people. He honestly did not need to exaggerate that much to convince the woman that the Austrian people were, in fact, deities; after all, the tales he spun of railways, steam-powered vessels, massive structures, and the many other impressive feats of his Kingdom was enough to convince the native woman that the so-called Kingdom of Austria was a blessed land of great prosperity and power.

Unfortunately, with the Austrians' arrival, pestilence had occurred in the land; before long, Kahwita developed feverish symptoms, and Berengar became quite concerned. After all, he knew that this woman lacked any form of immunity to the diseases he and his men had unwittingly brought over from the old world.

Thus, Berengar was tending to the sickly woman while waiting for Honoria to return with more men and supplies. As a precaution for facing unknown illnesses in the alien land of Vinland, the Austrians had prepared many herbal remedies to aid in all kinds of conditions he and his men might encounter as part of the journey.

With the initial outbreak, Berengar had ordered his medics to bring a portion of the supplies to the Mohawk village, and treat anyone who showed symptoms of the flu. In doing so, he hoped to save at least a few lives from the pestilence he brought to the new world.

At the moment, Berengar was brewing up an herbal tea alongside a pot of chicken noodle soup as he kept a careful eye over the native woman who lay naked in his bed. As part of her treatment, he had prepared a damp towel and placed it over her head.

Despite appearances, Kahwihta was not in the worst condition possible; in fact, she was doing quite well. However, she was entirely unaccustomed to influenza, and thus she felt as if she were dying. In reality, she had a mild case, primarily because of the effective natural treatment she had received from Berengar. Something the other tribes would not be lucky enough to experience.

The woman lay underneath the fur covers as she coughed lightly into the air; after doing so, she had a bitter expression on her face as she revealed her thoughts to her deity.

"I fear that I will not be able to witness the grandeur of your divine Kingdom. My only regret in this life is that I failed to prove useful to you..."

Berengar held onto the young woman's dainty hand with a warm smile on his face; he shook his head as he informed the native girl of her current condition.

"You will have plenty of time to establish diplomatic ties with the local tribes. Your condition is not as bad as you think it is; you have a high chance of surviving this illness. Rather, what you should be concerned about is the effect this illness will have on this land as a whole..."

Disease in itself was an ugly thing, especially when it came in the form of a virus. Influenza could rapidly spread and was one of the leading causes in Berengar's past life for the decline of the Native American peoples.

Unfortunately, there was no natural way to stop it. It was something that accompanied the Germans when they visited the land. Berengar, like much of his men, had become accustomed to this disease that was mainly the result of domesticating livestock.

While Berengar and his men had brought none such animals with them, they carried the disease, and by simply contacting the natives, had begun its spread. Thus when Kahwihta heard her people were also suffering from this unknown illness, she felt her heart bleed.

The fact that these foreigners could spread disease seemingly at will act as further proof in her mind that they were, in fact, gods. This disease was the wrath of the golden-haired gods and had come about as a result of the Algonquin's folly. Fortunately for her people; they had sided with the Austrians, and in doing so, ensured their protection from the pestilence they brought with them.

Of course, Berengar had no way of knowing that the girl was thinking about this and instead felt like she would blame him for her people's suffering. Despite this, he did not apologize; whether it was the Austrians who spread this disease or some other population from the old world that reached the Americas, such a thing was simply inevitable.

Thus, Berengar did not dwell on the subject and instead fed the girl the soup and herbal tea, which immensely helped her condition. After finishing her meal, Kahwihta fell asleep, leaving Berengar with some downtime; as such, he exited his quarters and approached his soldiers, who were currently on guard.

"What's the current status of the flu?"

The officer scratched the back of his head beneath his helmet as he updated the King on the ongoing plague that spread across the land.

"Our boys are fine; we've taken preventative measures and have effectively countered its effects. It is honestly a mild variant, at most a few sniffles here and there. Those who are showing symptoms receive regular hydration and herbal remedies.

However, for whatever reason, this variant's effect on the natives has been devastating. Only a few weeks have passed, but our scouts report that thousands from among the known tribes now lie dead. When we contacted the Mohawk, it was already in our systems and began to spread to them.

Unfortunately for them, the moment we left the village, the Mohawk Chief departed on a diplomatic venture to the other tribes on our behalf. In doing so, he unwittingly spread the disease to the other native populations. This could prove very useful to us in the long term.

With the rapid spread of the flu, the natives' numbers will dwindle, allowing our fortress to remain secure. So long as we bring in more men and supplies, we could theoretically turn this into a self-sustaining military outpost with limited support from the fatherland."

Berengar nodded his head in response to his captain's suggestion. Though it was a horrific event for the native Americans, to the Kingdom of Austria, the spread of influenza within the new world was a serious tactical advantage.

Of course, it would only increase after they had imported livestock. Ultimately, this was a fate that could not be avoided. Upon seeing his Monarch's reaction, the Marine Captain had another question on his mind, which he immediately inquired about.

"Your majesty, if I may ask, what exactly are the supplies being brought over on the next voyage?"

In response to this, a wide grin appeared on Berengar's face as he explained the mission he had tasked Honoria with.

"It may be a few months before they arrive; after all, several ships need to be retrofitted, but I intend for a larger fleet of frigates to ferry troops and supplies over—everything from livestock, agricultural technology, and building supplies to military equipment and munitions.

This primitive wooden fort will be rebuilt into a proper star fortress, and our dock will be capable of containing several ships. We will begin implementing fields outside the defense in the spring and raise livestock so that you men can have some fresh meat.

This fortress will act as our first military installation in this New World and as our first colony. For now, it will remain a highly regarded secret within our Kingdom; only those with enough security clearance will know its existence..."

This response by the Austrian King only filled the officer with further questions, who immediately asked for clarification to his curiosity.

"Who will work the fields? Surely you do not expect us to do so?"

When Berengar heard this, he chuckled before responding to the man's question.

"In time, some natives will come to revere us, especially after they see that we are unaffected by the pestilence that we have brought into this land. The survivors from the tribes that are not aligned with us and have not received our "blessing" will come seeking shelter, and when they do, we will put them to work in the fields. Their payment will be a portion of the food that they grow, shelter to live in, and protection provided by the Austrian Military.

In the coming years, I intend to replace these savages with Austrians. In the meantime, you and your soldiers are free to take as many of the local women as you want as concubines. Just remember, while we may bring diseases with us that these people are not immune to, it is possible that they have diseases which we are not familiar with as well.

You should all be very careful who you sleep with. If you think there is even remotely a possibility that a girl is sick, don't bed her... Spread the word, if any of you fuckers contracts an unknown disease, I will quarantine your ass here in the new world for the rest of your miserable lives!"

The Captain immediately nodded his head in understanding as he heard the words of his King. He would ensure that he would well inform the men stationed in Vinland about the potential risks of disease and the consequences for their actions.. Thus, while pestilence ravaged the land and the people who dwelled within it, Berengar and the Austrians planned to take advantage of the crisis.

Chapter 476 - Finding A Scapegoat

Within the confines of the Mamluke Sultanate, an Agent of Austria was currently dressed from head to toe in Arabic attire; Though a German by blood, he had spread enough makeup across his skin and dyed his hair in an attempt to blend in with the local population. If one did not pay close enough attention, they likely wouldn't tell the difference.

This Agent had a singular purpose: to frame the attack on the Second Prince on the Byzantine Empire's long-term rival. This was a task easier said than done, as it required smuggling ordnance into the country through the Emirate of Granada.

Yet despite the difficulties in his journey, at the moment, this man was on the back of a camel with several crates that were filled with artillery shells. These shells were a faulty product fired during the war in Iberia and remained undetonated. Despite this, they were fully armed and capable of being detonated if one knew what they were doing.

Of course, they could also be drilled out, where the TNT could be retrieved and turned into a makeshift explosive like what was used in Antioch. His goal was to plant the evidence within the Mamluke arsenal, as for what came after that, only time would tell.

In order for this operation to succeed, the man had taken up the identity of an Islamic radical who had salvaged the equipment in Iberia and was willing to sell it to the Mamluke Sultanate. As the camel slowly approached the gates of the Mamluke Arsenal, the Austrian Agent was stopped by the local guards, who immediately began to speak to him in Arabic.

"Halt! State your business!"

The Agent immediately did as he was told and stopped his mount before speaking in a perfect Granadan Accent.

"My name is Insaf Al-Mursi; I am a humble scavenger from Granada; I have acquired some assets from the war in the Iberian peninsula that your masters will be greatly interested in..."

The guards looked at this stranger with questioning gazes. Currently, the Islamic world was preparing for a Jihad against the Byzantine Empire; despite this, they had not included Granada due to their secular leadership and close ties to Christendom. For a Granadan to cross the straight of Gibraltar with gains from the battlefields in the Iberian Peninsula was suspicious.

Nevertheless, if he was genuinely faithful, then they could make great use of whatever was retrieved, and thus the leader of the guards nodded his head before responding to the strange scavenger from the North.

"Very well, I will escort you to the Magistrate. However, if you make one move out of line, I will cut your throat. Do you understand me?"

The Agent immediately nodded his head in silence, signaling that he understood the threat. After doing so, the gates opened, and he rode his camel through the entrance, where he eventually was led to the center of the facility.

After reaching a certain point, the Austrian Agent hitched his camel before following the guard further into the Armory, where the Mamluke Magistrate in charge of overseeing its operations was located. When the man witnessed the stranger beside his guards, he immediately began to question what was happening.

"Who is this? Why have you allowed him to have access to this facility?"

With this said, the guard immediately began to explain his actions

"This is a scavenger from Granada; he comes bringing weapons scavenged from the battlefields of Iberia. I thought you might be interested in what he has for sale..."

The Magistrate's eyes immediately widened in excitement as he heard this news; anything utilized by the Austrian Army in warfare was a considerable gain and was greatly desired by the various powers of the Western World. As such, he quickly addressed the Austrian Agent with a welcoming response.

"My friend, I am Ufayr Ibn Sulaiman, Magistrate of the Mamluke Sultanate. Please show me your wares; I promise I will pay a fair price for whatever you offer."

A smile immediately etched itself upon the Agent's face as he bowed before the Magistrate.

"It would be my honor..."

After saying this, the group walked over to the camels where the Agent lowered one of the crates; after doing so, he opened it up to reveal the unexploded ordnance.

"These are explosive shells fired by the Austrian Artillery; they proved to be faulty and failed to detonate. However, the explosive material within them is said to be still active. If you were to open these up, you could use them as makeshift explosives far more powerful than gunpowder!"

The Magistrate was immediately enamored with the product; he did not even care about its potential danger. As such, he swiftly nodded his head with enthusiasm before holding up five fingers.

"I will pay 5 Austrian Guildens for each! If my people can research how these devices function, we will easily be able to defeat the Byzantine Empire!"

By now the Austrian coinage had pretty much become the international standard of currency in the Western World. Its purity, and size made it a stable commodity, and the strict laws of Austria's National Mint prevented any debasement. The Austrian Agent did not even bother to negotiate. Instead, he bowed his head gracefully and responded with a surprising statement.

"That is fine by me; anything I can do to support the faithful!"

Upon hearing this, the Magistrate began to trust this supposed Granadan Scavenger more; as such, he quickly ordered a servant to retrieve the payment. After a few moments, a sack containing several gold coins arrived and was handed to the Agent. After counting the payment to ensure it was accurate, the Agent nodded and smiled before responding.

"A pleasure doing business with you!"

As he said this, he began to depart, where the Magistrate called out to him from behind.

"If you find any other Austrian weapons, our doors will be open for you!"

Despite hearing this, the Agent did not respond. Instead, he hurried off to a safe distance from the Arsenal; after all, he had left a little present for the Mamluke Sultanate. The Magistrate looked over at his guards and gave them their orders only after the strange scavenger disappeared.

"Quickly, unpack these shells and get them to the research department. I want to know how they function as quickly as possible!"

The guards immediately nodded in response and began to do as instructed; after searching through the opened crate, a guard noticed something peculiar. There was a small pocket watch at the bottom of the crate. He immediately called out to the Magistrate with a hint of concern.

"Boss, what is this?"

Immediately the Magistrate walked over and inspected the device, it was some form of a clock, but he had no idea what it was doing in the crate. The seconds slowly counted down as the Mamlukes inspected the device with curiosity until finally, the hands struck noon. The moment it did so, a massive explosion detonated, killing everyone present and bringing down the entire Arsenal.

The Agent gazed off from afar atop a dune as he watched the massive explosion rocked the city. He had wired this clock to act as a detonator; at the bottom of these crates was a board that served as a fake floor. Beneath this board was a layer of tightly packed TNT. When combined with the explosive shells, it provided a large enough blast to tear apart the Arsenal and everything in it.

With this act of terror, Austria could effectively claim that unexploded ordnance had been smuggled into the Mamluke Sultanate, which was used to attack the Second Prince of the Byzantine Empire. In doing so, absolving themselves of the guilt. They could also claim that after learning about this fact, they dispatched an agent to detonate the ordinance to prevent the Mamlukes from making another such attempt in the future.

This was the plan that the Deputy Director of Royal Intelligence had come up with to frame the most prominent enemy of the Byzantine Empire for the attack on Decentius and the other Conspirators. Unfortunately for the Mamluke Sultanate, Byzantium would retaliate swiftly and fiercely when this so-called fact was revealed.

The only people who would know that Austria was involved in the attack would be the Austrian Agents and the second Prince himself. After all, it was his actions that were responsible for the retaliation that had permanently maimed him.

This was something that he would never forgive so long as he still drew breath. However, despite knowing the truth, he would never reveal it; after all, if he did, his conspiracy to murder his sister and dissolve the Austro-Byzantine Alliance would be revealed.

If such a thing were to reach his father, he would be punished severely as a traitor to the Byzantine Empire and the Palaiologos Dynasty. The punishment for treason was death, and though he was now maimed, Decentius would never willingly walk into the grave.

As for the Agent responsible for this operation, he would quickly exfiltrate out of the Mamluke Sultanate and back to Granada, where he would begin to conduct operations against the various warlords of Portugal who still resisted the Sultan's rule.. For a man of his occupation, work was never truly finished.

Chapter 477 - All Is Fair In Love And War

Honorina stood aboard the bow of her vessel as she gazed upon the coast of Trieste. It had been a relatively brief journey of roughly two weeks; during this time, she had made her way back home without incident. The only downside to this was that her husband, the King of Austria, had stayed behind in the new world.

This caused her to be deeply concerned for his safety; after all, what kind of wife would she be if she did not worry about her husband who was isolated, and alone, separated by thousands of miles of sea? She did not trust the natives of Vinland. In her esteemed eyes, they were nothing more than backwards savages, and there was no way she could trust such uncivilized fiends.

Still, Berengar was an ambitious man, and for whatever reason, he was right about the existence and location of Vinland. Perhaps he was also right about the vast treasure trove of untapped resources it held. If such a thing was true, then Austria must monopolize it at all costs. If others were to realize the existence of this new world, then it would spur a race for whoever could claim the most territory.

Thus, Honorina was more determined than ever to aid her husband as she stepped onto the major port of the Kingdom of Austria. After she and the sailors had finished tying up the ships, she hopped off her vessel and embarked towards the shipbuilding factory. Her first order of business was to give a letter to Evio, the lead shipwright of the Kingdom of Austria.

After walking across the largely industrialized port city, the third Queen of Austria forced her way into the primary shipyard of Trieste. Upon witnessing Honorina's entrance, Evio halted his actions and hurried towards her. The Venetian shipwright showed immense respect to the woman, who had become known as the Scourge of the Mediterranean.

"My Queen, I thought you were on a secret mission alongside the King; why have you returned so soon? Did the quest turn out to be a failure?"

Honorina shook her head in response; a broad smile appeared on her pretty lips as she confidently handed over the letter to the man who handled the construction and retrofitting of her vessel. She remained silent as the man continued to read the letter's contents; with each sentence, his eyes grew wider as he spoke in his native tongue.

"Dear God, he found it!"

Immediately the man performed the sign of the cross before gaining control of his emotions and speaking in a language that Honorina could understand.

"I will begin construction of the Dominion Class ocean liners at once! It will take a while, as I am currently working on several projects. Because of this, I will have to construct these vessels one at a time. As for the retrofitting of the existing sailing frigates, we have officially completed ten in total. You are welcome to take however many you see fit to accomplish this mission. Though do be aware, the more vessels you bring over, the more men you will have to vet for security clearances. "

Honorina nodded in response to this before thanking the man for his efforts.

"Thank you, Evio, you are a hard-working man, and without you, Austria would lack its powerful navy!"

The old Venetian shipwright merely smiled and nodded his head before dismissing the Queen.

"Well, if there isn't anything else you need, I should get back to work on constructing this steel behemoth that his Majesty has requested of me!"

Honorina gazed upon the partially constructed hull of the Adela-Class Frigate with a bitter smile on her face. Evio was already working on the retrofitting of yet another frigate. What bothered her about this, is that Berengar had named these mighty vessels after his first wife, instead of herself. After all, Honorina was the queen of the high seas. Would such a fearsome ship not be better off being named after her?

Honorio suspected Berengar had named the Frigates after Adela because she was the primary wife. Of course, if she had known that Berengar named the Frigate Class after Adela because she had the smallest bust of his women, which correlated in his mind to the fact that he would arm these Frigates with the smallest guns of his future vessels, she would probably break out into laughter.

After observing the newest ship and its ongoing construction, Honorio nodded her head in silence before departing; she had much to do while she was in Austria; rallying forth the soldiers and supplies was just a part of it. However, she had a week to fulfill these obligations; she decided the first thing she would do was visit her baby boy who she had left behind, to go on this journey.

After taking the train back to Kufstein, Honorio found her way into the palace. As she made her way to her son's personal quarters, she found Linde inside, breastfeeding her child. The moment Honorio saw this, her expression sank; she knew Linde was practically a milk cow and that she would be the one feeding Alexandros while she was away, but to witness such a thing brought complicated emotions to her heart.

When Linde saw Honorio enter the room, it filled her with shock, so much so that she almost dropped the child. It took her a second to keep control over the boy as she quickly approached her rival. Linde immediately asked the question that was racing across her mind with an excited smile on her face.

"Is he home?"

However, the moment Honorio shook her head, Linde pouted. Instead of dwelling on the disappointment, she switched the subject to something more productive. Something that she had wanted to discuss with the Byzantine Princess for some time.

"Honestly Honorio, your son is lucky..."

Honorio raised her brow when she heard this. Just what was this vile temptress thinking of when she was clutching Alexandros to her breast?

"How so?"

In response to this, Linde sighed as she looked around to see if anyone else was watching; after doing so, she lowered her voice and became honest with Honoria for the first time in a long time.

"Since you and Berengar are married matrilineally, it means Alexandros won't have to compete with my son for the throne..."

Honoria felt as if Linde was insulting her and her child. She could not believe she would say such a thing when she was in the middle of breastfeeding the very child she insulted. Of course, Linde didn't mean it as an insult. Instead, she genuinely felt that Alexandros was lucky that his father wouldn't force him to compete against his brothers for the Austrian Throne.

However, Honoria didn't realize this, and instead scowled as she tried to force her son away from the woman she thought had insulted him.

"You can talk whatever crap you want about me, but don't you dare insult my son, you fucking bitch! Give him to me right now!"

Linde felt mistreated, but did as she was told. After all, Alexandros was not her son. However, the moment that Honoria had forced the boy from Linde's breast, he broke out into tears. This immediately caused the woman's maternal instincts to kick in as she shushed the child, calming him in the process.

Honoria gazed curiously at Linde. She did not know the woman was so good with children. Despite her venomous nature, she actually seemed to care for Alexandros, even though he was not her child. Thus, she took a step back from her preconceived notions and asked about what Linde meant by her previous statement.

"So you weren't insulting my son when you said he was lucky to be born matrilineal?"

Now it was Linde's time to feel offended when she heard Honoria's remarks. Linde puffed her cheeks up in a pouting expression as she expressed the thoughts on her mind.

"I would never! Your child may not be mine, but he is still Berengar's son, and whether or not you want to believe it, I still consider him family because of that. I was only saying that he was lucky to be spared

the future pain that will accompany Hans and my other future sons, who their father will force to compete against their siblings for the Austrian Crown."

Honorina had a newfound respect for Linde. In all honesty, she had never even thought of the line of succession since her children wouldn't be a part of it. She was fine with that. It meant her kids could enjoy their lives to the fullest without being chained to the state's affairs. However, she realized now the thoughts that both Linde and Adela alike must consider every time they saw the child of their rival. Linde's next remarks further enforced this idea in Honorina's head.

"Though Berengar will force Hans and his future brothers to undergo some hardships in pursuit of the crown, I vow I will do everything I can to ensure that it is one of my boys who ends up on Throne after their father has abdicated. I will never allow Adela to put one of her sons on the throne. If it is the last thing I do in this world, I will make sure I beat that bitch!"

Honorina always knew that the rivalry between Linde and Adela was fierce, but she never knew it was this intense. Of course, there was only one question on her mind, and she was not afraid to ask it.

"Why are you telling me all of this?"

Linde closed the distance between her and Honorina. As she did so, she patted Alexandros on his head, who was now in his mother's arms, before answering her question.

"Because I want to make sure that you are on the right side of this conflict. You may think that Alexandros is free from the politics of our family, but you and your children have a role to play. You and I both know how much of a hypocrite Adela is. She may act like the most pious woman on the planet, but she would stoop to levels I wouldn't dare to in order to ensure her son ends up on the throne. I could really use your support in this matter."

Honorina smirked when she heard this before expressing her honest thoughts.

"You are such a bitch..."

In response to this, Linde merely smirked before walking out the door. As she did so, she left her last remarks.

"All is fair in love and war...."

Chapter 478 - A New Labor Force

While Honoria was back in the Fatherland preparing for the next incursion to the New World. Berengar, along with his soldiers, were still stationed within the temporary Fortress that had been constructed within the coastline of New York.

For the past few weeks, Berengar had been treating Kahwihta over her flu symptoms, and finally, the fever had broken. She, like her kin, had received basic treatment for the illness and, because of this, survived the ordeal.

Unlike what Berengar had expected, the young woman did not blame him or his people for her suffering. Instead, she saw it as a test of her loyalty to her gods. One thing was sure; she was just happy to be alive.

With this in mind, the young native woman rose from beneath the flannel sheets and fur covers that provided her warmth during these troubling times and slowly got dressed in her tribal deerskin clothing. Berengar entered the room as she did so, causing a slightly chilly breeze to enter the otherwise comfy lodging.

Upon seeing the woman climbing out of bed, Berengar smiled; she appeared to be in a much better state than she was previously in. With this in mind, he quickly got to work as he prepared a nice meal for him and his translator to share.

There was much work ahead for the King of Austria, and he intended to use this woman to communicate with the other tribes the moment she was fluent in the German Tongue. However, such a thing could not be rushed; for the time being, he would make sure that Kahwihta was in peak shape before he began using her as a diplomat.

As Berengar continued to cook a healthy meal, the Chieftain's daughter worked on her German; she slowly looked over the educational materials that Berengar had provided; these were copies of the texts in use by the Austrian Education System. They were designed for use by first-time learners of the German language.

Berengar had brought a series of language books with him from the Fatherland to train translators from among the local population effectively. They had proven to be quite effective, as Kahwihta's understanding of the German tongue was increasing by the day.

Eventually, he finished the meal and brought it over to the young woman, where he forced her to take a break from her studies so that she could eat with him. The moment she tasted the dish prepared from a mix of rations, she moaned in pleasure before commenting on it.

"This is superb!"

Berengar chuckled when he heard this before rejecting the compliment.

"This is nothing, just something I threw together from our rations; you should see the delicacies I eat back in the Fatherland!"

Kahwihta failed to understand the entirety of Berengar's comment and immediately looked through her study book while eating to ensure that she could effectively learn what he said. After a few minutes, her eyes widened in shock, and she put down her book, where she pronounced the following phrase in broken German.

"Will you take me to your homeland?"

Berengar had an awkward expression on his face as he heard this; he couldn't very well take the girl with him back to Austria. There were still many dangerous diseases there that she was lacking immunity to. However, he could see that she desperately wanted to see what his homeland looked like, and thus he sighed before making a statement that effectively kicked the can down the road.

"Maybe one day..."

Though he had not answered in the definitive, it was enough to bring a smile to the Native girl's face. As for Berengar, he thought that if she witnessed the splendors of Austria, she might have a heart attack. After all, the pathetic timber fortress they had constructed and the measly rations his soldiers ate already impressed her enough.

How excited would she be when she witnessed the extensive railways that were being constructed across Austria or its grand architecture that existed throughout every city? Perhaps in due time, she would get a taste of what the fatherland offered right here in her own home.

Things were progressing smoothly in this military colony, and as Berengar had expected, there was currently a crisis underway among the Native Tribes of what was once referred to as New York in his past life.

In fact, at this very moment, there was a crowd of Natives sitting outside his fortress's gates, seeking shelter from the elements and their enemies alike. The flu had ravaged their populations, and these survivors could only turn to the people who seemed entirely unphased by the strange illness.

It was because of these circumstances that Berengar found himself in need of a translator, and though Kahwihta's training was not complete, she was the only person who could somewhat fill this role; with a heavy sigh, the young Austrian King made a request of his colonial concubine.

"Kahwihta, there is a gathering of natives outside our gates seeking shelter and aid. I intend to put them to work in the fields. Spring is around the corner, and I will need a proper labor force to make this fortress last. However, to make my generous intentions clear to these people, I need someone to translate my words. Could you do this small task for me?"

The young Chieftain's daughter gazed upon Berengar with a curious expression. It took her a few moments to translate his words within her mind, but ultimately, she understood his sentiment. A smile quickly spread upon her pretty face as she uttered the words that Berengar wanted to hear.

"Of course, I will help you in any way I can!"

Because of this warmhearted response, a kind smile spread upon the Austrian Monarch's face as he heard this before responding.

"I am sure you will."

Immediately, the girl's excitement when she heard these words of encouragement. However, the next moment, there was a knock on the door. The Captain in charge of the Marine Company was rather urgent as he continued to pound on the thick wooden door.

When Berengar finally pried the entrance to his lodging open, he gazed upon a frantic appearance on the face of the man he had tasked to lead his soldiers. Before he could ask what had caused the man to be in such a chaotic state, the Captain boldly announced what was transpiring.

"Sir, the Natives outside our gates have become agitated; if we don't get someone to calm them down, we might have a full-scale riot on our hands!"

Berengar's expression sank; such a thing was the worst-case scenario; there was no hesitation in his one good eye as he shifted his gaze upon the young woman next to him. With a stern order, he departed from his lodging towards the ramparts of the Fortress, with the native girl in tow.

"Come with me!"

Upon arriving at the ramparts, Berengar witnessed the scene of dozens of men, women, and children from a variety of tribes and cultures gathered outside the gates of his fortress. There were roughly a hundred people in total. Some of them had flu symptoms, while others appeared to be quite healthy.

Because different peoples gathered in the same space, it did not take long before conflict occurred. To the untrained eye of Austria's marines, these people were all the same, but Berengar and Kahwihta knew differently. The young Austrian King had a hint of urgency in his tone as he issued forth a decree, expecting his translator to convey his words effectively.

"Calm yourselves! As the leader of this settlement, I assure you will be taken care of if you behave yourselves and follow my orders appropriately. It just so happens that spring is around the corner, and we need farmers and laborers. If you agree to work for us, you will be provided with proper accommodations, such as housing, food, and medical treatment. If you disagree with these terms, then you may return whence you came!"

Kahwihta immediately translated these words into various tongues, which allowed these different tribes to comprehend what Berengar had stated. Upon hearing that they would be provided for in exchange for work, many of the people gathered immediately calmed themselves and ceased their hostilities.

While some refused to work for these pale-skinned foreigners, there were still dozens of people who had nowhere else to go, disease had ravaged their tribes and villages, and what remained were conquered by their neighbors. In the end, these people could only gracefully accept Berengar's terms.

Thus, Berengar had gained a small workforce for his small military colony that would provide the necessary labor to keep his settlement operational for the foreseeable future.. This would be the first group of natives incorporated into the German Colonies through peaceful means.

Chapter 479 - New Arrivals

Honorina had spent a week gathering the troops and supplies to bring back to Vinland. This would be the second of many voyages that her vessel would take across the Atlantic to ensure that the Military Colony in the new world was adequately maintained.

As per usual, the journey to the New World was uneventful. In fact, without Berengar to entertain herself with, or ships to pirate, the third Queen of Austria was dreadfully bored throughout the entire journey.

Upon arriving at the docks in Austria, Honorina stepped off her vessel and greeted her husband, who appeared to be doing well. She instantly grabbed ahold of his neck and kissed him passionately on the lips; a single phrase escaped her lips as she did so.

"I missed you!"

Berengar chuckled upon hearing this before inquiring about how his family was doing back in the fatherland.

"How is our son? Or my other children, for that matter?"

Honorina immediately summarized what had transpired during her time in Kufstein.

"Alexandros is doing well; that milk cow Linde keeps him well-fed; as for Hans, he and that girl Veronika are getting along well enough. As for Helga, she is growing like a weed; I swear by the time you return, you won't even recognize your daughter.

Kristoffer and Katherin are perfectly healthy, and Adela seems to dote on them significantly. As for Henrietta, she appears to be doing fine. She is just a bit lonely without you, but thankfully she has us to take care of her. As for Yasmin, her pregnancy is progressing smoothly, and she sends you her regards as well as this. "

Honorina grabbed hold of a small basket filled with pastries which was lying on the vessel and handed them to Berengar. They appeared to be home-baked goods made from Yasmin's hands in the style of her homeland.

A wide smile appeared on the young king's face as he nodded his head in silence. It was good to have a caring wife who enjoyed cooking. Upon seeing this, a smirk spread across Honorina's lips as she teased her husband.

"By the way, I had a few of them on the trip here, so you can enjoy whatever is leftover."

Berengar chuckled when he heard this, however when he took off the cloth that covered the treats, it shocked him to see that she wasn't kidding. There were only around three of the deserts left for him to eat. He immediately looked up at his wife, who had long since run off to the settlement. Upon seeing this, Berengar merely chuckled and shook his head before commenting on the girl's actions.

"That fucking bitch..."

After getting reacquainted with Honorina and the situation back home, Berengar began tracking down the shipping manifests. He spent quite a bit of time checking to see if all the supplies he had requested were gathered.

After thorough research, he was pleased to see that Honoria had not failed him in any way other than eating the treats that Yasmin had baked for him. He swore in his heart that one way or another, he would get the woman back for this offense.

However, Berengar shook his head after thinking about this; he had too much work to do now that the troops, livestock, and supplies had arrived. He didn't have time to engage in some petty feud with his wife that started over a few pastries. With another few hundred military personnel, it was time to overhaul this fortress into a more permanent settlement.

After a few hours, they unloaded the supplies from the ship, and Berengar was standing in the middle of the fortress introducing the new men to the settlement that they would stay in for the duration of their deployment.

"Men, you have entered the mythical land of Vinland. Our operations here are highly classified. All of you have been chosen due to your abilities and because you have been trusted with the security clearance necessary to know of these lands.

As you may be aware, when you were given this deployment, you were informed that your tenure here would last for a year. Afterward, you can choose to return to the fatherland and seek a different position, or you can choose to remain here in Vinland.

For those of you who wish to make a permanent settlement in this foreign land, you will be given special privileges here in the new world, such as political positions and ownership of property. Our aim here is simple; this land is our living space; In the coming decades, I fully intend to settle our excess population here in Vinland and carve out large swaths of land for our Kingdom.

So it would be best if you established ties to the native population, scout for valuable resources, and most important of all, maintain a self-sustaining, permanent settlement. I won't lie to you; as you build this colony here in Vinland, the fatherland will progress ahead of you, and when you finally return, it may astound you at the changes that have occurred in your homeland.

However, what you accomplish here in Vinland is of dire importance to the future of our Kingdom. The resources in this place are abundant and untouched. They will be critical for the continued prosperity of the fatherland.

Of course, you may also know we are currently seeing massive population growth in the fatherland; because of this, in a few generations, it will be challenging to sustain our population with the minuscule land we currently hold on to.

Even if we have united the German States; in a hundred years, there will still be too many people to house effectively. Thus, Vinland, the first of our colonies, will be of dire importance to the continued growth of our people!

As a perk of being the first men of the old world to step foot in Vinland, you are free to take any of the local women as your concubines. As for the rules and regulations regarding such activities, if you are interested, you can inquire about such things with any of the men who have already been stationed here for some time.

Be aware that the laws that exist in Austria still apply here in Vinland, as you are currently standing on Austrian soil! Thus, I will conclude my speech by welcoming you to the New World, one of limitless potential and prosperity for our Kingdom and the German people! For King and Fatherland!"

Upon finishing his welcoming ceremony, the soldiers broke out into salutes and repeated the words that Berengar had spoken.

"For King and Fatherland!"

Berengar gazed upon the men gathered with a proud smile; now that the settlement had been established, he had opted to bring over Army units instead of Naval Infantry. For the time being, as the King and Reichsmarschall, he acted as the Supreme Commander of this expeditionary force. However, when he finally departed in a few months and returned to the fatherland, he would leave a military governor in charge of the colony.

With this speech concluded, the new arrivals quickly set to task, setting up shop in their barracks and establishing familiarity with the settlement. In the following days, they would teach the native labor force who had submitted to the Austrian crown the knowledge necessary to maintain a proper Austrian Agricultural System and construct Austrian-style structures.

As for Berengar, he immediately regrouped with his translator, who was currently speaking with a group of Mohawk tribesmen who had gathered at the settlement; tears were flowing from the young woman's eyes as she held onto her sister in a loving embrace.

Her younger sister was only a couple of years younger than herself and was quite beautiful in her own right. The two siblings shared a moment of silence as they mourned the loss of their father. Kahwihta struggled to express her feelings as she questioned whether not the news she received was accurate.

"Ojistah, my dear sister, is what you say true? Has father passed?"

The sixteen-year-old girl silently nodded her head as she reflected on the recent passing of their father.

"The Anishnabe murdered the great chief when he went to visit them. They blamed him for bringing the plague to these lands and claimed it resulted from his unholy alliance with these foreigners. Our father tried to argue that it was their attack on the pale skins which resulted in this pestilence, but they refused to admit their fault. In his rage, the great chief of the Anishnabe murdered our father.

Now they are threatening to invade our tribe. Though our brother has assumed the role of chieftain, he is not prepared to shoulder the responsibility of war. Kahwihta, please, I beg of you, ask these foreigners to intervene on our behalf. If they are truly as powerful as you and brother claim, then we have a fighting chance against our enemies!"

As the two young women were talking, Berengar arrived, and when Kahwihta's sister gazed upon his handsome visage, she felt guilty. Berengar had helped her and her people so much this past month, and yet now she had to ask a major favor of him, one she could never repay.

"My Lord, this is my sister Ojistah; she brings news of my father's death. The Anishnabe has murdered him in cold blood! Now they are threatening to invade our village. She comes to ask for your help on our brother's behalf."

It shocked Berengar to hear this. It wasn't long ago where he met with the chieftain and brokered the initial terms of their trade. To be honest, he was looking to pay the Algonquin back for their trespasses against his settlement.

To hear that the old chief was killed during what should have been a peaceful negotiation was the justification for retribution that Berengar was looking for. After discussing the details of what had transpired with the two girls, Berengar put on a caring facade before agreeing to the request for military assistance.

"Kahwihta, tell your sister that we are grateful for the help your tribe has provided to us when we first arrived. My people know how to pay back our debts, and because of that, I accept her terms. My men will prepare to march on the Anishnabe, and we will bring their chieftain to justice. For the crime of murdering a diplomat in cold blood can not go unpunished."

When Kahwihta translated these words to her younger sister, the girl fell to her knees and thanked Berengar from the bottom of her heart. After doing so, Berengar helped her up before making one final comment on the situation at hand.

"You do not need to worry any longer. Within the next few days, a great fire will engulf the region, and the Anishnabe will have paid their debt in blood."

After saying this, Berengar left the two young women be.. He had much more important things to worry about now that he intended to march to war.

Chapter 480 - Surgical Strike

Captain Diedrich Veringer knelt within the treeline outside of an Algonquin village. This was one of many such locations spread throughout northeastern Vinland. Over a week had passed since Berengar was informed that his ally was murdered at the hands of Algonquin.

As a result, he had spent the week preparing for a surgical strike on the enemy village. Berengar was many things, but reckless was not one of them. He had spent this time gathering information on the enemy, by dispatching his Jaegers alongside Mohawk Scouts to collect intelligence on the target of their attack. Captain Veringer was the man in charge of the Company of Jaegers who were now conducting this operation.

The Austrian King had dispatched his Jaeger Company to launch a swift attack on the village responsible for the death of the Mohawk Chieftain. These elite soldiers currently blended perfectly into their surroundings as a new moon filled the night sky. They were garbed in the latest uniforms, which were used to equip specialized units such as special operations and reconnaissance.

These uniforms were largely based upon the blumentarn camo uniforms issued to the East German Army during the early days of the cold war from Berengar's past life. They even had the m56/70 pattern Stahlhelm, which were not only cheaper to manufacture than the Steel Pickelhaubes which the rest of Berengar's army was equipped with, but offered vastly superior protection. Theoretically, these steel helmets could protect its wearer from a modern pistol cartridge.

Atop these helmets were a hemp fabric cover which shared the same camouflage pattern as the uniforms. As for bodily protection, these men used a modified design of the Trench Armor issued to German forces during the Great War of Berengar's past life. This variant of the armor was lighter weight, offered superior protection, and allowed for better operation of arms. They also painted this armor in blumentarn camouflage.

These Jaegers were armed with the best equipment currently available to Austria's armed forces, which were G22 Rifles, 1422 Service revolvers, and 1422 Lightweight Mortars. They dedicated two squads of this company as mortar teams that were critical to the success of this operation.

Beside the Austrian Jaegers was a small group of Mohawk scouts who led their Austrian Allies to the Algonquin village. These men gazed upon the strange equipment of the Austrian Jaegers with awe. After all, if they weren't following them so closely, they never could spot them in the woods.

The leader of these mohawk scouts pointed towards the village that lie beyond the treeline before communicating in what little German he had learned over the course of the past month.

"That is the target!"

Captain Veringer nodded his head in affirmation as he gazed through his binoculars at the local Algonquin village. A cruel smile appeared on his face, which was painted with camouflage. They were roughly three hundred yards out and could fully launch their assault. Thus the Captain dispatched his orders to the Company of Soldiers who silently gathered on the outskirts of the native village.

"Deploy the mortars and prepare for combat. After the first shells go off, open fire on the enemy."

The soldiers immediately did as instructed. While the Mortar crew established position at a safe distance, the infantry prepared their weapons, and ensured that they were loaded with a cartridge."

After a few moments of hushed movements, the mortar teams dropped their 60mm high explosive shells into the bores of their mortars before firing them up high above into the air and onto the unsuspecting village below. When the shells landed on the timber longhouses, they immediately blew them apart and set the village ablaze.

The screams of the native women and children who inhabited the village resounded in the air, as the Algonquin warriors rushed out of their homes, desperately looking for the source of this attack. However, the moment they revealed themselves, Captain Veringer issued his orders.

"Open fire!"

With that said, dozens of large plumes of smoke shot out of the Jager's rifles as their bullets went down range and into the torsos of their targets. Blood and bone splattered onto the floor as the bodies of the men who had been hit dropped to the ground, lifeless.

The mohawk scouts gazed in awe at the firepower in use by their Austrian allies. They now understood how such few men had thoroughly repelled the Algonquin attack on their settlement. They could hardly believe their eyes and ears as they witnessed these pale-skinned foreigners conjure the elements against their enemies.

While Captain Jaeger and his men reloaded their weapons and prepared for another volley, the mortar crews launched a few more shells into the village, blasting structures to bits, and spreading the fire even further.

It would not take long for these flames to spread from the village into the forest. Despite the dangers of starting a wildfire, the Jaegers fired off another volley onto the algonquin warriors before Captain Veringer gave the order to retreat.

"Retreat! We have accomplished our aim. Fall back to the outpost!"

With this said, the mortar crew quickly packed up their weapons, and shuffled off towards the direction of the Austrian encampment. The rest of the Austrian Jaegers and Mohawk Scouts quickly followed behind them. Captain Veringer ensured he was the last man to depart from the battlefield as he covered their rear.

Though the Algonquin were unaware of who had launched an attack on their village, they eventually saw the Mohawk scouts in the distance running away. As for the Austrian Jaegers, their camouflage successfully concealed their figures.

Enraged by the attack on their homes, the Algonquin warriors raced after to their attackers, completely unaware that Captain Veringer and a squad of Jaegers stayed behind to ambush them. The moment the native warriors passed by the Austrian Jaegers, thunder resounded in the air as a volley of bullets reaped the lives of the unsuspecting tribesmen.

After launching this attack, the Austrian Jaegers unleashed the cold steel blades of their bayonets and plunged them into the tanned flesh of the Algonquin warriors, which spilled their blood across the landscape. Caught unawares, it took the native tribesmen a few moments to realize that the bushes were attacking them. Or so they initially thought. After all, they could not fathom the invention of camouflage.

The Austrians used this element of surprise to launch a full-scale assault on the remaining pursuers. Captain Veringer deflected an oncoming war club with the stock of his rifle, before plunging his bayonet in the warrior's throat who wielded it.

After ripping out his bayonet, and spilling blood across the floor, the man moved onto his next target. One by one, the native tribesmen fell to the steel bayonets of the Austrian Jaegers. The Algonquin warriors were in a state of panic. They had rushed after the Mohawks who they believed handled the attack on their village, only to come under assault by nature itself.

What black magic had their enemies conjured, in order to turn the thunder, the fire, and the bushes against them. The moment one of the surviving warriors fled, the others followed suit. Only ten Algonquin warriors could escape with their lives intact, forever scarred by the events that had taken place in the dimly lit forest outside their village.

Having successfully defeated the Algonquin war band, Captain Veringer sighed heavily as he gazed upon the carnage before issuing orders to his squad.

"Regroup with the company. From there we will head back to the Stronghold and inform the King of our success."

The soldiers nodded their heads and obeyed their captain's orders. Before long, they regrouped with the rest of their unit and their mohawk allies. Leaving behind a burning village in the middle of the night. Captain Veringer gazed upon the smoldering ruins of the native village one last time before continuing on his journey back to the encampment..

Though this was more of a skirmish than a full-scale battle, the actions taken by the Jaeger Company on this day had secured the position of the Austrian Colony. They did not know at this moment, but by attacking the enemy with mortars and setting the village ablaze, rumors would spread to other villages and tribes that the Austrian people could control the forces of nature.

While not everyone would believe these tall tales, such rumors would create a sense of fear in the hearts of the native tribes that would prevent them from launching a major attack on the Austrian Encampment. Instead, future battles in the New World would take place in the wilderness, between dedicated teams of Austrian Jaegers and the warriors of the hostile tribes.

By allying with the Austrian settlement, the Mohawk had secured their place as a major player in the Northeast of the North American continent. Trade of resources and technologies between Austria, and its newfound tribal ally, would allow the Mohawk to progress at a faster rate than their rivals did.. One thing became certain in the minds of the native peoples of the northeast: the pale-skinned foreigners were here to stay.